

TURKISH IMMIGRATION  
LITERATURE IN GERMANY: THE  
SOCIAL DRAMA AND  
TRANSFORMATION IN THE  
TRILOGY OF EMINE SEVGI  
OZDAMAR

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by

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## **AUTHOR DECLARATIONS**

1. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

2. The advanced study in the English Language and Literature graduate program of which this thesis is part has consisted of:

- i) Research Methods courses both in the undergraduate and graduate programs.
- ii) Examination of two novels by Emine Sevgi Ozdamar and of the secondary sources including scholarly articles from academic journals as well as newspaper articles, and books on the history of immigration in general and the history of Turkish immigrants in Germany in particular.

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **TURKISH IMMIGRATION LITERATURE IN GERMANY: THE SOCIAL DRAMA AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE TRILOGY OF EMINE SEVGI OZDAMAR**

**Hüsnü YILMAZ**

The point of discussion in this work is about the trilogy of a Turkish woman writer called Emine Sevgi Ozdamar. She is a representative of Turkish Immigration Literature in Germany. Her works, on the other hand, are different from the classics produced by preceding immigrant writers. There are several reasons that make her works distinctive. One is the language that Ozdamar uses in her works. The language of the novels is a mixture of German and Turkish. In other words, Ozdamar's method of thinking in Turkish and writing in German makes her works different from the accustomed products of the Turkish Immigration Literature. Her literal translation of Turkish phrases and idioms to German is one of the distinctive characteristics of her novels. In addition to the novelties she uses through a language combination, the content and context of the novels are also opposite the stereotyped immigration novels. The events in the first novel of trilogy take place in Turkey and only the language of the novel is German in the book. The second novel includes only a few chapters where the protagonist spends some time in Germany.

The focus of this study is to analyze the differences in the life of the protagonist who undergoes a transformation after her move to Germany. In the light of the

relationship between social drama and rituals proposed by Victor Turner, the social drama of Turkey in the first novel, *Caravanserai*, and the transformation of the protagonist in the second novel, *The Golden Horn*, will be comparatively examined. Changes and novelties under the title of transformation, which emerges in the life of the protagonist after her immigration to Germany, will be analyzed as an outcome of the social contradictions and norm conflicts between the sending and receiving societies.

Rebirth and reconstruction of a person will be discussed in the example of the protagonist. Without going into details, Ozdamar's representation of a backward Turkish society and a modern German society will be argued.

**Key words:**

Immigration, immigrant, ritual, social drama, transformation.

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## **KISA ÖZET**

# **ALMANYA'DA TÜRK GÖÇMEN EDEBİYATI: EMİNE SEVGİ ÖZDAMAR'IN (ROMAN) ÜÇLEMESİNDE SOSYAL DRAMA VE TRANSFORMASYON**

**Hüsnü YILMAZ**

Bu çalışmanın tartışma konusu Emine Sevgi Özdamar'ın roman üçlemesi hakkındadır. Kendisi Almanya'da Türk Göçmen Edebiyatı'nın bir temsilcisidir. Diğer yandan, yazarın eserleri kendisinden önce kaleme alınmış göçmen klasiklerinden farklıdır. Eserlerini farklı kılan bir kaç sebep mevcuttur. Bunlardan birisi Özdamar'ın eserlerinde kullandığı dildir. Romanlarının dili Almanca ve Türkçe'nin bir karışımıdır. Diğer bir deyişle, Özdamar'ın Türkçe düşünüp Almanca yazma metodu onun eserlerini alışlagelmiş Türk Göçmen Edebiyatı eserlerinden farklı kılmaktadır. Romanlarının ayırt edici özelliklerinden biri de Özdamar'ın Türkçe deyim ve sözcükleri Almanca'ya bire bir tercüme etmesidir. Dil kombinasyonu şeklinde üretmiş olduğu yeniliklerinin yanı sıra, eserlerinin içeriği de kemikleşmiş göçmen edebiyatı eserlerinden farklıdır. Üçlemenin ilk romanında olayların tümü Türkiye'de gerçekleşmektedir ve sadece kitabın dili Almanca'dır. İkinci kitapta ise sadece bir kaç bölümdeki olaylar Almanya'da gerçekleşmektedir.

Bu çalışmanın amacı da Almanya'ya göçünden sonra hayatında toplu bir değişikliğe uğrayan romanlardaki ana kahramanın hayatındaki yenilik ve değişiklikleri incelemektir. Victor Turner tarafından öne sürülen sosyal drama ve ritüeller arasındaki ilişkinin ışığında, birinci romanda işlenen Türkiye'deki sosyal drama ve ikinci romanda ele alınan ana kahramanın transformasyonu karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenecektir. Kahramanın Almanya'ya göçü sonrası gerçekleşen hayatındaki yenilik ve değişiklikler transformasyon başlığı altında, Almanya ve Türkiye arasındaki sosyal ve norm farklılıklarının bir sonucu olarak ele alınacaktır.

Bir kişinin yeniden doğuşu ve yapılanması gibi kavramlar romanlardaki kahraman örneğinde incelenecektir. Ayrıntıya girmeden, Özdamar'ın geri bir Türk toplumu ve modern bir Alman toplumu temsil ve resmetmesi tartışılacaktır.

### **Anahtar Kelimeler**

Göç, göçmen, ritüel, sosyal drama, transformasyon.



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## INTRODUCTION

Two years ago when I decided to focus on twin concepts such as immigration and immigrants in the field of literature as the subject of my thesis, I never thought that I would be an immigrant during the process of preparing my work. For the last two years, I have been in Kyrgyzstan and personally familiar with the aforementioned notions. Without giving rise to any verbiage, I want to confess the fact that immigration in theory and immigration in practice are completely two different issues. Reading the migratory process of Turks in Germany on written documents is not comparable to the personal experience of what immigration means in real life and especially in a totally different geography.

The reason that brought me to Central Asia as well as the conditions that I found myself in distinguish the type of immigration that I have experienced from the kind of immigration that Turks in Germany suffered from. In a sentence, I would like to underline the fact that the life that I have been living since I came here is taking place within a new module of immigration with its distinctive characteristics. In other words, I happened to find myself within a new immigration alternative, which could be categorized as a new phenomenon as far as the question of immigration and immigrants is concerned. Yet the focus of this work is not a comparative analysis of Turkish migratory process in Germany and my own experience.

The point treated in this study is the literature produced by one of the prominent representatives of Turkish immigration literature in Germany. The writer concerned is

Emine Sevgi Ozdamar and I will try to discuss her three self-declared<sup>1</sup> novels which include a veiled autobiographical form<sup>2</sup>. In her article about Emine Sevgi Ozdamar's novel *Caravanserai*, Sheila Johnson agrees with Seyhan about this issue. She thinks that "Ozdamar's story is of the community whose memory she honors in her 'quasi-autobiography'."<sup>3</sup> The novel just mentioned above is the first book of a trilogy and the second novel *The Bridge of the Golden Horn* is reviewed by the Guardian as follows:

"The novel is the second in a semi-autobiographical trilogy by the Turkish-German writer, actor and director Emine Sevgi Ozdamar. The first, whose lengthy German title translates as *Life Is a Caravanserai With Two Doors; I Came In One and Left By the Other* (1992), retraced the author's childhood in a politically turbulent Turkey in the 1950s and early 60s. *The Bridge of the Golden Horn* (1998), written when Ozdamar was in her early 50s, takes up the story from its teenage narrator's arrival as a "guest worker" in West Berlin in 1966. Like the author, the would-be actor learns German from scratch as a young adult, working on a factory assembly line making radios to earn money for drama school in Istanbul. The scene shifts between Germany and Turkey, before political events in Turkey drive her away in the mid-70s, to work in Brechtian theatre in East Berlin."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Seyhan, Azade. "Lost in Translation: Re-Membering the Mother Tongue in Emine Sevgi Ozdamar's *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei*." 420.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid 420.

<sup>3</sup> Johnson, Sheila. "Transnational Aesthetics of the Turkish Everyday: Emine Sevgi Ozdamar's *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei*." 47.

<sup>4</sup> "A tale of two cities." <http://books.guardian.co.uk/review/story/0,,2208365,00.html>

As for the third book of the autobiographical trilogy, it overtly deals with the life of the protagonist and covertly with the life of Ozdamar in Berlin. “Her third novel, *Strange Stars Turn to Earth*, in which she describes her life in Berlin, was published last year [2003].”<sup>5</sup> I want to mention one thing about the last novel. Since it has not been translated into English or Turkish yet, I will try to address some points in it on the basis of the discussions I had with a Swiss lady teaching German at the same university with me. She kindly accepted reading the novel and I had the chance to know something about the content of the third book through her help.

Another point is the distinctive characteristic of Emine Sevgi Ozdamar in terms of the content and method in her novels. It means that the thing that I am going to do is to identify if Ozdamar is dealing with the rituals of immigration peculiar to Turkish experience or she is exceptional in the sense that what she produces doesn't match and repeat the classics of the Turkish immigration literature. Ozdamar writes in a completely different style, meaning that rather than the general picture of immigrants as a community, the portrait of an individual immigrant is drawn. This fact brings the reader to the conclusion that the type of immigration issued by her is different and distinctive as well.

In Ozdamar's novels, the reader sees the idea and practice of immigration through the eyes of the protagonist and this characteristic feature in her books treats the related issue from a subjective point of view. Contrary to the familiar topics of

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<sup>5</sup> Lehmann, Lennart. “German-Turkish Writer Wins Kleist Award” [www.qantara.de.com](http://www.qantara.de.com)

immigration literature like culture shock and moreover culture clash<sup>6</sup>, Ozdamar's works include a definition of a self-discovery story embellished with a different context and language. In addition to first-person narration and subjective mood in the novels, one specific point raised in the novels is the transformation of the protagonist from the state of a submissive and obedient girl to a questioning and challenging socialist and theatre actress. It is around this transformation that I will try to approach the changes and transitions in the life of the protagonist by using Victor Turner's concept of 'social drama'<sup>7</sup>. Leaving the discussion of this concept and related ones here in order to treat them in parallel with the stories in the novels in the main body of my work, I would like to refer to one more issue. The notion of ritual will occupy a central position in my project, along with the concept of social drama. In other words, interrelation between rituals in the life of the protagonist and her social drama will be the main focus of my study. Besides the social drama of the major character in the novels, social drama taking place in her motherland, Turkey, will also occupy some place around the discussion of the mutual relationship between rituals and social drama.

As it was previously mentioned, the focus of this study is Emine Sevgi Ozdamar who was awarded and honored with prestigious German literary prizes<sup>8</sup>. This being the case, what is her target? Does she want to reach Turkish immigrants or does she want to get the attention of German readers and critics? And, where do her works belong to? In

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<sup>6</sup> Karakus, Mahmut and Kuruyazici, Nilufer. *Gurbeti Vatan Edenler*, 19.

<sup>7</sup> Turner, Victor. "Social Dramas and Stories about Them." This term is borrowed from Turner's statements in his aforementioned essay.

<sup>8</sup> Jankowsky, Karen. "'German' Literature Contested: The 1991 Ingeborg-Bachmann-Prize Debate, 'Cultural Diversity,' and Emine Sevgi Ozdamar." 262.

what follows, I will try to discuss these questions shortly in order to introduce Ozdamar before the analysis of her works.

When we look at the language Emine Sevgi Ozdamar uses in her trilogy, we can say that her target is German people. She writes in German language and at first sight, this feature makes her works a text for German speaking people. It is another fact that the story in *Caravanserai* completely takes place in Turkey although its language is German. In spite of its mono-geographical setting, I hold the idea that the target of the novel is still German readers, although the themes, characters and events in the novel mirror Turkish society. It is through the narration of events in the novel that a German reader can learn something about Turkey. In this case, the book is for Germans more and rather than Turks.

Another point which should be taken into account is where her writing belongs to. Is it possible to regard her novels as texts of German literature or is it better to describe Emine Sevgi Ozdamar only as a writer writing in German language? If we say yes to the former question, then she could be represented as a member of German literature and be involved in this literature in a direct way. If we say yes to the second question, we can define her writing as the literature written in German language. Remembering Germany's approach to immigrants in defining their citizenship status, it becomes possible to suggest that Ozdamar's situation reminds us of the concept of *jus sanguinis* which is a term used to define the type of institutionalized citizenship in Germany, which addresses the foreigners. I believe that Ozdamar's status within



German literary tradition couldn't be understood without reference to this socio-political fact.

Germany is known to be a country which is strict with its citizenship politics as far as the issues such as immigration and immigrants are concerned. Contrary to the citizenship regimes such as the civic assimilationist in France and the multicultural pluralist in England, the regime followed by German immigration office is defined as the ethno-cultural exclusionist<sup>9</sup>. The reason behind that attitude lies in a well-known fact that Germany insistently denies attributions or titles defining Germany as a country of immigration. This institutional structuring of cultural diversity<sup>10</sup> in an exclusionist and rejectionist manner in Germany, which is among the most immigrant receiving countries in Europe, leaves influence not only on the status and life-styles of guest-workers, but also of the 'guest-writers.'<sup>11</sup> The following quotation which is taken from Karen Jankowsky's essay belongs to Emine Sevgi Ozdamar herself; "I was accepted, but merely as a 'guest-writer'."<sup>12</sup>

Ozdamar's statement above reveals an important point which is really symbolic insofar as the discussions about the genre of literature produced by immigrants are addressed. It is known that there have been many titles throughout the history of

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<sup>9</sup> Koopmans, Ruud and Statham, Paul. "Challenging the Liberal Nation-State? Postnationalism, Multiculturalism, and the Collective Claims Making of Migrants and Ethnic Minorities in Britain and Germany." 661.

<sup>10</sup> Grillo, R. D. "Transnational Migration and Multiculturalism in Europe." 2.

<sup>11</sup> Jankowsky, Karen. "'German' Literature Contested: The 1991 Ingeborg-Bachmann-Prize Debate, "Cultural Diversity," and Emine Sevgi Ozdamar." 261.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid 261.

immigration, which are appointed to define the literature written by immigrant authors.<sup>13</sup> One of the titles used to name immigrants' literature is the literature of guest-workers written by guest-writers. Just as immigrants, mainly Turks, were welcomed and regarded as guests who were thought to turn back their home after a certain period of recruitment, spoke people of those immigrants in the literary word and world weren't taken differently by their German hosts regarding their temporary residence. Ozdamar is no exception either. This is a prejudiced approach in the sense that regardless of the artistic quality of the works invented and presented by immigrant writers who managed to get critical acclaim for the innovations in the language of their works, literary authorities tended to melt all those productive works in the same pot which in other words means the curb on creative writing of the other. The use of terms like guest-writer helped to intensify the discrimination that foreigners including Ozdamar faced.

The symbolic meaning that the ritual of those who are obsessed with the superiority of their literary heritage which has national themes and motives, and is also solidified with biased attitudes, is that like many others Ozdamar is one of the symbols. To put it simply, Ozdamar is just one of many in terms of the symbols which are the smallest meaningful parts of a ritual.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, describing Ozdamar and the like as guest-writers carries some symbolic connotations. One is that these writers are put into the same category with workers in terms of their alleged temporary residence in Germany. Once the guest workers go back, these guest-writers won't have any subject to

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<sup>13</sup> Suhr, Heidrun. "Auslandsliteratur: Minority Literature in the Federal Republic of Germany." Suhr generally treats the various definitions of literature produced by immigrants.

<sup>14</sup> Deflem, Mathieu. "Ritual, Anti-Structure, and Religion: A Discussion of Victor Turner's Processual Symbolic Analysis." 4.

treat. Therefore, it will be unavoidable for them to go back to their home country. This being the case, their presence in German literature or literature written in German could be temporary. The short-term existence within the literature concerned gives them a guest-like status. They are not evaluated as the members or representatives of German literature. On the other hand, what makes the situation complicated or controversial is that guests of the past, either workers or writers, are now part of German society. Their residence in Germany wasn't and isn't temporary. The essentialized identity<sup>15</sup> and status of Turks as temporary visitors has turned to be a myth in other words.

The things mentioned above around the concept of citizenship in the case of foreign people in Germany are not purely a literary issue. What is more, neither my task nor intention is to approach the question of Turkish immigrants in Germany from a political perspective. I treated the position of non-German citizens in order to refer to the idea of belonging around the issue of citizenship in the example of Germany where ethnic background is vital to decide who is who. Otherwise, neither my purpose nor subject of my work has anything to do with politics.

Being one of the prominent figures both in African literature and in post-colonial literature, N'gugi Wa Thiongo puts forward the idea which mainly highlights the use of terms like literature written in English language instead of the ones which directly and often mistakenly put all the literary works produced in English language into the category of English literature. Ngugi Wa Thiongo deals with the use of English through post-colonial idea and theory. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to claim that references he

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<sup>15</sup> White, Jenny B. "Turks in the New Germany." 761.

uses and ideas he proposes shouldn't be stripped off some political facts and connotations while talking about post-colonial literature. For this reason, an analogy between post-colonial literature and Turkish immigrant literature in Germany may seem to be irrelevant. It is true that Turkey never became a colony of Germany and there never emerged movements like literature of combat, which is a term borrowed from Frantz Fanon who was one of the most significant ideologues of decolonization process. On the other hand, Ozdamar's immigration is not similar to the movements of those who migrated from periphery to the center as it could be observed in the example of writers like Samuel Selvon, V S Naipaul and Salman Rushdie. To put it another way, Ozdamar's attempt should be evaluated free from all the concepts or phrases like 'the empire writes back'.

What I would like to raise is the similarity between the place that Ozdamar's works occupy in German literature and the ideas proposed by Wa Thiongo as far as the use of a foreign language by non-native people of that particular language is concerned. While doing this, we should keep in mind the fact that the drive that motivated Ozdamar to write these novels stems from her intention to keep her past alive<sup>16</sup> rather than purely mixing literature with political debates. Emine Sevgi Ozdamar's works written by a non-German are the works written in the German language. Her authentic and innovative language in her novels, which is thought to have "enriched literature in German with her

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<sup>16</sup> Jankowsky, Karen. "'German' Literature Contested: The 1991 Ingeborg-Bachmann-Prize Debate, 'Cultural Diversity,' and Emine Sevgi Ozdamar." 269.

cultural experiences from Turkey”<sup>17</sup> makes her a would-be writer and representative of German literature, however; she remains to be out of this strictly protected domain in spite of the awards she has been given so far. As Ozdamar confesses that she was accepted but only as a guest-writer.<sup>18</sup>

One point that I would like to mention here is the content of the first novel, of *Caravanserai*. There is almost nothing about Germany and international immigration in this book save the last few pages on which the unnamed heroine decides to leave for Berlin. The only thing which is German is the language of the novel. Although Ozdamar uses the German language, all the events in the novel take place in Turkey. This being the case, is it better to say that her work belongs to literature written in German or it should be considered within German literature?

I would rather say yes to the former question above since Emine Sevgi Ozdamar’s work is an autobiographical book<sup>19</sup> which treats the self-discovery of a Turkish girl within the borders of her home country. I do not think that her work should function as a guideline or guidebook for other immigrants. It is not much possible for an average Turkish immigrant to find many things in this novel similar to his/her own experiences. Ozdamar seems to be appearing self-oriented in choosing the content of the novel. Yet, it doesn’t necessarily mean that she overlooks the classical problems and issues peculiar to Turkish immigrants in Germany. What I am trying to suggest is her

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<sup>17</sup> Boesenecker, Aaron P. “Turkish Immigrant Experiences in Germany: The Cultural Divide in Literature.” 6.

<sup>18</sup> Jankowsky, Karen. ““German” Literature Contested: The 1991 Ingeborg-Bachmann-Prize Debate, “Cultural Diversity,” and Emine Sevgi Ozdamar.” 261.

<sup>19</sup>“A tale of two cities.” <http://books.guardian.co.uk/review/story/0,,2208365,00.html>

subjective approach to the question of immigration. Rather than targeting the second or third generation Turks in Germany to supply them with historical and socio-cultural information about Turkey, the novel appeals to Germans instead. Therefore, it is less possible that the novel could be a guide book for Turks. However, it doesn't necessarily mean that it could be a handbook for Germans without any doubt. This is still open to debate.

A contribution to naming the literature of Turkish migrants in Germany could be calling it as 'Turkish literature in German language.'<sup>20</sup> This title seems to be better for the novels of Emine Sevgi Ozdamar, especially the first novel of her trilogy, *Caravanserai* in which nothing except the language is German. Majority of events in the second novel, *The Golden Horn*, also take place in Turkey save a two-year experience in Germany. However, as I stated above, the concern of Ozdamar is the transformation of the major character. Reducing the field and degree of immigration into a personal level also decreases the possibility of treating Turkish migratory experience as a sociological and communal phenomenon. Although we have a physical movement such as immigration, it is restricted to the limits of the perspective and observations of an individual. This subjective point of view in the narration makes it difficult for the reader to have an idea about the Turks in Germany.

What do the novels have for German readers? The first thing to say is the language of the novels, as it was stated before. German readership will find the book similar mainly because of its language. On the other hand, German readers may find the

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<sup>20</sup> Karakus, Mahmut and Kuruyazici, Nilufer. *Gurbeti Vatan Edenler*, 51

novel interesting to see that Ozdamar's novels are no longer exactly the same with the ones which turned around the repeated and well-known issues of immigration. They are most likely to recognize another distinctive point in those books, too. This novelty is highlighted by Boesenecker as;

“the innovative use of language, which produces images and experiences which are foreign to the reader. Ozdamar in particular is known for her use of Turkish words, translated Turkish metaphors, speech patterns, and expressions that are "smuggled" into the German text.”<sup>21</sup>

If not exactly, but at least to some extent, blending a variety of Turkish idioms and phrases into the context in the form of thinking in Turkish but writing in German makes the language of novels a creole-like, or creolized<sup>22</sup> language. Ozdamar thinks in Turkish and writes in German. She prefers a word to word translation of Turkish idioms and phrases into German in the novels. Her literal translation makes her texts partly Turkish, which eliminates the complete domination of German language. The hybrid-like characteristic and partly creole structure of her language distinguish her writing from the preceding works within the same field.

Sheila Johnson, like Boesenecker, underlines the success of Ozdamar's first novel *Caravanserai* by proposing the same reason; “Ozdamar, the first “Fremde” to receive the Ingeborg Bachmann Forderpreis, initially garnered widespread praise for the “enrichment of German literature accomplished by her “exotic” vocabulary and

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<sup>21</sup> Boesenecker, Aaron P. “Turkish Immigrant Experiences in Germany: The Cultural Divide in Literature.” 4.

<sup>22</sup> Ghaussy, Soheila. “Das Vaterland verlassen: Nomadic Language and “Feminine Writing” in Emine Sevgi Ozdamar's *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei*.” 2.

“oriental” metaphors.”<sup>23</sup> Orientalist images used in the novel are suggested as another factor that might have helped German readers to see something familiar apart from the innovative and new language used.

I here would like to open a parenthesis in order to reflect the impressions of the Swiss lady on the third novel of the trilogy. I mean the lady who contributed too much to my work as I mentioned before. I vividly remember her saying that she had got astonished by the way how the major character in the novel got successfully integrated into European life style. She actually meant Ozdamar’s success in creating a successfully integrated immigrant character. Besides, the lady appreciated the vision of the author in terms of presenting such a figure who is quite liberal in mind and free in action. This example is just an individual one, but I think it may function as a sample to give an idea about the perception of Ozdamar’s works by German speaking readers.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid 38.



## PART 1

### THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL DRAMA: A Brief Introduction

A social drama, according to Victor Turner, is the successive events of life<sup>24</sup>, which mean an obvious and familiar pattern of sequentiality.<sup>25</sup> Social dramas, as ‘dramas of living’<sup>26</sup>, include a characteristic processual structure with discernible inaugural, transitional and terminal motifs.<sup>27</sup> In his analysis of Turner’s approach to the concepts like social drama and ritual, Mathieu Deflem draws attention to the point that social drama shows the fact that social life is in action.<sup>28</sup> In other words, he asserts the processual form of social life and social drama. Deflem also says that ritual is a part of an ongoing social drama. Victor Turner clarifies the connection between social drama and rituals as follows: “Ritual procedures represent germinative components of social drama, from which, I suggest, many performative and narrative modes of complex culture derive.”<sup>29</sup>

A minor issue is symbols, which are described as the smallest meaningful units of rituals.<sup>30</sup> Symbolically speaking, we have an egg whose shell is social drama, white is ritual and yolk is symbol. In addition to this symbolic definition of the relationship between social dramas, rituals and symbols, I would like to add that they may overlap

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<sup>24</sup> Turner, Victor. “Social Dramas and Stories about Them.” 156.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid 158.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid 149.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid 149.

<sup>28</sup> Deflem, Mathieu. “Ritual, Anti-Structure, and Religion: A Discussion of Victor Turner’s Processual Symbolic Analysis.” 16.

<sup>29</sup> Turner, Victor. “Social Dramas and Stories about Them.” 159.

<sup>30</sup> Deflem, Mathieu. “Ritual, Anti-Structure, and Religion: A Discussion of Victor Turner’s Processual Symbolic Analysis.” 6.

each other. This embedded relationship could be understood better in the following citation; “Ritual is part of an ongoing process of social drama [that] it is not only situated within a process of social drama, but itself processual in form.”<sup>31</sup>

One important point about rituals is that they don't have to carry religious connotations in all circumstances. Just as a ritual could be a religious practice like the unnamed heroine's night prayers in the first novel of the trilogy, a ritual could mean a habit and a repeatedly practiced action. In reference to their role in social life and social drama, Deflem, on the basis of Turner's ideas, infers three functions of rituals as controlling, balancing and uniting mechanisms.<sup>32</sup> Although it is mostly associated with religious meanings and symbols, a ritual may allude to the practices of terrestrial life, too. They could be employed mythical meanings so that they may function like something spiritual. And, what my point is to look at the possibility and even the fact that rituals embody non-religious characteristics besides their ritual tunes.

As Turner suggests, with the coming of the industrial age, subjunctive mood of rituals in social life was replaced by the indicative mood of modernity. Ritual performative genres, generative and regenerative processes of religion, were eliminated and subdued by cultural transformative methods of modern life, among which theatre appears to be one of the most influential methods of the concerned transformative leisure genres of industrial era.<sup>33</sup> Meaning and significance of theatre will be thoroughly

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid 16.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid 5.

<sup>33</sup> Turner, Victor. “Social Dramas and Stories about Them.” 166.

analyzed with reference to the transformation of the unnamed protagonist in the second part of the text.

What does transformation mean? What does it include and refer to? Turner's idea of transformation proposes an authentic reordering through 'destruction and reconstruction'.<sup>34</sup> What Turner suggests by transformation is dismemberment which could be translated and interpreted as deconstruction at the same time. Within the discussion of transformation and its relation to a sub-discussion between rituals in religious context and rituals in modern life, Victor Turner's ideas about the elimination of religious authority from modern life constitute the reference point again. Yet his ideas don't necessarily imply a total eradication of religion from social life. After putting forward the idea that "religion lives insofar as it is performed"<sup>35</sup>, Turner underscores the importance of removing the rituals of a religion beforehand in order to 'spay or geld'<sup>36</sup> it. If rituals mean nothing without functioning within a religious framework, then they are castrated alongside the castration of religion. Similar to the non-existence of religion without rituals, there are no rituals without religion in return. But, what is the alternative offered instead?

As it was mentioned above, the cultural transformative methods of modern life are thought to be the new favorites of people in social life after the emergence of all-encompassing industrial life. So, having the central position in the life of the people as controlling, uniting and balancing mechanisms similar to outdated-rituals, don't they get

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid 164.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid 167.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid 167.

the form of rituals? Cultural transformative genres like cinema, art, theatre, cinema, sports and the like start functioning like generative and regenerative modes of new modern life, don't they? In this regard, don't they become the symbolical and meaningful units of rituals at the same time in the social drama of the modern people?

I briefly want to introduce the agonistic characteristic of social drama. The relationship between social drama and ritual in the framework drawn by Turner lies in the fact that "ritual contains a distanced and generalized reduplication of the agonistic process of the social drama"<sup>37</sup> and that's why a ritual is dramatic. In order to make this relationship clear, I would like to treat the concept of agonistic process of the social drama. Victor Turner defines his basic social drama modal as "agonistic, rife with problem and conflict, and this is not merely because it assumes that socio-cultural systems are never logical systems or harmonious gestalten but are fraught with structural contradictions and norm conflicts."<sup>38</sup> Turner's social drama definition includes an agonistic structure by which he alludes to the competitive structure of a society. Turner suggests that this competitiveness may take place between individuals and may come true in broad scales or structures. If there is a competition between people, there arise problems as Turner proposes. In the case of the unnamed heroine, we have well-nigh similar situations regarding the practices of the rituals in the social drama that the unnamed heroine mirrors. The reason that makes those rituals dramatic for her within the social drama she bears witness to is actually associated with the existence of

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid 162.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid 157.

abundant structural contradictions and norm conflicts in the society where the related social drama takes place.

It is made clear in the novels that Turkish society is depicted as full of structural contradictions and norm conflicts, where rituals, in the sense of daily or social life practices, are mostly dramatic. On the other hand, this statement differs the social drama within Turkish society from the personal drama of the unnamed heroine in the novels. She mirrors the social drama taking place in her native land and what she suffers from within that sociological phenomenon is simply 'drama of living' in Turkey. She indirectly finds herself in that social drama, but the second novel of the trilogy makes it clear that reconstruction, reconfiguration and above all transformation of the protagonist occupy more place than the social drama discussed in the first novel. In this regard, this work firstly tries to examine the social drama in Turkish society, which is grounded on the structural contradictions and norm conflicts of this particular society. In the second part of this work, transformation of the protagonist in the novels will be attempted to study by highlighting how she is regenerated and transformed into a new personality by the means of liberation and freedom in Germany. Dismemberment and isolation of the protagonist from her past, traditions and home-made rituals will be analyzed as a result of her movement from a static and traditional country like Turkey to a modern country like Germany which symbolizes and also brings dynamism, change and manifold activities to her life. The last thing that I want to underline is that although I will quite often use phrases similar to 'the unnamed heroine's social drama' and 'the social drama in her life', they will both mean the personal social drama of the unnamed heroine and

the drama of Turkish society which is observed and reflected by her. This interconnection sets a pattern for the relationship between rituals and symbols offered by Turner. Similar to the symbols as the smallest meaningful units of the rituals which are also processual in nature like social dramas, the social drama of the unnamed heroine operates as one of many smallest units within a general social drama. Her transformation as a minor and personal social drama sheds light on the major and communal social drama of Turkish society.

**THEMES AND RITUALS IN THE SOCIAL DRAMA OF TURKEY:  
'DRAMA OF LIVING' - THE CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE OF THE  
UNNAMED PROTAGONIST IN EMINE SEVGI OZDAMAR'S TRILOGY**

In the light of the points I tried to discuss in the previous pages, I would like to start the discussion of the social drama of the unnamed heroine by giving priority to the concept and fact of religious rituals in her life. The first thing that I would like to point out insofar as the influence of religious rituals is concerned is that Emine Sevgi Ozdamar highlights this issue as a habitual of Turkish society. In other words, the society in question is associated with religious dogmas and rituals as if religious society was synonymous with Turkish society.

The inaugural motif in the unnamed heroine's social drama covers the years she spends in Turkey during her childhood and adolescence. Then comes the transitional and also transnational motif, which consists of her immigrations between Turkey and Germany. As for the last motif in the social drama of the unnamed heroine, her farewell to Turkey in the end of the second novel and her life entirely taking place in German society form the terminal motif.

Religion and religious rituals play an important role in the development of the unnamed heroine, especially in her childhood and adolescence. The reason behind this is the existence of seemingly religious people in her extended family, namely her grandmother and grandfather. In what follows, the role and meaning of religion and

religious rituals in the inaugural part of her life will be attempted to discuss with some of their symbolic meanings.

## **1. RELIGION**

It is both a habitual and characteristic of Ozdamar that using offending, degrading and blasphemous images and language regarding religious norms, teachings and values peculiar to Turkish society is a ritual in her novels, especially in *Caravanserai*. I am not intended to analyze all of those, but I would like to deal with some of them in order to discuss how norm-conflicts that come true as a result of the way religion is presented and lived are significant in the social drama of the unnamed heroine.

### **1.1.Night Prayers as a Socio-Cultural Tradition and Ritual:**

I want to start with ‘night prayers’ which become a daily routine and ritual of the unnamed heroine during her childhood in Turkey. Borrowing from David Horrocks, Sheila Johnson suggests that by this repeated ritual, Ozdamar emphasizes “traditional cultural values of remembrance and of reverence for death in life.”<sup>39</sup> Preserving traditional and cultural values as well as showing reverence for the dead is a way of reading and evaluating this practice. One striking issue in the former quotation is that prayers are given a socio-cultural and traditional meaning and role. Horrocks strips off

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<sup>39</sup> Johnson, Sheila. “Transnational Aesthetik des türkischen Alltags: Emine Sevgi Ozdamar’s *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei*.” 44.



the religious meaning and context from those prayers. In this case, night prayers of the unnamed heroine become a socio-cultural phenomenon in her life.

In one paragraph, I would like to refer to another interpretation of Johnson, who now doesn't quote from another person but personally thinks that "the archaic element of Turkish tradition is expressed in the protagonist's prayers for the dead, which also achieve literary significance."<sup>40</sup> What Johnson means by the literary significance of the protagonist's prayers for the dead finds its explanation in the following citation; "the prayer also function structurally in the novel, marking transitions in the protagonist's life. In them, boundaries of time, place, social class, and role disappear."<sup>41</sup> What is more related to my argument in this quotation is the influence of those prayers on the unnamed heroine's life, especially on the transitions she undergoes. Almost every night new deaths are added to the list. Since her family frequently changes their residence as a result of the father's profession, the unnamed heroine feels the necessity or responsibility of remembering the dead people of those new places in her prayers. She also registers new names after she listens to the stories of the dead in historical and national stories. Praying for all the new comers means their being respected by the unnamed heroine and this explanation seems to be proper although Sheila Johnson regards this practice as an archaic element of Turkish society.

The unnamed heroine, on the other hand, stops praying for the dead very after her immigration to Germany. Is it then possible to think that the unnamed heroine stops praying for the dead in her presence in a modern society like Germany where archaic

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid 44.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid 44.

practices are extinct? Is it possible to say that the unnamed heroine's reverence for the dead is based on external factors and forces like familial obligations or traditional requirements? Is she not sincere with her respect or homage to dead people? In what follows, I will try to treat the symbolic meanings of ending night prayers in the light of these questions.

One is about her mother's non-existence. She is away from her mother who used to tell her "if one forgets the soul of the dead, their soul would be in pain."<sup>42</sup> There is nobody to patronize the unnamed heroine in Berlin and it is a relief for the unnamed heroine to be away from the necessity of ritualizing the rituals which were imposed and forced by the people in authority in her family. The unnamed heroine says that she would start praying again when she goes back to Turkey but we can see the fact that this never happens after her return. Both in the second and third novels of the trilogy there is nothing about this childhood ritual.

The second connotation of giving an end to the ritual in question is about her work. She says that "In the first nights in Berlin I prayed for the dead, too, but I quickly grew tired, because we had to get up so early. I fell asleep before I had said all the names of my dead. So I slowly lost my dead in Berlin."<sup>43</sup> Material concerns or the anxiety of material interests overwhelm her association with her ritual beliefs as well as practices. This is a phase in her transition from living as a child under the auspices of the family to her struggle given to make her own living centered on the authority and control of herself.

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<sup>42</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. The Bridge of the Golden Horn, 11.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid 11.

As a direct result of having changed her social structure, norms, actually the requirements of the new place lead her to another direction. To get up fit in the morning, she should sacrifice her favorite ritual. According to Turner, it is rituals which include acts of sacrifice and self-sacrifice, it is not giving up a ritual which means self-sacrifice. Juxtaposition of norms and religious, or socio-cultural, practices manifests itself in the very beginning of her immigration. Remove the rituals so that you can easily castrate the religion which is supported and kept alive through those rituals. Sheila Johnson was possibly right while she was reading night prayers as a socio-cultural norm. Otherwise, it wouldn't be too easy to spay a religious ritual in a very short time. The protagonist dismembers and distances herself from her past by abandoning her most favorite ritual. An immigrant in a industrialized country like Germany easily gives up her seemingly religious practice. Societal structures of the sending and receiving societies contradict each other. Norms of these societies are in conflict with each other and we have an immigrant who is in the verge of transformation.

The change of the control mechanism from family to the unnamed heroine is an outcome of immigration. Individual philosophy occupying the centre of her life in Europe implies a deconstructionist approach regarding the abolition of the ultimate control of family. Leaving the local luggage at home and coming up with a new and empty one to fill in the place that she moved to is a ritual and habitual of the unnamed heroine contrary to the majority of immigrants who tend to become bound up with the traditions brought in their luggage.

Looking at the arguments I have tried to present so far, finishing the night prayers seems to be an outcome of the change of the country of residence. The unnamed heroine, who is free from all the burdens either of her family or of socio-cultural and traditional requirements in Turkish society, doesn't hesitate to abandon one of the most visible rituals she used to practice in her home country. She gives up praying for the dead as she is freed from the authority of family and traditions. The change comes true as a result of the socio-cultural change in her life. In addition to the novelties in her new social life with different cultural values, it is not less important for the unnamed heroine that her job, which stands for material concerns, defines that change as well.

### **1.2. Use of Religious Terms like Hell and Heaven as Control Mechanisms:**

Another example of religion's being a reason causing conflict in the life of the unnamed heroine is about the use of two terms about afterlife like hell and heaven by her mother to control and make her daughter abide by familial rules.

Before dealing with the manipulation of religion by the mother, I would like to say something about the unnamed heroine's confusion with God's being omnipresent. After the religion class in which she cannot get a satisfying answer about God's being omnipresent, the unnamed heroine starts talking with God. She challenges God in childish ways like asking Him to make her blind if He really sees her at that time. After a few days from this event, she sees a dream in which she is told by God that she cannot go to heaven. When she gets up in the morning, she tells her mother what she saw in her dream and her mother says that she knew that her daughter couldn't go to heaven as she

hadn't listened to what her mother said. What mother means here is an allusion to Prophet Muhammed's saying through which he advises sons and daughters to avoid doing anything offensive or injuring in their relationship with their mothers so that their behavior might be appreciated and awarded by God.

Mother's approach here is clearly discouraging and destructive. She frightens her daughter – more specifically she threatens the unnamed narrator. The short dialogue between mother and daughter is followed by their speech about the fire in hell. She seems not to be qualified enough to get the ticket for heaven and also frightened and discouraged by her mother. The unnamed heroine thinks that she would end in hell. What she understands from God's sayings in her dream and from her mother's accusation is hell as the final destination for her. Therefore, she approaches the stove and tests herself if she can bear the heat and fire in it. She seems to be preparing herself for afterlife, especially for hell.

“I wanted to get used to the fire in hell. When the stove was lit, I'd try to stick my hand into its flames. I touched the outside of the stove when it was bright red from the fire inside. I held my hand into the flames, but not for very long, and imagined what the hellfire I'd burn in one day would be like.”<sup>44</sup>

What we see here is a confused little girl who tries to find a way out as she is in between how she perceives religion and God, and what her family and teacher tell her about religion. It is quite ironic that she immediately responds to her mother's speech in a

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<sup>44</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. Life is a Caravanserai: Has Two Doors I came in One I Went out the Other, 165.

desperate and submissive way. A religious ritual as a control mechanism shows itself in this example.

After some pages from this situation, the unnamed heroine revolts against her mother using the terminology of the religious language that she was taught by her mother. Her mother gets angry with the unnamed heroine as she gets back home late. As an answer to her mother's question which inquires the place she is coming from, the unnamed heroine replies as "I have come from the last street in hell."<sup>45</sup> This rebellious and unconventional response is an outburst of her feelings. Socially restricted and religiously misguided and confused, the unnamed heroine cannot stand any longer and starts cursing people by using a religious language. Deciphering the meaning of her controversial response to see if it means the rejection of religious values or it is an outcry against domestic domination needs further analysis and I am not going to do it.

The misuse of religion as a means of authority to control, threaten and frighten people is proven to be both defective and destructive in the case of the unnamed heroine. Religious norms that she has internalized and conceptualized in her childhood, give rise to conflicts with family members and especially with religion itself. I think so simply because of the fact that religion doesn't take any place in the second novel, *The Golden Horn*. It gives the impression that the unnamed heroine has nothing to do with religion in Germany. The scope and time that religion covers in the second novel is quite limited. What's more, the unnamed heroine becomes a very ignorant and indifferent person when religious ideas are or religion in general is concerned. In the third novel of the trilogy

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid 225.

treatment of religion is not different from the second novel, meaning that it doesn't occupy any place in the life of the protagonist at all.

Islamic religious teachings like the ones which suggest that God is everywhere and sees everything we do and children should be careful with their treatment of their parents, especially mothers in this novel, if they want heaven, are presented by Emine Sevgi Ozdamar as the reasons behind the distortion of the unnamed heroine's psychology. Religious rituals are manipulated in order to keep the children under control and what is more, they give rise to psychological destruction of a school girl. Religion in her environment gets the role of an agent used to intensify the authority of elder people like parents at home and teachers in school. This being the case, religion takes a fundamental shape in relation to its functions in Turkish society. In such a society religion doesn't balance, but on the contrary destroys the cognitive and psychological development of a small girl.

### **1.3. Religion Symbolizing Underdevelopment, Poverty and Authority:**

One of the significant points about religion is that poverty is associated with it on the basis of the deficiencies of a district which is described as a religious place by the unnamed heroine. Although Ozdamar doesn't put forward direct ideas or present explicit events to show the interconnection between religion and poverty, she implicitly treats the quintessential relationship between religion and poverty. It won't be difficult for a conscientious reader to easily discern this covert relation. Ozdamar, through the eyes of

her meticulous observant protagonist, draws a picture of physically backward districts where religious images are visible in the territory.

“In our religious street we had the dusty earth and the sky above us. There were no planes, no cars, our dusty earth was drowning in a sky where only families of birds looking like Arabic letters flew off somewhere above our heads. Around us were the houses, with old women, men, cats sitting at the windows.”<sup>46</sup>

The idea of religion in general and Islam in particular as twin problematic norms appears here again. A cliché which suggests the idea that religion or religious authority as the reason behind underdevelopment and poverty manifests itself again in an indirect way. Hegemony of Islam through its norms is thought to be paving the way for conflicts within a society. One more thing is that those conflicts don't have to include any disagreement or row among people. As it is implied in the former description of the religious district, conflicts that are likely to arise from religious reasons might be socio-economic, too.

The figure of hodja in this religious district is symbolic within the same context discussed above. He clearly symbolizes religious authority or he is the representative of religious norms. However, his presentation is not different from the depiction of the religious district. Similar to the use of hell and heaven by the unnamed heroine's mother, the hodja is used as a means of religious control mechanism. What he signifies is threat and fright, especially for growing children. The unnamed heroine recalls the hodja as follows:

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid 52.



“I went to the mosque with Ali [her brother] and a headscarf. The walls are silent, the windows are silent, the carpets carry us as light as bird feathers right up to the hodja. He was sitting there on his knees, we went down on our knees and sat in front of him. His beard has never seen a comb, his clothes looked as though they had once been in the rain and hadn’t dried since. With his eyes almost closed he stared at a spot on the carpet as though there was an animal there flat on its back that couldn’t get away. The hodja gave off the smell of a woman, the smell of sitting under a date tree with the sun for a long time. I left myself be rocked in the arms of this smell and looked at the same spot in the carpet. The carpet is silent, the sun on the carpet is silent, the flies are silent, suddenly the hodja cries, ‘Read!’ ... The hodja beat us lightly with the long thin twig, that was part of the lesson...”<sup>47</sup>

The reader is given a society in which its religion Islam is connoted in various negative ways like from being a means of having absolute control over children to being the major reason behind misery and poverty. Defamation and degradation of Islam is repeated like a ritual in humiliating ways by Ozdamar. The tribal-like structure of Turkish society due to alleged frightening and threatening functions of religion makes it also an archaic, old-fashioned and medieval society.

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid 52.

#### **1.4. Religion as a Norm-Conflict:**

The last thing that I want to discuss how Ozdamar distorts religious images in her works, especially in *Caravanserai*, is about the dilemma of the unnamed heroine's grandfather. The following citation sheds light on his dilemma. The protagonist narrates: "Our new street was called Mausoleum Street. My mother said, "Today we are going up to see Ataturk." Grandfather went to the barber for a shave and had my brothers' hair cut... Grandfather said, "This building is a heathen idea, it's a merciless building."<sup>48</sup> What we see in this example is the clash between people like the grandfather and the person who founded the modern Turkey, Ataturk. Ozdamar implies the existence of a conflict and disagreement between the norms of the quasi-religious people like the grandfather and the norms of Ataturk's Turkey.

In addition to the treatment of the issue as a conflict; the issue which is about the socio-cultural transformation in Turkish society after the emergence of the Turkish Republic designed and reconfigured by Ataturk, the collision between those two sides implies a structural contradiction on the other hand. The grandfather cleans himself before the visit, but after the visit he farts and at the same time swears at the visit he made. If it is a ritual to visit the tomb of Ataturk to pay homage to him, this ritual is then dramatic for the grandfather since it includes the act of self-sacrifice. I want to open a parenthesis here to quote Turner's ideas about the dramatic structure of a ritual. Turner suggests that:

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid 244.

“Ritual is, in its most typical cross-cultural expressions, a synchronization of many performative genres and is often ordered by dramatic structure, a plot, frequently involving an act of sacrifice or self-sacrifice, which energizes and gives emotional coloring to the interdependent communicative codes which express in manifold ways the meanings inherent in the dramatic leitmotiv.”<sup>49</sup>

The grandfather doesn't want to visit Ataturk but it seems that there is no other choice. As a religious person as the unnamed heroine tells “five times a day we did our namaz prayers with grandfather”<sup>50</sup>, his norms, who regards visiting mausoleums as an act of infidels, are overcome and overwhelmed by the structural norms of the implied secular Turkish society. The grandfather is not happy with being obliged to visit Ataturk; “From Ataturk's mausoleum we walked down our merciless mausoleum street toward the centre of the city. Grandfather Ahmet farted a few times as he walked, said, “I fart on his grave.”<sup>51</sup> The case of the grandfather sets a good example to the dramatic structure of rituals. What's more, the conflict of norms and structural contradictions reveal themselves again in this example.

The role and importance of Ataturk are not and cannot be reduced into the scope of the previous discussion in Ozdamar's novels. What Ataturk means for Turks or how he is presented by Ozdamar is also important to understand the socio-cultural and historical contexts of Ozdamar's works. In what follows, I will try to treat the question

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<sup>49</sup> Turner, Victor. “Social Dramas and Stories about Them.” 161-62.

<sup>50</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. Life is a Caravanserai: Has Two Doors I came in One I Went out the Other, 237.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid 246.

of Ataturk in relation to the associated symbols and rituals in Caravanserai and The Golden Horn.

### **1.5. Ataturk as a Mythical and Sacred Figure in Rituals:**

“Ataturk, Ataturk, come back out of your grave.”<sup>52</sup> A young Turkish boy called Arkadas cries out the hatred he has for the ruling party of the contemporary time. He believes that the party in control is betraying and misusing the inheritance left by Ataturk. Ataturk is presented as a mythical hero in the context of another Turkish political ritual through which the sympathy for Ataturk is made clear by describing him as a national hero who can save the Turkish Republic again. What Ataturk’s visualization as a national hero suggests here is the continuation of Turkish Republic based on the principles introduced and settled by Ataturk. This being the case, Ataturk embodies the role of a symbol within the aforementioned political ritual in Turkish politics and society.

What does Emine Sevgi Ozdamar try to do by portraying Ataturk and images associated with him in an ambiguous way? Going back to the childhood of the unnamed heroine to see the meaning attributed to the word and name Ataturk provides us with a clear understanding of the issue concerned. In her childhood, people from her very environment like her family to broader social groups and communities used to glorify Ataturk as an idol. She bore witness to ambiguous approaches of people to Ataturk’s heritage and it was the same during the years she spent in Ankara that people tended to

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid 196.

complain about any inconvenience taking place in Turkey by going to the tomb of Ataturk. This ritual has been in process as much as we can see it by virtue of the unnamed heroine's observations throughout her life time.

The conclusion that we are likely to reach about the question of Ataturk is also a reflection of the processual nature of rituals as it is described by Victor Turner. People are still the same like trying to seek refuge in the heritage – more specifically in the myth of Ataturk. On the other hand, it is not easy to find an answer to the question if the unnamed heroine is really able to combine her socialist ideas in *The Golden Horn* with the ones associated with Ataturk that she has been told since her childhood.

There is another ironic issue about the use of Ataturk images in a poor town like Hakkari. In her voyage to the Eastern part of Turkey to propagandize socialist ideas and the need for socialism in the rotten and corrupt Turkish society, she encounters many Ataturk statues in all of the Eastern cities she visits. The only representative of Ataturk is the bunch of Ataturk statues in different parts of Hakkari. However, the city is quite underdeveloped, which means that Ataturk's target like raising Turkey to the level of a modern and industrialized country doesn't manifest its reflections or applications in real life. Is Ataturk only a symbolic figure then? Is Ataturk a symbol within the rituals of people, who through those rituals formulate the social drama of Turkish society? If yes, does he carry symbolic meanings which imply the contradiction and conflict between people from different segments of the same society? Is Ataturk, like religion, manipulated to keep people under control like preventing the penetration of any threatening issues like socialism and Americanization into Turkish society?

## **2. SOCIO-CULTURAL, SOCIO-POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL SUBJECTS**

### **2.1.The Alleged Dichotomy between Turks and Kurds (in betweenness and ambivalent feelings):**

The concept of social contradictions is suggested by Turner as one of the constituents of the agonistic characteristics of the social drama. When we look at the structural contradictions in the life of the unnamed heroine, we can easily discern the dichotomy between Turks and Kurds, which is first highlighted by the unnamed heroine's school teacher and then experienced by the unnamed heroine personally during her presence in the Eastern, mostly Kurdish populated provinces of Turkey.

I want to start with this particular case focusing on the dilemma she experiences in her education. Ambivalent situation that comes true as a fact as well as a result of being an immigrant is revealed here. The unnamed heroine is in Istanbul when this particular event happens since domestic immigration is a fact in her childhood. Her family lives in different cities due to the business of the father. What is striking in this particular school case in which she is degraded by her teacher due to her Kurdish origins is that a school girl finds herself in an ambivalent situation which happens as a result of a social ritual. This ritual is to categorize people according to the region or city they come from.

Similar to the feelings of a Turkish immigrant in Germany, who is likely to experience the dichotomies like "us-them" and "Turk-German" – which also implies the

configuration of an “other” – the unnamed narrator faces the same situation. Since she is from an Eastern province called Malatya, she is called according to her ethnic background. She is not a Turk, but a Kurd in the eyes of her Istanbul – people from Istanbul – classmates. On the other hand, when it comes to her experiences in Malatya or another Anatolian city, she is considered as an Istanbul and a Turk. The unnamed heroine quotes in the following citation how her teacher in Anatolia used to call her; “For him I was the clever girl from Istanbul. For my teacher in Istanbul I had been a Kurd from Anatolia with a tail growing on my ass.”<sup>53</sup> As a direct result of this dilemma, she feels ‘the enigma of arrival’, a term borrowed from Naipaul.

Emine Sevgi Ozdamar presents a picture of society in which people are classified on the basis of their ethnical identities. Bearing this in mind, Ozdamar portrays how tribal or medieval Turkish society is with reference to the classification of people according to their ethnic belongings. The taxonomic language that Ozdamar uses here implies the existence of an archaic structure in Turkish society. The social ritual or practice of labeling people according to ethnical or geographical identities bears resemblance to the characteristics of nomadic and tribal societies. What makes me think in this way stems from the fact that Ozdamar, or the unnamed heroine, speaks from the mouth of a primary school teacher. Discrimination of a little girl does not take place among her peers, but in front of an educated person, her teacher. If the unnamed heroine had been assigned a racist identity by her classmates, the situation would have been less worrying. However, teacher’s backwardness in relation to her rhetoric in front of the

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid 48.

students makes the situation more serious. When we consider the role and influence of a teacher or teachers in general on students' development, either in psychological or in intellectual sense, it could be understood better why the situation is serious in this case.

Ambivalent situation of the unnamed heroine regarding the difficulties she faces in her education has another dimension with reference to the absolute difference between her teachers' approaches towards her. Contrary to the teacher in Anatolia who regards our heroine as a modern Istanbullu, the aforementioned teacher describes her as a Kurd. Just as it is possible to say that the attitude of the first teacher may stimulate interest in city life for the girls, the second teacher's manner may drive the unnamed heroine to tend to fundamentalist approaches like tightly preserving and holding her identity founded on and intensified by ethnic values. These two totally different practices of two different teachers are of enormous importance as they play an important role in the development of the unnamed heroine. Since she is spoken to in that way by her teachers in educational institutions, it would not be an exaggeration to say that she is likely to transform from one phase to another under the influence of her teachers' approaches. My point here is about the symbolic meanings in Ozdamar's language in which segregation of students according to their origins is very obvious. This being the case, what I am trying to draw attention to is the controversial language used by Ozdamar as if categorizing people – even children within a classroom – was a social ritual of Turkish society.

The question of Kurds in Turkish socio-cultural and socio-political agenda is revealed here from its beginning. It means that a small child is introduced to the related



issue in her early life and development. Introduction of racist ideas in a state institution is another symbol on the basis of the internal dynamics of Turkish Republic. The thing that I am trying to highlight is the biased and exclusionary approach applied by the members of a state. We see a primary school teacher taking a rejectionist stance against a small kid simply because she is coming from a Kurdish background. Although these latest statements don't necessarily mean an entrenched state policy applied in educational system against Kurds, I also think that both the perception and treatment of the Kurdish people by the state cannot be stripped off completely from the behaviors of the teachers. If there is not a direct, but at least an indirect relationship between state policies and human practices regarding the Kurdish case within Turkish society.

The point in the former discussion is about the cognitive development of a child in different places and contexts. Reconfigurations and reformations in the psychology of a small girl as a result of her being in different environments during a perpetual migratory process in her life are also related to this particular discussion. On the other hand, her nomadic life takes place within the borders of Turkey in the sense that the successive immigrations in her life are internal and domestic movements.

Considering the fact that there is also an international stage of immigration in the life of the unnamed heroine, Ozdamar seems to get the protagonist ready for further dilemmas, difficulties and enigmas. Making both immigration and its shortcomings ritual for the major character in her novels, Ozdamar prepares her for the future life, which may bring more challenging problems. In this case, Ozdamar gives immigration such a form that it becomes also processual in its nature in the life of the unnamed

heroine. In other words, a repeated action like immigration becomes a ritual due to periodical movements. The idea of immigration is conceptualized in her life through those periodical and recurring movements. To put it another way, the unnamed heroine internalizes the idea and practice of immigration so that it becomes an institutionalized fact in her life. In addition to the concrete structure of immigration in her life span, its outcomes like the feeling of in-betweenness, which in previous lines was described as an ambivalent situation, are centralized by Ozdamar. A girl, who is neither Turk nor Kurd as a result of the dilemma she faces in her motherland, is now prepared for any similar dichotomous situation abroad. However, it is not observable in the second novel that the unnamed heroine faces the same problem in Germany in the form of an “us versus them” dichotomy. In Turkey, however, after her return following two years of work experience in Berlin, she understands what “other” means due to her involvement in the socialist movement. She faces many problems but never gives up. It is the same country again where she faces problems.

What do these mean? Why does discrimination for ethnical and political reasons exist in Turkey, but not in Germany? Why is it so obvious and discernible that a Turkish girl in a European country is treated without any enmity or hatred, but humiliated in her own land due to political and ethnical factors? These questions don't suggest that they have to exist in Germany, too. But, is it a characteristic not only of Turkish state, but also of its people that they tend to categorize and reject ‘others’? It seems so when we pay attention to classification of Turks, either men or women, living in the same hostel in spite of the fact that they have the same destiny that they all are immigrants and

workers in Germany? I would like to put two successive quotations in a row which shed light on the classified lives of people coming from the same origin. The first one belongs to the case of Turkish working women and the second one expresses the situation of their male compatriots.

“The next morning the women who had found their evenings and gone out of the hossel were told by the other women: ‘You are whores and go to other factory hossels, where Turkish men live, you spread the semen of these men on your bread and eat it.’ So once again the women’s hossel divided into the women who spread Turkish men’s semen on their bread and ate it, and the women who spread margarine on their bread and ate it.”<sup>54</sup>

“The men in this hostel divided into those who let their money be eaten by women and those who didn’t let their money be eaten by women”<sup>55</sup>

What is common in these two quotations is that people, either men or women, are divided into categories on the basis of traditional and ethical codes.

Another possibility around the debate of the ambivalent feelings of a school girl should be about the social drama represented by two different Turkish teachers in Turkish society and educational system. However, it doesn’t actually mean that what I am suggesting is a totalitarian regime dominating and imposing its ideology through its one of state’s apparatuses like educational system and its members. I am not in the pursuit of discovering the authority of a state’s ideology on the students.

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<sup>54</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. The Bridge of the Golden Horn, 27.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid 35.

What I mean by social drama of teachers actually refers to the breach between those educators and their students. In the classroom, the Kurdish girl is not recognized and accepted by her teacher. The lack of recognition also brings lack of love in the same situation. The crisis between a teacher and a student is a result of non-existence of love between the educator and the educated. The breach or gap is so serious that it seems to be a minute sample of a broader breach among Turks and Kurds in social life within Turkish society. Kurds and Turks don't recognize each other, so forget about love. What happens then is the separation of each side from each other, which results in tragedy, a social drama within Turkish society.

The second example of Kurdish question peculiar to Turkish society is revealed in the dialogue between the unnamed heroine and a little Kurdish girl. Actually, they cannot have a conversation because of the fact that the protagonist doesn't know Kurdish language. What is striking here is the lack of communication between the people of the same country. They don't understand each other. We also witness the dilemma of the unnamed heroine. Her dilemma is to be unable to understand a Kurdish girl although both are coming from a Kurdish background. The unnamed heroine had experienced the alienation between the members of the same country in her school. She was humiliated as she was Kurd and now she doesn't understand the language of a little Kurdish girl. However, the difference between her teacher and herself is that she prefers remaining silent. Does it mean that it is useless to talk because everything is clear? Does it mean that silence is the best explanation or alternative when there is nothing to say? Juxtaposition of little girls is symbolic and Ozdamar is as conscientious as the unnamed

heroine in terms of revealing the dilemma of Kurdish people. What is ritual here is the unchanged conditions for little girls whose dilemma is coming from their being Kurd in origin but living in Turkey as if it is a problem. The static structure of Turkey on the basis of a specific case is underlined by Ozdamar. She highlights the fact that there is no change in terms of the betterment of the question discussed. Kurds are the same, their life is the same and misery, poverty and some related problems are still current in their life.

## **2.2. Militarism Overcoming the Threat of Socialism:**

In addition to the question of Kurds, there is also the question of socialism that the Turkish Republic seems to be dealing with. What interests us is the presence of the unnamed heroine in the middle of the events in these two cases. In the first case, she is a little school girl and in the second one she is more than twenty and what's more she is educated and awakened, thanks to the socialist ideology. She is on the focus of both events and those events take place in Turkey which is the only place where she faces dilemmas which stem from structural contradictions and norm conflicts as well as they are fraught with ambivalent situations.

Except the quasi-conflict purported by Emine Sevgi Ozdamar in relation to the relations between Turks and Kurds in social life and, Kurds and the Turkish government in state issues, militarist-socialist dichotomy or the conflict between military power and socialist movement is another structural contradiction peculiar to Turkish society. It is seen in the childhood of the unnamed heroine that military coups are classic rituals of

political life in Turkey. She experiences a military intervention in her childhood for the first time. When she becomes a young woman, she witnesses the same situation with the exception that she is no more a child, but an active and a driven socialist this time. It is this distinctiveness in her development that makes the ritual of military coups in Turkish socio-political life dramatic for her in her social drama. She suffers, maybe not as much as her friends, as a result of her political and ideological believes, but whatever the situation is, she decides to leave her home country again at the end of the day.

Just as it was the unnamed heroine who personally suffered and bore witness to the dilemma and deteriorated situation of Kurdish people in Turkey, it is again the same person who has to endure state pressure directed towards socialist people like her through its military power. There is no life for a Kurd and for a socialist in Turkey; this is the most implication revealed through the subordination of both ethnic people like Kurds and politically extremists like socialists to the state hegemony within Turkish society. In other words, there is no freedom. Oppressed and frightened people always feel the haunting presence of the army. It doesn't have to be a military intervention, the hegemony and superiority of soldiers in the rotten Turkish society is always felt.

### **2.2.a. The Gap Between Folk and Army in the Social Drama of Turks:**

It is a historical fact of Turkey that the army has been of great importance in different parts of society and life. Besides the ideological and political influence of the army on Turkish society, presentation of soldiers as a threat or frightening creatures,

although they are stripped off their military costumes, means the distance between ordinary people and the army represented by the soldiers in civil life.

The sentences in the following quotation highlight the scenery depicting the relationship between folk and soldiers in daily social life the extent to which the adolescent unnamed heroine observes and perceives.

“In the evenings after the military bands had marched by, a lot of young men would suddenly appear on the main street. During the day the street carried the officers, in the evening the sidewalks carried the young men in civilian dress. It was called promenading, showing yourself at the marketplace. The young men walked arm in arm on one side of the street, while fathers, mothers, daughters, children walked on the other side. The men kept their eyes on their wives, the women kept their eyes on their daughters, the children of these women kept their eyes on their older sisters, the young men on the other sidewalk looked as though they were looking in the direction they were walking in.”<sup>56</sup>

As it is seen in this case, what is prevalent in Turkish society is the breach and gap between people and soldiers in the social drama of Turkish people in general. There is no consensus or shared territory in such a classified, grouped and distanced society. What is the solution then? Is it immigration? Since all these military symbols and figures leave a great impact on the protagonist, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the breach between Turkish army and Turkish society constitutes one of the reasons behind her final immigration in the end of the second novel. She is not allowed to make the

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<sup>56</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. Life is a Caravanserai: Has Two Doors I came in One I Went out the Other, 134.

propaganda of her socialist beliefs and what's more she suffers from the police investigation and interrogation. There is no way for political freedom in motherland. When we combine the alienation between folk and army members, the best alternative for the unnamed heroine seems to be the change of place again. And, what she does is to immigrate to Germany after a turbulent life in Turkey.

The conflict and contradiction between ordinary people and soldiers are made clear by the protagonist in the above quotation. The crisis-like relationship between the sides concerned, which is actually a disconnection rather than a relationship, manifests itself in the fear and distant attitude of everyday people. Symbolically speaking, the authority of the military sources, which is founded on the fear and isolation of ordinary people, is issued by Emine Sevgi Ozdamar as a ritual within the Turkish social drama. Quite briefly, I would like to mention the reason which makes this ritual dramatic. Moving from the fact that the socialist heroine leaves her home country for the second time as a direct result of the rising militarism in Turkey, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to read her movement as an act of sacrifice. She is quite active within the socialist movement and she tries to help the helpless Turkish peasants and villagers via socialist ideology. In such a condition, leaving the country behind along with abandoning the ideological struggle is an act of sacrifice. A ritual of Turkish society or within Turkish social drama, which refers to military coups, so rising militarism, directly influences the life of a socialist and gives the protagonist's experience in Turkey a dramatic structure. This particular ritual of Turkish social drama is dramatic for one more reason. It means



the sacrifice of the quasi-democracy which was thought to be taking place in Turkish political life before the coming of the military coup.

### **2.3. Americanisation:**

Another structural contradiction and norm conflict in the social drama of Turkish society is American domination. I found it better and proper to evaluate the influence of Americanization as a socio-cultural and socio-political phenomenon. Americanization is one of the central issues that play quite an important role from the top to the bottom in the social drama of Turkish society. It is symbolic for the unnamed heroine. Not only is it influential in the development of the unnamed heroine, but also in her active participation in the socialist movement. I would like to treat the question of Americanization under some sub-titles.

#### **2.3.a.The Impact of Americanization in Turkish Social Life:**

“My mother said, ‘They are the wives of rich men, they vote for the party that works for the Americans.’”<sup>57</sup> Ozdamar introduces the American influence on Turkish society by pointing out the life style of the wives of rich men collaborating with Democratic Party (DP), the ruling party of that time. There is a criticism of DP via its subordination to American influence, meaning that even the sympathizers of the party is thought to work for American interests in Turkish daily and social life. What is symbolic here is the covert American domination over Turkey of that contemporary time. Besides,

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid 89.

people who support the ruling party of the time concerned are categorized within a definite frame. It is their richness which differs them from the rest of the people. The interconnection between the USA, DP and its sympathizers manifests itself in the lifestyle of the wives of rich businessmen. They are rich with the help of their affiliation to the ruling party which is, metaphorically speaking, hypnotized by American hegemony. The symbolic relationship between the cooperation of Turkish government with the American authority and the life style of the wives of rich businessmen supporting DP becomes apparent in the stereotyped and repeated life styles of the same women. Not only the hegemony of American politics, but also the American way of life is visible in Turkish society. What is striking in the description of those women is again the method of categorizing Turkish people. After she listens to her mother's definition of the wives of rich men, the unnamed heroine imagines those women as aliens who "swallow pills instead of food, and that's all they need, just like Americans."<sup>58</sup> Classification of Turkish people as strangers to each other is a repeated issue around the theme of Turkish-American relations. The impression given by the mother in her description of the luxurious life of the ladies mentioned above seems to be referring to the criticism of the contemporary politics of the ruling party of that period, especially the ones about foreign affairs. The elite position of rich people as a concomitant of their pro-Americanism is presented as a symptom – more specifically as a determiner – of the breach among Turkish people.

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid 90.

When we remember the effect of the narrations and stories on the development of our unnamed heroine, it becomes obvious that both the way she is equipped with the meaning and role of the USA and the ruling party of that time and also her perception and understanding of those things would be of enormous importance regarding the transitions and transformation in her future life in which socialist ideas also drive her to take stance against American imperialism. As I will show in the following pages, as a child she is ignorant of what is going on in her society around the discussion of Americanization. On the other hand, it is not easy to deny the high possibility that although she doesn't react immediately, she internalizes all the ritualized anti-American criticism and inculcations in her childhood and adolescence. In other words, she grows up in a milieu where the gap and breach between the people of her country doesn't come from only internal collisions and structural contradictions, but also external reasons which leave a destructive influence on the structure and norms of Turkish social life.

### **2.3.b.Demonizing Americanization and its Effects in Social Life:**

One tricky issue about this topic is the clash between the traditionally described Turkish life and the productions of modern American industry which have an impact on the children of the same family. What Ozdamar is doing here is to draw the attention of the reader to the social drama taking place in a family – more specifically between a mother and her children. Ozdamar, in other words, localizes the social drama within Turkish society by reducing its limits to the borders of a family. By fusing the traditional believes of a mother who describes anything outer – particularly the US influence is

meant here – as infidel as well as destructive, with the hegemony of an outsider in terms of its influence on likings and habits of her children, Ozdamar points out the generation gap between the mother and her kids. When we look at other cases in which the domineering US hegemony over Turkish society in political, socio-cultural and economic levels is visible, it is then possible to say that there is a social drama prevalent in Turkish society which comes true especially as a result of the differences in the life styles of two different age groups. While mother is rejecting almost everything American, which also signify the things associated with ‘Others’, the unnamed narrator and her brother are content with the things that the period of time in which they live offers, which are relatively and comparatively too much or excessive for the people of milieu in which her mother grew up. With this in mind, Ozdamar in a sense portrays one family in two different pictures. One implies the traditional, restricted and out-of-date structure of mother’s life whereas the other picture refers to the challenging and revolutionary reordering of things in a modern society. The second issue concerns with the life and the environment of the unnamed heroine and her siblings as well as their peers. They are now experiencing both a transition in their inner side with respect to their openness to the offers of the modern age and also a transformation regarding the changing social order and social life under the influence of external factors, that is to say American.

### **2.3.c.Using Religion and History against Americanization:**

The use of religious rituals and historical figures to reduce and even eliminate the influence of foreign cultural values is also important within the discussion of Americanization in Turkish social drama. Images symbolizing American culture here are American comics for children. After seeing the overwhelming effect of those comics on her children, the mother of the protagonist first tries giving admonitions by dramatizing the situation;

“Ali [her brother] was sitting at home reading comic books, there were a lot of them coming out. They were American cowboy comic. Tom Mix ... Mother sometimes cried and kneeled down in front of us and said, ‘My little lambs, did I give birth to you so you’d become soldiers of Tom Sik (she said Tom Sik instead of Tom Mix), no, I didn’t give birth to you for Tom Sik. Why do you run after that heathen human-flesh-eating shadow game? Those things draw blind curtains over your eyes, stay here with me, under my wings, that’s poison,’ she said.”<sup>59</sup>

However, her admonitions don’t help the situation and the mother has recourse to a superstitious ritual decorated with a religious meaning. The protagonist explains what it is; “Grandmother and mother fetched crazy old Saniye from the soulless street we used to live on. She was supposed to do some sorcery on us. Crazy Aunt Saniye arrived bringing a very large sieve made of fine wire, a tin cup and ladle and some lead. She said, “Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.” She filled the cup with very hot water and used the

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid 143-144.

ladle to put lead into the water. The lead changed shape in the hot water, she prayed and walked around holding the lead in the sieve over our heads, then in front of our hearts, then behind our backs, then she put three drops of the lead water into Ali's mouth and three into my mouth. We drank it... Ali and I wanted to go to sleep, and we did fall asleep a little."<sup>60</sup> What is the result? The unnamed heroine gives the answer; "The next day Ali said, "Let's not take Tom Mix home anymore, tamam mi (it is ok)?" "Tamam (ok)" I said."<sup>61</sup>

The mother does one further thing by buying a historical story book in which a national hero stars the main character. "Mother bought us another comic book, a thick book, called 'The Son of the Blind Man'."<sup>62</sup> The name of the hero in it is Koroglu. The mother is competing with and challenging the 'Other', which is again an American figure, with the help of a Turkish historical hero. The story of Koroglu is rewritten in the book given to the unnamed heroine in the sense that the story is enriched with mythical figures. Koroglu's fight, in addition to his fight with the landlord in the classic Turkish version, is now also with Venetians. Koroglu in this new story is competing with the landlord who buys weapons used with powder from Venetians. What is symbolic here is the fight of a national hero against the modern inventions of that age. He has no guns working with powder and uses traditional means of warfare, but the landlord responds with more advanced guns imported from Westerners.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid 144-45.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid 145.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid 145.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Ozdamar produces a story within a story. She starts with the fight of tradition with modern if we go back to the scene in which the unnamed heroine's mother buys Koroglu in order to prevent the penetration and invasion of American culture into the life of her children. Ozdamar then goes on with portraying a Turkish hero in traditional folk tale as giving struggle not only against the landlord, but also the military inventions of that particular time. The core of the outer and inner stories in this case is that tradition is versus modernity. What happens at the end of the story of Koroglu invented by Ozdamar is that Koroglu flies to the mountains on the back of a horse and everybody visualizes him as living on the back of the same horse. The folk tale now becomes half a myth and half a story so that it appeals to the children more. The influence of the story on the unnamed heroine and her brother reveals itself in the short a question-answer dialogue between the unnamed heroine and her brother Ali. "Ali said, "The blind's man son [Koroglu] is alive, tamam mi?" "Tamam," I said. When I prayed for the dead at night, I never said the name of the blind man's son because he was alive."<sup>63</sup>

Ozdamar combines a religious ritual with a historical story which is quite rich in terms of its symbolic meanings and by doing so Ozdamar shows how influential still are both religious and social rituals in the life of children – more specifically in their transition from one phase to another. With mythical figures, Ozdamar makes the story of Koroglu more attractive and mythology, on the other hand, seems to be endowed with ritual characteristics in this particular combination of rituals and mythical elements.

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid 146.

Ozdamar's approach to the use of rituals and national heroes seems to allude to a retrospective attitude of the mother. The unnamed heroine and her brother like reading American comics, but their mother strongly opposes them to read those materials. Instead, she buys them a book of a Turkish folk tale and asks them to read it. Children, who were happy with the products of the American pop-culture or of modern life, now become satisfied with the story of their national hero. By using the national and traditional values and figures as a means in her struggle against modernity, mother manipulates the symbols and the ritual activities associated with these symbols. In this way, Ozdamar's presentation of a Turkish mother with a retrospective perspective rather than a prospective one corresponds to the attitudes of those in whose eyes traditions and rituals form the basis of underdevelopment, which also remain local entities within the borders of the society in question.

In relation to the purported ideas about mother's backwardness, I would like to stress the fact that neither preserving traditions means underdevelopment nor refusing Americanism means the rejection of modernism. The thing that I tried to point out is the mono-cultural approach of the mother. From the perspective of the mother, she seems to be right since she tries to protect her children from the quasi-destructive effects of American pop-culture. However, what she does reveals another fact that children tend to do the things they are disallowed in an overt way. In other words, restriction brings rejection of the authority insofar as the relationship between the mother and her children is concerned. In the continuation of the story, the siblings try to read the comics and act the stories in them in the basement of their apartment. What I am intended to say is the



invalid or out-dated approach of the opinionated mother. How can the mother resist the temptations of Americanism as long as its influence on her kids is observable in different parts of life? Is it the only way to disallow the kids to read American comics? Is it better to misinform the kids through reinvented folk tales and so reconstruct their historical and traditional heritage in a distorted way? What happens at the end of the day is the victory of modern or industrial leisure genres over the traditional ones. Reproductive structure of the modern age enters the life of the children by means of another American-made character called Mike Hammer. The following quotation summarizes the situation; “What my little brother didn’t manage to do for me, an American book that came into our house, did. It was a detective story, the hero’s name was Mike Hammer,...I read all the Mike Hammers and loved him very much.”<sup>64</sup>

#### **2.3.d.The Generation Gap as the Best Example to the Social Drama in Turkish Society:**

The generation gap in particular and the social drama in general that I tried to discuss in the former pages shed light on the dilemma of Turkish people since the second half of the 19th century when the Ottoman Empire tended to turn its face to the West for modernization. I don’t want to deviate from my point by discussing the modernization or westernization period in Turkish history, which has been in process for more than 150 years, however; the use of traditional and historical facts which can be explained in one word, “dilemma”, function here to decipher the ambivalence and

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid 205-6.

enigma of our unnamed heroine who is actually one of many in her society. Contrary to the mentality of the man of global era, who thinks globally but acts locally, the mother of the unnamed heroine is depicted as a person who both thinks and acts locally. She is not an open-minded enough and gives the impression that she insinuates the continuation of a closed-society and lacks setting herself as a role model in a promising open society.

Similar to the regular movements of her family from one place to another, the unnamed heroine moves from one phase to another. Just as she has to change her place of residence as her family frequently immigrates within Turkey, she also experiences a processual change in her inner world. Forming an analogy between physical movements such as domestic immigrations of her family and psychological or cognitive changes which happen as a result of the change of places, is the ability of Ozdamar to cultivate her heroine before her international immigration. Ozdamar is really talented as she forges and reforges a character that personally experiences what enigma and ambivalence mean first in her motherland. Ozdamar's heroine is equipped with the necessary precautions in terms of her mental preparation which is most likely to make things easier for her in her life in a foreign city. In other words, this preparatory stage means that the unnamed heroine will most probably adapt herself to a different life style easily.

As a girl who always questions and observes novelties she comes across, when we pay attention to her meticulous reflections in each place they move to, the unnamed heroine appears to be drawing a picture of life in her mind. She never hesitates to ask

questions about new things she encounters every day. She closely examines the places and people in all of the places she has lived. This being the case, she is an opposite figure of her mother and it seems that all those preconditions encourage and drive her to think beyond the limits. As a result, she decides to move to Germany and makes her decision without asking the ideas of her parents. After being informed about their daughter's decision, her mother attempts to convince the unnamed heroine to abandon the decision she has just taken. The following dialogue takes place between the unnamed heroine and her mother:

“I came home and said, “Mother, I am going to go to Germany to work.”

Mother said, “Spit that out quickly, don't say such big words, you can't swallow them.”

I said, “I'm going to go to Germany.”

Mother said, “If you go, you don't even have enough brains to spread over a prick.”

“I'm going.”

Mother said, “Shush, shush, quiet! I swear I'm going to raise one hell of a noise now.” (Vallahi billahi kiyametleri koparirim). She said it four more times. But she didn't make one hell of a noise, the lodos wind made the sea throw itself at the window, pull back again, catch its breath, come, knock its head into the window again. I sat at this window and said, “I will go.”<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid 287.

Her mother's attempts bring no result. This novelty, the attempt to reach freedom, is symbolic for two reasons. One is that the mother cannot keep her daughter under her control anymore. Her authority is invalid. Secondly, the unnamed heroine appears to be a capable person who seems to be able to stand on her own feet. And, this decision is the climax in the social drama of the unnamed heroine. Her decision marks the beginning of a new life for the protagonist. The resolute parents, especially her mother, strive too much to stop their daughter but what happens at the end of the day, as it is revealed in the last sentence of the above quotation, is the victory of the unnamed heroine. After some days of the announcement of her immigration plans, the unnamed heroine's father says; "I believe in my daughter, she is my lion daughter", and mother agrees with her husband; "I can leave her all by herself, the only girl in the middle of a horde of soldiers, I'll find her where I left her. "66

#### **2.3.d.The Impact of Americanization in Turkish Political Life:**

The first thing that I would like to mention about the discussion under this subtitle is that the main focus of debate is the ruling party in the childhood of the unnamed heroine. I mean Democratic Party (DP) which is accused of being an obedient and subordinate ally of the USA. At first sight, the relationship between the USA foreign policies and DP's place in it doesn't interest the unnamed protagonist. What is important about the aforementioned relationship between Turkey and the USA foreign politics is mainly related to harsh criticism of DP by the main opposition party, Republican

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid 288.

People's Party (RPP). It means that in *Caravanserai*, the impact of Americanization in Turkish politics shows itself via internal dynamics of Turkish political life. We see the American influence in Turkish politics the extent to which DP is attacked on by RPP due to DP's submission to American interests and politics. This is unfortunately still a ritual in Turkish politics in 2008.

The second novel of trilogy, *The Golden Horn*, also treats the same issue, but this time from the perspective of a conscious and resolute socialist. The silent girl in the first novel, who functions as an observer and a reporter of Turkish-American interests, turns to be a determined and active socialist. This time, the reader sees the events from the perspective of a socialist person. In parallel with the expectations and teachings of the ideology she follows, the unnamed heroine formulates the criticism of the United States as a ritual in her life. In the second part of this work, I will deal with the criticism of the USA from the perspective of a socialist girl in a detailed way.

In *Caravanserai*, there comes a man called Arkadas to the district where the unnamed heroine lives. The unnamed heroine introduces him to the reader as follows;

“When some of the papers were no longer allowed to speak [the unnamed heroine attributes a totalitarian character to DP], a paper-on-legs arrived on our steep street. People said it was a student and they called him Arkadas (friend), because he always said “arkadas” when he spoke. He knocked on Republican doors and sold little cotton handkerchiefs embroidered with the insignia of the Republican People's Party.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid 195.

The character called 'Arkadas' is symbolic for some reasons. He seems to be in the pursuit of convincing people to say yes to the abolition of the ruling party in a revolutionary way. Arkadas visits people door by door in order to awaken them to the American mandate and contemporary Turkish government's a client-regime-like position. Another symbolic meaning that we can deduce from the issues related could be the master-slave relationship between American and Turkish governments.

On the other hand, it is possible to translate her name into English as 'comrade' due to his enthusiasm and dynamism in his actions, which remind us of the active participation and struggle of a comrade for his ideology. The unnamed heroine confesses the fact that she is astonished by his manners; "I was amazed at how many words Arkadas could say one after the other. He could just as well have been speaking English, only his continuous swaying reminded me of my Koran-lesson hodja in the mosque."<sup>68</sup>

It is interesting to see that the unnamed heroine sees or recalls the image of a religious person in Arkadas. I want to treat point out the use of images that makes Arkadas a religious-like figure. The use of blood in the following citation is symbolic also; "People said Arkadas embroidered handkerchiefs in class at the university. But because he had to listen to the professor at the same time, he'd prick his fingers and the handkerchiefs were flecked with blood."<sup>69</sup> Arkadas waves things to sell and use the money for his struggle. While waving, Arkadas gets his finger bled. Why I regard blood symbolic here is that it makes his struggle and efforts sacred and religious in the sense that he seems to be doing an act of self-sacrifice for the sake of the political stance he

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid 198.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid 196.

believes in. This feature makes his ritual of waving handkerchiefs dramatic and his social drama agonistic as his struggle that she gives for RPP, which is also in competition with DP, reveals the competitive mood in his drama of living, as Turner suggests.

In addition to the presentation of Arkadas as a religious figure through his bloody struggle which includes acts of self-sacrifice and bears a resemblance to the hodja in the mosque, the connection between the past and the present is symbolic here as it sheds light on the transition of the unnamed heroine in the processual nature of rituals in her life. Similar to the rituals in process, she is experiencing a continuation in herself. She combines the past with the present through space-occupying and meaning-carrying people in her social drama. It is possible to say that the unnamed heroine, symbolically speaking, makes a comparative study of the hodja and the controversial-leftist RPP sympathizer. She is influenced, moreover amazed by the manners and stance of Arkadas in a way that his success in representing himself and the ideology he supports gets the protagonist astonished. As a result, she starts showing sympathy to him and especially the way he acts. The symbolic meaning that the appearance of Arkadas carries in relation to the development of the unnamed heroine is that she sees a person making the propaganda of his own political belief. She bears witness to the sincerity and determination of a 'comrade'. In other words, Emine Sevgi Ozdamar introduces the unnamed heroin with revolutionary-minded people whose enthusiasm and ambition make a profound impact on her.

The struggle of Arkadas is not limited to his fight against the ruling party. It means that he not only strives for the elimination of the ruling party from throne, but also for the eradication of the USA hegemony from Turkish socio-cultural life. Allusion to American history in the next quotation also carries a symbolic meaning. “From his pocket Arkadas took a piece of the frozen meat the Americans had sent as aid, threw it down into our steep street a few times and said, “Look, this is what the Democrat beggars have got for us from America, maybe it’s Indian meat. They didn’t bury all the Indians they killed.” Then Arkadas would pick the meat up again, take his coin with the hole in it, and go.”<sup>70</sup> There is a mixture of the histories of two different countries, Turkey and the USA. Mixing Turkish politics of that contemporary time with some key points in American history is an intertextual interpretation.

In her intertextual interpretation, Ozdamar refers to the ‘frontier mentality’ in the US history by showing the extent to which the practices of this mentality have exceeded beyond the Atlantic. It is no more North America where the invasion is expanding its scope towards unknown places. In other words, American expansion has taken the form of imperial politics. The empire of that period is the USA and as a Turkish leftist Arkadas is strongly against this domineering power over his home country. He is an anti-imperialist socialist who denounces the horizontal influence of the States’ domination across the globe.

Looking at the symbols listed within the debate of the US hegemony, it is possible to claim that Ozdamar shows her ability to use symbols as the smallest units of

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid 197.



rituals (activities). They are all associated with the domination of the USA and one more thing what these symbols have in common is that we have a hero named Arkadas who appears on stage as the spoke-person of anti-American voices.

It is also possible to approach the oft-treated American issue from another perspective in which the USA becomes a symbolic figure except its dominating influence in the previous paragraphs. Just as it is possible to say that Ozdamar tries to point out the socio-cultural imperialism of the USA, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that DP is severely criticized by Ozdamar as it is revealed in the following quotation. Here we see a policeman criticizing DP in front of the unnamed heroine's mother; "The policeman next door came over and said, "Fatma Hanim, don't be sad, it doesn't matter. They [DP members] think they own the place. They may be riding their horses now, but the nights are pregnant with something else."<sup>71</sup>

What is clear in this quotation is the covert authority of a power as it is suggested by the officer. It is a police officer who accuses of the ruling people as they have misused their right to rule. Although he works as an officer under the rule of the government he renounces, he implies a change which is going to happen since there is something wrong with the party in authority.

I want to open a parenthesis here to draw attention to one point which is similar to the context and aura of the aforementioned events happened in the late 1950s. We are in 2008 and Turkish politics for the last two years have been turning around the same topic of the period mentioned above. There is no Democrat Party, but there is Justice and

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid 195.

Development Party (AKP) as the current rival of RPP which is still taking place on the stage. And, instead of the USA, the European Union (the EU) occupies most of the place regarding the debates in Turkish domestic political affairs. The legitimacy of AKP is in question and they are suggested by RPP to be working for the interests and concerns of mainly the EU and partly of the USA, which is actually regarded a really banal and old-fashioned argument.

It is the ritual of Turkish politics that strong and fierce oppositions have been applied by RPP since there appeared parties taking over the influence of the party concerned. In this context, excuses like the EU and the USA are just symbols used – more specifically manipulated to maintain and perpetuate, and justify and validate the inner conflicts within Turkish domestic political life for the last 50 years.

Emine Sevgi Ozdamar deals with the political rituals in Turkish political history as flexible issues which could be treated from different perspectives. It is not only the criticism of the USA hegemony aimed at by referring to DP's surrender to American politics, entrenched structure of RPP's influence in Turkish society is also implied around the discussion of this particular Turkish political and social ritual. One important thing about the processual nature of the political clash between DP and RPP is that the clash becomes a ritual in the course of time and the competition between these rival parties ends in 1960 with the military intervention, which has been another ritual in Turkish political life since the first coup in 1960.

Ozdamar's evaluation of Arkadas' enthusiastic situation is ironic on the other hand. What I am trying to suggest is that it is possible to think in the way that Ozdamar

pokes fun of both Arkadas, who stands for a propagandist of CHP, and the mother, who represents the public. He seems to be reciting sentences as a parrot. Repetition of the same sentences which turn around the criticism of the USA becomes a habitual and so a ritual of Arkadas, who seems to be instrumentalized like a recorder to recite the same things again and again. The idealist leftist who astonished the unnamed heroine in the previous pages is presented as a confused person who looks like unconscious of what he is talking about:

“While we [he means the people in Turkish Republic during DP rule] were asleep, arkadas, who opened the door to our land? The wolf of the Democrats, with the long fingers. We had no dogs, arkadas, that could scare the wolf’s eye. Just think, arkadas, who was there? Nato, kiss me baby. With green socks, short nights. A wind, arkadas, a blue bird saw and fell down, fear in its heart. Nato, arkadas, Truman, his weapons, books, American military boots, military socks green socks came in through the door with the wind. The builder of the door was dead – oh, my Ataturk, dying stars, my heart bird, yellow nightingale. The Democrats, arkadas, are beggars, they accept a sock and give a Turkish soldier in return. Silver children for green socks, arkadas, they left with the foreign wind, backwards, out through the door of our land.

“Where are you going, my silver bird?”

“To Korea, brother, say hello to my mother, tell her not to cry.”

Nato said, “Unhappy boy. I need you. I want you.”<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid 196-7.

Arkadas is confused. Arkadas is angry. Arkadas is nervous. He clearly criticizes Turkish foreign politics of that contemporary era through the language of the opposition party he supports. However, what he says is no more than the repetition of clichés. While drawing attention to the dramatic farewell of the sacrificed Turkish soldiers in Korea; while waving his hand behind the lost Republic founded by Ataturk and while remembering Ataturk with great reverence, he reveals his own drama or tragedy. The ritual he repeats, which means the propaganda of RPP, is a part of the social drama of Turkish society in the political level. In his struggle with DP, he aims at raising the number of conscious people, but is he able to express himself and the message of RPP clearly? When the grandmother asks the mother what she understood from the provoking speech of Arkadas, she answers in the following way; “What do I know. If I could understand what he says, I wouldn’t be here, I’d be a great stargazer.”<sup>73</sup> Mother’s respond here could be defined as ignorance or an indifferent attitude as far as the politics is concerned. An inference that could be drawn from mother’s attitude is the passive and static situation of Turkish voters. They seem to be inactive in the sense that while parties are competing with each other, sympathizers of any side cannot do anything in order to have, if not absolute, but some influence on the politics of the sides they support. This passive situation also refers to non-existence of democracy in Turkey. To put it in a more proper way, non-existence of democracy in Turkey could be replaced by the rotten structure of democracy in Turkey; democracy which exists only on theory but not in practice insofar as Turkey is concerned.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid 198.

With one more example, I want to point out the treatment of voters. The following quotation belongs to a high-rank army member who is talking about his public very after the military coup in 1960. He says that; “My people is illiterate. The politicians can betray it.” Then he said, “Ataturk ideas.”<sup>74</sup> Similar to RPP’s arguments before the elections in 2007 in Turkey, the young army member repeats the same ideas about the alleged ignorance of the public who can be easily deceived by the politicians. So, if the army realizes such a situation, it is its right to interfere with the situation. On the other hand, this right is not given, but inherited like the authority left to succeeding generations in a dynasty. The country in question is a republic and democracy is thought to be prevalent in the political life of the country concerned. Does it really exist? Is there a pseudo-democracy in a purportedly republican regime?

Since 1950 when DP came into power, which symbolized the elimination of the overt hegemony of RPP which had been on throne since the foundation of Turkish Republic in 1923, this ritual has been in process. Figures and symbols change, but the logic of that political ritual which is peculiar to Turkey remains the same; democracy is not attainable, applicable and practicable in Turkey. And, if there is no democracy, there is no seat in European Union as a result. Isn’t this excuse or the purported deficiency of Turkish politics repeated again and again?

## **PART 2**

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid 216.

## **CHANGES, NOVELTIES AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE UNNAMED PROTAGONIST’S LIFE IN GERMAN SOCIETY**

### **1.THEATRE: A CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIVE METHOD OF MODERN LIFE**

#### **1. 1.Theatre Challenging the Norms and Structures:**

The meaning of theatre in the industrial age is underscored by Turner as one of the transformative as well as regenerative methods of modern life. Being one of the genres of industrial leisure<sup>75</sup>, theatre makes a great impact on the life of the unnamed heroine, too. Although she leaves her mother country for Germany for the sake of theater; “I thought, I will go to Germany, work for a year, then I’ll go to theatre school”<sup>76</sup>, she makes her debut in high-school years in Turkey.

“A small fat man came to the school, an actor. The school had a stage, he said, “Ataturk and his minister of culture, Hasan Ali Yucel, had all the classics of the world translated into Turkish for you.” We heard that he would be putting on a play by a dead playwright, Moliere, with students from our school: The Imaginary Invalid. He chose a girl who lives in the orphanage to play the servant girl. She was twelve years old and so was I. I loved this girl, so went to the audition and was given the role of the imaginary invalid’s wife.”<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Turner, Victor. “Social Dramas and Stories about Them.” 166.

<sup>76</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. The Bridge of the Golden Horn 5.

<sup>77</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. Life is a Caravanserai: Has Two Doors I came in One I Went out the Other 208.

Changes in her life emerge with the coming of theatre. After her first appearance, she starts ritualizing theatre in her life, in an amateur way though. In the following citation, the unnamed heroine implies how theatre functions as a transformative method which changes and challenges the entrenched patriarchal authority in her family:

“One day a very fat man came to the school. The literature teacher told me to go and read him a poem...He was directing and playing the lead role in Moliere’s The Self-Made Gentleman. He took me out of the school to the state theatre. After school I went to the rehearsals, was allowed to work at the theatre and earned 350 lira. ...When I finished working in the theatre, my father took the money I’d got from Moliere and went to find work in Ankara.”<sup>78</sup>

Juxtaposition of roles is influential both in the life of the family members and in the developmental process in protagonist’s life. As for the former situation, the father can go to Ankara with the help of the money that the unnamed heroine made in theatre. This means the reconstruction and also deconstruction of traditional values in her family. I am not questioning the contribution of a daughter to her family in the financial sense, I avoid any misunderstanding. However, in a traditional and patriarchal family like she has, what the unnamed heroines starts performing is earth-shattering. The situation is dramatic for the helpless and unemployed father. In this regard, the unnamed heroine mirrors the tragedy and drama of her helpless father. As for the influence that this novelty leaves on the protagonist, she becomes an important figure in the family and her increasing popularity via her performance in theatre gives her a status in her social life.

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid 211-12.

She gains self-confidence and this confidence paves the way for her future plans and goals in Germany. In a sense, her self-driven behavior and helpful attempt operate as a catalyst for change in her life.

Mathieu Deflem asserts that in modern life, religion is regarded as something apart from our economic, political, domestic and recreational life that it doesn't take place in the domain of social life as it used to happen in medieval societies.<sup>79</sup> In theatre where the unnamed heroine gets her first break, an actor breaks his fast before the scheduled time because it was a necessity in the play. He sins as a requirement of the play he was acting in. The symbolic meaning of this scene is that modern overwhelms the traditional – religion. The rituals or practices of theatre overcome the teachings and practices of the religious past. Is it possible to evaluate this act as an encouragement of the indicative mood of the modern era? Would it be practicable and attainable to interpret this behavior as the rejection of the subjunctive mood of the past traditions? Simply, is it possible to come to a conclusion here relying on the arguments suggested by Victor Turner, who praises the indicative mood of the present over the subjunctive mood of the past?

### **1. 2.Theatre as a Symbol by Virtue of Famous Dramatists' Careers:**

In former stages, it was mentioned that symbols are the smallest meaningful units of a ritual. Since theatre is the major, or the first and the foremost ritual in the life of the unnamed heroine, especially after her arrival in Berlin, I would like to point out two

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<sup>79</sup> Deflem, Mathieu. "Ritual, Anti-Structure, and Religion: A Discussion of Victor Turner's Processual Symbolic Analysis." 12.



symbolic constituents of this ritual. One is about emulation of famous dramatists' life. Here is a short conversation between the unnamed heroine and her roommate Rezzan, who "like me[the unnamed heroine is speaking], wanted to become an actress"<sup>80</sup>:

“- I don't know Tennessee.

- He was homosexual and left school for the theatre, like us.

- Did you know that Harold Pinter left school, too?"<sup>81</sup>

The multifunctional structure of theatre is revealed in this dialogue. In addition to its being a ritual in her life, theatre carries a minor symbolic meaning here. The unnamed heroine uses theatre as a justification for her move to Germany. She seeks relief in the stories of dramatists like Harold Pinter and Tennessee Williams, who left school for the sake of theatre. By following dramatists like Harold Pinter and devoting her life to theatre, the unnamed heroine actually repeats a cliché. The cliché she repeats is the ritual which at the end of the day may well bring a successful career to the one who persistently insists on it. The example of Harold Pinter and Tennessee Williams has no other connotation in this particular issue. The role-models in front of her motivate and encourage the unnamed heroine to an important extent, which means that it is through theatre that she holds on tight to life.

One striking point in relation to her closeness to theatre lies in the fact that she lives in a hostel next to theatre called the Hebbel Theatre. "Opposite the women's honsel was the Hebbel Theatre."<sup>82</sup> Besides her mental affiliation to theatre, the protagonist

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<sup>80</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. The Bridge of the Golden Horn 13.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid 13.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid 12.

consolidates her relationship with it by staying in a place which is very close to the building. Her physical proximity to the theater synchronizes with her enthusiasm and ambition. The harmony that she manages to produce bears evidence to her resoluteness with respect to her desire to achieve a successful career in theatre.

### **1. 3.Theatre is More Precious than Diamond:**

Diamond is metonymy for the maidenhead, which carries also symbolic meanings for women like Turkish immigrant women who are away from their husbands in a foreign land. They are not away from only their husbands, but fathers, brothers, brother-in-laws and the like. They are shortly freed from the notorious patriarchy dominant in the society they are coming from. They are thought to be responsible for preserving and protecting their maidenhead, which symbolizes the honor, dignity and prestige not only of their identities, but also of their families. However, they seem to be quite relaxed and feeling free. “She [a Turkish working woman] said to herself: ‘It is a good thing that no man is waiting for me at home’.”<sup>83</sup> What is relieving is the idea that there is no husband or any male waiting at home. This is symbolic when it comes to the authority of male domination in Turkish society. It is a great relief for working women not to have a husband waiting for them to come back from work. There is a great relief in having a life which is free from patriarchy at home. Looking at the latest statements it could be said that Germany takes the role of a freedom-provider for Turkish women who

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid 46.

used to be oppressed and suppressed by the authority of male existence in their families. Germany gives freedom that Turkey failed to do.

The analogy formed between diamond and virginity by Ozdamar is symbolic here. Just as diamond is the most valuable thing in the material sense, honor kept by preserving maidenhead is the most valuable possession for a woman coming from a traditionally and religiously depicted society like Turkey. Similar to the material value of diamond, maidenhead carries the same meaning for a woman in the spiritual sense as far as that traditional Muslim society is concerned. It is the ritual of the society concerned.

The focus of this sub-title is the concept of maidenhead and I will go on with it in the following paragraphs. However, I briefly want to say something about the mood and working conditions of Turkish working women in Germany. The first thing that I would like to raise is the mechanized and instrumentalized life of those people, which is oriented within the borders of the space consisting of living and working places, which are respectively hostel and factory.<sup>84</sup>

Looking at the symbolic meaning attributed to the left eye of almost all working women in the following quote, it could be inferred that similar to their lives their bodies are also mechanized and instrumentalized. The protagonist summarizes the situation;

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<sup>84</sup>Ibid 7 - Ozdamar, from the eyes of the observer protagonist, explains the living and working conditions of Turkish immigrant women working and living in the same places with the unnamed heroine. In various detailed descriptions Ozdamar portrays the ritualized and routine lives of those people. Quotations are long indeed, and I would like to add this short footnote instead of quoting passages from The Golden Horn.

“Each of us had to have a magnifying glass in our right eye while we were working. The left eye always narrowed and remained half shut. I saw that, like me, the other women were looking only with their right eye. Since starting work in the radio valve factory we believed our right eye more than our left eye. With the right eye behind the magnifying glass one could bend the thin wires of the little radio valves with tweezers.”<sup>85</sup>

Left eyes of working women stand different from other parts of their bodies, especially from their right eyes. It is because of the fact that they use their left eyes to do their job, but after a while the eye starts showing disorders and works worse than before. On the other hand, an eye is not a part of a machine and it can't be fixed and replaced by another one, especially in the case of the working women whose main concern is to save money abroad, not to spend money on their physical betterment. What I understand from this situation is their exploitation. When a working woman stops working properly due to health problems, then she is of no use any more for the company she works for. The only way to protect the system regarding the functionality of the factory or the company is to employ new machines and it recurs again and again as a ritual of the working conditions brought by the capitalist system. As a socialist in the continuation of the novel, the unnamed heroine observes this beforehand. I regard this as the criticism of capitalism and Ozdamar's habitual method shows itself here that she prepares the unnamed heroine for further stages in her life. Similar to the function of domestic

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid 7.

immigrations in Turkey, the unnamed heroine is set ready for the forthcoming events in her life by the writer.

The unnamed heroine is in Germany for theatre as she personally utters and she lives in a hostel with other Turkish immigrant women. The environment she found herself in is classically Turkish, meaning that it is not different from the society left. Traditional and socio-cultural practices are accompanied by religious dogmas. One of the principles in this place is to behave according to the norms and moral codes of the former society. In particular, preserving maidenhead for a girl is precisely important. When the unnamed heroine tells the women in the hostel the conversation she and Rezzan had with a communist in the Workers' Association, the women respond as; "‘You’ll end up communists.’ They said to us. ‘You’ll end up losing your maidenhead, that is your diamond, you will lose your diamonds.’"<sup>86</sup> Very after this warning, actually at night after this dialogue, the unnamed heroine and Rezzan see their mothers dead in heaven in their dreams and they swear not to go to that place again. The unnamed heroine and Rezzan are subconsciously under the influence of the values and beliefs of the society they are coming from. On the other hand, what is likely to happen in the life of a girl who has lost her diamond is expressed in the following quote. The protagonist is talking about her friend called Angel from the hostel. "After Angel lost her diamond, the Dove, the wife of our communist hostel warden, helped her find a flat for ninety marks in Kreuzberg."<sup>87</sup> Inner dynamics of the hostel which are based on the traditional and socio-cultural values imported from motherland play an important role in the banishment

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid 37.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid 43.

of Angel. What is striking is that her deportation from the hostel comes true immediately after the ultimatum-like speech of the women in the hostel. What women said in theory is put into practice in the case of Angel. But, what is the remedy for the protagonist? She is suggested by the communist warden, who leaves a great impact on the protagonist and I'll deal with this point in further pages, to leave her diamond. While leaving Germany to be the director of a theater in Turkey, the communist warden advises her that; "Let me tell you something, Titania: if you want to be a good actress, sleep with men, it doesn't matter with whom, sleeping is important. It's good for art."<sup>88</sup> Then comes the preparatory stage in her life, which refers to her attempts to look for sample cases that may validate the act of leaving diamond.

The use of people and figures associated with theatre manifests itself in a different example. This case also carries a symbolic meaning in the sense that just as the protagonist refers to the lives of well-known dramatists like Williams and Pinter, she again uses another figure related with drama in order to justify her intentions and forthcoming actions based on those intentions. What I mean is a story of Anton Chekhov. The plot of the story is so simple that a married man betrays his wife. The unnamed heroine, on the other hand, is confused due to reasons still haunting her in Germany. She is confused with keeping her maidenhead abroad and the story she listens to soothes her anxiety. It is the relief brought by this story that helps the unnamed heroine to feel comfortable. What is symbolic here is the freedom of life in the sense that even a married woman feels free to have relationship with a man. As a person who is

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid 74.

stuck between modern life and the haunting and stalking ghosts of traditions, she is encouraged by this story regarding her attempts to leave her diamond. What's more, it is a story by Chekhov, from a dramatist that without hesitation she can give heed to what he narrates.

One further example in the same context is the lives of the women who feel quite easy and live free despite the fact that they have already left their diamonds. Losing diamond has no significance in terms of the continuation of life. By looking at the routine life of the women who have already left their diamond, the unnamed heroine tends to validate what she wants. She tries to justify her need looking at the examples in her life. She thinks that;

“I wanted to give up my diamond at last. I thought, before I return to Istanbul I must save myself from this diamond in Berlin. Angel had given up her diamond, Gutsio [a relatively old Greek woman] didn't have a diamond any more, up on the sixth floor the girl with the dead embryo didn't have a diamond either. And all of them put on and took off their coats just as I did and could open the doors. Open letters. Smoke a cigarette. Switch off a light. They still liked the taste of macaroni. They could also look at a film at the cinema without a diamond. I lay in bed and swore by the headlights of the passing cars on the wall that I would save myself from my diamond.”<sup>89</sup>

As a characteristic of her personality, the unnamed heroine meticulously observes the life in general and events in particular. She does the same thing in the previous lines.

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid 90.

She carefully examines the life of those for whom there is no change or unusual situation in life although they are leading their lives without diamond. It is quite normal for them to live a diamond-free life, which means the abolition of patriarchal and religious control as a result of the emergence of freedom as the supreme power and highest authority. However, will it possible for a girl like the protagonist to neglect and invalidate the socio-cultural and religious inheritance in her tradition?

I want to quote a passage from Gai Eaton, whose ideas on the concept of normality, I believe, may shed light on the tendency of the protagonist towards imitating others whose behavior she regards as normal to pave the way for her own free actions.

“One particularly interesting example of the word “normal”, a very significant word since everyone wants to be thought normal. In earlier times there was an aspiration toward a Norm, a perfection towards which we might strive but which we could scarcely hope to reach. The Christian ideal was summed up in the imitation of Christ, who represented the human Norm, as does Muhammed [S.A.V.] for the Muslim. Today normality means to be as like other people as possible (emphasis added). If the majority are in error, then to be in error is normal; if they are corrupt, normality takes the shape of corruption. The majority must be right (emphasis added). The trouble is that the majority changes its mind from one decade to the next.”<sup>90</sup>

The majority must be right, so must the protagonist! Because today normality means to be as like other people as possible. Is this different from the protagonist’s situation,

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<sup>90</sup>Eaton, Gai. Remembering God: Reflections on Islam, 23.



feelings and practices? Similar to the transformation that the concept of normality has undergone throughout the history, doesn't her situation, actually development and transitions in her life, remind us of the transformation just mentioned?

To combine the things mentioned above and the ones follow below, I would like to explain the situation of the unnamed heroine with the help of the concept 'life-crisis rituals'. Mathieu Deflem gives a brief definition of this concept as follows; "Life-crisis rituals refer to that class of rituals which mark the transition of one phase in the development of a person to another phase. Such phases are important points in the physical or social development of the ritual subject."<sup>91</sup> It is clear that there is a crisis in her life stemming from the haunting and all-encompassing influence of the ritual of preserving the maidenhood as a moral, traditional and religious norm of the society she was born in. However, is it enough to say that phases mentioned in the quotation are restricted to the rituals concerned? Don't they have any influence in the development and transformation of the person who is subjected to the norms raised out of the related ritual? Is it the crisis of the ritual only or also of the person who suffers from it?

After her immigration, the protagonist returns to Istanbul for a short period of time and she is still confused with the issue in question. "I wanted to learn German and then rid myself of my diamond in order to become a good actress. Here I would have to come every evening and look in my parents' eyes. Not in Germany."<sup>92</sup> Although she is convinced that it is a requirement and a necessity that she should forget about her

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<sup>91</sup> Deflem, Mathieu. "Ritual, Anti-Structure, and Religion: A Discussion of Victor Turner's Processual Symbolic Analysis."15.

<sup>92</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. The Bridge of the Golden Horn 79.

diamond and its symbolic connotations like honor, dignity, belief and the like, she is still in dilemma. If she ignores what she was taught or imposed, and soothes her anxieties, she may do an authentic start. To put it simply, if she shows enough courage to sleep with a man, it would be a milestone in her transformation. And she does it. She sleeps with a Spanish boy in Paris. A Turkish girl sleeps with a Spanish boy in France. It is a real global, multicultural and transnational phenomenon. “I understood that I had already left my diamond with Jordi in Paris.”<sup>93</sup>

She has intercourse with the Spanish boy called Jordi for the sake of theatre. A cultural performative method of the modern life marks the climax in the transformation of a Turkish-Muslim girl in Germany. This means both reconstruction and reconfiguration of the self from the very beginning. If the centre of her life is theatre and whatever she commits, she does in order to be an actress, she then invalidates the former life. She destroys it and reconstructs a new one on the basis of her authentic and transformed identity. She is no more the same girl. She is no more the daughter of her mother. She is in bed with the boy and she reflects on the hallucinations that she sees at that time;

“Suddenly I saw two women standing next to one another in the air. One was my mother, the other the boy’s mother. I thought, good, you gave birth to us and clapped my hands. The boy’s mother blew me a kiss in mid-air, and my mother looked at the boy as if she, too, loved him very much. I floated towards my

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid 124.

mother, but the boy held me tight, ran his hands through my hair and divided it in the air, to the right, to the left.”<sup>94</sup>

She doesn't belong to her mom any more. This is the first meaning that could be deduced from her being disallowed to move towards her mother. The second interference is that the unnamed heroine repeats one of her ritual in this case again. Just as she tried to justify her intentions and ideas by referring to examples about people from all walks of life such as Chekhov, Pinter and women in the hostel, she now tries to legitimize not her plan, but her action relying on her mother's imagined approval for her relationship with Jordi. She visualizes her mother not strongly standing against her behavior contrary to her doubts and fears. She tries to find consolation in an imaginary land, world or place where she deconstructs and reconfigures the approach of her mother. She gets her mother transformed into a tolerant and open-minded person.

In the continuation of the second novel, sleeping with man becomes a ritual in her life. There are several arguments that she puts forward for this ritual, but I want to refer to one which is directly associated with theatre. She is in Istanbul now and an actress in a theatre. For her role, she needs to practice shouting and the way to do it she thinks is to sleep with men. “I slept with a couple of boys from the drama school. I practiced the best way for me to shout, so that it didn't sound fake.”<sup>95</sup> Sexuality becomes a ritual in her life. It becomes something like a performative method to succeed in theater. If we remember the relationship between symbols and rituals, we can easily propose the idea that sexuality is one of the meaningful units in the ritual of theatre in

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid 101.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid 160.

the protagonist's transformative immigration process. Change from a traditional to a modern girl takes place within the borders of an industrial country via the genres of leisure like theatre that country provides.

#### **1.4. Theatre's Maternal Aura:**

The unnamed heroine confesses the fact that it is through imitating her mother in one of the plays that she could discover her mother. She says "in the part of the mother I imitated my mother and then noticed how tender my mother was to me. So it was at the theatre that I discovered my mother."<sup>96</sup> It is again drama which gives rise to the discovery of one essential thing in life, which means understanding the value and importance of mother. Moreover, what the unnamed heroine realizes during the play in which she plays a mother through visualizing her own mother is the mercy that a mother feels for her children. The approach of the unnamed heroine to the issue regarding the meaning of a mother for her children is emotional. When we consider the fact that it is in theatre that she discovers the significance of a mother for her kids, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that drama here functions as a conscious revealing factor in the life of the unnamed heroine. She is awakened by the means of drama in order to come into the realization of what mother means for a child.

Besides theater's contribution to self-discovery process in the unnamed heroine's life, theatre is employed the role – more specifically a characteristic of a mother. As it was shown in the previous quotation, it was theatre that helped the unnamed heroine to

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid 172.

apprehend the tender attitude of her mother towards her daughter. Theatre is described in a way that it is represented as a maternal figure. It was through theatre's caring and all-encompassing characteristics that it became possible for the unnamed heroine to get rid of the obscure meaning of mother. The first things she was told about the basics of being an actress also correspond to the aforementioned ideas. Her drama teacher, Memet, says that; "The first condition of becoming an actress is the ability to imitate. Father and mother are easy to imitate, because one knows them."<sup>97</sup> In this citation we have father with mother as the role models that a prospective drama player or student should imitate successfully. I don't want to carry this discussion further like focusing on the praise of the concept of family within drama teachings. I would like to stop here wishing to have highlighted the contribution of drama to the unnamed heroine's awareness of the meaning of a mother for her children as well as theatre's mother-like approach to actresses, which teaches them something essential and valuable about life.

After all the discussions around the role and meaning of theatre in her life, what we have is a good example to the application of Turner's ideas about the processual nature of rituals into practice. What I mean is the analogy between what Victor Turner theorizes about the processual nature of rituals and how the unnamed heroine practices this process in the example of theatre in her life. Her sympathy for theatre which starts in high-school years in Turkey becomes an obsession step by step. During this period, she first sets up the foundation of theatre in her life in the sense that she attempts to authenticate the existence of theatre in her life through some excuses, actually by

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid 153.

allusions and attributions to everyday life examples. She tries to justify leaving her diamond for the sake of theatre and she makes sexuality a minor-ritual – more specifically a symbol in her life. She gradually legitimizes the practice of this ritual within a broader ritual of theater.

## **2 .INTEGRATION: AN ALTERNATIVE AND AUTHENTIC CASE**

### **2.1. The Protagonist's Integration is Different from the Preceding Classics:**

Moving from social drama's agonistic structure which embodies structural contradictions and norm conflicts and looking at the fact that transformation means an authentic regeneration, then it becomes possible to claim that the unnamed heroine's integration has nothing to do with the concept of social drama whereas it perfectly matches the definition of transformation. As I tried to reveal in the first part of my study, she in a sense escapes from the tragedy and drama in her home country. She chooses immigration and life in a contradiction and conflict free atmosphere although she is a foreigner in the place she visits. She is an immigrant, but she is so just on paper, which means that the path she follows during her immigration doesn't go parallel with the ones of her compatriots.

It is the characteristic of the unnamed heroine that wherever she goes or finds herself, she first surrenders to the authority in that new place. In other words, she abides by the rules and in some cases follows the conventions of the place in question. If the concerned place is home, she obeys what her parents say and listens to the admonitions

given by them. She first takes everything seriously and constructs her life and doings around them. This ritual is repeated in the case of her theatre learning, too. She observes first and then acts.

On the basis of the flexible and adaptable characteristic of the unnamed heroine defined in the previous paragraph, an important issue which is worth being discussed is her quick adaptation to and socialization in German society, which makes her distinguished for this peculiar personal value. She doesn't restrain her life in the sense that except the first few months, her life is no longer restricted within the borders of the hostel. Her immigration, for this reason, doesn't match the classical definition of a migratory process. This being the case, her immigration if not totally at least mostly is out of the perceived meanings and contexts of usual immigration cases. In spite of the presence and practice of some rituals peculiar with a classical migratory experience, her situation is not a ritual. It means that her immigration is not one of the stereotyped cases.

When we closely examine her experiences we can easily discern the fact that the unnamed heroine is a really easy-going person during her presence in Germany. This fact is an important factor which differentiates her immigration from the classical ones. It is a well-known fact that internalizing and integrating into German life style occupies an important place in the story of Turkish immigrants as this is known to be the bedrock of all other related problems in their social life.<sup>98</sup> However, in the case of the unnamed heroine the situation is quite the opposite. She feels easy and comfortable with being abroad and what's more it is her home country rather than Germany where she

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<sup>98</sup> Karakus, Mahmut and Kuruyazici, Nilufer. Gurbeti Vatan Edenler 97.

experiences problems with adaptation. After spending two years in Berlin, she finds it really difficult to get accustomed to the life in Istanbul. This ambivalent situation in which she finds herself in a foreign land with strange people although she is actually back in her native land bears resemblance to the feelings and dilemmas of Turks who returned back to Turkey from Germany in the 1980s. It was not easy to start a new life for those people after almost twenty years of separation from their motherland.<sup>99</sup>

Another point around the discussion of the unnamed heroine's adaptation to German society and feeling alienated in Turkish society is about her being and staying neutral during the years she spent in Berlin. What I am trying to say is her remaining impartial and not attempting to function as a bridge or mediator between the cultures of the sending and receiving societies. She is not concerned either with the foundation of any agreement between two cultures or the harmony between native people and immigrants.<sup>100</sup>

## **2.2.Living Abroad but Feeling at Home and Being at Home but Feeling**

### **Alienated:**

One important thing about the issues mentioned so far is the priority given to living abroad by the unnamed heroine instead of staying at home. She feels herself isolated and a stranger in Istanbul; “a woman opened the door and cried out: ‘My daughter!’, kissed me and looked at me again and again, as if he couldn’t believe that I

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<sup>99</sup>Ibid 101.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid 99.



had come back.”<sup>101</sup> She is so isolated and alienated from her own society that her mother becomes an ordinary woman. She doesn’t want to stay in Istanbul, which is not different from the Istanbul that she left two years ago. In other words, Istanbul or the life in Istanbul is not dynamic and her choice is to go on living in a dynamic society like Berlin rather than pursuing a static life in a city like Istanbul. Istanbul’s representation as a static, so a backward city is supported by the observations and descriptions of the unnamed heroine during her ‘break’ in Istanbul. She says that; “Apart from my mother’s blonde hair everything in the apartment was as it had been. When I had gone to Germany two years ago, the light bulb in the entrance hall of the building had flickered. It still flickered.”<sup>102</sup>

Istanbul is still surrounded and haunted by rituals and practices which were no different during her childhood she spent in different cities of Turkey such as Malatya, a city in the East side; Ankara, the capital city; Bursa, a city between Istanbul and Ankara; and also Istanbul. Upon her coming home late, her mother says that; “My daughter, you have become a man. You have brought a new fashion from Germany. You come home in the middle of the night.”<sup>103</sup> The unnamed heroine’s portrayal of Istanbul after two years experience of life abroad is actually a replica of her perception of Istanbul in particular and Turkey in general during her childhood and adolescence.

A possible interpretation of the unnamed heroine’s immigration could be that it seems to be different from a migration as it is more like an example of displacement.

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<sup>101</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. The Bridge of the Golden Horn 133

<sup>102</sup> Ibid 134.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid 169.

The reason that drives me to think so stems from her being a shuttle migrant as she moves from place to place, either between Turkey and German or between Berlin and other European cities like Paris. It is also quite visible in *The Golden Horn* that she cannot stay in one place during her presence in Turkey. She visits some Anatolian cities as a socialist in the propaganda campaigns of the socialist movement in Turkey. Except the journeys between Anatolian cities, the unnamed heroine's taking the morning ship to go to European side of Istanbul and taking the evening ship to go back home in Asian side are symbolic as these ritual practices leave important influence on her perception of the life in Turkish society.

### **2.3.The Idea of not-Belonging or Anxiety of Belonging:**

The idea of sense of belonging is a significant point to understand the migratory process of the unnamed heroine who doesn't have any sense of belonging to a particular and isolated group based on ethnical, national or cultural values. She doesn't confine herself to the world of any diasporically structured community or environment. She doesn't consider herself as a member of a ghetto consisting of alienated and isolated strangers. She doesn't feel in between in terms of having some ambivalent feelings. She feels easy in relation to her transnational situation, which gives her the courage to challenge and refuse the rituals of the past that she had internalized before she left Turkey. Her approach and attitude towards the idea of integration is really flexible and she is successful in integrating into social life in Berlin. She is really good at canalizing herself to any way of life and their requirements. This set of mentality makes the things

easier for the unnamed heroine so that she doesn't have any difficulties with living abroad.

While the unnamed heroine likes swimming upstream, meaning that her problem with the sense of belonging is related to her adaptation to her home country after she returns to Turkey, the problem or the ritual of alienation and anxiety of belonging finds its explanation in the practices of the Turkish working men in Germany. Contrary to the unusual practices of the unnamed heroine, the life style of those men corresponds to the clichés of the former immigrants. While talking about the solidarity among Turkish men, the protagonist says that;

“If the men had walked along the streets alone, they would perhaps have been wafted off the ground and their heads would have struck the walls of the buildings. That's why these men always walked together...Each man, when he was with others, found his father, his grandfather, and it was good to be walking beside a father or beside grandfather feet,...The men walked together along the Berlin streets and spoke their language loudly, it looked as if they were walking along behind their words, which they spoke loudly, as if their loud language cleared the way for them.”<sup>104</sup>

The use of mother tongue which functions like a bulldozer opening the ways cut off due to snow and which is a reminder of a torch as it sheds light on their way during snowy and cold nights are two symbolical meanings within the ritual of the working men. Finding solace both in the mother tongue and in get-togethers with compatriots in

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid 30.

diaspora, in ghettoized lives is central to the description of the Turks walking in groups in the streets of Berlin.

Ozdamar describes their coming together as a chance. In my opinion, there are two meanings of this encounter; one is literal and one is lateral. Literal one is about their work in the sense that they are working in the same job and doing almost the same thing in factory. They are simply dealing with the things offered to immigrants. Lateral meaning, on the other hand, is the meeting of these people in the same social arena. People from different backgrounds wouldn't have seen each other if they had stayed in Turkey and hadn't preferred immigration. They moved to Germany and in a sense, something lateral like the unification of various Turkish people with different histories and stories came true. Ozdamar's definition or perception of the Turkish community as a result of coincidence makes the community in question a fortuitous combination of immigrants. What we see is a lateral community of literal workers.

On the other hand, the community formed by those workers has its ritual. To this society, new comers join as long as the migratory process is in progress. After the lateral, coincidental meeting of literal workers, we have the ritual of the arrival of new comers. Meeting new people, who has the same destiny akin to theirs, becomes a ritual in the life of former migrants. The circulation of this event constitutes another ritual of the migratory experience of the foreign workers in the social level. Immigration starts in the individual level for each immigrant, but in later stages it becomes a social phenomenon. What remains the same is the flow of people moving to the receiving

societies in large numbers. This being the case, immigration, which is originally an individual venture, becomes a social phenomenon at the end of the day

Borrowing from Caryl Phillips<sup>105</sup>, the unnamed heroine assumes the role of a person who seems to have versions of home, meaning that nonexistence of the anxiety of belonging to one particular place in her case makes immigration an easy process for her so that she can easily move between different places. In those places, she can successfully get accustomed to the way of life. In this regard, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to claim that her immigration could be and should be redefined as emigration. Novelty and innovations in the practice of immigration by the unnamed heroine differ her from the usual prototypes in the history of immigration.

Another point around the discussion of the unnamed heroine's experience is about the notion of imaginary homelands<sup>106</sup>. In other words, application of this notion into real life is a specific point in her emigration. There are two things I would like to raise in relation to the idea of imaginary homelands and its connection with the unnamed heroine's story. One is about the possibility of reading the imaginary homelands as nostalgia, which is reminiscent of ritual. The other connotation that the term imaginary homelands carries is its being a symptom of a totally new phenomenon.

What I mean by the first variety of meaning attributed to the concept of imaginary homelands in the case of the unnamed heroine's perpetual displacement and emigration is associated with her remembering the past with some of its significant and

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<sup>105</sup> This term is taken from Caryl Phillips' a collection of essays book called [A New World Order](#).

<sup>106</sup> This term is taken from Salman Rushdie's a collection of essays book called [The Imaginary Homelands](#).

entrenched notions which are still influential in her life. During her first visit in Berlin, the unnamed heroine cannot dare to give up her diamond, especially because of the fact that constant transitions in her development and personality synchronize with the teachings and rituals of the past. The past and childhood framed by the teachings of her family who structured the unnamed heroine by injecting the traditional values and rituals is synchronous with her perpetual development in Berlin. The simultaneity of the unnamed heroine's continuous transformation in reference to the changes in her perception and understanding of life, and of seemingly slight but actually strong influence of the past rituals in her life is quite symbolic. It is symbolic because the synchronized situation implies her being haunted by the images of the past home which is now kilometers away from her. Her liberation from the bounds of the past becomes possible as long as she tries and manages to catch freedom in the varieties of homes.

The unnamed heroine doesn't allow herself to get stuck within a ghetto-like environment in the physical sense and in an imagined community<sup>107</sup> in the national sense. Reconfiguration of imagined communities centered on the prerogative and priority of theatre is not similar to the construction of well-known but at the same time pristine imagined communities highlighting chauvinism and nationalism. The unnamed heroine is not a nationalist and it could be understood better when we remember her universal and transnational attitude towards immigration in the example of her successful integration to the host society.

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<sup>107</sup> I owe this phrase to Benedict Anderson's statements in Imagined Communities.

#### **2.4. Theatre Solidifying her Integration:**

Looking at the points discussed in the previous sentences, in what follows I would like to connect some symbolic meanings of theatre to those points. Theatre is like her imagined community where she comes together with many ordinary people interested in drama like her and the legends of theatre at the same time. Theatre links the present time to the past in a way that the unnamed heroine can easily identify herself with theatre of her time and the traditions in theatre inherited from the former highly-acclaimed actresses and actors. Theatre is the stage where she is able to get the spirit of the drama as well as inhaling the aura of it via acting personally. Theatre is the name of the imagined community for the unnamed narrator who imagines to be, actually dreams of being a good actress in her life. Theatre means her hopes for the future and for her life. Theatre means future besides its contemporary or present functions in her life.

Just as narrating folk tales and national and historical stories was the major factor which enabled the grandmother of the unnamed heroine to keep alive and provide her with some space and occupation to live on, theatre links the unnamed heroine to life. It is to theatre that she owes her existence in a sense. Moving from the functions and importance of theatre in the life of the unnamed heroine, we can get to the point through which Victor Turner aimed at suggesting the autonomous and individual structure in the lives of people in the industrialized societies.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Turner, Victor. "Social Dramas and Stories about Them." 166.

### **2.5. Mutual Relationship between Multiculturalism and Integration:**

There are several examples of multicultural groupings and communities in *The Golden Horn*. Some of these are politically-oriented and some of them are socially constructed. The first example that I would like to refer to is the kitchen of the hostel which reminds the unnamed heroine of the multiethnic structure of a famous Turkish shadow play, Karagoz and Hacivat.

“It looked like the shadow plays in traditional Turkish theatre. In it figures came on to the stage, each speaking their own dialect – Turkish Greeks, Turkish Armenians, Turkish Jews, different Turks from different towns and classes and with different dialects – they all misunderstood each other, but kept on talking and playing, like the women in the hessel, they misunderstood each other in the kitchen, but handed each other the knives or pots, or one rolled up another’s pullover sleeve, so that it didn’t hang into the pot.”<sup>109</sup>

The empathy and sympathy among the residents of the hostel is described with an attribution to the multiethnic and multicultural structure of a traditional Turkish shadow play in traditional Turkish theatre. Behaviors and actions of women inhabiting in the hostel are described as if they are on stage in a shadow play in traditional Turkish theatre. They are presented as the actresses of a play. So, does the unnamed heroine perceive the existence of working women as a play or think that life is a play per se?

The use of theatre refers to the vivid and colourful form of their life. Theatre, especially the traditional Turkish theatre, is symbolic here as it implies the co-existence

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<sup>109</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. The Bridge of the Golden Horn 16.



of different images and characters from different ethnic backgrounds in a traditional shadow play in Turkish theatre called Hacivat and Karagoz. It is replete with people from different ethnic backgrounds although the play is a tradition of Turkish nation. One thing is ironic here that Ozdamar brings them together under the same shelter in a foreign land, not in Turkey as it used to be. It is possible to draw the conclusion that theatre here plays the role of the setting of an imagined community where a past tradition is revived. The question left to the reader is not easy to answer, essentially because of the fact that Ozdamar presents a defamed and degraded Ottoman history in the first novel, Caravanserai. It is not easy to answer if Ozdamar tries to set up a parallel situation between the Ottoman period and the hostel, which have one thing in common and it is the solidarity and peace between Turks and others like Armenians and Greeks.

If Ozdamar doesn't seem to be claiming a historical unity and harmony among the people concerned, what is she trying to do? Is she trying to show the politically free structure of theatre? Is theatre for theatre's sake only? Responding the last two questions with a positive answer seems much more possible than the negative one. The praise of theatre as a cultural mediator in relation to its success to portray a clash, disagreement and hatred free Turkey is the focus of this particular point. Elimination of quasi-cultural and national conflicts between the ethnic minorities and the Turkish administrations since Ottoman period and moreover achieving this by the means of theatre is an implication of glorifying theatre and its transnational and cross-cultural capacities above all. Legitimizing theatre as a means uniting people regardless of their ethnic and national

backgrounds also means reducing the value and importance of systems taking their power from their dynastic history and tradition such as Ottoman Empire into nothing.

In addition to the presentation of a humiliated history of Ottoman Empire in the first novel, the hatred of the unnamed heroines' aunt against Cypriots who are also humiliated on the name of their religious authority reduces the possibility of giving a positive answer to the previous question. The aunt reduces the degree of Makarios to a material object. "When Aunt Sidika saw me naked, she burst into laughter, said, "Makarios." Makarios was the Greek Orthodox priest of Cyprus and he had a long black beard. What Aunt Sidika meant was that my little box had grown hair."<sup>110</sup> Makarios is symbolic here since he is the religious leader of Orthodox-Cypriot people in the land of Cyprus. She puts him and the hair in the sexual organ of the unnamed heroine into the same category. Degrading a religious leader finds its explanation in the loathsome definition of the aunt, who symbolizes a historically contested phenomenon between Turks and Rums. As a living history, she is like a witness to the ongoing debate between Turks and Rums. She explicitly detests Rums and shows her hatred by equalizing the hair in her cousin's sexual organ to the spiritual leader of Orthodox Cypriots living in Cyprus.

Contrary to the exclusionist approach in the former example, another example to the multicultural and heterogeneous structure of her life in Germany is the solidarity between idealist socialist students from different countries, among which the protagonist's close friendship with Greeks is an important point. The existence of

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<sup>110</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. Life is a Caravanserai: Has Two Doors I came in One I Went out the Other 201.

transnationalism in the life of the immigrants coming from different backgrounds is praised by the protagonist;

“Every evening the Turkish students went to a Greek bar, in which there sat Greek chickens [chicken is a metaphor which refers to socialist students], Turkish and Greek chickens danced syrtaki together, drank ouzo, talked together against the Greek military junta, many Greek chickens, who couldn’t go to Greece, went to Turkey on holiday out of homesickness. Sometimes a chicken that had been really plucked by the army arrived from Greece, and all the other Turkish, Greek, German chickens, who still had their feathers, gathered around it and had enormous respect for this plucked chicken.”<sup>111</sup>

Although the unnamed heroine alludes to the solidarity and unity among socialist students and praises socialism as a transnational phenomenon and movement, the multicultural life of which she is a member transcends the historical and national clashes between Turks and Greeks. What she experiences is a transnational life in different European cities such as Paris and Berlin with non-Turkish people. She avoids banal structure of the ghetto life and tries to become a citizen of Europe, if not of the world yet. The unity of students described on these pages exceeds the limited horizons of traditional writing of immigration literature. The friendship between Greek and Turkish students is presented in a way that functions as a bridge between the members of these nations. Ozdamar’s book in this case operates as a mediator in the chronic disagreement between Turks and Greeks.

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<sup>111</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. The Bridge of the Golden Horn 119.

The unnamed heroine exemplifies the possibility of setting up a multicultural life even in a country like Germany. This could be an irony regarding Germany's strict approach to accept and recognize itself a country of immigration, a country with a multicultural context. It is possible to read the multicultural aura in the hostel as a criticism of German authorities as Germany is already a country of multicultural fact although people in charge don't think and say so. It is also possible to say that Ozdamar's hostel is a miniature of a multicultural Germany dreamed, but which is not in existence yet.

Another matter which should be taken into consideration while treating the transformation of the protagonist from a Turkish girl having grown up with traditional values in her own society to an enlightened figure equipped with the requirements of the modern life is about the hybrid character of the unnamed heroine. It is important to notify the fact that the culturally hybrid protagonist sets a role model for other immigrants to show how multiculturalism works or is applicable in the life of an ex-urban Turkish girl.

### **2.6. The Role of 'Star Groups' in Integration:**

The flexible nature of the unnamed heroine's characteristic was highlighted as the basic reason behind her success in quick adaptation and integration into a foreign society. It is through her ability to quickly get accustomed to the life style of a foreign society that she manages to overcome the troubles and problems about integration. The idea of 'star groups' may provide us with better understanding about the success of the

protagonist. Before he focuses on the role and importance of star group for people, Turner proposes the idea that “social dramas occur within groups of persons who share values and interests and who have a real or alleged common history.”<sup>112</sup> Victor also says that “a social drama first manifests itself as the breach of a norm, the infraction of a rule of morality, law, custom, or etiquette, in some public arena.”<sup>113</sup> In the continuation of his discussion, he goes on talking about the function and meaning of the breach as “the expression of a deeper division of interests and loyalties than appears on the surface. The incident of breach may be deliberately, even calculatedly, contrived by a person or party disposed to demonstrate or challenge entrenched authority.”<sup>114</sup>

In the social drama of the unnamed heroine, context is not different. The social drama of the unnamed heroine occurs within her family where people share the same values and interests. Again it is the same in her social drama that it manifests itself as a breach of a norm like her debut in theatre through which she helps her father to go to another city to find a job. As I mentioned before, there is no problem with the contribution of a daughter to her parents, I am not against it. However, in her patriarchal society, this means both a conflict and contradiction in terms of familial norms and structures. When we look at the deeper divisions of interests and loyalties rather than the reasons appear on surface, we can see theatre as the point of focus in her life. If we remember the discomfort and disapproval of the mother when the unnamed heroine announces her decision, the gap or breach which stands for the crisis in the family is

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<sup>112</sup> Turner, Victor. “Social Dramas and Stories about Them.” 149.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid 150.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid 150.

clearly understood. And, it is Turner again who claims that crisis follows the breach and is followed by the stage of redress which is the third stage of the social drama before the last one which is either reintegration or recognition of schism, breach. In the social drama of the unnamed heroine, the breach is strengthened and enlarged with further breaches, with further deviations from the norms like leaving the diamond for the sake of the same deeper interest, theater. And at the end of the day, never comes the reintegration of the divided people who formerly had the same values and interests. Because the unnamed heroine's social drama is her transformation. Her case is a pattern for the ultimate change in a person. She has not only challenged the entrenched authority of her family and her socio-religious values, she has actually destroyed them by eliminating them from her life to pave the way for her reconstruction and deconstruction of the past. She is no more the same daughter. These being the case, she ends cooperation or relations with her first star group which means family.

What does Turner mean by a star group? Turner is speaking; "in every culture one is obliged to belong to certain groups, usually institutionalized ones – family, age-set, school, firm, professional association, and the like. But such groups are not necessarily one's beloved star groups."<sup>115</sup> According to Turner, it is a star group "which we owe our deepest loyalty and whose fate is for us of the greatest personal concern. It is the one with which a person identifies most deeply and in which he finds fulfillment of his major social and personal desires."<sup>116</sup> It is because of this identification and loyalty that "it is in one's star group that one looks most for love, recognition and,

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid 149-150.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid 149.

prestige, office and other tangible and intangible benefits and rewards. In it one achieves self respect and a sense of belonging with others for whom one has respect.”<sup>117</sup>

In the light of the definitions and ideas mentioned under the last sub-title, I want to look some key concepts like ‘conflicts of loyalty to different star groups’ which are thought to give rise to some “tragic situations”<sup>118</sup> and ‘the idea of belonging to a star group.’ Contrary to the existence of her family as her star group in *Caravanserai*, the unnamed heroine identifies herself with the socialist movement in the majority of *The Golden Horn*. Socialist environment becomes her star group in the second novel. Last but not least, theatre is always there to play an important role to reconfigure her life. It wouldn’t be an exaggeration to claim that theatre is her most favourite star group in the process of her transformation although her interaction with it is periodically interrupted.

The end of *Caravanserai* makes it clear what conflict of loyalty to a star group means. The unnamed protagonist decides to leave for Germany in the end of this novel and the obedient daughter who has been a loyal girl to her parents now becomes a challenger in the sense that she leaves everything behind without taking into consideration any traditional, ritual or cultural notions and immigrates to Germany. As to the conflict which eliminates the loyalty of the unnamed heroine to her first star group, family, her enthusiasm for theatre should be proposed as the main reason.

The end of *The Golden Horn* is another example of disappearance of loyalty that a person feels for his star group. After suffering much in Turkey due to her political affiliation to socialism, she decides to leave for Germany again. What is similar to her

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid 150.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid 149.

first immigration to Germany is ending her loyalty to a star group, which is a political institution now. Just as the unnamed heroine ends her subordination to her family before her first immigration, she repeats the same thing. She abandons another star group in her life. In her processual life, in her social drama, breaking ties with star groups and ending her loyal stance to them become a ritual of the unnamed heroine. Each book, in this case, both has an end and has a beginning. Connection with a star group is ended in order to start with another one. It is no different in the third novel, *Strange Stars Turn to Earth*. Just as the end of the second novel marks the end of her affiliation to socialist ideology, the beginning of the third novel indicates her whole-heartedly return to her most favourite star group. In the third novel, her life is theatre and theatre is her life.

What is tragic in these situations is that in each case she feels alone and isolated after her decision. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that she gets disappointed after each event. When we look at her first days in Germany very after her first immigration, her mixed feelings can be easily discerned. She shows how much she misses her mother and always walks around the train station as if she wants to turn back to Turkey. She questions herself and her coming to Germany:

“But how does one think about a mother?

Some nights, like a film running backwards, I went from the hessel door to the train on which I had got here. I also had the train run backwards. The trees ran backwards past the window, but the journey was too long, I got only as far as Austria. The mountains had their tops in the mist, and it was hard to make a train run backwards in the mist. That's where I fell asleep. I also noticed that I thought



about my mother when I didn't eat anything and remained hungry, or when I pulled out the skin on my fingers a bit and it hurt. Then I thought, this pain is my mother.”<sup>119</sup>

There is a retrospective outlook here consisting of elements peculiar to living abroad like missing the home country, dreaming the journey of turning back home on the same train that brought the immigrant to the land of perception and realizing the importance of the figures that people usually don't take important as much as they do when they get separated from them. The unnamed heroine misses her mother and she reveals the fact that how young she still is. Being away from home and facing the difficulty of living away from mother point out another transition in the life of the unnamed narrator. She starts realizing what a mother means for a child. The unnamed heroine's helpless situation in the beginning of her migratory process presents her as a young girl. The issue of finding solace and shelter under the image of mother if not in front of her knees is important, too. Symbolic meaning of mother protection and of the unnamed heroine's attempts to subdue loneliness relying on the image of mother in dreams shed light on the enigma of the unnamed heroine's arrival. As a result, she starts to question both the importance and role of her mother in her life. Immigration, in this case, gets an immigrant closer to the family members in the emotional sense despite the physical separation. In other words, immigration is not isolation or separation, but on the contrary a sort of reunion of family members around the idea of reconfiguring family as it is

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<sup>119</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. The Bridge of the Golden Horn 11.

exemplified in this case. However, this get-together is just illusionary; it is not the reintegration that Turner suggests. The breach is still current.

We see the unnamed heroine taking part in theatre tours very after her rejection of active participation in and open refusal of socialist movement just before her second immigration to Germany. As a result of the strict control of the police regarding the interrogation of the socialists in Turkey after the military coup in 1971, she has to give up following the socialist path. Apart from the ghost of police haunting not only the socialists, but also Turkey of that contemporary time, another reason behind her decision, which means deterioration of her loyalty towards socialist environment, is the betrayal of her socialist friends. Her lover Kerim, who she really admires, cannot stand the pressure of the militarist control of that contemporary time and deviates from socialism. The unnamed heroine is disillusioned after Kerim's disloyalty and the feeling of being left alone causes her to call off her engagement with another star group, socialist movement in Turkey. A former socialist, Kerim says that; "It is time to gather up bourgeois culture and to read new books and to listen to different music."<sup>120</sup> Upon this change in the person who made the unnamed heroine a fan of socialism, she gets disillusioned and reveals her disappointment by saying that "he had begun to speak a different language from me."<sup>121</sup> And, she decides to finish the relationship with Kerim, which means the end of affair with socialism; "I didn't want to sleep with Kerim anymore."<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid 254.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid 254.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid 254.

It is a fact of the unnamed heroine's immigration that there are no symptoms of notions such diaspora, ghetto, isolation and the like in her experience. There is no confinement or imprisonment in her migratory process. On the other hand, the unnamed heroine localizes the idea and feeling of belonging to her star groups. She formulates this particular idea the extent to which she identifies herself with her star groups. Her successful integration lies in her affiliation to her star groups. Instead of pursuing the goal of social integration like trying to reach all the aspects of social life in Berlin, the unnamed heroine holds the idea that the way that leads to achievement in integration in a foreign society is closely related with a successful integration and adaptation to a group first. This community is the synonym of a star group which enables her to do well in her socialization process among German people.

The localized environment that the unnamed heroine tends to construct seems to be similar to the formation of ghettos by immigrants, however; space of movement in her life is not limited to the stereotyped restrictions like diasporas founded by her compatriots and immigrants in general. Her closest society is her star groups which include members from different countries and backgrounds. It means that her star groups or immediate societies get a multicultural and transnational structure which is obviously different from the homogeneous frameworks of the ghettos and diasporas established by immigrants. The colourful context of her communities makes both her sense of belonging and adaptation plus integration processes different from the accustomed feelings of the almost-totally isolated and alienated "others."

While talking about the obligatory situation in which it appears as a must for each individual in every culture to feel belonging to an institutionalized group, Turner counts family as one of those groups.<sup>123</sup> What Turner suggests here also summarizes the unnamed heroine's situation, who as a child and teenager is obliged to belong to a certain group and it is her family. However, the criterion which makes the participant in a group himself as a member of that community is something more than an obligation. Turner proposes different factors from love to recognition and prestige to office<sup>124</sup> that make a person a member of a group. Turner supports his argument with other reasons that appeal to people within a star group and he also explains the things that distance the members from a star group.

One person may belong to a group, but it doesn't have to be his star group and we can see the application of this situation in the practice of the unnamed heroine's leaving her family behind and moving to Germany. It is not difficult for the reader to recognize one fact which highlights the strong ties between the protagonist and her family. It is clear that the unnamed heroine belongs to her parents and she is submissive to the ideas and instructions of family members including her older brother Ali. She says 'tamam' whenever she is asked to do something by any member of her family. Sohelia Ghaussy explains the meaning of tamams as ritualistic expressions; "the ritualistic ways in which the girl uses the expressions "tamam mi?/ tamam" (which indicate agreement)

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<sup>123</sup> Footnote 41

<sup>124</sup> Footnote 43

to convey the almost magical power of these words to bind her to her family members, particularly to her brother.”<sup>125</sup>

Turner suggests recognition as one of the features that drives the individual to have the feeling of belonging to a group. This idea highlights the role and significance of praise by others to regard the self as one of those admirers. When we look at how the unnamed heroine defines her mother towards the end of *Caravanserai*, I believe that the importance and meaning of recognition could be understood better with reference to the unnamed heroine’s discomfort with her first star group. After she reaches her puberty, the unnamed heroine’s behaviors begin to change as a result. One of the remarkable things in her life becomes her struggle she gives to be recognized by people in her environment. She tries to attract the attention of the young boys in the streets by wearing in the way her mother does. She seeks recognition. In this situation, her rejection of her family as a result of the lack of recognition she thinks to be suffering from family members is connected to the description of her mother as a ‘half-mother’. She defines her mother so as she believes not being paid enough attention to by her mother. What is interesting is the change of mother’s description after a while. A few days after her emotional approach, the petulant unnamed teenager starts describing her mother as a ‘full-mother’ due to mother’s attention and care during her illness. This being the case, the concept of recognition defines too much in her relationship with the family.

Another point about the sense of belonging within a group is love as Turner puts forward. To my understanding there is a close relationship between love and

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<sup>125</sup> Ghaussy, Soheila. “Das Vaterland verlassen: Nomadic Language and “Feminine Writing” in Emine Sevgi Ozdamar’s *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei*.” 11.

recognition. To be loved, one should be recognized first. For this reason, the unnamed heroine's love affairs with boys that she meets in the socialist environment couldn't be a coincidence. If we remember the fact that the unnamed heroine leaves her diamond after her affair with a boy called Jordi, we can say that first recognition and then love bring the elimination and rejection of the things which were once regarded as indispensable. The unnamed heroine sleeps with some other socialist men and keeps on sacrificing her values in a sense, insofar as she is recognized and loved.

The idea of prestige is another reason with recognition and love as constituents of the sense of belonging, it is possible to claim that the unnamed narrator gets prestige through her connection to her socialist star group akin to the realization of love and recognition within the same field. She actively participates in the socialist movement and within the program of this movement she travels across Anatolia to awaken the peasants. She becomes influential in some places and honoured by people.

What brings her success in the form of prestige and recognition is the indicative mood which is a reminiscent of modernity. Turner suggests that "modernity means the exaltation of the indicative mood."<sup>126</sup> Oxford dictionary defines indicative as showing or suggesting something. In addition to its literal meaning, Turner equates this word with industrialization through which "many specialized performative genres have been born [from the death of religion and traditions]; genres of industrial leisure like theater, ballet, opera, film, the novel, printed poetry, the art exhibition, classical music, rock music,

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<sup>126</sup> Turner, Victor. "Social Dramas and Stories about Them." 166.

carnivals, processions, folk drama, major sports events, and dozens more.”<sup>127</sup> Theatre as one of the performative genres is also described as a cultural transformative method by Turner.<sup>128</sup> To specify and make clear the role of theatre as a transformative method, I would like to show what Turner means by transformation. He suggests that “only ... through destruction and reconstruction, that is, transformation, may an authentic reordering come about.”<sup>129</sup>

While talking about the introduction of industrialization to the Third World, Turner defines the struggle between the entrenched traditional structures and industrial development as follows; “When industrial development came to much of the Third World it had to confront powerfully consolidated structures of ritual performative genres.”<sup>130</sup> Turner goes on; “In the West similar institutions had been gradually eroded from within, from the revival of learning to the Industrial Revolution. Here the indicative mood triumphed.”<sup>131</sup> Then, what does Turner propose to come over those powerfully consolidated structures of ritual practices? What is the solution? In this case, he offers the dismemberment of ritual types in a way like “if you wish to spay or geld religion, first remove its rituals, its generative and regenerative processes.”<sup>132</sup> It is clear in the last quotation that Turner approaches the concept of ritual in the religious sense. He, on the other hand, implicitly addresses their performative and

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid 166.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid 166.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid 164.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid 167.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid 167.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid 166.

generative characteristics in the socio-cultural scale. And, it is the socio-cultural function of rituals that I am interested in as far as the social-drama is concerned.

Her indicative mood, which brings her approval and prestige, takes place as a result of her involvement in an industrial leisure genre. In other words, it is through theatre that the unnamed heroine can suggest and show the peasants, in an inductive method, how the socio-political situation in Turkey is rotten and corrupt so needs transformation. The authentic reordering of the society is thought to be achieved via socialism and the means that the unnamed heroine uses to reach her goal is a performative genre of industrialization. Reminiscent of her drama teachers and directors, she uses theatre to “awaken the passive life of intelligence.”<sup>133</sup> The unnamed heroine internalizes the sense of belonging through her association with a group of people who she respects and be respected by them in return. It wouldn't be wrong to assert that these are the tangible and intangible benefits and rewards that the unnamed heroine can get as a member of a star group.

### **2.7.Socialism and the Unnamed Heroine's Transformative Integration:**

While talking about why a person identifies himself with a star-group and why the same individual renounces his ties with the same group, recognition, mutual respect and the sense of belonging were proposed as major reasons for joining the group. Within the same discussion, it was also said that people tend to integrate themselves into a star group where they can feel the aura through which they may fulfill their personal and

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<sup>133</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. The Bridge of the Golden Horn 150 - 52



social desires. This being the case, the unnamed heroine's involvement in the socialist environment becomes her second best among her star groups throughout her developmental and transformative immigration and integration. Until her last decision that she gives in the end of the second novel where she totally gives up socialism, she goes and comes between socialism and theatre. Sometimes theatre provides her with socialist intellectuals and sometimes she is given place in theatre with the help of her friendship with socialist people who are also interested in theatre. As a result of the socialist ideology that she meets and internalizes in Germany, we have a different person who can examine the events, especially in her home country after her return, into details. I will try to make this issue clear by focusing on her reflections on the ongoing American influence on Turkish society. However, I first of all want to go back to the days when she met the person who introduced her to socialism.

The hero concerned is the communist warden in her hostel. The protagonist describes her first meeting with him as follows; "Our new warden said, he was an artist and a communist. No one knew what a communist was."<sup>134</sup> After saying "a new life began with the communist hostel warden"<sup>135</sup>, the unnamed heroine goes on talking about the changes in the life of the women in the hostel. Communist warden hands out his books written by playwrights and other intellectuals like Chekhov, Wilde, Gorky and Dostoevsky to women like the unnamed heroine, who are in need of reading to get consciousness and awareness. The books are given to women who used to "search[ed] for their mothers, their sisters or their stepmothers in the other women, and like sheep

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid 19.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid 23.

who on a rainy night were afraid of thunder and lightning, they came too close to one another and sometimes squeezed one another until they couldn't breathe."<sup>136</sup> The unnamed heroine also mentions the symbolic meaning of the emergence and influence of the warden in the life of the women as follows;

“Now we had a shepherd, who could sing. He gave us books and said: ‘Here, I’m giving you my best friend.’ One of his best friends was Chekhov. So he was not the only man we had. Other men came into our hossel with him: Dostoevsky, Gorky, Jack London, Tolstoy, Joyce, Sartre and one woman, Rosa Luxemburg. I didn’t know any of them before. Some women fetched books from him, which perhaps they didn’t read, but they loved these books as a child loves foreign stamps, they loved to have these books in their bags when they got on the bus to the radio valve factory.”<sup>137</sup>

The communist warden symbolizes the beginning of a new life not only for the unnamed heroine, but also for the other women in the same hostel. The influence of the warden is so strong that women are divided into groups according to their sympathy for him and their ability to adapt the changes brought by the same person. “When our communist hostel warden spoke to a woman, he always began his sentences with the word ‘Sugar’. The women who loved him also began to address each other as ‘Sugar’ and ‘Sugars’. And so slowly the hostel divided into the women who said ‘Sugar’ and the women who didn’t say ‘Sugar’.”<sup>138</sup> The women start to establish their star group on the basis of their

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid 23.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid 23.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid 23.

love and respect they feel for the warden. Mutual recognition and respect give rise to the formation of a new star-group. And, the unnamed heroine is one of the members of this group. Communist intellectual shakes the ground and alters the way of life in the hostel. If we remember Marx's statement in which he suggests changing the world order rather than commenting on it as philosophers do, the communist warden is practicing what Marx put forward. Regarding the hostel as the world of the working women whose space of movement is limited into the borders of that building, the change starts in the local level.

Without going into details, I briefly want to highlight the influence of the communist warden and socialist drive looking at the changes in the order of the unnamed heroine's life. There are sleepless nights for the sake of reading, which is a new custom in the hostel. She feels free from the bounds of the traditional patriarchy and patriarchal hegemony in Turkey. She gets the freedom of dealing with drama and theatre without suffering the admonitions of her parents who used to reinforce the unnamed heroine to give up theatre and focus on education. She can make her dreams about theatre obtainable and practical via the readings that she does with the help of the communist warden. She is close to her aims regarding having a career in theatre and she is away from the restricting rules of family life replete with forbidding and discouraging rituals and being involved in a totally new environment where the unnamed heroine can easily use the opportunities provided by modern, industrial life. And, theatre – more specifically the way and possibilities that make things easier for her to reach her dream appear as the best opportunities put forward by an industrial society. Remembering

Turner's definition of transformation via the cultural transformative moods of the industrial and modern age, what we have in the case of the protagonist is not different. Starting from her life in Turkey and going on with her experiences and changes happening during her presence in Germany, it would not be an exaggeration to claim that what we see in the example of the unnamed heroine is a social drama, in which she acts the starring role.

Looking at the unnamed heroine's first impressions on one of Engel's book, it is possible to say that Engels' book which is the first book she reads after she decided to become a socialist functions like a book which seems to be teaching her the alphabet or scripts of socialism. "My first book, a Turkish alphabet book, had also had many creases, because there was so much one had to learn by heart."<sup>139</sup> The analogy between her first alphabet book and Engel's text is another symbolic change in her new life. In addition to the analogy just mentioned, the protagonist's rebirth through socialism reminds me of another analogy that I am intended to discuss in the following paragraphs.

The analogy is between pilgrimage in the symbolic sense and the unnamed heroine's immigration. I first would like to say that I use pilgrimage here in the symbolic sense of the word. Describing the immigration of the unnamed heroine is another version of reading the transformation she experiences. She is purified as her presence in East Berlin is a kind of self-discovery by which she comes to an awareness of herself. She finds herself in socialism with which she identifies herself. Reading the unnamed heroine's immigration as a reminiscent of pilgrimage is possible for some reasons. One

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid 69.

of those reasons is about her self-discovery or recovery through reaching awareness by the means of socialist ideology.

When we look at the city where the unnamed heroine derives her consciousness, it is the eastern part of Berlin, which was under socialist rule during the years of her immigration. She becomes a pilgrim in a meaningful and symbolic city like East Berlin. East Berlin is a place where not only the unnamed heroine but also many other people are involved in the socialist movement. In a sentence, I would like to refer to the social unity and harmony among people during the process of a religious pilgrimage where people unite, irrespective of their country, race, origin, color, language and some other distinctive characteristics. The factors listed in the former sentence are not important for those people because of the fact that it is their belief which collects them to one place for one reason. The reflection of this religious ritual takes place among socialist-minded people who get together in their associations like the Socialist Association in Berlin, in their favourite public places such as restaurants and cafes often visited by the same kind of people, and the like. Similar to non-existence of any colour or racial discrimination between participants in a religious pilgrimage, we can observe the same aura in this politically oriented ritual.

The unnamed heroine's friends in East Berlin vary from vary from Greece to Spain.<sup>140</sup> There are also some other German and Turkish members within the community. They don't care the less about where they are from. One more thing is that the man the unnamed heroine slept with for the first time in her life was from Spain. I

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<sup>140</sup> 2.5. Mutual relationship between multiculturalism and integration (in this work)

would like to open a parenthesis here to stress the point that I am not trying to compare a political movement to a religious ritual by presenting the motivations behind both as the same things. On the contrary, as I mentioned in the beginning of this discussion what I am intended to do is to reflect on the symbolic meanings of the unnamed heroine's immigration which manifests similarities with the religious ritual of pilgrimage.

The third point that I want to raise in relation to the symbolic interpretation of the unnamed heroine's immigration as a pilgrimage is about the books that show her the way. In several occasions, the unnamed narrator draws attention to the books written by the founding fathers of socialist ideology and practice like Marx, Engels and Lenin, although the first two are mostly associated with Marxism as such. Those books function like the sacred books of her pilgrimage.

The unnamed heroine's immigration is processual in nature as rituals are. It means that her immigration is a ritual which is first based on and then supported by dynamic processes. One of the headquarters in her life or processual immigration is her meeting with socialism which leaves its influence and authority on her in East Berlin. She changes her place of residence and the most significant transition in her life comes true there, miles away from home country.

Deflem had described the symbols as the smallest meaningful parts of a ritual while analyzing Turner's ideas on the social drama and rituals. In other words, he presented a ritual as a collection of symbols. This being the case, the aforementioned analogy exactly matches Turner's definitions. The unnamed heroine is a socialist now with its many symbolic figures some of which I tried to explain above. These symbols

come together and form the ritual called life under the principles of the socialist ideology.

The socialist heroine is back in her home country and it is socialist ideology and ideas that enable her to observe her environment carefully. She examines the poverty closely and carefully as well as paying tribute to those who were beheaded for their revolutionary ideas in different parts of the world in different times. She thinks about people from the rebels in French revolution to the ones in Spanish Civil War. She also reflects on the people both in Ottoman and Turkish histories like Pir Sultan Abdal and Nazim Hikmet. What these people have in common is the fact that they experienced suppression and hegemony over themselves in parallel with their maltreatment due to political reasons. As a socialist the unnamed heroine approaches their situation as they were dispossessed and suffered from the atrocities of the authority. Her attitude is quite revolutionary and political. Having internalized her political stance in Germany, she delineates not only the current situation in Turkey, but also its history from the perspective of a socialist.

Ozdamar's approach to the American influence over Turkish social life is no different in the second novel of the trilogy in the sense that America is still being presented as the ultimate control and domination over Turkish Republic. Similar to the criticisms in the first novel, the USA is still harshly criticized in the second book as well. The only difference between the first and second novels is the existence of a conscious narrator in the second novel contrary to the spectator-like narrator in the first one. We have a fully-awakened socialist in *The Golden Horn*. What's more, cultural impact of

the USA is criticized through some images associated with American pop-culture. We have a symbolic Coca-Cola bottle which is dirty. The unnamed heroine photographs “the dirty Coca-Cola bottle”<sup>141</sup> which is symbolic for the reason that Coca-Cola manages to enter underdeveloped and poor places like Diyarbakir, a poor city in the Eastern part of Turkey. American pop-culture is everywhere. After the penetration of Americanization through comic books, it is felt now all around the country by virtue of global images introduced and distributed by the States.

One of the striking issues that the unnamed socialist experiences in her voyage throughout Eastern Turkey is the submission of an Anatolian tailor to American dollar. The tailor confesses the fact that it is the clothes of American soldiers that fill his hungry stomach. The following dialogue beginning with the question of the Anatolian tailor takes place between him and the unnamed heroine; “‘What does “imperialism” mean?’ – ‘They exploit us.’ The tailor said: ‘I fill my hungry stomach with American trousers.’ – ‘Americans haven’t done anything to harm me.’”<sup>142</sup> The tailor replies so and this is sad to hear for the unnamed heroine because the tailor is not aware of the American exploitation according to her. The Anatolian tailor is lacking the consciousness and awareness of the socialist heroine.

Either the approach of the tailor to American hegemony over social life in Turkey or his statements which seem to be selfish mirrors the replacement, actually defeat of public consciousness by the American individual philosophy. Contrary to what the unnamed heroine expects from the peasants who are imagined to be the pioneers of

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<sup>141</sup> Ozdamar, Emine Sevgi. The Bridge of the Golden Horn 213

<sup>142</sup> Ibid 214.



the earth-shattering transformation on the social scale all around the world, the tailor, who is not a peasant but a small shop owner, disappoints the socialist heroine. Before she sets out with her friends, the unnamed heroine explains the reason behind her travel as follows: “No, the peasants are starving, I want to do something for them.”<sup>143</sup>

However, what she faces is quite the opposite of her expectations. She finds a group of people entitled as peasants who are not awakened to recognize the burdens on or obstacle in front of them that prevent the same people from deriving their consciousness. Patronizing attitude of the unnamed heroine appears here as a ritual of the socialist ideology to inject awakesness to “the duped peasants.”<sup>144</sup> The use of both local people in the example of peasants and the tailor for a universal goal, which means the targeted victory of socialism over capitalism, manifests itself in the peculiar story of Turkish people. The backward Turkish people in the eyes of the unnamed heroine besides the dirt and poverty in Eastern cities like Hakkari and Diyarbakir give the impression that they are used as a means of justifying the voyage of the socialist group.

The unnamed socialist describes the inhabitants in the places she visits as “four thousand dust-covered people.”<sup>145</sup> What I understand from the definition of people covered with dust is that they are the ones who need awareness which may come true once they get rid of the dust on them. Dust is symbolic here as not only covering the bodies of the peasants but also existing as obstacle in the way of the peasants, the way which leads to consciousness. What brings dust, dirt and misery to the life of those

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid 205.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid 207.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid 216.

Anatolian people is their subordination to American control, first in the economic and then social sense, which is the concomitant of the former one. In order to purify themselves either mentally or physically, the first thing to be eliminated from their life is the American influence and then the way which is supposed to take peasants to liberation could be opened. The way to open the route to liberation is possible with political means, which here stand for socialism as it is clear in the following citation quoted from the unnamed heroine: “I believe that liberation of the peoples is only possible through socialism.”<sup>146</sup>

In this paragraph, what I would like to treat is the situation which contradicts the acts of the unnamed heroine as a socialist. What I mean is the money given by the Anatolian tailor to the socialist group. The money that the sailor gives to the unnamed heroine and her socialist friends to go on their socialist propaganda is ironic and symbolic as well. I would like to propose two reasons. One is that the socialists can continue their journey with the indirect help of Americans they strongly criticize. For the second one, I have a few questions: why do those socialist people accept the money given by the tailor who was just overtly condemned by the unnamed heroine as serving the American soldiers in Turkey? Does this mean that the unnamed heroine and her companions don't have enough consciousness yet although they are giving the fight of enlightening people via socialism? Are they sincere with their movement or simply adventurous people and not sufficiently equipped with the required political and ideological ideas?

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid 216.

Although it seems possible to claim that Germany gives the unnamed heroine her identity in terms of politics, we, on the other hand, cannot see the unnamed heroine as an active politically-driven person in her German life. Her involvement in socialist movement becomes visible after her return to Turkey. The life style of the unnamed heroine in Germany is much more social than political. She is interested in her dream of first having a good theatre education and then being a successful actress. She is active in her social relations that she always changes her star groups and finds new friends. She experiences many new things in Germany, among which sleeping with men appears as the most important change in her life. The unnamed heroine focuses on her own life and social issues rather than taking part in the socialist propaganda and its concomitant activities. In this case, I wonder if it is simply a coincidence that Turkey is represented as country full of political and cultural conflict while Germany is the land of pleasure and freedom. We have a protagonist who gets pregnant in Germany and hides this situation from the people in her environment in Turkey. She cannot reveal it to anybody and she is afraid of being caught pregnant by her parents. We have a protagonist whose life is shaped around politics in her 'break' in Istanbul. What do all these mean? What does Ozdamar try to do? What is the reason behind comparing a free German society to a politically, culturally and traditionally complicated Turkish society?

## CONCLUSION

### **The Unnamed Heroine's Immigration: A Social-Drama or Tragedy of an Individual:**

Turner's definition of the social drama addresses a communal phenomenon. What he means by a social drama is the conflicts and contradictions taking in a broad community. Collisions or disagreements which are likely to arise in a social drama are thought to be interlinked with and encompassing the continuation and processes of a social life in general. On the other hand, the case of the unnamed heroine seems to be a personal drama or tragedy. The individual characteristic of the novels in terms of their narration reduces and limits the level of drama in those novels into a personal and local scale. Whatever the reader sees and knows about the places, events and people mentioned in those books, he knows them through the eyes of the unnamed heroine. The reader's analyses and observations are limited the extent to which the protagonist narrates the issues and events. The individual perspective of the unnamed heroine occupies the center point in other words.

The drama of the unnamed heroine means her development and transformation which are fraught with dramatic elements which refer to the agonistic structure of the relationship between the unnamed heroine and her motherland. The unnamed heroine's transformation which starts with an obedient school-girl and daughter, goes on with an anarchic-like but still submissive adolescent in many situations and ends with a completely different personality who is equipped with socialist ideas mirrors her

competition with the structures provided by her own country. Similar to three motives or stages within a social drama, the stages in the unnamed heroine's transformative social drama are also discernible. They are distinctive as they carry different motives and structures within themselves. In the beginning she is a child and then becomes an adolescent. These two stages, inaugural and partly transitional ones, function as the bedrock of the fully transitional stage in her drama in Germany and in Turkey, and her terminal stage in Germany. Transitions through social, cultural, political and religious reasons become visible in her life when she starts dealing with theatre in high-school. She then meets socialism through socialist people and undergoes manifold transitions which bring her transformation at the end of the day. After this transitional stage, the terminal motif comes, which means her life in Germany from the beginning to the end of the third novel.

Her success in terms of conceptualization and formulation of events in her inner world after observing them conscientiously urges me to insistently hold the idea that she is really quick and successful regarding her adaptation and integration into new environments. I retain and maintain the belief that what makes her both successful and different from the majority of immigrants with respect to her ability in adaptation and integration is simply about her submissive and subordinate attitude towards the new places and their facts as well as their requirements without any opposition or question. This stance or structure in the novels that makes me regard Ozdamar's works as a narrative of self-discovery. The first and foremost concern is the transformation and development of a girl, and then come her relationship and interaction with the social life,

mainly in Turkey and partly in Germany. These last statements don't necessarily imply any ignorance like the unnamed heroine's undervaluing the socio-cultural, socio-political and religious indoctrinations. What I am trying to suggest is that the unnamed heroine personalizes the events in a way that she reconfigures them first according to her perception and then approaches the general issues. She tries to understand them first by observing and then gives them some space and place in her life.

As a result the aforementioned peculiarities of the unnamed heroine in observation first and then integration, the rituals like sleeping with men for the sake of theatre, which might be regarded as acts of self-sacrifice in the traditional and religious sense, are practiced and even institutionalized by the protagonist without any concern. Removing the sense or idea of self-sacrifice from those rituals by justifying her actions on the basis of the concept of 'normality', the unnamed heroine attempts to eliminate the tragic content of her actions. The case of the unnamed heroine could be exemplified as a social-drama in the beginning and an authentic transformation replete with transitions in the continuation.

### **Europe for Intellectual Aura and Freedom:**

Why does the unnamed heroine leave Turkey and move to Germany? As she confesses, her main target is to involve herself in theatre so as to make it possible for her to catch her dream of becoming an actress. Turkey is not good enough to supply what she needs. It is clear in the statements of the unnamed heroine that it is not for nothing, but for the sake of theatre she leaves for Germany, which stands for Europe and Europe

signifies many artistic facilities as well as opportunities made attainable and possible in industrialized and modern Western societies. It is again not for nothing that Ozdamar severely criticizes Turkey's absolute subordination to the USA through the perspective of the protagonist.

A further idea could be put forward in relation to Turkey's alleged backward situation in terms of intellectual creativity and freedom by looking at the unnamed heroine's return to Germany at the end of the second book due to mainly political and also intellectual reasons. She leaves Turkey again as she cannot stand the authority and strict control practiced by the junta after the military coup in 1971. Police question the unnamed heroine as she takes part in socialist movement and activities. She cannot deal with theatre on the other hand during the turbulent situation in Turkey. Chaos and instability appear as the main reasons that drive the unnamed heroine to leave Turkey again. This negative and derogatory approach presents Turkey as a third world country on the basis of its political situation. In such a country, socio-cultural life lacks enough support for intellectual activities where artistic skills and performances are censored as a direct concomitant of the rotten structure mentioned.

What is symbolic and also ironic in relation to this particular situation is the unnamed heroine's disappointment in Turkey. She is disillusioned because she cannot reach her target in terms of contacting the maximum people to contribute to their awareness with the help of socialist ideology. As a conscious and awakened socialist after spending two years in Germany, she tries to help her fellow citizens to come into realization of the corrupt and rotten structure in Turkish society. Again, as a disciple of

Marx, she is not in demand of commenting on the current situations, rather she is in the pursuit of changing them. She returns back to Turkey as having equipped with the necessary things in the ideological sense, but the aura in Turkey doesn't allow her to put her ideas into practice.

Similar to Western intellectuals' consideration of the Third World countries from an etic perspective and the stories about these countries from the same of view, Ozdamar seems to be doing the same thing. Since one of the definitions of epic narration<sup>147</sup> is that it makes the descriptions of the described as alien due to the fact that the criteria used is external to the story analyzed, it is possible to consider Ozdamar's analysis of Turkish society within the same context. Contrary to those like Azade Seyhan who suggests Ozdamar's narration of Turkish society dating back to Ottoman History as an informative guideline for the second and third generation Turks in Germany, especially the ones who got their socialization in Germany, I hold the idea that Ozdamar's book cannot be a guide book for the generations concerned. Seyhan says that; "In a symbolic, poetic and folkloristic reordering of the past, she restores for the second generation of Turks living in Germany the history of their now foreign homeland."<sup>148</sup> Quite the opposite, Ozdamar's narrations function to solidify the etic perspective of the West on Turkish society which has been known to the West as a site settled on "binary thinking valorizes culture from Germany or Europe as Christian and enlightened and lessens the

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<sup>147</sup> Turner, Victor. "Social Dramas and Stories about Them." 145.

<sup>148</sup> Seyhan, Azade. "Lost in Translation: Re-Membering the Mother Tongue in Emine Sevgi Ozdamar's *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei*." 420.



worth of culture from Turkey as reflecting Moslem fundamentalism, as being particularly patriarchal, as lacking in modernity.”<sup>149</sup>

### **Orientalism and Ozdamar:**

It is not easy to assert with pure belief that Ozdamar draws a picture of Turkish society from the perspective of an Orientalist observer. It is discernible in her works that she uses oriental images and defines things and concepts peculiar to Turkish society by distancing herself from those discussed issues. In other words, she presents them as the values which belong to ‘other’ people. Yet, these arguments are not sufficient to ascribe an Orientalist stance to Ozdamar and her works. This being the case, I would like to put forward the idea that she gives the impression of an ‘unintentional Orientalist’, which highlights the emergence of any possible Orientalist point of view and way of description in her books as a direct result of the rejectionist and controversial attitude as well as life style of the protagonist. The last sentence, however, doesn’t neglect the fact that the protagonist embodies the intellectual curiosity and creativity of the author. Since the protagonist in her novels undergoes a transformation as an outcome of her international immigration, Turkey in that contemporary time is criticized by the unnamed heroine alongside her personal development. Symbolically speaking, a comparative study of Turkey is followed by the unnamed heroine from her childhood in Turkey to her immigrant position in Germany. In addition to physical changes like the place of residence and new people in different surroundings, transitions of the

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<sup>149</sup> Jankowsky, Karen. ““German” Literature Contested: The 1991 Ingeborg-Bachmann-Prize Debate, “Cultural Diversity,” and Emine Sevgi Ozdamar.” 263.

protagonist in the cognitive sense also lay an important role in her perception and evaluation of her home country. As a direct result of the changes both in physical and also mental stages, the unnamed heroine frames a Turkish society the need for an 'other-observer' status is implied as the basic criteria to understand the society in question. Remembering the autobiographical structure or fact of her novels, I think describing Ozdamar if not entirely but at least partly an Orientalist wouldn't be an exaggeration.

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