

**T.C.  
KARABUK UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LOTERATURE**

**COMPARISON BETWEEN ELIF SAFAK'S BLACK MILK AND  
CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN'S HERLAND IN TERMS OF  
THEIR CULTURAL, NATIONAL AND SEXUAL DILEMMAS**

**MASTER'S THESIS**

**Prepared By  
Melek YILDIRIM**

**Thesis Supervisor  
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tavguh Ghulam SAEED**

**Karabuk**

**JUNE/2019**

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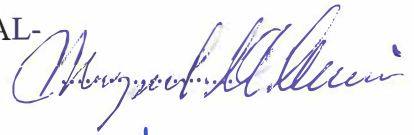


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## THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

To Karabuk University Directorate of Institute of Social Sciences

This thesis entitled "Comparison between Elif Safak' Black Milk and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Herland in Terms of their Cultural, National and Sexual Dilemmas" submitted by Melek YILDIRIM was examined and accepted/rejected by the Thesis Board unanimously/by majority as a MA thesis.

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Member	: .....	.....
Member	:	.....

Thesis Exam Date: 24/06/2019

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

**Name Surname:** Melek YILDIRIM

**Signature :**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'M. Yildirim', written in a cursive style.

## FOREWORD

I came across a number of times to Elif Şafak's *Black Milk* and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* in almost all of our criticisms as the master's degree students of feminism course about feminism throughout my course before I begun writing my thesis and the dilemmas in both of these novels revealed themselves in my view. Although the novels claimed that they deeply criticized the existing system and followed their own pathes, what I saw was that Safak and Gilman did not put into words what they aimed.

Because of the fact that I felt the necessity to study on the dilemmas which take place in both of the novels, and divided into the thesis two parts for each novel. Since my attention concentrated upon national, cultural and sexual dilemmas in both of the works, I preferred analyzing my parts in these three sections as I thought that my thesis may contribute to enlighten the existing conflictive issues, faults and deficiencies, which I consider that these conflicts do not accord with feminist approach although both Şafak and Gilman reveal their support for feminism. However, the dilemmas in their novels seriously fall into conflict with what they assert. I expect that this study will help the reader to distinguish between what these authors aim at writing and what they put into words.

I want to express my gratitude to my supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tavghah Ghulam SAEED for her patience, advices, help and kindness throughout my thesis. It would be impossible for me to finish my thesis without her strive and support with hard work to evaluate this study. In addition I want to thank our Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Mustafa YAŞAR, Prof. Dr. A. Serdar ÖZTÜRK, lecturer Emine İNAL AYDIN. Certainly, I cannot forget to thank my parents, brother and sister for always supporting and believing in me. Also, I want to thank the head of the Department of the Air Management in the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, Nazan ÖZYÜREK, my manager Önder GÜRPINAR, my experts Sezin ÇALIK ÇEPE, Arzu ERDOĞAN, Şeyma UÇAR SEÇGEL, Mehmet Metin ÇİÇEK and our bright assistant Görkem YEŞİLYURT. I will remember your support forever.

## ABSTRACT

The cultural, social, economic and political occurrences with sudden shifts have triggered salient changes in humans, yet these people have had difficulty in according with these processes for centuries. The individual has had to find a position within the wind of change while he /she has been compelled because of sticking between being a ‘self’ and ‘individual’ and the society’s strive to preserve its rules by stimulating the sense of belonging. The introduction chapter aimed at revealing information about the novels from two different countries.

Chapter One gives information about modernism in order to enlighten the movement, which has affected both *Black Milk* and *Herland*. In addition, Elif Safak’s and Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s biographies are included in this chapter since we know that these novels contain various details about the author’s lives.

Chapter Two embraces the cultural, national and sexual dilemmas in the *Black Milk*, the semi – autobiographical novel, which encompasses the source of the conflicts within the constraints of individual angle.

Chapter Three includes the dilemmas in *Herland* within the same framework with criteria in the previous chapter from a communal perspective.

In conclusion, both of the novels mirrors the obscurity between where the main characters want to stand and where they are as a result of the individual preferences and social assertiveness and imposition by leaving the individual never ending dilemmas.

**Keywords:** nation, culture, gender, individual dilemmas, undermining feminism.

## ÖZ (ABSTRACT IN TURKISH)

Son birkaç yüzyıl boyunca yaşanan kültürel, sosyal, ekonomik ve politik olaylar ve bunların ani ve çok hızlı bir şekilde yaşanması, insanların hayatında birçok değişimi tetiklemiştir, fakat insanlar bu süreçlere uyum sağlama konusunda sorunlar yaşamıştır. Kişi, 'kendi' ve ' birey' olmak ve bireyin aidiyet duygusunu canlandırarak kurallarını korumaya çabalayan toplum arasında kalmasından dolayı zorlanırken bu değişim rüzgârında kendine bir konum bulmak zorunda kalmaktadır. Giriş bölümü, iki farklı ülkede yazılmış olan iki roman hakkında bilgi vermeyi hedeflemektedir.

Birinci bölüm, hem *Siyah Süt*'ü hem de *Kadınlar Ülkesi*'ni etkisi altına almış olan modernizm akımına ışık tutmak için bu akım hakkında bilgi vermektedir. Bun ek olarak romanların yazarları Elif Şafak ve Charlotte Perkins Gilman biyografileri de dâhil edilmiştir çünkü her iki roman da yazarlarının hayatları hakkında çeşitli bilgiler içerdiğini bilmekteyiz.

İkinci bölüm yazarın bireysel bakış açısının sınırlamaları dâhilinde çatışmalarının kaynağını barındıran yarı – biyografik roman *Siyah Süt* 'te yer alan kültürel, ulusal ve cinsel ikilemleri barındırmaktadır.

Üçüncü bölüm bir önceki bölümde yer alan kriterler çerçevesinde ama bu bölümde komünal bir perspektif ile *Kadınlar Ülkesi*'nde yer alan ikilemleri içermektedir.

Sonuç olarak her iki roman da ana karakterlerin hayatlarındaki sonu asla gelmeyen ikilemlere ışık tutması ile sonuçlanarak bu bireylerin nerede durmak istedikleri ve nerede durdukları arasındaki belirsizliği yansıtmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ulus, kültür, cinsiyet, bireysel ikilemler ikilem, feminizmin zayıflatılması.



### ARCHIVE RECORD INFORMATION

<b>Title of the Thesis</b>	Comparison between Elif Safak's <i>Black Milk</i> and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's <i>Herland</i> in Terms of their Cultural, National and Sexual Dilemmas
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### ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ (in Turkish)

<b>Tezin Adı</b>	Elif Şafak'ın <i>Siyah Süt</i> ve Charlotte Perkins Gilman'ın <i>Herland</i> Adlı Romanlarının Ulusal, Kültürel ve Cinsel İkilemlerinin Karşılaştırılması
<b>Tezin Yazarı</b>	Melek YILDIRIM
<b>Tezin Danışmanı</b>	Doç. Dr. Tavgh Ghulam SAEED
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<b>Tezin Sayfa Sayısı</b>	187
<b>Anahtar Kelimeler</b>	Ulus, kültür, cinsiyet, bireysel ikilemler ve feminizmin zayıflatılması.

## ABBREVIATIONS

**Abbreviations 1:** p.p.: per procuracionem

**Abbreviations 2:** p.: page



This study focuses on the novels, *The Black Milk* by Elif Şafak and *The Herland*, which was written by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Both of the authors deal with female protagonists who are in pursuit of ideal lifestyles for women. In this context, this thesis aims at uncovering the dilemmas in each novel in order to clarify the authors' problems about their point of views on feminism.

### **PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

This study seeks for revealing the authors' conflictive approaches throughout their works in which they neither completely give up their interaction with the society to which they belong - although they claim that they already put an end to it - nor they pursue their ideal path for their welfare and happiness. I think this thesis will help the reader to figure out the dilemmatic situations, which undermine the feminism.

### **METHOD OF THE RESEARCH**

Comparative literature is expected to be the best alternative in order to enlighten the essence of the dilemmas in terms of individual and communal angles.

I assume in this thesis that Şafak's and Gilman's approaches in their literary works undermine what they aim at defending because of the dilemmas, which they possess and reflect them in their works. In addition to the damage, which they give their novels, they also unconsciously cripple feminism while they favor in supporting the vice versa.

## INTRODUCTION

The cultural, social, economic and political occurrences with sudden shifts have triggered salient changes in human being, yet these people have had difficulty in according with these processes for centuries. The individual has had to find a position within the wind of change while s/he has been compelled because of sticking between being a 'self' and 'individual' and the society's strive to preserve its rules by stimulating the sense of belonging. The individual who has swung between being the 'self' and society could not come to a neat decision since the alternatives which surrounds him/her are not desirable. Nonetheless, life forces people to choose a path to follow whether the person want it or not. *The Black Milk*, by Elif Safak narrates the story of a woman who goes between two opposite polars in terms of cultural, national and gender – sex in pursuit of being an individual in the society. In this context, the protagonist learns what being a seesaw between two opinions means and the cost of it. Thus, the individual realizes that it is not possible to break up all his/her connection with the society in which s/he lives, yet the zeitgeist, in other words, the spirit of time do not leave the person alone. *Herland* which is penned many centuries before *the Black Milk* reveals the neglect of the cultural, national and gender-sexual elements while the person strives to run away from and the same time his /her attempts to turn back from the path which s/he considers as ideal by resulting in shedding light on various dilemmas in the protagonist's lives.

Although these two novels are claimed to be the products, which are on the side of feminist movement, we have come across numerous dilemmas whose roots are nurtured by various reasons by underpinning the fundamental structure of this movement. When we focused on the existing literature about these novels, we have noticed that the dilemmas in these novels are evaluated by reaching their core, which will shed light on the nature of the dilemmas via a meticulous study on them.

The novels aforementioned may go on blurring people's minds about the perspectives of them. In order to draw a line between feminism and the books which posses the potential to give harm to this movement although they are penned with good intentions. However, the good intention is not enough to achieve an ideal. Therefore,

we believe in the importance of being aware of discrepancies between an author's intention and the intention of the book.

In this context, the research aims at detecting and classifying the dilemmas in the *Black Milk* and *Herland* under three titles: cultural, national and sexual dilemmas. In addition, grouping them together will help the readers to notice the relationships among each dilemma and bring the reasons of them to the surface.

In order to achieve this goal, the thesis is divided the thesis into two parts. The first part gives supportive information about feminism, which owns serious effect in both *Black Milk* and *Herland*. In addition, comprehensive information is shared about Elif Safak, the author of *Black Milk* although her novel is autobiographical, specific information from various references in order to enlighten the dilemmas in a clear cut way. This Chapter also reveals particular information about Charlotte Anna Perkins Gilman who penned *Herland* because her novel is dominated with her private experiences an individual point of views towards woman rights.

Part Two focuses on *Black Milk* within the framework of dilemmas in terms of cultural, national and sexual points. Each dilemma in Black milk will be detected and the reasons behind the formation of them will be explained.

Part Three includes three Chapters which deal with *Herland* from the perspectives of cultural, national and sexual sides.

The dealing with these two novels will help the readers to gain a new attitude towards these works. In addition to it, making assessments about these works will contribute to the enforcement of feminism. Although these two novels in general are claimed to be feminist fictions, which emphasize women rights, the dilemmas in them underpin the principles of feminist approach both consciously and unconsciously. As a movement which aims at the dominant patriarchal system, the women's rights requires the literary fictions, criticisms and academic studies in order to reinforce the norms of the feminism for the improvement, welfare and happiness for the women.

In spite of the fact that feminism has gone through a considerable progress for centuries, it still cannot break or slow down the effect of the patriarchal system. Women face inequality in social, political and work life. They still have to strive to

prove their quality. The justice system still cannot protect women since one everyday reads news about women who are murdered by their husbands, but these men go on their daily routines without any interruption. The women are tortured, kept in houses like being a prison or their communications with their families are cut off. Many women cannot take the education that they want. They are raped but their aggressors can defend themselves by stating that they were turned on. What is worse than that is the reality that this statement is enough for the dismissal of the cases.

When the circumstances are so disappointing, literary works, which are so popular such as *Black Milk* and *Herland* can easily cause harm to feminism while this movement is in need of constructive support for the improvement of women rights. Works, which are controversial about feminist claim, cannot hold on to this movement, but they may merely be the supporters of patriarchal system. In other words, thoughts are not enough to affect and promote the mass society to inject the ideals. Therefore, an approach without humanistic basis and a rationale cannot take a permanent position in the literary sphere.

It is hoped that this thesis will help the literary sphere to concentrate on the literary device, dilemma within its meaning and the function in the terminology of literature and to see the misuse of the dilemma by conducting to it moving away from its origin and function since it will be noticeable that the use of dilemma without its technical characteristics has the potential to mislead the path of a literary work.

Both of the novels require meticulous studies since they seem as if they serve for the benefit of feminism while it will be proved in this thesis that the deeper meanings in the texts will necessitate prejudices towards the literary works and the popularity of an author or the fictitious work should be ignored for the objective evaluation of the works.

In conclusion, both of the novels mirror the obscurity between where the main characters want to stand and where they are as a result of the individual preferences and social assertiveness and imposition by leaving the individual never ending dilemmas. Therefore, it is believed that such thesis will help the evaluation of the literary works will be done in a more scientific and objective way by presenting more distinguishing criticisms for the readers.

## CHAPTER ONE: FEMINISM

### 1.i Feminism

Chapter One will focus on giving some general information about feminism because of the fact that the novels *Black Milk* and *Herland* share some common points with this movement.

When we pay attention to the history of feminism, its three periods with various characteristics has relationship with both of the novels aforementioned. In addition to it, Charlotte Perkins Gilman's contributions to this movement through her life and reflecting them in a utopian style in *Herland* makes it necessary to begin the thesis by giving information about feminist movement.

It is aimed at Chapter One will help the readers to compare the novels and notice their position in Turkish and American literature in terms of feminist perspective. Therefore, this Chapter will prepare the background of the thesis.



## CHAPTER ONE: FEMINISM

### 1. i Feminism

Feminism has been one of the most common movements both in the academic and social life. However, the wide scope of its content and many diversities and fragmentations still necessitate centralizing the core of the issue for the women who are into it and people of the literary sphere. In broad sense, feminism signifies series of beliefs and opinions about which is held by an expansive social and political act attain more freedom and equality for women. The circumstances for women in social, working and political life caused the formation of this movement.

Today, many women have the right to vote, work, take education in each level of education institutions, in other words, they are in public sphere in a more active role. However, these conditions were not available merely a few decades ago and achieving various rights required a long and systematic fight against the existing system in the past. Many women from different parts of the world and period focused their energy and time for the benefit of better condition for the women such as Simone de Beauvoir, Virginia Woolf, Mary Wollstonecraft, Dorothy Parker, George Elliot, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Doris Lessing, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker. Although their approach was not identical, which was seen as one of the most prominent blocks in feminism, they believed in the social, economic and political justice for both of the sexes by following an organized series of activities in order to empower women's rights and interests. Advocating all the rights for women in an as equally as for men was not welcomed immediately. Initially, deconstructing the existing system and establishing a new system for the sake of equality for both of the sexes irritated some people, who were either not ready for such a drastic change or the ones who had the monopoly to act as freely as possible in the public sphere. However, the women witnessed or observed all the happenings around their environment and living within the constraints of the society by putting the women into disadvantageous position.

Dietz says that "Each moment of our lives our every thought, value, and act- from the most mundane to the most lofty- takes its meaning and purpose from the

1. Fiss, Owen M. "What is feminism." *Ariz. St. LJ* 26 (1994): 413. p. 413.

wider political and social reality that constitutes and conditions us”<sup>2</sup>. Dietz’ quotations from Margaret Atwood’s successful novel, *The Handmaid’s Tale* emphasizes the power of the political system, which organizes the conditions in such an order that do not awaken the society. The awakening, which comes late means more strive, time and energy to promote the established, fixed patterns.

The beliefs, opinions, movements, agendas are included in feminist activities and they prefer refraining from the use of the word ‘movement because of the fact that they think that this term sounds a male language and feminism which was actively used in English in 1890s in order to fight consciously and actively against patriarchal system for the sake of altering the self-satisfied sureness of this patriarchal structure, to enable sexist equality and also in order to put an end to sexist domination in transforming cultural, social, economic and political society. In this sense, they favour using the expression of ‘feminist discourse’ instead of the expressions movement, theory, criticism...etc.<sup>3</sup>

Feminism is in general divided into three parts as the first wave, the second wave and the third wave in terms of the feminists’s types of the demands. First of all, what is critical here is that the feminism possesses a long political history, which takes its momentum especially in England and America. The Women’s Rights and The Women’s Suffrage were two leading activities in taking the world’s attention to the women’s issues, which were accepted as groundshaking acts. The first wave feminism includes prominent names such as Virginia Woolf, Simone De Beauvoir, Mary Himm, Olive Schreiner, Elizabeth Robins, Katherine Mansfield, Dorothy Richardson, Ray Strachey, Winifred Holtby, Rebecca West, Vera Brittain and so on. The first wave feminism dates back to the period of the late eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the times when the women had no civil status in the public sphere. According to Kahle, “... *they were pronounced civilly dead upon marriage or remained legal minors if they did not marry. They were not allowed to sign a will or a contract and they had no control about their wages. It is said that there was no need for*

2. Dietz, Mary G. "Context is all: Feminism and theories of citizenship." *Daedalus* (1987): 1-24. p. 1.

3. Selden, Raman, Peter Widdowson, and Peter Brooker. *A reader's guide to contemporary literary theory*. Longman, 2005. p. 115. 115 – 144.

*them to control their wages because they were supposed to leave their jobs (when they had one) early in order to marry men who could provide economic security”<sup>4</sup>.*

The expression above helps us learn the level of the disadvantageous life for women before the twentieth century, when they had the mere right to sign a formal document was their wedding certificate. It means that they cannot purchase or sale real estate property, they could not bequeath or inherit. If somebody benefit from patrimony, it was the male person who was the nearest relative from family blood if there were no one, the state would confiscate the Money and the property. The women always needed the signature of their male relatives for the legal issues. When it comes to their working conditions, they could not get the jobs that they wanted. They had no legal right to chaffer about their wages, they had to work longer hours than the male workers for the same work. The working women after marriage was a rare situation except for servants, governesses or nannies. The education which they took was actually limited and what they learnt except for reading and writing was, singing, playing piano, drawing, sewing and other embroideries or learning French, in other words, they were constrained with female activities which they could learn at home, as well.

What left for women to do was merely at home and they were just householding and child-rearing. When we take into consideration the position of women in the public sphere, it was inevitable for the first wave feminists focus on the right for the women to represent themselves in the official institutions without the existence of a man. It means that the feminism had to start their actions to strive for their civil rights, in other words, they had to begin by being in pursuit of their fundamental rights to achieve more sophisticated rights.

The most famous women in feminism were Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony Lucretia Mott, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. While they were in search of their liberty and legal rights, they did not hesitate to harshly criticize the institutions of family, church and state, which were the fundamental principles of institutions in the Victorian Age<sup>5</sup>. What is another important point is that the women in the first wave in general took attention of the women especially for middle class women who demanded economic alternatives to marriage and motherhood<sup>6</sup>. In

4. Antje Kahle, "The First Wave of Feminism in Politics and Literature". Grin Verlag Press; Norderstedt, Germany, 1. Edition, 2005, p. 4.

5. Ibid; p. 5.

Addition to it, what can be said about the general activities and the characteristics of the actions that they took was that the women's struggles were limited to the individual searches and works because of the fact that it was the period of the beginning of this movement and the women who controlled the management of the woman acts in their countries were the rich women from the aristocrat class of their countries since the work for the initiation of the women act required money to carry on their studies, to travel for the introducing this new action. Another important point about this issue is that the women at that period with the talents of reading and writing was in fact very limited. When the activity reached the point of the issue of every women by their full participation in social and political sphere, the feminist strive turned to an issue of public interest as civil status.

The second wave in feminism, which is the period between 1960s and 1970s, not only went on striving to give information about the meaning and the goal of the feminism as the injustice between the men and women in the public sphere, but it also aimed at benefitting from this definition as a foundation for the change. It is also stated that it was the period when women started to give importance to each other and at the same time their being proud of being born as a woman<sup>8</sup>. Hollows expresses in her book that "*Feminists in these countries struggled for equal pay, equal access to education and equal job opportunities; they fought for free contraception and the right to abortion; they campaigned about unpaid domestic labour, the need for free child-care provision and for both economic and legal independence; they claimed women's right to define their own sexuality; and they protested against domestic and sexual violence against women*"<sup>9</sup>. When we compare the second wave feminism with the first wave, it is clear to see the reality that women began to be more aware of the content of the feminism and they were more courageous to show the problems that they could not bear any more. What is more, we can see that they try to enter more professionally to the

6. Valery Sanders, "The First Wave Feminism" "The Routledge Companion to Feminism and Postfeminism edited by Sarah Gamble." *FEMINISM AND PSYCHOLOGY* 13.1(2003): 117-119. p. 20.

7. Ibid; p. 24.

8. Joanne Hollows, "Feminism, Femininity and Popular Culture", p. 3-2-19.

9. Ibid; p.3-4.

public sphere and they were more careful at defining their problems more specifically. Also, we notice that they want to participate in the world of economics more actively and at the same time more consciously. They struggled to add new and well - defined opportunities. Furthermore, the second wave aimed at new regulations for women with children because it was not possible for them to pay wage for baby – sitters since their own wages were not still paid in a fair way. Therefore, they favoured following an alternative path by demanding from the state and employees to present suitable environments for child – care in workplaces. The children’s needs were added to women’s demands.

Another distinguishing issue, which the second wave feminists pronounced, was the demand of female health. According to Valk, American women especially in 1969 stressed their need for abortion, birth control and free medical care for each woman<sup>10</sup>. The next issue, which cannot be ignored, is that the violence against women is put into words as neatly as possible for the first time in the history of feminism. The problem of violence certainly was expressed in an indirect way, but they were not declared as particularly as this period.

Barrett strives to emphasize in her study *Capitalism and Women’s Liberation* that the one of the most prominent reasons behind the oppression which was exposed to women by the patriarchal society is the capitalism, which demands support for a social order of the reproduction of the labour power as many as possible via domestic labour in the household, which works for the cheapest cost and also flexible employers of married women as crowded as an army so as to decrease the price of wages<sup>11</sup>. The number of the women who worked all day for the sake of their family without a regular wage or salary and also growing up the children who work both in the house and in the public sphere, the high number of the work power which enable to decrease the wages. Therefore, it can be noticeable that the feminism in the second

10. Anne Valk, “Fighting for Abortion as “Health Right” in Washington D.C.”, “Feminist Coalitions: Historical Perspectives on Second-Wave Feminism in the United States” edit. By Stephanie Gilmore, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago; USA. 2008. P.p. 135-178. P. 135.

11. Barrett, Michelle, “Capitalism and Women’s Liberation” *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory, Volume I* edit. by Linda J. Nicholson, Roudledge Press; New York, New York-USA, 1997, p. 123.

wave feminism and the critics who concentrate on it presents to evaluate the existing problems about women's rights which also looks from the perspective of men.

The third wave feminism, which comes into being around 1990s, signifies the underpinning the type of stable identity, which was supported by the first and second wave<sup>12</sup>. In addition to it, the women, who initiates this wave bring to the surface the issue of sexual freedom and agency. Henry says in her book *Not My Mother's Sister: Generational Conflict and Third Wave Feminism*; "*Third - wave feminists see their sexual freedom as a fundamental right, much like the right to vote*".<sup>13</sup> What differs third – wave from the other waves as secondary importance lays on its apparatus of 'media' at its peak by atracking the generations after its trends, so shaping the identities of the women takes its speed via the power of the media.

All in all, feminism has gained a considerable value, power and effect for the last century in both literay and political sphere and at the same time evolved, and gained new goals by defining itself more clearly. It seems that it will go on protecting its position in the literary world.

12. Jane Spencer, "*Introduction: Genealogies*", from "*Third Wave Feminism: A Critical Exploration*", Edit by. Stacy Gillis, Gillian Howie, Rebecca Munford, Palgrave Mcmillan, New York; N.Y.-USA, 2004, pp. 8-65, p. 9.

13. Astrid Henry, "*Taking Feminism to Bed- The Third Wave Does the Sex Wars*", from "*Not My Mother's Sister: Generational Conflict and Third-Wave Feminism*" Indiana University Press; Bloomington-Indiana USA. 2004. pp. 88-115, p. 90.

## 1. ii Elif Safak as a Female Writer in Turkey

Elif Safak, Turkish author, columnist and speaker, was born in Strasbourg, France in on 25 of October, 1971. She is Nuri Bilgin's (a successful academician who died in 2015) and diplomat Safak Akayman's only daughter. Because of her father's doctorate degree, she had been to France till her parents' divorce when she was one year old. When her mother and she came back to Turkey, Safak Akayman turned back to Turkey and went on her higher education, which she dropped out of International Relations because of her marriage. After her graduation, Akayman worked in Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ankara.

If we focus on Safak's childhood as a starting point in her writing, it is easy to realize that she did not have a joyous period. She explains her mood of childhood in one of the interviews, which she had with Nihal Duzel by stating that she considers her earlier ages as sorrowful because of her loneliness and unsociable character. When her mother realizes this situation, she buys a diary to her daughter and gives books in order to reduce Safak's sense of loneliness. The author states that:

After she finds out the sphere of the books, she utterly withdraws into her shell, imagination. There is so much disintegration in her life. Her parents broke up, and she in usual travelled with her mother from one country to another one continuously, also her mother 'entrusted' her care to her grandmother for a time. Later, her loneliness was accompanied by being culturally outsider when her mother and she moved to Spain when she was ten years old.<sup>26</sup>

She could take merely her writing talent to wherever she goes and the only talent which gives her the sense of perpetuity is writing, therefore nothing could be stable in her life except for writing.<sup>27</sup> However, what initiates her writing regularly is with the help of her mother's observations on her daughter. In fact, she admits that she used to love her imaginary world much more than her real life, so she had many felt-tip pens and she used to speak them up by wondering around the house. As her mother is worried about her mental health, she buys a dairy and recommends her daughter to take notes about what she did every day. Nonetheless, Elif Safak becomes sick and tired of writing the same daily routines, therefore she decides to write about the events

14. Elif Safak, "We announce ourselves 'old' at a very early ages", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=259>, retrieved at 23 of February, 2018, page 1of 3.

which she does not experience and these little lies turns into fictitious stories. As her not having a regular and well-balanced family life, she grows up alone by observing other people, reading. As result, she builds up a world of imagination and stories. She thought that the world of the stories was more colourful and realistic.<sup>14</sup> People generally discovers herself via other people but Elif Safak experiences this process alone and she calls it fragmented mirrors which hindered her from having unity in her soul and created the choir of discordant voice, the unharmonious voice, an identity, a symbol. She states that she wrote in order not to lose her mental health and also so as not to be 'I', but to be 'somebody else'.<sup>15</sup>

After Safak's mother's assignment to Amman, Jordan, she moved to her grandmother in Ankara again as her mother believed that taking Safak to Amman could not be possible after she takes into consideration of the climate of the country and the political circumstances which creates serious worry in a female diplomat who is divorced and knows no one to trust and leave the care of her daughter to Elif Safak's grandmother. The author attends Ataturk High School in 1989, but she cannot break the chain of loneliness although her reputation arrives before she comes to her school as she can fluently speak English and Spanish like a native speaker and also knows French at intermediate level, however, she cannot keep this fame and Safak turns back to her two lovers: her books and writing.<sup>16</sup>

Because of living abroad at early ages, her mother tongue loses its flexibility and richness, which directs her to take up studying Turkish like a primary school kid to help her to understand the idioms and jokes. She explains that she discovers Turkish is a language whose characteristics are suitable to auto-didacticism. In addition, she says that she still reads dictionary and studies vocabularies, which enables her to reach to the depth of language.<sup>17</sup>

14. Elif Safak, "the greatest writer is The Creator", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=346>, retrieved at 23 of February, 2018, page 1 of 4.

15. Fatma Yilmaz, Tuba Nur Arican, "Subject of the Sentence: Elif Safak", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=280>, retrieved at 25 of March, 2018, 3 of 3.



Elif Safak finished the department of International Relations department in Middle East Technical University in 1994. She got her graduate degree from this university's Women's Studies department with her thesis, titled "Destructuring woman in Islam within the context of Bektashi and Mawlawi thought", which was awarded by Social Scientists Institute. She received her master's degree also from the same university, but this time from the department of Social Science with her thesis, titled "Women Prototypes in Turkish Modernization and Boundaries of Tolerance for Marginality".

Once taking into account the author's university years, it is quite clear to see the both sides of the coin. Initially, Safak's period of waiting for her father gives its place to fury because her father calls her merely a few times and never visits her, in other word, Safak considers herself a "forgotten daughter". In spite of her strife to remind herself and reveal her need for a father's care, she cannot change the circumstances and she gives up hoping for experiencing a father and daughter relationship any more.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, she uses her mother's name 'Safak' as a surname when she sends her first story to her editor. After her father's death, she writes article for Turkish newspaper, Hurriyet in order to share her emotions with her readers. She explains that: "My father died two times for me, the former when he was not with me; the latter, now ... after years when we just started to create a bridge between us...<sup>19</sup>"

The advantageous side of her university years was her meeting Sufism, Islamic philosophy which represents pure discipline in order to reach one absolute truth: the Creator, the oneness of Being who gives reality to all of the existence<sup>20</sup>, and Mevlana Celaleddin-i Rumi a timeless Sufi leader and the founder of the Mevlevi order in Islamic-Sufi tradition.<sup>21</sup> Sufism is not a few courses which she has to pass to graduate, but it also turns to a new insight with which Safak learns how to control the storm in her soul. She explains it in that way:

16. Elif Safak, "The Award for Loneliness Goes to Elif Safak", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=28>, retrieved at 26 of February, 2018, 1 of 9.

17. Yesim Cobankent, "Exposure via Characters", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=30>, retrieved at 25 of March, 2018, 1 of 3.

18. Elif Safak, "My childhood passed by waiting for my father ", <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/kelebek/hayat/cocuklugum-babami-beklemekle-gecti-28142640>, retrieved at 26 of February, 2018, 1 of 3.

Turkey is in need of Sufism. While all we struggle the tension, stress, violence and hostility, what we should do is to stop this chaos and remember human essence, the pure 'self' existing in our soul, which is our essence is made up of LOVE. Not with small letters, but in capital letters: LOVE! Our essence is to love the created for the Creator's sake. Our essence is not to segregate or seclude and also not to break people's hearts, to mirror the earth and seeing ourselves in the reflection of the earth... to be helpful for the people, for the humanity... our essence requires to be a ring in a love chain... glittering like a bullion of solid gold and glittering light and love... this is our essence, and the rest is hot air because 'everything on earth is made up of love'.<sup>22</sup>

Elif Safak wants here to stress that not only she but also all Turkey may find the solution in Sufism when considering the mood of the people and the source of the problem, which haunts them. When people forgets the Islamic and Sufis rules stressing the existing of love and affection for the created and also people's need to see and reply to this care, which is emphasized in the Sura of Maryam: "*Indeed, those who have believed and done righteous deeds – the Most Merciful will appoint for them Affection. (96).*"<sup>23</sup> In this sense, the importance of believing in the Creator and being a good person is praised. In addition, it is stated that Allah is going to create love and affection for the people who loves and believes in their Creator and enable them to be loved by the other people, and enhance the emotions of fraternity and affection for them.<sup>24</sup> The author states that Sufism is a way which puts the word "decency" on pedestal involving avoiding from extreme polar. At all costs, it advises all human being to inhibit discrimination and class consciousness. It not only integrates all the states and behaviours of a person, it also unites them with all the human beings. Furthermore, Sufism teaches the entire world to appreciate and esteem each individual. Indeed, it sets the humans free via taking its roots from "love", but not from fear or prohibitions.<sup>25</sup>

19. Ibid., p. 3 of 3.

20. Salaaddin Ahmed, "What is Sufism? ", <https://philpapers.org/rec/AHMWIS>, retrieved at 27 of February, 2018, 1 of 17.

21. Burcu Saglam, "A Discussion on the Myth of Mevlana in Modern Turkey", <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07256868.2017.1341391?journalCode=cjis20>, retrieved at 28 of February, 2018, 1 of 16.

22. Elif Safak, "May Sufism be trendy?", <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/elif-safak/219476-tasavvuf-moda-olabilir-mi>, retrieved at 2 of March, 2018, 3 of 3.

23. Abbas Ahmadi et al, "Tanzil Quran Text", <http://tanzil.net/#trans/en.sahih/19:96>, retrieved at 3 of March, 2018, 312 of 604.

24. T.C. Basbakanlık Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, "Hermeneutics", <http://kuran.diyanet.gov.tr/tefsir/Meryem-suresi/2346/96-ayet-tefsiri>, retrieved at 3 of March, 2018, 1 of 1.

What knowledge the reader is in need of knowing about Sufism for Elif Safak is that Sufis rely that the human beings already have knowledge about what to know, which they generally name it "dormant knowledge". Therefore, what they should do is to change the "latent capacity" into the "actual". When people turn to their inner-self world, they will achieve their goal. When she thinks about these characteristics of the Sufism, she finds out common features between Sufism and literature. According to her, literature too, let people to go beyond the limits of the "self" and thus bridge across the culture, religion and nations no matter what their identities are.<sup>26</sup>

After her doctorate studies, she moves to Istanbul and writes the *Mirrors of the City*, meanwhile she gives lectures at Istanbul Bilgi University about the topics: "Turkey and Cultural Identities" and "Woman and Literature".<sup>27</sup> In the 2003-2004 academic year, she attends and gives lectures at Michigan University, the fellowship program of Mount Holyoke as an assistant professor. In addition, she worked at Arizona University, giving lectures about "Literature and Exile", "Memory and The Politics", "Sexuality and Social Sexuality in Muslim- World".<sup>28</sup>

The author got married in 2005 in Bern, Germany and her first child, Sehzat Zelda was born in 2006, the two important events in her life which promotes her in order to write *Black Milk*. After the publication of this novel, various academic and social debates reached its top in Turkey because of the fact that the novel questions the notion of female identity, motherhood, the possibility of being both a mother and writer. In her novel, she wants a clear-cut answer to her critical and sensational question: Does each woman have to give birth to a baby? Being a patriarchal society, which respects but at the same time puts heavy burdens on women and mothers, Turkish men harshly criticized Elif Safak for trying to demolish the traditional perception of a mother and a woman. However, female readers showed serious attention to the topic of the books and significant debates about over-burdened identity

25. Elif Safak, "May Sufism be trendy?", <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/elif-safak/219476-tasavvuf-moda-olabilir-mi>, retrieved at 0 3 of March, 2018, 2 of 3.

26. Anonymous, "Interview with Elif Safak", [https://www.goodreads.com/interviews/show/469.Elif\\_Shafak](https://www.goodreads.com/interviews/show/469.Elif_Shafak), retrieved at 4 of March, 2018, 1 of 3.

27. Anonymous, "Who is Elif Safak? Her Biography and her Books", <http://www.radikal.com.tr/hayat/elif-safak-kimdir-elif-safakin-hayati-ve-kitaplari-1177768/>, retrieved at 5 of March, 2018, 1 of 2.

28. Anonymous, "Who is Elif Safak?", <https://www.sabah.com.tr/elif-safak-kimdir->, retrieved at 5 of March, 2018, 1 of 2.

of women, the expectations of the society and impossibility of the existence of even single lady whose characteristics are in line with the traditional female prototype.

In 2008, Elif Safak had a son, Emir Zahir. Although she has got two children, she moved to London, but she frequently goes to Arizona and spends nearly half of the year in order to pursue her literary career because her editor lives in the USA.

Based upon the interviews, which she has had throughout her career, we can make inference that Elif Safak believes the art cannot be exclusionary when we take into account the art's principle of its universality involving inclusive attitude towards all the human being. As a consequence, artist cannot be the "other" while artist job is in essence to tell stories which are common heritage of all the world.<sup>29</sup> What is so stimulating about our writer's approach to literature is that the way "how" she forms her relationship with life includes mutual resemblance with the way "how" she frame her relationship with writing.<sup>30</sup>

According to Safak, writing is a strive in order not to lose her mental health and at the same time, she does not want to think herself more important and superior than the others as being a writer nurtures his/her ego causing the individual to lose his relation with reality. Besides, she stresses that writing helps her to keep the different and diverse characteristics of herself together.<sup>31</sup>

Similarly, renewing herself is the result of this strive while being in pursuit of exploring and accepting her identity, which hides many features of the author in the corners of undiscovered states of her inner world. Furthermore, she calls writing as a journey with her readers, which helps her to come closer to understand human being.<sup>32</sup>

However, this plural journey does not destroy her sense of loneliness, which she has to get on well with since her childhood, but the reasons of the loneliness

29. Kobifinans Magazine, "From Spiritual to Worldly Issues with Elif Safak" <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=313>, retrieved at 18 of March, 2018, 2 of 5.

30. M.Salih Polat, "The Writer and his Work aren't Identical", <http://arsiv.ntv.com.tr/news/36392.asp>, retrieved at 18 of March, 2018, 1 of 7.

47. Hulya Okur, "We, writers are so lonely while writing and the reader lonely while reading ", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=284>, retrieved at 8 of March, 2018, 3 of 14.

32. Gulenay Borekçi, "Our deepest and the worst emotional wounds stem from our families ", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=353>, retrieved at 9 of March, 2018, 4 of 6.

changes in her life as she matures. Although she gains this feeling because of her parents' divorce, living abroad and her mother's job, loneliness changes into a more consciously choice by preferring it in order not to experience loneliness successively so isolation becomes a life-long strategy. Therefore, she favours writing novels, which she defines it as "the loneliest art of all literary genres."<sup>33</sup>

In her view, not only the rhythm but the perception is completely dissimilar; while people read novels, people enjoy rare times in which they are all alone except for their inner world and becoming face to face with themselves", as a result, these moments are precious for Safak. Furthermore, she claims that: "*The time we spend while reading may be the moments when we are the most honest, peaceful, unhurried and even the freest people*".<sup>34</sup> What she finds so interesting about concentrating on arts-based on individual participation is that the people are in general more open-minded when they are alone; "*In my view, people are more democrat and tolerate when they are alone, but the moment when a few people come together, they are more authoritarian and intolerant or reactive, that is, fascism is an epidemic disease. On the other hand, novel is the loneliest art of all and catches human's soul in free or liberate state*".<sup>35</sup>

The stimulus, which evokes Elif Safak to write is to try to be "someone else" and empathizing while looking through the world from their point of view, and at the same time being far away from 'her-self'. She says that she enjoys this change which gives her sense of partial freedom, in other words, to be 'free from her-self'.<sup>47</sup> She is in the opinion that except for *Black Milk* her books are not in general autobiographical although any work of art mirrors its author.

In spite of the fact that the author emphasizes her need in order to be "anyone" with the aim of camouflaging her deep rooted loneliness, she is always in the search of

49. Hulya Okur, "Writers are Lonely while Writing and so is the Reader while Reading", <http://elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=284>, retrieved at 9 of March, 2018, 9 of 14.

50. Muge Akgun, "Words do not Become Old.", [http://kitap.radikal.com.tr/makale/haber/kelime\\_eskimez\\_olsa\\_olsa\\_yaslanir-62806](http://kitap.radikal.com.tr/makale/haber/kelime_eskimez_olsa_olsa_yaslanir-62806), retrieved at 12 of March, 2018, 2 of 4.

51. . Muge Akgun, "Words do not Become Old", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=375>, retrieved at 14 of March, 2018, 1 of 3.

herself as she is in the opinion that she realizes how drastically she changes while she starts writing each of her books. In that way, her novels reveals their own energy although they are born from the same writer's pen. Whenever she mentions about her books, she insists that each of her novel is a station, but at its essence, writing is the central point is the journey itself; that is, writing.

As a writer who mainly prefers writing novels, she states that the fiction conducts the process of the birth of the novel. When she is asked a question about fictionalization the protagonist of *Sufi*, she obviously expresses that she does not manage it because she believes that elements of the language does not let her to control everything to form the novel. The power of the language applies the conduct itself and a word lays the path for the next word, which enables the formation of the work without her interruptions.<sup>36</sup>

Safak thinks that the writers, who obey their draft are generally males by taking control like an engineer from completing the fictionalization in their minds to being aware of what and when the character say or do, to what extent s/he will say and that his/her speech may lead to Nevertheless, many female writers like her do not follow this path. She says that following a draft causes her to feel like a puppet artist who is charged to conduct all the show from performing the show to the checking the lights. Instead of it, a photograph/picture, a feeling, emotion or sensation is enough to initiate her to write a novel:

She sometimes experiences such moments in which she visualizes the first scene of the novel, or a few pictures pursue one another in my mind. Then she begins to understand that the character acting in this picture. Who is s/he? The subconscious dreams or images from time to time may inhibit her writing for months.<sup>37</sup>

Our author is in the opinion that sentiment sometimes distinguishes itself from the logic especially after the theme of the novel and the story meet with the fictionalization of the work.<sup>38</sup> This situation, then, lays the paving the stones for forming the novel without the writer's frequent interruptions in order to follow his/her draft.

36. Elif Safak, "She won the reward of loneliness", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=28>, retrieved at 7 of March, 2018, 2 of 3.

Although our modern age is dominated by speed because of the high technology involving less time, less patience, but more work, novel has not lost its significance. On contrary, people have frequently begun to realize their need to turn to their inner world, to discover their reflection, to stop for a time and to be in tranquility in order to see the state of their lives.

The relationship between Elif Safak and her readers is strong and closer than the author-reader connection from the previous generations thanks to the technological developments and social media. As opposed to what publishers or other writers in general say, she says that the literature readers in Turkey are in fact realistic, intimate and careful although the quantities of them are not satisfactory for her. Even so, she still calls them my "soul mates" by enhancing her expression that she and her readers create a book and unearth the meaning together.<sup>39</sup>

In addition she claims that readers in Turkey are quite different from the reader in West in the way that Turkish people shares their books with their family, friends and even with their relatives. Such kind of attitude helps her to defend her book insistently as if a boxer takes his guard against his rival.<sup>40</sup>

Another important point, which Safak stresses is that art of novel owes to her female readers because of their quantitative contribution by reading books and purchasing their books legally. Also, the female readers in Turkey have the books read to their boyfriends, fiancées, husbands and friend.<sup>39</sup> This habit of sharing and exchanging the books lead to two results. In one hand, the readers indirectly support the advertisement campaign of the book on a wider scope in and economical way. On the other hand, it makes impossible to detect the exact and total number of the books for the publish houses and the writers. For that reason, the qualitative and the quantitative number of the book readers are always a mystery in Turkey. Although the owners of the publish houses complain about the economic cost of the production,

37. Yaprak Ozer, "A Lonely Woman In the Crowd", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=371>, retrieved at 8 of March, 2012, 7 of 9.

38. M.Salih Polat, "The Writer and his Work are not Identical", <http://arsiv.ntv.com.tr/news/36392.asp>, retrieved at 18 of March, 2018, 2 of 7.

39. CNNTurk, "Time for 'Safak' in Turkish Literature", <https://www.cnnturk.com/2010/kultur.sanat/diger/02/10/.lif.safak.varolmanin.gayesi.ask/563135.0/index.html>, retrieved at 17 of March, 2018, 4 of 4.

writers in Turkey finds it amazing when they attain the readers' comments on the streets, conferences and social media.

As one of the common problems in the world of literature in Turkey, the ratio of the people who read and buy books is also one of the most frequently popular questions which are asked to our writer. In her view, the existence of tendency to elitist attitude from a small group of artist who whose awareness of superiority whose pride is witnessed from their expressions and attitudes leaves the impact on the reader's being disdained. What the reader expects from the author is that they need to be considered equal, instead of experiencing the attitudes as if they are school kids who are in need of teacher centered education. However, she strongly emphasizes that the process of writing a story requires equality in transfer between two sides; that is, between the writer and his/her readers.<sup>41</sup> As far as we can make deduction, this transfer or sharing the responsibility of creation of the work of art equally promotes the relationship between the author and reader, which leads to the birth of the synergy which Safak names it as "soul mates". When such cooperation comes into being, the work of art turns to a complete output. After observation of this experience, Safak maintains that it is not rational to put stress on the existence of a hierarchical relationship between the author and the reader. The writers who assert antipodal view to Safak's thought – she again claims- liken writing a book to giving birth to a child.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, authors' this kind of approach means more than interiorizing his work, in other words, this situation signifies authors' so-called domination on his/her book.

Based upon the principles of the modern art, the completion of a literary work requires the participation of the reader, which demolishes the monopoly of the authors. The observations, which the writers convey into their books and their imagination whose development is supported by the environment where an author grows up and live and enhance the book. The structure of the language that the writer uses puts

56. Elif Safak, "Each Author Desires to Be Read by Millions", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=315>, retrieved at 17 of March, 2018, 1 of 4.

57. Kobifinans Magazine, "From Spiritual to Worldly Issues with Elif Safak", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=313>, retrieved at 18 of March, 2018, 2&3 of 5.

58. M.Salih Polat, "The Writer and his Work are not Identical", <http://arsiv.ntv.com.tr/news/36392.asp>, retrieved at 18 of March, 2018, 2 of 7.



limitation on artist's productive power, as well. Any literary work, which is combined with these subtleties includes a complex context with multi-layers, whose readings are responsive to the application of different types of criticism and comment. Elif Safak supports the opinion that: "the contexts collecting different and various sounds and fragments demands higher responsibility from the readers and less dominance from the owner of the text".<sup>43</sup>

Considering all these elements together, we can find out that Elif Safak's goal to achieve is not to transfer a social message, instead of it; she focalizes on a micro-story by narrating the output of her imagination.<sup>44</sup> Safak asserts that the tradition which standardizes the authors by stressing the compulsion to give message in all the novels dates back to the Ottoman Tanzimat (Reform) Period (1839-1856).

The writer sees him/her more learned than the reader and seems as if s/he were a teacher and even disdains like the authority of an absolute monarchy because of the fact that the novelists assumed the responsibility to teach the way of adaptation to modernization and westernization till the end of the Ottoman Period.<sup>44</sup>

If we look and scan the novels belonging to that tradition, it is possible to see many characters that are appropriate and this classification.<sup>45</sup> The main characters are given place in order to represent or teach an ideal such as *Calikusu (the Wren, 1922)* in which the protagonist, Feride symbolizes the ideal teacher for Turkey.

Another significant characteristic, which echoes Safak's style is that she never writes heroic protagonists. In actual fact, no "absolute good characters" or "absolute bad characters" do exist in her novels as we cannot come across such kind of people whose personality may be divided with a clear-cut line. Instead of it, people are mass of contradiction or unharmonious voices when we give thought to Sufi rules that all

59. M Salih Polat, "The Writer and his Work are not Identical", <http://arsiv.ntv.com.tr/news/36392.asp>, retrieved at 18 of March, 2018, 2 of 7.

60. Hulya Okur, "Writers are Lonely While Writing and so is the Reader while Reading", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=284>, retrieved at 19 of March, 8 of 14.

61. M. Salih Polat, "The Writer and his Work aren't Identical", <http://arsiv.ntv.com.tr/news/36392.asp>, retrieved at 18 of March, 2018, 1 of 7.62. Hulya Okur, "Writers are Lonely While Writing and so is the Reader while Reading", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=284>, retrieved at 19 of March, 6 of 14.

human being, the mirror to the entire universe, have everything what exist in the universe. As a result of it, the sole distinction stems from the extent or the degree of the distinctions.<sup>46</sup>

In conclusion, although Elif Safak was actually young to pen her biography, her strive to find an answer whether it is possible to be an author, a spouse and a mother at the same time by means of writing a semi biographical and semi fictitious work achieves its goal. In addition, it is clear to see that Elif Safak has gone through various processes both in her private life and in her professional career, which take place in *Black Milk*. This Chapter helps to notice that her experiences, especially the earlier years in her life, have a considerable effect on this novel. Her lonely childhood, her parents' divorce, her lack of communication with her father and brothers, her frequent travels and growing up by two different kinds of women deeply left impression on her life. These circumstances also constitute the sources of her dilemmas, which will be evaluated in other chapters.

### 1. iii Charlotte Anna Perkins Gilman as a Female Writer in the USA

Born on July 3, 1860, in Hartford, Connecticut, Charlotte Anna Perkins Stetson Gilman was a noted social activist, critic, theorist for social reform, lecturer, philosopher, spokesperson, economist, utopian feminist, fiction (poems, short stories and novels) and non-fiction (autobiography) writer, journalist, publisher, editor, tutor for children, designer-artist of trade- greeting cards and also role model for future generations of feminists during the late 1800s and early 1900s.<sup>47</sup> Daughter of parents who were both distinguished Rhode Island families whose viewpoints were in conflict with each other, Gilman might have owed a lot to her family because of their contribution in forming dueling personality.<sup>48</sup> Her father - her grandmother's second cousin - Frederick came from the Beecher family who were prominent radicals who included Isabella Beecher Hooker who was one of the leading names defending equal suffrage and her motto, "the world is my country; to do good is my religion" reveals not only her worldview, but it reflects the Beecher loyalty and dedication to reform and their thought on their historical role<sup>49</sup>. Harriet Beecher the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* also was an abolitionist. The Fitches, however, were founder – family of Rhode Island and they were conservatist Americans. According to Cynthia Davis, Gilman always thought highly of Beecher – Perkins side of her lineage for their service – oriented life styles and revolutionary and resisting approach to the all traditions and established rules, therefore the Beecher became role model for Gilman and idealized them much more throughout her life.<sup>50</sup>

In spite of being the closest member of The Beechers, Frederick Beecher Perkins may be called a non – existing father who left his family when Gilman was six years old because of her mother's scandalous love affairs and they had to move

47. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, *Charlotte Perkins Gilman*, Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc, October of 16, 2017,

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charlotte-Perkins-Gilman>, retrieved at May of 27, 2018, page of 1 of 2.

48. Mary Beekman, "*Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935): Her Life And Work As A Social Scientist and Feminist*", cited at <http://faculty.wobster.edu/woolfilm/gilman.html>, retrieved at May of 27, 2018 pages of 1 of 4.

49. Cynthia, Davis. *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: A Biography*. Stanford University Press, 2010. P. 4.

50. Craig. Carey, „*Reading 'Connectedly': Charlotte Perkins Gilman* , the Index, and Her Librarian-Father.” *American Literary Realism*, vol. 45, no. 3, 2013, pp. 210–228. *JSTOR*, JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/amerlitreal.45.3.0210](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/amerlitreal.45.3.0210). p. 210.

51. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman: an autobiography*. Univ of Wisconsin Press, 1935. p. 9.

nineteen times in eighteen years.<sup>51</sup> Mary A. Fitch was an exceptional talent on piano and had a long and complete education on music because of Mr Perkins' irregular and limited financial support to his family, Mary Fitch worked wherever she could earn a living; however, the period in which they lived did not present equal and fair payment or working conditions, so she was usually in debt and the reason behind the moves stemmed from financial problems. They lived with Mr. Perkins' parents, his aunts, with her parents and in other houses. These circumstances leave serious effects on Gilman's memory and she says:

Her childhood memories are filled with railroad journeys, generally on the Hartford, Providence and Springfield; sometimes with steamboats; accompanied by the smell of "hacks" and the funny noise the wheels produced when her little hands were covered in little ears and withdrawn again, in turn.<sup>52</sup>

Being a single mother with two children to the accompaniment of pecuniary problems and rejection by her family, Mary Fitch was in disappointed and desperate state, which caused her to decide on bringing up her children not the same way she was brought up, but instead she believed that when she taught them to reject affection from others, they might suffer less. Therefore, they could be self – reliant and independent individuals, thus she behaved in a cold and remained aloof with her siblings. However, this approach left deeper and negative impact on Charlotte Gilman, strict control, absence of a father and existence of an unaffectionate mother, laid way to the constitution of a rebellious characteristics in Gilman's personality. In Kessler's view, as she expresses in her book, *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Her Progress Toward Utopia With Selected Writings*, the disappointment and displeasure Gilman felt during her early ages must have prepared the conditions which constructed her background in order to be a utopian writer and social activist.<sup>53</sup>

Because of the fact that Gilman moved to many places before adulthood, she attended seven different institutions within seven years, but this process lasted until

51. Kessler, Carol Farley, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Her Progress Toward Utopia with Selected Writings*. Syracuse University Press, 1995. p. 18.

52. Mary Beekman, "Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935): Her Life And Work As A Social Scientist and Feminist", cited at <http://faculty.wobster.edu/woolfm/gilman.html>, retrieved at May of 27, 2018 pages of 2 of 4.

she was fifteen years old as a result of her need of money. Nevertheless, she did not give up education and achieved to attend the Rhode Island School of Design from 1878 through 1883 despite of her mother's disinclined acceptance. She found a wide scope of works for the sake of providing money for her education from giving drawing lessons, selling floral greeting cards, and painting advertising cards for a soap company to being a governess in Maine.<sup>54</sup> During her school years her intimate friendship with Martha Luther was included in her autobiography saying; "With Martha I knew perfect happiness".<sup>55</sup> However, their responsibilities which were within the circle of social, political and religious institutions was a block in their lives, so After Luther's marriage, their friendship went on and Charlotte Gilman fell in love with a local painter, Charles Walter Stetson. Although she was in a serious dilemma whether to follow up the classical circle of marriage like other girls the same age with her or to pursue her Beecher family's intellectual and worldly missions. Then, this dilemma came to an end in 1884 and Charlotte Gilman married Walter Stetson and her only child Katharine Beecher Stetson was born the following year. In spite of the fact that birth of a child is generally accepted as one of the happiest times of a married couple, Gilman and her husband experienced a complete adverse case as a result of the attack of postpartum depression.<sup>56</sup> Post - partum depression in Gilman's period was not studied as meticulously as today and this age considered women "emotionally uncontrollable" and "anxious" beings, therefore; women's complaints after giving birth such as sadness, hopelessness, feeling irritated, angry, overwhelmed, sense of emptiness and guilt, impatient were ignored for seeing them as worthless and unconvincing.<sup>57</sup> In April of 1887, her husband convinced her to consult a prominent Philadelphia neurologist Dr. Silas Weir Mitchell who was specialized in women's nervous diseases. Its diagnosis was exhaustion of the nerves and recommended the

54. Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. "The living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman: an autobiography". Univ of Wisconsin Press, 1935. p. 78.

55. the Biography.com Website, "*Charlotte Perkins Gilman Biography*", cited at <https://www.biography.com/people/charlotte-perkins-gilman-9311669>, A&ETelevision Networks, retrieved at May of 28, 2018, page of 1 of 2.

56. <http://www.charlotteperkinsgilman.com>, "*About Charlotte Perkins Gilman* ", cited at [http : // www.charlotte perkinsgilman.com /2008/05/about-charlotte-perkins-gilman-1860.html](http://www.charlotteperkinsgilman.com/2008/05/about-charlotte-perkins-gilman-1860.html), retrieved at May of 28, 2018, 1 of 11.

57. <http://www.charlotteperkinsgilman.com>, "*About Charlotte Perkins Gilman* ", cited at [http : // www.charlotte perkinsgilman.com /2008/05/about-charlotte-perkins-gilman-1860.html](http://www.charlotteperkinsgilman.com/2008/05/about-charlotte-perkins-gilman-1860.html), retrieved at May of 28, 2018, 3 of 11.

Rest Cure, a treatment, which was open to discussion, which was laid groundwork by himself. This treatment encompassed bed rest, isolation from family, overfeeding to increase fat volume, massage and occasional use of electricity on the muscles, rarely to read, write, sew talk.<sup>58, 59</sup> However, this treatment worsened Gilman's psychological health and she gave up the treatment, started reading and writing and finally left her husband by moving to her friends in Pasadena, California with her daughter.<sup>76</sup> She divorced her husband in 1894 and she tried to raise her daughter and care for her mother, but her income was not well enough to support her family, thus she sent Katharina to Walter Stetson and Gilman saw her daughter merely a few times till her death.

In 1888, she wrote her first book *Gems of Art for the Home and Fireside* and then one of her most prominent short stories *The Yellow Wall Paper*, which was published in 1892.<sup>58</sup> In this story, she fictionalized her personal experience of a marriage life which was progressively worsening and causing her mental collapse. Her prescription for it was to divorce, an act of disgrace according to that period's conventions.<sup>55</sup> After an instant love with a woman called Adeline ("Delle") Knapp, and addition of harsh criticism from both public and press, Gilman married her first cousin, George Houghton Gilman in 1900.<sup>59</sup> Some of the researches claim that her second marriage which was differing strikingly with her first marriage, was gratifying relationship which lasted until Houghton Gilman's death in 1934. In 1893, she was publicly recognized via her first volume of satirical poetry, which was titled *In This Our World*. Although she never stops writing both fictionalized and unfictionalized literary social political and economic works.

Charlotte Gilman worked as the editor of the *Impress* which was a literary –

58. „Charlotte Anna Perkins Gilman “ YourDictionary, n.d. Web. 25 May 2018. Cited at <http://biography.yourdictionary.com/charlotte-anna-perkins-gilman>, page of 1 of 3.

59. Kessler, Carol Farley, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Her Progress toward Utopia with Selected Writings*. Syracuse University Press, 1995. P. 22.

60. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, *Charlotte Perkins Gilman*, Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc, October of 16, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charlotte-Perkins-Gilman>, retrieved at May of 27, 2018, page of 1 of 2.

61. Radcliffe.harvard.edu, "*From Woman to Human: The Life and Work of Charlotte Perkins Gilman* ", cited at <https://www.radcliffe.harvard.edu/schlesinger-library/exhibition/woman-human-life-and-work-charlotte-perkins-gilman>, retrieved at May of 28, 2018, page of 1 of 2.

weekly magazine which was published by Pacific Coast Women's Press Association between 1894–95. Beside her manuscript, *Women and Economics* which she wrote the draft in 1897, which prompted an international attention and success in Gilman's career and immediately translated into seven languages.<sup>60</sup> Gilman formulates a theory in the book that women could be truly independent when they first got their freedom.<sup>80</sup> By saying in *Women and Economics* in 1898); "There is no female mind. The brain is not an organ of sex. As well speak of a female liver."<sup>61</sup>, she claimed that issues such as male's aggressive approach and motherly social roles for women were unnatural and hollow views and were not vital. In addition, she put forward in this work that domestic environment suppressed women. Under such circumstances, it was not possible to enable equality between men and women. She also stressed that motherhood should not inhibit women from working outside their homes and added that cooking and child-care should be given to the professional caretakers. What so appreciated by the feminists is Gilman's portrait of the ideal woman; "The ideal woman (according to the society) was not assigned a social role that locked her into her home, but she was also expected to be cheerful and gay, smiling and good-humored".<sup>52</sup>

In addition to writing and delivering lectures, Gilman started a new career as a journalistic advocate of the radical Nationalist Party. While Gilman's devoting all her time and attention to her career, this life style also meant that she had to neglect her duty as a mother. As a result, her daughter Katharina's resentment to her mother worsened their mother and daughter relationship especially after Katharina's perception her mother's sending her to Watson Stetson as abandonment. However, Gilman's failure as a mother does not surprise us when we remember her mother's strict discipline and neglecting showing love, care and tolerance to Gilman. Therefore, Gilman's preference her career to her motherhood may have a strong correlation with her childhood without maternal care.

*Concerning Children* which Gilman wrote in 1900 included her extra-ordinary ideas about how to bring up children asserting that a critical responsibility like child-

62. Pat, Harrison, "*The Evolution of Charlotte Perkins Gilman*", Harvard University Press, cited at [https://www.radcliffe.harvard.edu/news/radcliffe-](https://www.radcliffe.harvard.edu/news/radcliffe-magazine/evolution-charlotte-perkins-gilman)

magazine/evolution-charlotte-perkins-gilman, retrieved at May 28, 2018, page of 2 of 2.

care should not be resigned to unprofessional mothers or servant-girls, but instead of them higher class of educators might serve organizing meticulously children's environment.<sup>63</sup> Although the statement above may function as an exaggerated and illogical alternative for child development, Gilman's criticism on teaching strict obedience, for instance, shows strong association with modern principles about bringing up children;

The 'habit of obedience', forced in upon the impressible nature of a child, does not develop judgment and will, but does develop that fatal facility in the following other people's judgment and other people's wills which tends to make us a helpless mob, more sheep, instead of wise, free, strong individuals.<sup>64</sup>

1903 was the year when Gilman wrote her third non-fiction book "*The Home: Its Work and Influence*" whose profits gained from the sales was donated to the Freeriver Community Project, a project which aimed to promote harmonious community on a well-being in the world.<sup>65</sup>

"*What Diantha Did*", was written in 1910 telling the stories of women who preferred managing their own business rather than obeying traditional concepts of being merely a mother, housewife or mistress. Diantha, who is the protagonist of the novel, faces important problems with men and traditional-minded women who cannot perceive Diantha's enterprising ideals.

Although the topic may seem ordinary or boring, working of the women outside their houses was a rare choice which was not approved and supported by the society; therefore, this novel led to public and press attention and laid path for the

63. Amy, Gagnon, "*Charlotte Perkins Gilman*", Connecticut Humanities, cited at <https://connecticuthistory.org/charlotte-perkins-gilman/>, retrieved at May of 29, 2018, page of 2 of 2.

64. Kessler, Carol Farley, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Her Progress toward Utopia with Selected Writings*. Syracuse University Press, 1995. p. 27.

65. Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. "*Concerning Children*". Vol. 2. Rowman Altamira, 2002. p. 39.

66. amazon.com, "*The Home: Its Work and Influence*", <https://www.amazon.co.uk/home-its-work-influence/dp/153090840X>., CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, South Carolina, 5 of April, 2016, Doi Number: 978-1530908400, 5of April, 2016, retrieved at 2 of June, 2018.

67. Books.google.com is an excellent source of information about the novel : "*What Diantha Did*" on [https://books.google.com.tr/books?id=UO6ovGFQZu0C&dq=What+Diantha+Did&lr=&hl=tr&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.com.tr/books?id=UO6ovGFQZu0C&dq=What+Diantha+Did&lr=&hl=tr&source=gbs_navlinks_s)". Retrieved at 2 of June, 2018.



discussion of women's freedom of working in public sphere a bit louder.<sup>66</sup>

"*The Crux*" which was the product of the year 1911 put forward the intricate issues of gender, citizenship, eugenics and frontier nationalism via a story about independence at all costs for young women were restricted and oppressed by the society who keeps them unaware of the risks of sexually transmitted infections.<sup>67</sup> 1915 witnessed publication of Gilman's another book; "*Moving the Mountain*" as an example of utopian and dystopian literature. Gilman in this novel helps the reader to imagine what women thought about a world of true equality could look like in an absorbing way. The Crux showed the popular theme of eugenic science were interesting for the feminists, authors and intellectuals of Gilman's period since they articulated that America's national development and expansionism were not up to less the women and motherhood than to masculine strife.<sup>68</sup>

Charlotte Gilman not only did write about fictitious feminist books, she also established a monthly magazine named *Forerunner*, including feminist articles, views, criticism and fiction between 1909 and 1916. In 1915, Gilman wrote about a groundbreaking novel, "*Herland*" which tells the story of an isolated community who are composed completely of women who reproduce via parthenogenesis. On the eve of World War I, an entirely female community is discovered somewhere in the distant place of the earth by three male explorers who were to reconsider their presumption about position of women in the society.<sup>69</sup>

As a sequel to *Herland*, *With Her in Ourland* goes on putting into words the adventures of Ellador who was the protagonist in *Herland*, so the story, which began in *Herland* as a fantasy turns to a demanding analysis of modern social issue in real world. The themes consisting in the novel helps us to see Gilman's perspective about ideal society.

Through the end of her career, Charlotte Gilman penned her biography, titled;

68. Goodreads.com is a good source of brief information about the content of the novel; "*The Crux*" cited at [https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/52301.The\\_Crux](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/52301.The_Crux).

69. Amazon.com, Inc is an excellent source of information on the novel, "*Moving the Mountain*" cited at [https://www.amazon.com/Crux-Charlotte-Perkins-Gilman/Gilman dp/0822331675](https://www.amazon.com/Crux-Charlotte-Perkins-Gilman/Gilman%20dp/0822331675).

*The Living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman: An Autobiography* and published it in 1925. When her husband George Gilman suddenly passed away in 1934, Gilman moved back to California in order to be near to her daughter Katharina. Gilman discovered that she had inoperable and irrecoverable breast cancer nearly two years before moving. As she had to suffer from the illness and taking treatment, she put an end to her life at the age of seventy – five by taking overdose of chloroform after writing her last letter in which she explained the reasons she preferred chloroform to cancer.<sup>70</sup>

No grief, pain, misfortune or “broken heart” is excuse for cutting off one’s life while any power of service remains. But when all usefulness is over, when one is assured of unavoidable and imminent death, it is the simplest of human rights to choose a quick and easy death in place of a slow and horrible one... I have preferred chloroform to cancer.<sup>71</sup>

Despite the fact that Charlotte Perkins Gilman achieved international fame, especially after the publication of the *Women and Economics*, the end of the World War I and other political occurrences led to decline on woman issues. However, the studies which belongs to Carl N. Degler reissued about Gilman and works because of the contributions, in other words, her strife for women’s movement and development of feminist scholarship especially during 1960’s and 1970’s. Also, Gilman has become well – known thanks to *Herland* and the *Yellow Wall Paper* for twenty years and achieved an important position in the contemporary literature.

What Charlotte Perkins Gilman tried to achieve was to integrate a new system by uniting feminism and socialism; in that way, women’s level of quality in their lives could be raised via deconstruction of the institutions home, economy and politics by means of fictious and non – fictious books. In addition, she tried to analyze past from her own humanist – socialist point of angle in order to project a vision of the future which could be real when autonomy of women became far away from being a dream. When the women were provided the conditions which were well enough for their development and released from chains of social and political rules, human progress.

70. Penguin Random House is a beneficent source of information on “*Herland*”, “<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/about-us/>”.

71. Kessler, Carol Farley, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Her Progress toward Utopia with Selected Writings*. Syracuse University Press, 1995. p. 40.

72. Haley Salinas, "A Sociological Analysis of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* and *With Her in Ourland*." *Discourse of Sociological Practice* 6 (2004): 127 P. 2.

could serve at its ideal speed. Her ideals are still under discussion by the third –wave feminists and have been advocated and worked for the benefit of the all the universe. Although the topic may seem ordinary or boring, working of the women outside their houses was a rare choice which was not approved and supported by the society; therefore, this novel led to public and press attention and laid path for the discussion of women's freedom of working in public sphere a bit louder.<sup>66</sup>

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It can be concluded from the information which are mentioned in this chapter that Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gilman lived her life to the fullest from choosing her job, and attending each social and political event that she wanted to join to talking courageously whatever she want to share with the society. Additionally, *Herland* in the work where Gilman mirrored both her individual point of view and the issues, which dominated the social and political problems in question in her period.

## CHAPTER TWO: ELIF SAFAK'S BLACK MILK

### I. i Cultural Dilemmas

### I. ii National Dilemmas

### I. iii Gender and Sexual Dilemmas

The *Black Milk*, which was written in 2007 by Turkish columnist and author, Elif Safak, is an autobiographical novel, which is said to be the first novel in Turkish Literature whose topic deals with postpartum depression, a kind of depression, which is undergone after the period of giving birth, but not for all the mothers. Within this context the author concentrate upon feminism by shedding light on the pioneers and the prominent feminist female writers via giving information about their private lives, professional career, their works and novels and undelying their contribution to the feminist movement. The author presents us their opinions and definitions of being a woman, being a writer, being a female writer and being a mother because of the fact that the author is in fact confused about whether she wants to be a mother and if she does, she wants to learn whether it is possible to be a good writer and a good mother at the same time. In this process, she comes to the point that there is not a definite formula to apply for all the women since she notices that each female writer has followed the path of their own and gone through their particular experiences with its pros and cons.

However, Elif, our protagonist's journey within herself does not last as she expects and she causes serious dilemmas in the *Black Milk* both consciously and unconsciously throughout the novel. We want to focus on the detection of these dilammas, reaching their sources and discovering the nature of them.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ELIF SAFAK'S DILEMMAS IN HER SEMI-AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL: *BLACK MILK*

#### 2.1. Cultural Dilemma

Culture is a Notion which deeply causes to reveal itself in *Black Milk*. As a person whose roots originates in Izmir, born in France and grew up in Ankara, Madrid, Amman-Jordan, Germany, Japan, USA and Istanbul, she has experienced coming face to face with various cultures and ethnicities. Furthermore, She was reared by both her mother, who is a feminist, modern and secular woman with a successful education and by her grandmother as traditional – minded woman in company with her superstitions and classical way of thinking with limited education, which caused Elif's intense exposure to absolutely different two polars of perspectives.

Such kind of discrepancies inevitably causes dilemmas in Safak's life in terms of cultural elements. When living among diverse cultural environments, Elif Safak cannot always discriminate the the scope of the cultural effects on her and the drawbacks of cutting all her bounds with culture and excessive exposure to foreign cultures. After she finds out the value and function of it on the individual for the benefit of sense of belonging and fulfilling one of the elements of her identity, she will realize that some of the established rules still help people to enrich their lives.

Cultural dilemmas in *Black Milk* are the conflict which Safak handles and comes to agreement by means of her getting over the post-partum depression. Also, she will remind people the power and the function of the culture by giving information about experiences from the past about their approach towards women who are under the control of post-partum depression.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ELIF SAFAK'S DILEMMAS IN HER SEMI-AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL: *BLACK MILK*

#### 2.1. Cultural Dilemmas

Originating from the early 16<sup>th</sup> century by means of Latin from Greek dilemma, di – ‘twice’ + lēmma represents "double proposition" or "perplexing situation", which refers to two contrasting possibilities, and both of them give the impression of being virtually reasonable.<sup>73</sup>

In literature, dilemma is a rhetorical device, which signifies a conflicting situation which comes to light by putting pressure on a person in order to choose between right or wrong alternatives even though both of them show the sign of equal value. Dilemma in general necessitates wrong decision in terms of ethical worth, which might result in advantageous outcome, but at the same time may have morally critical consequences.<sup>74</sup>

When we look up Holman's *A Hand Book to Literature*, we can merely find ‘conflict’ instead of the term ‘dilemma’. He defines it the strife which develops out of interplay of the two opposing forces in a plot as a means to trigger attention and suspense in any form of fiction.<sup>75</sup> In Holman's view, this term also indicates the existing fact of motivation or any kind of goal in order to achieve this conflict.<sup>92</sup> We can generally come across five kinds of dilemmas in literary sphere: protagonist against another person, against forces of nature, against society as a force, against mastery and against fate or destiny.<sup>76</sup>

In fact, the main characters are required to strive, evolve and decide on a choice through the chain of events for the development of the fiction in an effective way, in other words; tension and complexity, as significant elements in setting up the narration, may be empowered by benefitting from confusing and conflicting ideas,

73. Oxford Dictionaries, "*Dilemma*", <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/dilemma>, Oxford University Press, Oxford: March of 2000, retrieved at 19 of June, 2018.

74. LiteraryDevices Editors, "*Dilemma*" LiteraryDevices.net. 2013. Web. <https://literarydevices.net/dilemma/>, retrieved at 19 of June, 2018, page 1 of 2.

75. Holman C. Hugh. *A Hand Book to Literature*. (The Odyssey Press, New York.1972). p. 118.

76. Ibid. p. 119.

that is, inclusion of dilemma into the literary work.<sup>77</sup>

Culture is allegedly a difficult norm of sociology to define. On the other hand, there are a few prominent definitions, which may help us to see different points of views of the anthropologists. Initially, Mathew Arnold claims that culture alludes to intellectual or artistic effort – activity and products which is in general called high culture.<sup>78</sup> This collective intellectual achievement such as music, art, theatre, literature mirror “a refined understanding and appreciation of culture”.<sup>79</sup> Broadly speaking, enlightenment and greatness of taste which is gained via intellectual and aesthetic training.<sup>80</sup>

In addition to it, the other side of the culture is a fundamental basis for this study. Lexically, “The customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social particular group”<sup>81</sup> is a complementary definition which demands attention to the way of life of a specific community. This expression stresses typical attribute of every day being and lifestyle, which is shared by people in a specific place or time. People’s coming together, a system of habits or common characteristics requires sharing attitudes, values and practices, which are turned into habits, which distinguish and identify a community, institution or organization. When people integrate their sets of cumulative deposit of knowledge, faith, belief and behaviour and transfer them to next communities or generations, meaningful hierarchies of experiences is built up; that is, culture comes into being. This approach owes its academic existence distinctively to anthropologist Franz Boas and his students thanks to their contributions to the eclectic perspective in anthropology by claiming that culture could not be higher or lower; but instead, the view of “uniqueness of the many

77. LiteraryDevices Editors, page 2 of 2.

78. Mathew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), p. 6.

79. Oxford Dictionaries, “*Culture*”, En.oxforddictionaries. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/culture>, Oxford University Press, Oxford: March of 2000, retrieved at 24 of June, 2018.

80. Merriam Webster Editors, “*Culture*”. Merriam-webster.com/dictionary, n.d. Web. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture>, retrieved at 24 of June, 2018.

81. “*Culture*.” American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. 2011. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company 24 Jun. 2018. Web. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/culture>.

82. Spencer-Oatey, H. “*What is culture? A compilation of quotations.*” *GlobalPAD Core Concepts*. Available at GlobalPAD Open House. (2012) Web. [https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al/globalpad/openhouse/interculturalskills/global\\_pad\\_-\\_what\\_is\\_culture.pdf](https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al/globalpad/openhouse/interculturalskills/global_pad_-_what_is_culture.pdf), retrieved at 24 of June, 2018, 2 of 22.

and varied cultures of different peoples and societies”<sup>82</sup> was defended as a reaction to social evolutionists like Tylor.

Countries such as Turkey, which consists of multi – cultural and traditional social structure are more prone to experiencing dilemma to the extent of national problems. When we consider the reality of 21<sup>th</sup> century as an age which is dominated with the fact of globalization by abolishing the distinctive characteristics of traditional, ethnical and local elements of the countries or societies, it is clear that these two different opposing forces cause cultural dilemmas in people’s lives.

As an acceptable literary work for this topic, *Black Milk*, which was written in 2007 by Elif Safak, reveals cultural dilemmas via penning her period of post-partum depression and motherhood. This work is an inner voyage through Elif Safak’s putting into words her biography like an adventure by furnishing the novel with fantastic elements while she was in a period of questioning and discovering her identity. This journey proves the requirement for the author by reminding her emergency of the dilemma and conflicts in order to face with herself with all of her characteristics, wishes, love, hatred, so that she can achieve harmony and coherence in her life.

The cultural dilemma focuses on the centre of her fighting against her own identity. Because of her Thunbelinas’ priority are different from each other, it is clear to see that the narrator has experienced and exposed to dilemmas, which was indirectly expressed via these six Thunbelinas whom the author in her imaginary world. Although the author thinks that she knows her ‘Self’, she notices that in reality they different from each other and then she decides to show them that “Living together is so vital”<sup>83</sup>.

To begin with, her thought about marriage, an institute, which has prominent role in culture, is against traditional notion, which is one of the most prominent elements in culture. She used to express the extent of her unsuitableness and hatred for marriage and no intention of having a husband and being a mother: “Domestic bourgeois life? Forget it! I don’t think raising kids is my thing...” (p. 3).

83. Sazyek, Esra. "Elif Şafak'ın Romanlarında Çokkültürlülüğe Giden Aşamalar." *Electronic Turkish Studies* 8.4 (2013). Retrieved at May of 20, 2019.p. 1237.

<http://www.acarindex.com/dosyalar/makale/acarindex-1423932981.pdf>.



In another paragraph, the author raises her degree of emphasis on being a wife: "I would go nuts if I had to be in the company of other people all the time" (p. 4).

According to our protagonist, the reason behind such kind of lifestyle lies on her need for loneliness and privacy as a writer. From this perspective, marriage means fixing her routines in line with a husband's job permanently in a city and giving up all goals, which are related with a professional carrier. Within the frameworks of such a traditional family structure; at least from Safak's point of view, cutting all family ties ignoring every relations which will cause her to stick to a person, place or experience except for her carefree and wandering spirit in pursuit of striving for writing: "...she had been sure about that she could live any place or country on earth on the condition that she did not have to put down roots" (p. 3 – 4).

As a clear – cut expression of Safak's attitude toward marriage before meeting her husband, she writes "The Manifesto of the Single Girl" by which she explains her point of angle about marriage, the reasons behind it and she substitutes marriage with literature.

8. If she has to benefit from marriage as a metaphor, she may assume that literature is metaphorically her husband and books are her daughters and sons. The mere alternative for her to get married is either to divorce literature or to marry with a second spouse (p. 18).

9. Since breaking up with literature is definitely not possible and since there is no man among humanity who would agree to become "spouse number two," in all possibilities, she may be single and spinster throughout her life (p. 18).

However, she falls in dilemma with her views and she even proposes to her husband, who comes from a traditional Turkish family, but this is not the only conflicting attitude that we can detect. Her future husband asks her whether Safak is still against marriage, or not:

She is sure [...], in theory. [...] she implies, she is not in favour of people's getting married, at least the majority of them, since they in fact should not marry, [...] she is not against her marrying her partner (p. 169, 170).

Elif and her partner abstained from having a wedding ceremony since both of them were against ceremonies [...] Elif did not buy a wedding gown not only because of her hatred for such a ritual but also she never put on white clothes [...] (p. 2, 170).

Moreover, on that day in May, she embellished herself in her favourite colour choice: black. As for Eyup, he preferred dark pants and a white shirt, as respect tradition relatively (p. 3).

In spite of the fact that Safak falls into dilemma with her thoughts about the institute of marriage, - and still against in theory – she is dominated by love. Nonetheless, the way she marries is again a conflicting attitude with conventional Turkish wedding ceremonies, which proves her multi-cultural and to some extent complicated characteristics and life experience. What Safak so strongly stresses about her lifestyle as an author who is deeply in love with loneliness is her need for nomadic and unsettled way of life without considering how far or how long she will be away from her homeland. As she states in the novel:

...she could not lay down her roots anywhere for a long time. Having been born in Strasbourg, grown up in Madrid, and resided in Ankara, İstanbul, Amman, Cologne, Boston, Michigan and Arizona, she had been living out of a suitcase throughout her life - sure that she could settle in a certain city on earth provided that she did not have to settle down (p. 3, 4).

“... loneliness was an inseparable part of being human” (p. 4).

“Yet, I did not want to lose the wandering, independent, carefree spirit that I was” (p. 5).

“My instinct is to take off to the end of the world as soon as it is morning” (p. 88).

“She also elaborated on the two conflicting sides of her personality: one independent and carefree, the other in need of love and security” (p. 135).

In one of her interviews, Safak states that she never had a stable house until she was thirty-six years old and considered life as a nomadism; that is, being always on a

84. Fatma Yılmaz; Tuba Nur Arıcan, “The Subject of the Sentence: Elif Safak”, <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=280> , retrieved at

journey. In accordance with this point of view, she regards her novels as journeys.<sup>84</sup> Moving due to various reasons without emotionally questioning whether she really wants to be always on a journey – and certainly without being asked whether she has wanted to leave the places where she just started to feel like homeland- indirectly has forced Safak to conceive immigration as a solution for each problem which she comes across.

Therefore, whatever may cause her to settle down is considered as a block to her freedom, career and ideals. Love, marriage, and being a mother within traditional meaning used to be defined as the aforementioned block in Safak's point of view. Thus, she used to look for solutions for problems from exterior means. However, her facing with Islamic spiritualism and her individual experience on reflection lays path on some of her dilemmas.

“The main point is the journey within her mind. She is not going to America, she is going through her soul” (p. 96).

“New lands you will not find, you will not find other seas.

The city will follow you...

You will roam the same streets” (p. 97).

As it is mentioned before in one of the interviews with Safak, she did not have a settled life until she was thirty-six years old and considered life as a nomadism; that is, being always on a journey. In accordance with this point of view, she regards her novels as journeys<sup>100</sup>. What is so critical here is that the author is completely aware of the fact that her dilemmas stem from her childhood experience as a lonely girl with no father, a mother who is rarely seen and few friends. Thus she does not experience a classical family life and she can merely see it as a social institute which can observe from a distance by criticizing it via Miss Highbrowed Cynic as if it is only a sociological issue to evaluate scientifically.

It is clear to notice that what she in fact means while she tries to go away from one place to another is to turn back to inner self and experience reflection. In 2011, she told Gulenay Borekci that there should be a place for everyone in order to go from time except for their home or else their relationship may turn into an obligation instead of having freedom. However, going far away signifies to beginning a journey within ourselves like a detox for our mind and heart.<sup>85</sup>

The expression in the previous paragraph implies that the author gave up escaping from her problems and feelings as she got adult by facing with her 'self' via reflection in order to free from evil ideas. This view proves us that Safak realizes the importance of our attitude towards our problems. The extent and the way of her reactions is accordance with her focusing on her inner voice, seeing her needs, wishes and problems. The author's way of dealing with her inner voices by putting physical distance hinders Safak from being in harmony with her feminine biological clock. The question whether Elif Safak could put an end to her dilemma is open to debate in theory. Although she is married and has two children her children who started school in London, but the family was in Turkey on holidays. Therefore, Elif Safak moved to London in 2010, she has lived in different countries all around the world and she never experienced taking participation in school meals on Hacney Quarter.<sup>86</sup>

According to Sazyek, cultural values are apparatuses which are transporters of continuity, wholeness and meaningfulness also act as a hinder to diversities in culture by causing circumstances which stimulate cultural conflict. When differences for reasons such as modernization, immigration come into being, self denials, renunciations or identity crisis are inevitable problems of such kind of processes.<sup>87</sup> What we here infer is the impact of Safak's life especially before her adulthood when

85. Gulenay Borekci, "The Deepest Wounds Stem from the Family", <http://www.elifsafak.us/kitaplar.asp?islem=kitap&id=34>, retrieved at 11 of November, 2018, page 5 of 5.

86. Gaby Wood, "A Page from Elif Safak's Life", <https://www.haberturk.com/kultur-sanat/haber/726510-elif-safakin-hayatindan-bir-sayfa>, retrieved at 11 of November, 2018, page 2 of 2.

87. Sazyek, Esra. "*Elif Şafak'ın Romanlarında Çokkültürlülüğe Giden Aşamalar* &60; br&62; Phases of Multicultural Progress at the Novels of Elif Şafak." *Turkish Studies* 8.4 (2013): 1221-1242. p. 1222.

she was brought up in France, Turkey, Spain, Germany and Amman by her mother, an maternal grandmother and - for a short time - paternal grandmother. She states in interview by Gulenay Borekci that she was grown up by two women: on one side there is an educated, feminist and modern Safak Akayman, and on the other side there is a more traditional, more spiritual, wise woman in spite of her superstitions, her grandmother Fahriye Akayman. She learns written and oral culture. She also adds that women's dilemmas never end because of their diverse responsibilities throughout their lives to keep up with what they have to do like an acrobat.<sup>88</sup>

According to a view, the moment that an individual becomes a member of a cultural community, s/he is affected directly or indirectly by this community's common moral and behavioral repertory.<sup>89</sup> No matter how specific biological and genetic talents and tendency which are in line with his/her species – with human being - does an individual own, the cultural community which s/he has just participated in shapes the individual with its own norms which take their basis upon envisioned attitude behaviour and moral patterns. Hence, individual's identity and characteristics are shaped in these patterns.<sup>90</sup> It also means that a person experience her point of view, habits, routines, acquisitions, the way of his/her human relations, understanding of life with the help of this cultural community's norms.<sup>89</sup> However, Safak strives to hide her inner feelings and thoughts in order to suppress her traditional and maternal background. For instance, she starts her book with her observation about a young pregnant woman with two children although the reader is face to face an autobiographical novel. The more Safak depicts woman's appearance, the harder she tries to find a defect to look down on the woman on the ferry. The author's concentration on a classical woman with children reminds us Freud's defense mechanisms, which are accepted as both "building blocks of psychopathology and as potential stepping stones of ego development".<sup>90</sup>

88. Borekci, Gulenay. "Elif Arızalar Diyarı'nda". <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/gulenay-borekci/755132-elif-arizalar-diyarinda>. Istanbul: Haberturk, Ciner Medya Grubu retrieved at 8 of July, 2018, 1 of 3.

89. Bhikhu Parekh, *Çokkültürlülüğü Yeniden Düşünmek*, (Phoenix Publishings, Ankara, 2002), p.198.

90. George E. Vaillant, *Ego mechanisms of defense: a guide for clinicians and researchers*. American Psychiatric Pub, 1992.22. Ichars Integrated Psychotherapy, "Suppression and Repression – Defense Mechanisms", <https://www.instituteofclinicalhypnosis.com/suppression-repression-defense-mechanisms/> Mumbai, Maharashtra India. Retrieved at 13of October 2018. Page 1 of 2.

As a surprising beginning, the author's harsh criticism about a young woman whom Safak never saw beforehand reminds us Freud's suppression mechanism, we consciously prefer not reflecting our awake line of thinking, emotion or actions although we are conscious of them. This helps us to concentrate on our main goals, which are forced to be discredited by every stimulus, which come to the surface. The reason why we apply this mechanism may stem from the improper timing of the situation or action and as a result, we postpone or cancel the impulse or at least we try doing it.<sup>91</sup> The denial mechanism which is frequently applied by Safak as a consequence of her wish to be a modern intellectual woman taking its basis from the author's mother requires fighting against a huge cultural community which has shaped and affected thousands of identities throughout the years.

These two strong wishes, which put pressure on the author in order to make a choice between two alternatives protect their existence in the other parts of the novel and evolve through formation of a cultural dilemma. The existing dilemma between mind, which symbolizes modernism in this novel and tradition comes into being after the end of the period of Baby Blues. Although her grandmother calls the depression which negatively affects author as "nazar" or "evil's eye", her doctor insults this view by calling them superstitions and states that the majority of the today's mothers experience "postpartum depression"; as a consequence, these two different points of views mirror the discrepancy between two people who were born and grown up in different cultural values although they live in the same country.

In an interview with Efnan Atmaca in 2007, she says that she has noticed that Safak wrote about superstitions as one of the most prominent topics even from the beginning of the book although many people disdain such kind of themes and she criticizes those people while she focuses on her grandmother's beliefs and talks about the Djinni who haunts puerperant women. The writer explains that she believes that the world is something above what human being perceives via his five senses and her perception is open to spiritual world because the effects of the period when she grew up with her<sup>91</sup> maternal grandmother. Also she remembers it that empowers women.

91. Ichars Integrated Psychotherapy, "Suppression and Repression – Defense Mechanisms", <https://www.instituteforintegratedpsychotherapy.com/suppression-repression-defense-mechanisms/> Mumbai, Maharashtra India. Retrieved at 13 of October 2018. Page 1 of 2.

She admits that she noticed after her giving birth to her first child that her uneducated grandmother has more knowledge on postpartum depression than her well- educated mother. It is true that she misnames it, but her grandmother finds it so natural and she can do many things by benefitting from the experience of the many centuries in order to fight against the depression.

When it comes to the author's mother's generation, they assume that they can both give birth to a child and at the same time they can have a professional career, as well. They have super-female image, which is strongly promoted by magazines for female world. However, this generation has lost a highly important degree of awareness from the previous generation and this issue is a striking point for the writer.<sup>92</sup>

The author finds the gap between the generations rather dangerous and she thinks that this gap causes a considerable loss for the younger generations. According to her, literature may help to start a new communication among human being and the product of the centuries may shed light on younger people. She adds that she wants the world of the intellectuals come closer to her grandmother's traditional world. She cannot name this culture exactly because some people name it 'superstitions' while a group of people call it 'Islamic folklore', but she prefers perceiving it as the 'cultural accumulation of many centuries'. She also expresses that the knowledge of the centuries were lost during Turkey's adventure of Westernization as we looked down on traditional culture as a matter of the fact that we attributed knowledge to West, but we considered the issues on womanhood, sexuality, femininity, and motherhood as unimportant topics which cannot have relationship with intellectual world<sup>93</sup> "Interestingly, women knew about this in old days. Our grandmothers were aware of all kinds of pospartum instability and therefore better prepared" (p. 8) says Elif even in the beginning of the novel and adds that her mother's and her generation are not successful at transforming knowledge (p. 8).

The aforementioned explanations help us to realize that the intellectuals'

92. Efnan, Atmaca. "It is a Novel which is the Mixture of Treatment and Therapy", [http://www.radikal.com.tr/ek\\_haber.php?ek=ktp&haber\\_no=7004](http://www.radikal.com.tr/ek_haber.php?ek=ktp&haber_no=7004), retrieved at 02 of December, 2018, page 4 and 5 of 6.

93. Atmaca, Efnan, "It is a Novel which is the Mixture of Treatment and Therapy", [http://www.radikal.com.tr/ek\\_haber.php?ek=ktp&haber\\_no=7004](http://www.radikal.com.tr/ek_haber.php?ek=ktp&haber_no=7004), retrieved at 02 of December, 2018, page 5 of 6.

rejection of daily-topics of the individual female life cause them to lose a considerable quantity of knowledge which sheds light on female issues and this loss causes serious problems which may affect people around them. Therefore, Safak treats this traditional treasure serious and wants to make the best of it:

She wants to see that her writings bridge between previous generations and the intellectual or westernized discourse via novels. She clarifies her view that she was afraid of ordinary life-style before penning her novel ‘*Araf*’ while she thrusts her different and marginal sides to the forefront. She was afraid of marriage, being a mother as she thought she could not write anything. She used to think that she could write more successfully if she preserved marginal and bohemian lifestyle. This view has nurtured her writing to some extent, but later she saw that she misinterpreted this view.<sup>94</sup>

Another example for dilemmas in *Black Milk* stems from Safak’s conflicting approaches towards the culture of motherhood. As a patriarchal society, each young lady is expected to have a successful marriage and act like an angel in the house and finally be a dedicated mother who strives in effort to meet every need her child(ren) demand(s) be a caring, compassionate and tolerant mother without complaining about the burden of her responsibilities which in fact have to be shared with the father. Certainly, such kind of motherhood – even there would be such an angelic woman; in fact, if it were, she would be something terrible – is not possible for our main character who did not have a healthy family environment because of her mother’s job. The non – existence of the mother figure in her early life and passing nearly half of her life in Western countries who applies more reasonable and less sentimental child upbringing, Safak’s early adulthood in Turkey forces her career – focused life style and her biological existence falls in dilemma with her intellectual and modern mind.

The notion of motherhood in Turkish culture is a dominant topic of debate in *Black Milk*. According to Kucukbezirci, a woman’s most prominent status in society is motherhood in Turkish culture. A life without the existence of the mother would be

94. Atmaca, Efnan, “It is a Novel which is the Mixture of Treatment and Therapy”, [http://www.radikal.com.tr/e\\_k\\_haber.php?ek=ktp&haberno=7004](http://www.radikal.com.tr/e_k_haber.php?ek=ktp&haberno=7004), retrieved at 02 of December, 2018, page 5 of 6.

95. Kucukbezirci, Yagmur. *The Reflection of the Importance and Place of Mother to the Proverbs and Idioms in Turkish Culture*, 5th International Turkish Culture and Arts Congress/Art Activity, Madrid/ Spain, 09-13 May, 2011 (Poster) <http://www.yagmurkucukbezirci.com/Yagmur-Kucukbezirci-8-23-.html>, retrieved at 12 of July, 2018, page 2 of 2.



inevitably hard for a child as a mother is considered as the most trust – worthy person especially in distressed circumstances of a child.<sup>95</sup> Mehmet Emin Bars stresses that “The Turks called the communities which they cared and were holly as “mother’s right” and they equated “God’s right” with “mother’s right”.<sup>96</sup> Human, as a social being who directs his earlier steps towards life thanks to his mother, mother is the first stage of his socialization. In that way, he unifies himself with the existence of his mother. Thus, position of a mother in her child’s life is likened to a window, which is enables entrance to the world. Inevitably, mother’s role lets her to direct her child in line with limitations of her talents, life experience and her goals, which she tries to inject to her child<sup>96</sup>.

Being protector and source of reproduction of her family, preparing her child to life and socializing it, trying to be the symbol of reason and wisdom and never letting her child alone, mothers are burdened with various responsibilities. In spite of the changing conditions in Turkish family life – style as an output of modernizing and globalizing world, her statue as a member of society, she is still expected to be self – sacrificing or devoted, chaste, esteemed, loyal to her husband and the protector figure in her child’s life:

How can it be possible to tel her that the order and quiet which she gives so much importance causes stress on her? Settling in the same house for years, to know by heart each store owner and neighbour on the street, to be fixed in the same street, same quarter, same city, is a lifestyle which she is completely against. Order and fixibility are Russian and Chinese to her (p. 24).

*Is there any likelihood that a woman may be both a good mother and good writer? Does she desire to be a mother? If not, why not? If so, when, why, how? (p. 47).*

The clash of Turkish-traditional notion of motherhood and modern world’s pattern of motherhood feeds the cultural dilemmas, which causes chaos in Safak’s soul, which is always in need of a clear-cut order throughout her life. “We’ll split your

96. Mehmet Emin Bars,. "Motherhood in Turkish Culture and How It is Viewed in *Âşk Garip Story*." Elazığ: Fırat Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Türkçe Öğretmenliği Bölümü Elazığ & Asos Eğitim Bilişim Danışmanlık San. Tic. Ltd. Şti. ASOS – The Journal of Acedemic Social Science, 2(6), September, 2014, p.

time into two chunks: writing time and nursing time” (p. 47), says Little Miss Practical by proving us that the modern side of Elif Safak never hesitates to dominate on the author’s decisions:

The human mind resembles a set of kitchen drawers. The cutlery is put in one drawer, the napkins in another, and etc. Practise the same system. When are with your baby, open the ‘motherhood’ section. When you focus on your novels, pop open the ‘novelist’ one. So easy! Close one drawer and open the other one. Not complicated. No contradictions. No exhaustion. All thanks to right classification. (p. 48).

The author’s observations about culture of motherhood in the modern female world which is based upon ‘I can do anything, from career to motherhood at the same time’ is put into consideration by questioning the probability of such a family life:

Click on a website. You can choose a baby sitter. Filipino, Moldavian, Bulgarian... you may even decide on her nationality (p. 48).

The modern female figure, which is characterized by Little Miss Practical mirrors people’s finding each solution for their problems by conducting merely to reason without paying enough attention to emotions which is considered as a hinder against logic. For modern world, achieving goals of professional career is more important than emotions and these sentimental approaches are weaknesses, a quality, which is not acceptable in 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Little Miss Practical’s readings are based solely on two key criteria; efficiency and functionality. *How to Win Friends and Hearts, The Key to Unwavering Success, Ten Steps to Power, The Art of Knowing People, Awaken the Millionaire Inside, The Secret to Good Life...* She gobbles up self-help books like popcorn, but never reads novels. Fiction, in her eyes, has no function (p. 49).

“Time is not money, time is everything.” She is in favour of repeating. In order to save time, instead of cooking supper and setting a table she uses up crackers and chips and buys a lot of vitamins, as supplements...[...] he who desires nothing, hopes for

nothing, and is afraid of nothing, cannot be an artist [...]she wants, expects and fears, all abundantly and all at the same time (p. 52).

Inevitably, such kind of a figure frequently blurs Safak's mind. However, what Little Miss Practical cannot perceive are two important facts: the power of the cultural codes, which come from the experiences of centuries and the reality of biological clock. These two elements achieve affecting author's mind by empowering the dilemmas, which cause a war of decisions:

You wish to quit thinking. Quit examining, stop analyzing and begin seizing the moment. Only then will you notice how being a mother and being a writer can be balanced (p. 51).

Safak states in one of her interviews in 2007 that being both an author and a mother is possible and there is a wide scope of examples for such kind of experiences although their synthesis are quite different from each other because their natures are distinctive and demanding in company with their own dilemmas. While some of women become mother without marriage, a number of women prefer professionals for help:

She has kept a list of all the information she will need. Phone numbers of the baby sitter agencies, babysitters, nursery schools, pediatricians. She should also get an assistant to deal with her e-mails [...]. And if she finds a secretary and a recorder, she does not have to keep on writing altogether. (p. 48).

In order to convince herself and her readers, Safak writes about Virginia Wolf, one of the most successful female writers in the world of literature as an example for female authors:

Virginia Woolf used to take notes as orders to her servants on a piece of paper. What houseworks to do, what to cook, which dresses require washing... She would take notes to order. Can you think about it? They resided in the same house but instead of sparing time to saying to them what they have to do, she *wrote* to them... (p. 49.)

However, she cannot help thinking about women who try to do their best by doing everything themselves, being a good mother and wife, being a hardworking and doing her professional job and at the same time a housewife by cooking the best dinners, doing the cleanest laundry, baking the best cakes. Is it possible to be so

perfect? If it is so, how would such a woman feel or to what extent she can carry on such an order? These questions triggers in Safak's mind the experience of Sylvia Plath:

She desired to do everything to immediately and flawlessly [...] she stubbornly insisted on the thought that she could be a successful mother and an outstanding poet: the matchless Poet – Mother [...] nevertheless, her strive to be “superwoman” used up Sylvia Plath... when she begin to pursue after a work, she noticed she had skipped over another; when she improved one thing, she would lose her control on another... (p. 79).

The war of dilemmas between traditional cultural codes and modern culture sometimes reach a point where they are nearly in equal power:

Look at yourself, always evaluating, always in haste. Sometimes you try to do five things at once and then fall flat from exhaustion. Do one thing at a time. What is the hurry? Give yourself over to the moment. Time does not exist beyond that (p. 73).

It means if you have a baby, you will always be envious of women who do not have children and focus fully on their careers. If you choose to focus on your career, however, you will always envy women who have kids whichever path you choose, your mind will be obsessed with the option you have discarded” (p. 56).

In addition to it,

My point is, whichever woman you will grow into, you will wish to be the Other. According to the great French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, the essence of ethics is the point where you come face-to-face with the Other. Of course, from a phenomenological stance, we could speak of the ‘other’ inside the ‘I’ (p. 57).

The author cannot escape from her desire to be a mother in spite of her resistance against pregnancy and she never says a word about abortion although she has not planned it. Thus, the dilemma of the taking decision on being a single author or a mother with no career comes to an end, but the former dilemma will leave its place to another one.

Nevertheless, Elif Safak's pregnancy does not become just like she has imagined. Her traditional cultural codes conquer her ‘self’ by benefiting from its power, which is gained throughout centuries via national and international value:

“Motherhood is Holy and Honorable, and it should be treated as such.”  
Unquestionable, untouchable, unchangeable (p. 185).

From now on, even the tiniest criticism against marriage or motherhood will be punished by law. Simone de Beauvoir’s books have been seized and burned in a huge bonfire. Sylvia Plath, Dorothy Parker, Anaïs Nin, Zelda Fitzgerald and Sevgi Soysal are strictly banned. I am not allowed to read any of them during my pregnancy (p. 185).

Elif Safak pens a letter for her daughter on week twenty-five in her pregnancy in order to leave a permanent gift, which reflects her earlier feelings for her baby:

I do not know why you ended up picking me out of all the potential mothers in the universe. Maybe you are a crazy kind of girl. You find the idea of a perfect mother boring. Or you already know me better than I know myself. Maybe you see the potential in me. Maybe you want to help me overcome my shortcomings. You can be my best guide, my best teacher (p. 194).

In one of her interviews with Efnan Atmaca in 2017, Safak concentrates on the war between Miss Highbrowed Cynic and Miss Dame Dervish and asks the author whether it is possible to be both an intellectual and maternal person. Elif Safak says that she used to have a great fear of non-migratory life because of her doubts and anxieties in addition to the idea of going away. In fact, she has always dignified. However, she admits that human being is always in pursuit of what is opposite to her; in other words, she has wanted anything which she could not associate with intellectual lifestyle like buying curtains for kitchen as a part of ordinary life.

Therefore, *Black Milk* is the story of disdaining all such kind of point of views. While she draws up characters, she believes that human being a versatile being, so she emphasizes that there are no heroes or heroines because of the fact that there are no perfect human beings, no absolute good or bad people in this world. As a result of this fact, her novels never consist of heroic characters, but instead of it, they have conflictive characteristics in the structure of the fiction. Unfortunately, she cannot conduct the same approach in her life.

The reason, which lies behind this reality stems from her having no habit of asking for help, which has forced herself so much throughout her private life and career. In fact, such quality takes its root from her early childhood, which passed in a lonely way, so she got used to doing everything alone since her early years. However, she has become aware that such kind of approach in life was so tiring and hard both physically and psychologically<sup>97</sup>.

Another reason of these conflicts triggers an important question by a journalist from *Hurriyet* and Ayşe Arman and wants to know in her interview with Safak the difference between a woman's preferring not to be a mother for being afraid of losing her figure in order not to get on weight and destroy her physical appearance and preferring not to be a mother not to leave intellectual activities? The author replies that there is not in fact a clear-cut difference between them. A female individual starts an order in her life and never wants to destroy her plan. She admits that she also used to have such kind of a strict order that she forbade herself from taking pleasure from unimportant female and maternal activities such as buying gaudy baby booties or cooking puddings, but now she really likes it. While she used to enclose her world with reason, and disdain the other maternal world. In other words, she used to believe that she would betray her intellectual world if she ever have enjoyment in maternal activities, but now, she is aware that her fears about maternal interests were in vain.

The author expresses that the cultural dilemma in her life takes its shape via *Highbrowed Cynic* and *Dame Dervish*. She also says that she has given the books and respected them so deeply that the *Dame Dervish* decides to teach her the reality that there is a point that reason cannot do anything because of the existence of another dimension which cannot be comprehended by means of merely mind. Thus, these two different points of view have always been in conflict with each other and Safak has always housed this dilemma and also she has benefitted from it<sup>98</sup>. After her marriage, Elif Safak's opinion about marriage is asked in one of her interviews in 2008, but she prefers calling herself as 'a woman in love', instead of 'a married woman' as marriage still causes her to get panicked as it provokes the fears towards settled and domestic life in her soul marriage signifies getting monotonous and habitual lifestyle which is grounded on repetitions, which is an undesirable condition for any artistic study<sup>98</sup>.

Inevitably, such kind of lifestyle, in other words, being a married working woman as a writer with two children accompanied with the responsibility of a house in addition to cleaning, cooking and education of the children are not normal routines for Elif Safak since she did not have any idea about words 'routine' or 'habit' because of her nomadic life till she met her husband, so choice of marriage and domestic life activities is an extraordinary decision for her. Certainly, this point of view does not imply that she supports the popular motto "I can both have a career and baby as an author with a successful profession. She evidently refuses such type of imposition of the dilemmas. She stresses that unquestionably the children come first, but it does not convey the meaning that the women should dedicate all of her life to her family, children and strive in her career by forgetting her requirements and wishes. Possibly, this issue is one of the few matters that Safak is totally certain about her point of view. Putting so many burdens on women's shoulders is a typical attitude in Turkish culture.

What is so disappointing here is that modern culture also nurtures this approach indirectly by hiding its motto behind feminist clichés. For instance, Nil Karaibrahimgil who is a famous singer, songwriter and a participant of the world of advertisement with her voice and songs, the expression in one of her advertisement song "although they say my enthusiasm will fade, I can both have career and baby!" is criticized by many intellectuals. One of these intellectual people, Elif Safak has frequently declared her thoughts about it (although it is commonly known that Elif Safak and Nil Karaibrahimgil are good friends and they support each other in both their private lives and professional careers) since many journalists, critics and readers asked her approach in similar ways to Karaibrahimgil's aforementioned lyrics.

We should pay attention to a reality that a woman cannot be a mother without loving children. If we remember Elif Safak's expression that before coming across her husband she used to think that she might be a good stepmother. This shows us that Safak has always been aware of her affection and love for children. Therefore, we can say that her confusion and fear about marriage was more as dominant as her desire to be a mother, so her strive for forbidding herself from domestic pleasures and focusing all of her attention to her professional career is not a surprising approach. What amuses

us as readers and critics is that she has endured for such a long time to face with the reality that human being is not merely mind, but it is the unity of the mind and soul, which trigger the potentials in human's world to achieve their goals.

Modern psychologists and experts have currently emphasizing the prominence of self-fulfillment via achieving the balance between intelligence quotient and emotional quotient. Therefore, Safak's range of dilemmas is described in gloomy mood. While finishes her book and put an end to her war against her desires and inner voices, she welcomes happiness and serenity at the end of the novel as she becomes aware of the fact that no one can truly be happy and successful without embracing her characteristics whether they may be traditional, out of date or modern as the human being' capacity, potential and vision are open to every experience when s/he has become what she wants and who s/he is. If this reality is looked down on or ignored, dilemmas, which hinder people from being where they want to be, unhappiness and unrest attitude towards life, are inevitable and no one can put the blame about this issue on any other person.

It is inevitable to ignore the author's wounds, which take their roots from her parents throughout the novel and her interviews since the beginning of her career. She states that she had experienced both advantages and disadvantages of not having an order in her life, which enabled her to come across different cultures, which has always left her 'araf' (purgatory). It is both a good and at the same time hard position in her view. It is not easy to explain the state of being on 'araf' and what 'araf' means for a person who is far away from such kind of moods. Especially araf is the hardest position to be within the constraints of it in a period when the categories are divided in a so clear – cut way since araf blurs the borders. Although we prefer using the word 'purgatory' for the English meaning of 'araf', these two words cannot be completely replaced because of the fact that the former word takes its root from Christianity while the latter stems from Islamic terminology. "Araf is the Muslim sheol or borderland between heaven and hell for those who are, from incapacity, neither morally bad nor morally good. Araf is also a partition. Between hell and paradise, there is a high wall,

99. <https://www.definitions.net/definition/ARAF>, retrieved at 31 of December, 2018, page 1 of 1.

100. Elif, Safak, "I have eight different personalities, and all of them are in dilemma with each other.", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.as.p?islem=roportaj&id=55>, retrieved at 21 of January, 2019, 1 of 5.



an a'raf. On this partition stand men who have escaped from hell but who are not permitted to enter paradise. They yearn to enter paradise, but their sins and virtues are evenly balanced.”<sup>99</sup>

What Elif Safak implies as ‘araf’ is her dilemmas, which she can neither love nor hate them. However, she is highly aware of the fact that the general title of her dilemmas is different cultures, which pushes the author to dominate her life. Whenever she turns her back one culture, she immediately feels the existence of the features of this culture and she cannot be sure whether she makes an appropriate decision, thus she is caught in between different cultural moods. In her earlier ages, she cannot realize the taste of the contrasting qualities.

Elif Safak expresses in one of her interviews in 2002 that her way of thinking has never been absolutist in her life. In fact, she considers it as an advantageous characteristic since she believes that when a person approaches life without being completely sure about anything, it may enable the imagination to work in a different way<sup>100</sup>. Therefore, she both accepts her dilemmatic attitude and at the same time, she centers it in the way how her mental process functions in addition to applying it in her novels, and especially in *Black Milk*. What we should put into consideration when we focus on the dilemmas in *Black Milk* is that the novel’s dilemmas are nurtured with the differences of culture, religion, social class and this condition results in loneliness, sense of otherness and isolation. Inevitably, such circumstances lead to traumatic fragmentations and the inability to get the sense of belongingness because of the sudden changes, breaks, ends in very short times.

Also, another important point, which is stressed in this novel, *Black Milk* is culture of health. In this sense, the postpartum depression, which is rarely chosen as a topic in the world of literature as if this illness is hardly ever detected among women, centralizes in this novel. In her interview with Ayse Arman from the newspaper, *Hurriyet* in 2007, the journalist wants to learn the reason why female writers have never dealt with this issue in a similar way with *Black Milk* and why they have never written about post partum depression or whether they have merely looked down on it.

101. Elif, Safak, “Yyeapp! Finally I have got rid of postpartum djinnis!” <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=188>, retrieved at 31 of December, 2018, 4 of 8.

The author emphasizes that she believes like many people as readers that many of the female writers have experienced such kinds of illnesses and dilemmas whether to be solely in *Black Milk* and why they have never written about post partum depression or whether they have merely looked down on it. The author emphasizes that she believes that many of the female writers have experienced such kinds of illnesses and dilemmas whether to be solely an author or being both a mother and a writer. Maybe they have got through and recovered depression or they have decided not to give birth to a child even in the beginning period in their career. As a matter of fact, such kinds of topics are not so simple or easy to put into words, as we should keep this in our minds that the word of literature is dominantly male, thus female writers apply to some strategies in order to have a position in the literary sphere.<sup>101</sup>

In spite of all these hinders in the world of literature, it is inevitable that the hardships which the author has come across both in her private life and professional career as a result of her dilemmas, she achieves to turn her hardship and hinder into success by benefiting from her illness and trying writing about an issue which is rarely focused on the world of literature: the culture of illness.

In one of her interview with the journalist Ayse Arman from Hurriyet, The author expresses that illness is a splendid source of theme for literature in terms of enabling human being to see the limits and at the same time the limitless characteristics of him. As of the most successful writers who deals with illnesses are Proust, he supports the idea that there are merely two different kinds of ideas: the ones, which lead people to happiness and the others, which stem from pain. Then he claims that the masterpiece, which shakes the ground of literature, is the painful ideas.<sup>102</sup>

According to Safak, another prominent author who courageously concentrated on illness is Virginia Woolf who penned "*On Being Ill*" about her nervous breakdown, which we name it as bipolar disorder, which conveys the meaning of being "a brain disorder that causes unusual shifts in mood, energy, activity levels, and the ability to

102. Ayşe Yılmaz, "Safak Talked about Her Experience: Postpartum Depression", <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=191>, retrieved at 3 of February, 2019, p. 1 of 3.

103. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/bipolar-disorder/index.shtml>

carry out day-to-day tasks.<sup>119</sup> In such cases, it is commonly seen that the mood of the patients "... range from periods of extremely "up," elated, and energized behavior (known as manic episodes) to very sad, "down," or hopeless periods (known as depressive episodes). Although this illness is today can be diagnosed via careful examines, various tests and experts' researches on similar symptoms, it requires a considerable attention, patience and observation in order to put a correct diagnosis.

People who are caught this illness face "periods of unusually intense emotion, changes in sleep patterns and activity levels, and unusual behaviors. These distinct periods are called "mood episodes." Mood episodes are drastically different from the moods and behaviors that are typical for the person. Extreme changes in energy, activity, and sleep go along with mood episodes.<sup>103</sup>

Experiencing such kind of illness especially for a writer with a strong pen would inevitably lay path for a new approach by mirroring the secret corners of mind and soul while the majority of the writers still stacked to the themes of love, politics and war like a vicious circle. Virginia Woolf was aware of this situation and she reflected her view about it:

"There is, let us confess it (and illness is the great confessional) a childish outspokenness in illness; things are said, truths blurted out, which the cautious respectability of health conceals. About sympathy for example; we can do without it. That illusion of a world so shaped that it echoes every groan, of human beings so tied together by common needs and fears that a twitch at one wrist jerks another, where however strange your experience other people have had it too, where however far you travel in your own mind someone has been there before you—is all an illusion."<sup>104</sup>

What deeply shaken in Woolf's soul when it came to illness was that the frank and pure state of human mind when it face with the reality of pain, suffer and the fear of death, which opens the door to truthfulness and she goes on saying: "*We do not know our own souls, let alone the souls of others. Human beings do not go hand in hand the whole stretch of the way. There is a virgin forest, tangled, pathless, in each; a snowfield where even the print of birds' feet is unknown. Here we go alone, and like it*

*better so. Always to have sympathy, always to be accompanied, always to be understood would be intolerable. But in health the genial pretence must be kept up and the effort renewed—to communicate, to civilise, to share, to cultivate the desert, educate the native, to work by day together and by night to sport. In illness this make-believe ceases.*”<sup>104</sup>

While Woolf deals with illness as ‘virgin forest’ she stresses how rarely this theme is approached as an issue although it is a common fact or everyday experience which is widely used by modernist artists. In addition to its being untouched matter which triggers sympathy, care and tolerance although these phenomenon cannot be frequently observed in the civilized world.

What *Black Milk* highlights is a more specific illness, which is more commonly put into words among women, but it is ignored in the literary sphere. Maybe, an illness which attacks a women when she experiences one of the most important moments, after being a mother when the women is expected to be happy and strong. However, the mother’s psychological condition before during and after the birth of the baby may leave strong impact on the new mother and postpartum period may be different from the classically dreamt happiness. According to Wahyuntari, dysphoria, mood lability, crying, anxiety, insomnia, poor appetite and irritability are commonly observed symptoms of postpartum depression<sup>105</sup>.

I don’t sleep at all. The Second I close my eyes, unpleasant thoughts and and discomfoting images barrage my brain who knew that my head was such an arsenal of anxieties? I haven’t been able to sleep properly days. Around my eyes there are circles as dark beige and round as the simits of İstanbul. Never had it entered my mind that my heart could hold so bleak an anguish (p. 209).

Women in general come face to face with considerable psychological, social and sentimental changes, so people from a wide variety of culture see that this is a period when mothers have a high degree of sensitivity towards everything. According

104. Virginia, Woolf, “Selected Essays: Virginia Woolf Oxford World's Classics” edit. by David Bradshaw p. 104 2009.

105. Evi Wahyuntari, "Postpartum Affective Disorders." 4 th ICRIEMS Proceedings Published by The Faculty Of Mathematics And Natural Sciences

Yogyakarta State University, ISBN 978-602-74529-2-3, evi.wahyuntari@unisayogya.ac.id, p. B-15, 2017.

to Lee's study about Chinese postpartum culture in 2007, the women who do not follow traditional practices after giving birth, are in general more have tendency towards postpartum depression.<sup>106</sup>

The author intends to show another face of giving birth via *Black Milk* that postpartum period is not merely a sparkling and sentimental and it also conveys its own roughness and blocks. As a woman who got over the same period with many other mothers who are at the period of afterbirth, she benefitted from her black milk in order to write this book and makes references to postpartum depression. According to her, the title, *Black Milk* refers to motherhood, depression and authorship.<sup>107</sup>

This trio has forced the main character's limits, but this situation cannot be completely considered as a negative experience since it enables the author to discover herself whom she has not frankly explored or observed. The dilemmas were inevitable elements in the process, but when it comes to traditional conflicts, they helped the reader see the reflections of the mind and soul of a modern woman who is not totally different from the modern female psychology.

106. D Lee, (2007). Antenatal Taboo, among Chinese Women in Hong Kong. *Midwifery*, doi 10.1016. Lee, Dominic TS, et al. "Antenatal taboos among Chinese women in Hong Kong." *Midwifery* 25.2 (2009): 104-113.

107. GÖLBAŞI, Zehra; EĞRI, Gamze. Doğum sonu dönemde annenin bakımına yönelik yapılan geleneksel uygulamalar. *Cumhuriyet Medical Journal*, 2010, 32.3: 276-282.

## **2. iii National Dilemmas**

Some of the authorities state that any literary work of art can be evaluated by merely taking into consideration of the structural/technical elements and any approach means application to the techniques, which are not directly related with literary sphere. However, focusing upon an autobiographical requires studying on cultural and national details.

Elif Safak's dilemmas, which stem from her sense of nation constitute the most complicated and hard to come to an agreement because of her loose communication with her parent and her frequent both national and international travels whether she wants them or not. She comes to terms with these circumstances and such lifestyle and becomes an indispensable part of her life to such an extent that she calls herself 'nomad' and expresses her fear of settling down in a city permanently. Nevertheless, some facts and realities are above Safak's plans or intentions as each human being is born with the sense of belonging in his/her society no matter how hard life an individual might have experienced in his/her native country. The absence or deficiency of this sense invariably causes serious psychological problems such as depression on various levels, lack of sense of identity and belonging and socially feeling of otherness. In addition to it, it is stated that the problems with the notion of nation constitutes the source of terrorism.

In Safak's case, lack of the sense of nationality affects both her private life and professional career. In spite of her strive to hide behind the concept of multiculturalism, it will not help her to compensate for the deficiency of nation. Therefore, this dilemma will be her everlasting problem throughout her life.

## 2. iii National Dilemmas

Some of the critics claim that a work of art can be evaluated in terms of merely literariness, in other words, structural or technical approach is the sole way in order to analyze and assess a pure work of art. For instance, Roman Jakobson who was a Russian critic supported the view that Northrop Frye, who asserted that literature, can be an independent field to study when it is freed from historical, psychological sociological or linguistic disciplines, therefore, work of art should be analyzed by separating it from any field except for literature itself. He embodied this view in his prominent book: *Anatomy of Criticism*, which triggered the hope especially in America that literary criticism, could turn into an institutionalized and autonomous structure.<sup>108</sup>

When we put into consideration all these expressions it is clear to say that this kind of approach support that the literature benefits from aspects of life by giving both individual and external life of people while it sometimes shed light on the existent conditions it also reveals ideal situations realities and facts from time to time. In other words, literature both affects life and at the same time it is affected by life itself. It may be because of political reasons or merely the authors' sharing their point of view as outflow of the sentiments and opinions.

This approach helps us to see that both the structure and the content of the works of art are worth of dealing with scientific and artistic ways. It did not only affect the academic critics, it also enabled the readers to enter into the mood and inner layers of the novels and benefit from their imagination and questioning the distinct of them, which caused the formation of a new interactive relation between the readers and the authors. Some critics and authors believe that the success of the books depends upon the level, the depth, and the continuity of this effect.<sup>109</sup> If we pay attention to the frequency of watching or reading authors from televisions and social media, Kırımlı's point of view may be acceptable. However, the rate of book sales and the cost of advertisement make social media more appealing, yet the position of the author has nowadays been questioned: are they sure about their choice of occupation?

108. Jale, Parla, "*Don Quixote'tan Bugüne Roman*", İletişim yayınları, İstanbul, 2000, p. 45.

109. Bilal. Kırımlı, "*Elif Şafak'ın Romanlarında Milliyet ve Türklük Algısı*." *Türklük Bilimi Araştırmaları* 28 (2010): 261-281.

110. Berna., Moran, *Edebiyat Kuramları ve Eleştiri*. İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2017. P. 2.

Binyazar believes that artistic improvement is up to the improvement in the intellectual world. The Western Society has also improved itself in literature; however, it has also had influence upon many countries. On the other hand, each country has its own way of thinking, feeling and perception. As a result of this, no country has the same way of creation, production or follows the same way of perceiving the created elements.<sup>111</sup> It is in general accepted that an artist is universal, but each artist nurtures his/her art via his/her own roots:

The term ‘nationality’ comprises political and social sides. Nationality refers to “the official right to belong to a political country” and “a group of people of the same race, religion, traditions, etc.”<sup>112</sup> while Britannica expresses that it signifies “membership in a nation or sovereign state in law”<sup>113</sup>. Another definition for the same is used as “the status of belonging to a particular nation, whether by birth or naturalization”.<sup>114</sup> Nationality is considered as of inalienable right, basic right — the right, in fact, to have rights,<sup>115</sup> which possess all the human being. As a result of this, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is a document of turning point in terms of human rights expresses in Article 15 that “everyone has the right to a nationality” and that “no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality.”<sup>116</sup>

When we put into consideration the definitions which take place in the previous paragraph, it is a critical significance because of the fact that it is a key factor which enables the individual to be included in the extent or range of international law and to achieve economic, politic rights and privileges which are granted by modern countries which are on their nationals. Nationality helps individual to regulate the association between him/her and a nation state. While the nationality in general enables the protection of the individual by the state, it also puts obligatory responsibilities on

111. Adnan Binyazar. *Toplum ve Edebiyat*. Can Yayınları, İstanbul 2010, p. 2 – 3.

112. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/nationality-international-law>

113. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/nationality>

114. Chief Justice Earl Warren, *Trop u Dulles*, 1958, quoted in Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues, *Winning the Human Race?* (1988), 107.

115. <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

116. Cuza, A.C. “Nationality in Art” Plural Magazine, <https://www.icr.ro/pagini/nationality-in-art-1927>, retrieved at 17 of February, 2019, page 1 of 2



people towards the state.

Nation as a term the wholeness of blood – related people who live on a fixed territory, which works as an essential for their existence, serves as functional characteristics of a state. The people who speak the same language, which they have shaped themselves through centuries via a common past, present, and future, become the participant of the creative of human culture. The formation of the personality of the peoples' coming together via the fusion of the different blood of the individuals of a nation helps improve of the creative power of human culture.

As a political and ideological approach, nationality supports any state's aims such as gaining total independence and self – government. In other words, it stresses the significance of a state's right to govern, that is, every state can become independent of external powers or foreign domination by dedicating an individual to the improvement, welfare and serenity. In addition to it, nationality assumes that each nation should build a national identity, which shares common elements such as culture, language, race, religion tradition, history and politics, and they should be protected.

As one of the most prominent and leading figures in the field of theory of nationalism, Anthony D. Smith expressed that “No memory no identity; no identity, no nation.”<sup>117</sup> In this way, he wants to emphasize that any nation without the availability of the collective memory means that it could not form the sense of consciousness of identity, which takes its root from its origin. As a result of it, we cannot expect to be a nation from the peoples who do not own the consciousness of identity.

The identity which is an indispensable part constituting a nation take its power from the unity of the past, in other words, the unity of history, which perpetuates being a nation. By living together for a long time, the experiences, which are undergone shape peoples and help people to acquire a culture; that is acquisition of the identity. Thus, the individual becomes a participant of the state.

When the individual owns the consciousness of the national memory, he/she becomes aware of the value of his/her identity, which enables the harmony between the person and the state. As a participant of a community, human being is in need of

117. Anthony, Smith, D. “Memory and Modernity: Reflections on Ernest Gellner’s Theory of Nationalism”, [http://fbemoodle.emu.edu.tr/pluginfile.php/44356/mod\\_resource/content/1/A.%20d.%20Smith-memory%20and%20modernity%201994%2C%20NN.pdf](http://fbemoodle.emu.edu.tr/pluginfile.php/44356/mod_resource/content/1/A.%20d.%20Smith-memory%20and%20modernity%201994%2C%20NN.pdf)

sense of belonging. One of the most important factors, which hold people together, is a common identity. The reason behind the collapse of the powerful empires, which were founded many centuries ago was their not owning a common identity, so the relationship among different communities were so weak that the end of these imperial states was inevitable.

Adnan Binyazar expresses in his book: *The Society and Art* that art is a universally common activity, which is a productive process. Each nation makes contributions to the development of art in accordance with the scope of their recourses. The possibility of art's becoming prevalent is in relationship with the formation of the similar conditions. Any nation's struggle in the pursuit of producing art without having the consciousness of their national identity is in vain, but it is merely value within its own limits. Unfortunately, our people have lived without having the consciousness of their own identity for a long time. Therefore, it is not possible to concentrate upon the developments in our art. At this point, our country falls into the position of satellite of another country. Canalizing another country's culture is a kind of imperialism although they do not rule over there.<sup>117</sup>

What Binyazar focuses on the paragraph above is the universality of the art, which nurtures itself via nations' contributions from their cultural resources. Any nation's effort to produce art by ignoring its national characteristics has never taken any position in the history of art. However, our country has recently undergone a period of dislike for its own identity and turning its face completely to West by imitating what is seen without questioning the appropriateness of the elements to our structure. The point which is worse than being a merely an imitator is being culturally, socially and mentally under domination although our history is filled with the strives in order to preserve our state from any factors which would have shadowed our national identity. *Black Milk* may be accepted as a novel, which can be evaluated from the point of nationalistic view within the framework of dilemmas, which have been in the literary circle since the publication of *Pinhan*.

To begin with, author's process of life before her marriage may be able to give us a great extent of information about what and how she has experienced as a single and free person:

117. Binyazar, Adnan. *Toplum ve edebiyat*. Can Yayınları, İstanbul 2010, p. 2 – 3.

“I am a nomad” p. x

“All this time my writing had filled the one suitcase I took with me wherever I went”  
p. 6.

As a novel of autobiographic genre, the *Black Milk* starts with giving introductory information about protagonist, and what is so attention – taking about the beginning part of the novel is that the main character stresses that she does not have a settled life and her past is filled with many countries and cities which she has been to there for a time, but she never reveals anything about her national roots as if she has no idea or knowledge about her past. She has never hesitated going without taking into account her family, friends, job or homeland, yet her sole worry is to set her roots to anywhere:

“Nothing seemed familiar I, who had traveled across continents, easily finding home in so many places, could not find the strength or will to go out into the street” (p. 6).

The main character gives an example to shed light on how her psychology reacted when she had to stay in Istanbul for a period because of her giving her first baby to birth and how deeply she was affected by the post –partum depression. While people in such conditions prefer being in his/her homeland, she finds staying in the same place as an obligation because of her psychological health. The reason, which lies behind the curtail, is also revealed in the novel:

“I could not settle down anywhere too long. Having been born in Strasbourg, raised in Madrid, and resided in Ankara, Istanbul, Amman, Cologne, Boston, Michigan and Arizona, I had been living out of a suitcase all my life – certain that I could stay anywhere and everywhere on this planet as long as I did not have to put down roots” (p. 3 and 4).

This quotation above clearly reflects one of the reasons why the protagonist’s bond with her native country is rather weak. She has to move from one place to another one with and without her asking for her ideas about them. Therefore, she has flipped like a leaf of a tree in the wind. All of her moving to different places took place without the accompaniment of her father and when she moved with her mother, she could not spend quality time with her as a result of her mother’s job. The children first

gain their notion of nationality via their parents. However, we cannot expect from Safak's parents to teach and help their daughter being a participant of her state. As a result of this, we can say without any hesitation that when it comes to mirror the main character's perception on nationality, there takes place merely a big deal of empty space on her basis about her idea of nationalism. Living in one country or another does not make a great extent of differences on the condition that she would not stay there too long. The characteristics of the country are not an issue, which may worry her:

“Those who use the expression “the female bird builds the nest” do not understand the bird. It is true that birds build nests, but with every new season, they abandon the home they made to erect a new one in a different place. There is no bird that stays in the same nest for the entirety of its life” (p. 18).

The expression from the *Black Milk* reflects the low degree of the author's relationship with her homeland. The image 'bird' a kind of animal many of whose families can fly to long distances in order to survive implies how vital and natural is for the protagonist to have an unsettled lifestyle. However, there is a subtle issue which the author cannot bring to her mind that the birds come back to their nestles when the weather conditions recover for their survival. On the other hand, she would rather go to a different place so as to improve her psychological situation.

“Is it possible to say Agaoglu that the order and silence which she so gives importance irritates Safak? Settling in the same home for years, to know each storeowner and neighbor in the area, to be fixed in the same street, same quarter, same city is an alternative that Elif finds horrible. Regularity and stableness are Russian and Chinese to her” (p. 24).

It is clear to see that the protagonist's life until her marriage is made up of moving from one country to another or having journeys whose length has in general changed in line with her mother's job, her education and her professional career. Actually, she seems completely happy with such kind of lifestyle. Remaining in the same place for a long time conveys the meaning of being stuck to a point, which leaves the impact on the character a kind of recession and the end of the variety and alternatives. The key point in the previous paragraph, 'rooted in the same city' is expressed in such a fear that it seems as if it was a kind of phobia, which has to be handled with meticulous care.

Lexically, nationality means “people who have common origins or traditions” and the word ‘origin’ may be matched with the word ‘root’ in the previous paragraph, and these two words frequently made use of in order to define the term ‘nationality’.<sup>118</sup> Thus, her fear of ‘root’ also implies her ignorance and carefree attitude towards the notion of nation.

The protagonist’s indifference to the term of nation and nationality reveals us to what extent she had given in being within the borders of another country no matter where or how far it is from her land. This approach helps the reader to comprehend the impression of the imperialism on the main character’s life, which is not merely and negatively affected by her homeland. Her lonely life abroad nurtures her sense of loneliness although she does not completely and directly put it into words.

According to Binyazar, an individual’s being lost in the constraint of imperialism blocks his/her progress through the universal art because of the absence of the conscious, which enriches via national identity:

“A nation within the constraint of imperialism – let alone to change the world - cannot be conscious of the changing world. Unfortunately, it means cultural captivity. In fact, many nations have attempted to have knowledge about its national identity and be aware of its existence since the beginning of the Renaissance. Each nation should make contributions to the world of literature by reflecting its own characteristics”.<sup>119</sup>

In *Black Milk*, the first singular narrator as an inevitable feature of an autobiographical novel constructs the plot by forming a half realistic and half imaginary world where many people from different nations and cultures have position in the book by benefitting from various writers from the entire world and from different periods while the protagonist reveals details about her marriage and her post-partum period. According to Kırımlı’s calculations, this work welcomes twenty - seven words, which are related with different nations and ethnic roots. The most frequently pronounced national and leading word is ‘the Americans’, which is repeated twenty four times. Excepting these numbers, ‘the Turk’ is used ten times, ‘Chinese’ is counted eight times, ‘English’ is written seven, ‘the Japanese’ six times, ‘the French’ and ‘the Jewish’ is repeated five times, ‘The Russian’, ‘the Arabic’ and ‘the Indian’ are used

118. <https://www.definitions.net/definition/NATIONALITY>. Retrieved at 27 of February, 2019.

119. Binyazar, Adnan. *Toplum ve edebiyat*. Can Yayınları, İstanbul 2010, p. 3.

three times, ‘the Philippine’, ‘the Moldavian’, ‘the Uzbek’, the gypsy’ ‘the Zimbabwean’ and ‘the Moroccan’ are used two times, ‘the Ottoman’, ‘the Australian’, ‘the German’, ‘the Pakistani’, ‘the Kirgiz’, ‘the Spanish’, ‘the Scottish’, ‘the Greek’, ‘the Palestinian’, ‘the Mexican’, ‘the Brazilian’ are written merely one time. This choice of words and the quantity of the national words reveals us that the author’s writing style and her way of thinking are constituted of a multinational view in the *Black Milk*.<sup>120</sup>

If we focus on the setting of the novel, we can remember that the majority of the book takes place in Istanbul while the rest of it is constructed in Ankara, America, Germany, Spain and England. “Having grown up in various cities and countries, the main character wants to emphasize the phenomenon of ‘globe’ rather than the phenomenon of ‘national homeland’<sup>121</sup>”

“Just like those showy types, I open my windows as I sit down to work on a novel. Surely, my aim is not to invade the outside world with my personal music. I want the music of the outside world to invade my inner space. The cries of seagulls, the honking of cars, the siren of an ambulance, the quarrels of the couple living upstairs, the clamor of the children playing football across the street, the sounds of backgammon pieces coming from coffeehouses, the yelling of peddlers and the punk and post punk music spinning on my CD player... Only in this hullabaloo is the revelry inside me briefly drowned out. Only then can I write in peace” (p. 25).

“Pedestrians hurrying up and down the street, commuters standing still in the public buses that are full to the brim, peddlers selling replica designer bags, street children cleaning the windshields of the luxurious cars that stop at red lights, billboards advertising fast money and glitzy lifestyles, a city of endless contradictions... that is what I see when I look around in Istanbul” (p.94).

The quotation, which takes place in the previous paragraph, reveals us the protagonist’s observation about an ordinary day in Istanbul. Although the author strongly stresses that she does not want to be uncontrollably impressed by the outside world, but she is in chase of finding out synchronous order, which is in line with her

120. Kirişli, Bilal. "ELİF ŞAFAK'IN ROMANLARINDA MİLLİYET VE TÜRK LÜK ALGISI." *Türk Lük Bilimi Araştırmaları* 28 (2010): p. 276 – 277.

121. Kirişli, Bilal. "ELİF ŞAFAK'IN ROMANLARINDA MİLLİYET VE TÜRK LÜK ALGISI." *Türk Lük Bilimi Araştırmaları* 28 (2010): p. 278

own rhythm. However, the mood of the paragraph leaves the contrasting impression on the reader. The natural melody of Istanbul, which consists of a wide scope of sounds from the seagulls to honking cars achieves a harmony although this situation may seem illogical. This dilemma conquers the protagonist's soul by implying the power of the synergy which comes to being by means of coming together of the different elements, nations and ethnicities, which is felt in an indirect way in order to back up the notion of pluralism and multiculturalism as the prominent topics in almost all of the novels which were written by Elif Safak.

In his manuscript, *The Society and Literature*, Adnan Binyazar expresses that *"No artist can form anything without self – recognition and knowing his roots. Unfortunately, we had been unaware of this method for centuries. In such kind of conditions, it is not possible to create work of art the extent of the quality of which can compete with embrace all the human being."* When we consider about the last two quotations we can realize that when the author focuses on her proximal zone, she catches her mood in harmony and this helps her meet happiness and consistence in her psychological condition and professional career. The protagonist opens the windows in her house in order to trigger her mood of writing, that is, she lets all the elements outside her house to come and fill her house and mood.

"A woman who is split inside, half East, half West" (p. 94).

Sense of fragmentation is a commonly known and used phenomenon especially after the period of World War and the term 'modernism' took position in many different fields such as sociology, history, psychology as well as literature. When the globalization overwhelmed Turkey, too; our life style has become a complicated state. However, this phenomenon does not mean intermingling or unity. In other words, where the first half begins and where it ends are ambiguous. Such kind of uncertainties negatively affects human psychology because of the loss of the unity of identity. The problem of having no or deficient knowledge about who we are, where our origins come from or what kind of experiences our ancestors faced are important questions which deliver the details about ourselves. In order to achieve this goal, people should take into account his own social, cultural, historical and political qualities improvement of the nation. "If Elif goes on staying in Istanbul, these three finger women will not leave her alone" (p. 95). "Neither Turkey nor United States actually

differs. The main point is the journey through her 'self. She is not going to America; she is having a journey within herself' (p. 96).

As examples of the author's uninterested and indifferent attitude towards her national state, these three sentences convey the meaning that Istanbul, the city where she has lived the majority of her life is reflected as if the reason behind her dilemmas, chaos and disappointments lies behind Istanbul. In fact, her unrest and anxiety stems from her loneliness since her childhood and the inconsistent style of her grown up by her mother and grandmother, who have completely as different visions and attitudes towards life as black and white. Therefore, she prefers ascribing the reason of her dilemmas and alternative solutions in order to overcome this problem to the cities and countries where she has lived.

In this respect, we can say that the main character puts forward irrelevant reasons for her habit of moving to different places such as there is no difference for her to live any place as long as she can write, or to try to find solution in order to fight against her sense of dilemmas. Unfortunately, her continuous moving is merely an escape from her problems and her problem of identity submerges in this process.

"She only desires to spend some time at the station to breathe its awkward, fetid smell, the odor of the people who chase after all directions, the heavy sound of the poverty-stricken people with their dreams of wealth, the stimulating clue of new destinations. The moment she wants to focus on a mystery or to watch like a hawk the world, the moment the nomad in her soul awakens, she go leaves wherever she is." (p. 96).

This paragraph helps us realize the existence of the protagonist's national sentiments although it seems as if the half of this feeling is under the iceberg and the other part of it can be seen even though it takes place in far distant point. The description, which is given as an example above, proves us that Safak loves the characteristics of Istanbul, which may not be enjoyed by another person from any nationality. The rushing of the people of cosmopolitan

Istanbul, the odour of them, the associations, which are driven by these people, charms the author in order to write and travel. In other words, even the negative features of this city inspire and give pleasure to her.

"You said: "I'll go to another country, go to another shore,



find another city better than this one.  
Whatever I try to do is fated to turn out wrong  
and my heart lies buried like something dead.  
How long can I let my mind moulder in this place?  
Wherever I turn, wherever I look,  
I see the black ruins of my life, here,  
where I've spent so many years, wasted them, destroyed them totally.”

You won't find a new country, won't find another shore.  
This city will always pursue you.  
You'll walk the same streets, grow old  
in the same neighborhoods, turn gray in these same houses.  
You'll always end up in this city. Don't hope for things elsewhere:  
there's no ship for you, there's no road.  
Now that you've wasted your life here, in this small corner,  
you've destroyed it everywhere in the world”.<sup>122</sup>

By Konstantinos Kavafis (p. 97).

As Konstantinos Kavafis expressed in his poem, no matter how deeply a person hates his/her native country and leaving aside the degree of the person's valid reason for his/ her anger towards his national state, s/ he cannot cut all of her/his ties with the national identity and past. Therefore, there is no reason for leaving a person's homeland for sentimental reasons. It can be precisely understood that the main character is between two minds of whether she can empower her attitude towards her nation or she had better break all of her connection with her own nation. In addition to her experiences from her past, her having intellectual and academic identity is another block which aims at cutting all of her link with her national culture, tradition and other social values. In Binyazar's view, a society's coming out of his shell and open up the gateway to earth depend upon his self – realization about his national identity. The national identity requires presenting his history, language, his native literature, his artistic reservoir which he has created. The nations who have achieved it can

122. C. P. Cavafy, "The City" from *C.P. Cavafy: Collected Poems*. Translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard. Translation Copyright © 1975, 1992 by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard. Reproduced with permission of Princeton University Press. Source: *C.P. Cavafy: Collected Poems* (Princeton University Press, 1975).

123. Binyazar, Adnan. "Toplum ve edebiyat". Can Yayınları, İstanbul 2010, p. 4.

comprehend and become aware of his existence.<sup>123</sup>

In this explanation, Binyazar proves without any hesitation that the way to the being within the notion of universality in art can be found solely by means of an artist's being aware of his /her national identity and the elements, which constitutes of the identity. In other words, the universality is achieved via locality; that is the national resources which nurtures the originality – the cornerstone of art – as a path to the production of the treasure of the world.

Our names and surnames are a part of our identity as legal, social and cultural sides in addition to their linguistic qualities. “According to Scassa, many states have searched in a direct and indirect way in order to affect the language of the surnames which belong to their own nationals. Teresa Scassa also stated that surname policies could show definite national identity goals such as for assimilating or segregating distinct ethnic section “to engage in national building exercises around a shared ethnic identity”. Such kinds of surname policies are especially precious when they are considered together with the surrounding ethnic diversities and circumstances like United States of America and Canada”.<sup>124</sup> When names and surnames own such national characteristics, it is inevitable for the main character to concentrate on this issue even since her youth:

“When Elif was at the age of eighteen, she determines to change her name. However, she has no problem with her first name Elif, which is a quite common girl's name in Turkey, which refers to tall and lithe, like the first letter of the Ottoman alphabet, ‘aleph’. The word can be found in Arabic, Persian, Hebrew and Turkish, although to the extent of her knowledge, it is only in the latter that it is used as a female name. She reads Borge's “*The Aleph*” and she is acquainted with the depiction of the word as a lexically point which is unable to be found in space which includes all points.” (p. 98).

Another example for them Elif's being fond of international elements is her name ‘Elif’, which is also an Arabic alphabet and at the same time a name which is used in various countries as for females. She seems to imply that even her name refers to her global point of view. Also, Borge's “*The Aleph*” in which the writer describes the meaning of ‘Elif’ can be shown as another example for her always moving from

124. Teresa, Scassa, “National Identity, Ethnic Surnames, And The State”, *Canadian Journal of Law & Society/La Revue Canadienne Droit et Société* 11.2 (1996): 167-191. p. 167.

one country to another one with an unbelievable speed.

If speak in terms of legal language, people change their names after marriage in Turkish national state. However, there may be exceptional cases where an individual wants to change his / her name because of a valid reason, which can be justified at court such as the meaning of the name, which owns an insulting or humiliating definition within social circle. In addition, when a person wants to cut away all of her ties with his / her family, s /he can apply to court in order to change her surname. However, this is a virtually long and hard legal process in Turkey to justify the requirement for changing second name. This shows us the position of the family name in our state,

Nonetheless, the author neither she wants keep her life with her father's name nor she venture to chase after at courts and cope with judicial process which is both a time and money consuming case. As an author who is in love with words, Safak comes up with a more practical solution via her choice of words:

“When it comes to her surname, however, the issue is completely different. It disturbs her that as women, we have to use take family names of our fathers, then our husbands' surnames. Since she has become an adult without spending time her father, she finds it meaningless to use his name” (p. 99).

“Then she realizes that she does not need to think about it much. She really, she does not need to focus on it. What she needs is to see what she has here and now. She preferred using her mother's name as her surname than using her father's surname.” (p. 106).

When Elif Safak's first writing is accepted to publish, she is asked whether she wants to change her name because of the fact that 'Elif' is commonly used female Turkish name, which might be evaluated as too ordinary to write under the first writing to be published. However, she would rather change her surname and prefer her mother's name as her new second name instead of using her father's second name 'Bilgin'. The protagonist goes on expressing her approach towards surnames:

“Men do not experience the necessity to change their family names. Their identification papers are provided to them at birth. Fixed and. Their surnames

are like their biological genes which are bequeathed from their fathers and grandfathers, and they transform it to their children and grandchildren.

When it comes to the women, whether they are aware of it or not, they are like nomads who immigrate to other countries. They own surnames are here today, immigrated tomorrow. Women writes official forms for different purposes over the course of their lives” (p. 99).

Many states conduct the law, which requires the women’s change their surnames after their marriage while men do not follow the same path if we exclude the exceptional cases. This procedure has been applied for centuries. The application, which helps the continuity of the generation in patriarchal communities, has been argued among feminist circle for centuries. As a defense for the continuation of the national policies, this legal application is explained in various parts of the novel. “The plane is jam – packed with undergraduate and graduate students, businessmen and businesswomen, trained professionals, journalists, academics, tourists and a newlywed couple on honeymoon... Besides Turks and Americans, there are Indians Russians, Bulgarians, Arabs and Japanese who have come from connecting flights” (p. 107).

If we focus on the *Black Milk* within the framework of setting, we can notice that she prefers choosing places where people from multi – cultural and multi- ethnic backgrounds is able to come together. In addition to multi - cultural countries and cosmopolitan cities, she gives chances to the public places where different kinds of people from diverse social classes and backgrounds share such as train stations, bus stops, airports, ferries and even the planes. What we as readers have come across in the former pages of the book emerges again. While she tries to seem as if she is always happy with being abroad, it is clear that whenever she needs inspiration and social ties, she immediately turn to her national country. “I notice some Westerners reading books on Turkey or Istanbul (including a novel of mine), which intrigues me, because most of the tourists read about a foreign country *before* they go to see it, but very few continue reading *after* they have seen it” (p. 107).

“Soysal’s female characters are, for all intents and purposes, the exact opposite of the “ideal women” of Turkish society. Hers are women who make mistakes,

stumble on their path and hurt their knees, and yet, each time, somehow manage to pull themselves together” (p. 117).

In spite of the fact that Turkey was accepted as a patriarchal society, the strides about the position of the woman in regard of politics, education, work life, social and cultural conditions including the global impacts on lifestyles has given its fruits and thus; the portray of women has improved to a great extent. The female image in Turkey includes more active women who work both in state and private sector by having upper positions in work life, entering universities, getting international scholarships are merely a few successes which Turkish women has achieved for the last twenty years. Therefore, commenting on Turkish women as if there were in the same position, as the twenty years ago may be considered as unfair or prejudice.

“A French woman, a Japanese woman and a Turkish woman – three determined writers, there autonomous individuals, who lived worlds apart but spoke the same language – could they be dining together in heaven now? I would like to think so” (p. 118).

When we pay attention to the quotation above, it is not hard to notice that this is the first time the protagonist said appraisal expressions about the Turks. However, when the author goes to United States of America for her education, she again loses herself in the foreign atmosphere, and starts criticizing Istanbul harshly although she has expressed her admiration for the mixed sounds in Istanbul:

“As soon as I step down onto the sidewalk, the silence on the campus is like a slap on the face. My ears are so used to the constant chaos and crazy rhythm of Istanbul that I fear I may go deaf there. I see people, but nobody is shouting, yelling and whistling. Even the squirrels seem to tiptoe so as not to make noise. I find the stillness unsettling (p. 119).

But the campus is lovely. It is vast and green as far as the eye can see. There are tall, thick trees everywhere, speaking in gnarled mystery. There are dozens of other languages being spoken here – the college being home to more than two thousand students from almost seventy countries. One out of three students is a foreigner like me (p. 119).

This impressive, cosmopolitan college is the outcome of one woman’s vision” (p. 119).

*“All this – squirrels and lesbians – I write about in a column for a widely circulated Turkish newspaper known for its conservative readership. Understandably, the feedback to my column is mixed. Overall, my readers in Turkey seem to be more surprised by the fact that nobody catches the squirrels and cooks them (not that we have a national squirrel dish; I do not know where they get this idea from) than by the sight of lesbian couples walking hand in hand I take this as a progressive sign” (p. 120).* While the main character gives details about her first observations about the students who attend the college, which she attends, too, she implies her prejudice about her readers’ thoughts about the lesbians. The way she initiates her topic seems like what she aims is to condemn the Turks for their approaches towards sexual preferences. However, she expressed in one of the interviews that “she believes that the Turkish readers are very good and realistic at reading literature. Therefore, she particularly focuses on their every kind of criticisms. She absolutely follows what they think about her works and their point of views towards her way of writing. Also, she gives importance to negative criticisms<sup>125</sup>” (p. 2).

The author does not content with these explanations and goes on expressing her perspective about Turkish readers that “she considers her Turkish readers as her soul mates and there exists a soul-kinship because of the fact that she does not perceive ‘the readers’ as people who are passive. They reflect their angle to the novels. Hence, they complete the novel together by coming to a common point”. In addition, she states that she is not completely sure about the view that the authors are so prevalent to their own work since there are some readers who are better at evaluating her works than herself. As a result, there should be a horizontal relationship between the readers and the writers<sup>142</sup>” (p. 2).

“I wander around the campus. Being rid of the finger – women – if only for a short while – lightens my heart and mood. Like a walking sponge, I soak up every detail I see, every sound I hear, every smell I sniff, and store it all away inside me. That is what happens when you are a foreigner; you collect details as if they were seashells on a shore” (p. 123).

“Before me, there was an Indian painter residing here – the walls still smell of her

125. Elif, Safak, “I Consider My Readers As My Soul-Mates”, <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=282>, retrieved at 10 of March, 2019, page 2 of 4.

paints. And before her, a Zimbabwean sociologist. The room has seen dozens of women from all over the world. The Indian artist left behind paints stains and an intricately designed rolling pin. The Zimbabwean scholar left a scary mask on the wall, which casts a long and thin ebony shadow”.

“What will I leave to next year’s fellow? “Before me, there was a Turkish author staying here,” she will say. I cannot find anything but words to hand down to her. Perhaps I can leave one of my favorite Turkish words, which also exists in English: *kismet*” (p. 125).

As an example for national dilemmas, which stem from the main character’s problem of identity, the paragraph above shows us Elif’s roots remind themselves as a participant of her identity. When she comes across elements, which owns local and native characteristics, Elif immediately takes help from her root. As the Turks have improved themselves in literature because of the rules and bans, which comes from Qur’an, they have canalized to the words rather than drawing or architecture. Binyazar states his opinion about this issue by saying that:

“The more a person make contribution to the improvement and change of the world, the more s/he experiences self – fulfillment. The more s / he changes and contributes to the world, s / he can dominate the world. An individual’s gaining meaning as a creative existence as is up to this reality.<sup>126</sup>

“I lie down on my bed. The solitude that I so enjoyed only this afternoon now darkens my mood. What am I doing here so far away from Istanbul, from my loved ones, from the place where my novels are set, from my friends, my mother and my mother tongue? Am I throwing myself into unknown waters just to see if I can swim? (p. 125).

I am still being dragged around by the winds, like a kite whose string has snapped” (p. 125).

These sentences stresses the density of the sense of loneliness which prevails into Elif’ soul and mind. Her being at a far distant place from her native country triggers her compassion for her national roots. This situation fall into dilemma with her expressions about settling in a place: “How can I explain to her that the order and quiet she so values give me the creeps? To live in the same house for decades, to know the face of every storeowner and neighbor in the area, to be rooted in the same street, same quarter, same city is an idea that I find harrowing. Steadiness and stability are Russian

126. Binyazar, Adnan. “*Toplum ve edebiyat*”. Can Yayınları, İstanbul 2010, p. 4.

and Chinese to me” p. 24. In this regard, we can see that Elif’s attitudes towards nationalism does not take stable a polar; in other words, although she does not want to seem like an intellectual within the confinement of national boundaries, her roots muses her in order to hold on to life and write.

The fruits of national dilemmas reveal themselves even in the other novels, which belongs to Elif Safak. She reflects the individuals who are not successful at integrating into the societies, which they have immigrated to, but at the same time, they are the people who own some problems with embracing their roots, too. According to Elif, such kind of people are in general in chaos:

“It is about a group of foreigners in and America coming from very different cultural backgrounds struggling, not always successfully, with an ongoing sense of estrangement. I write about “insiders” and “outsiders” about belonging and not belonging, feeling like a tree that is turned upside down and has its roots up in the air” (p. 147).

The protagonist’s loose ties with her native country not only affect her own life, but it also leaves the impact of domino stones when this social issue is under consideration.

“We will do the best we can. You will be nomad, I will be the settler. You will bring me magic fruits from lands afar; I will grow oranges for you in the backyard”

“And since you are the worldwide traveler, tell me, where on earth would you like to say ‘I do’?”

“Somewhere where brides are not expected to wear white,” is my answer.

“How about Berlin?”

“Hmm, make sense to me,” he says, suddenly serious. “We will be like East and West Berlin, remarkably different and previously independent but now surprisingly united.” (p. 171).

The protagonist’s problem of sense of belonging, which negatively affect her national side awakens at her period of marriage. While she questions the requirement for constant moving from one place to another and whether it is worth of being constantly away from her family and mother country a few pages ago, she accepts her



darlings proposal on the condition that she may go whenever she thinks that it is necessary to go.

Another important point, which the main character unjustly criticizes, is Turkish mother's way of growing up their children and their meticulous attitude towards their babies even before their giving birth to them. Their strives to do their best to make their children healthy and happy I are worth of appraise and respect, yet she does not believe in the Turkish mothers' effort to protect their children and she insultingly reflects her view about it by saying that: "*Let's say that Turkish mothers have created this 'super intelligent baby'*" (p. 198). However, the condition changes after Elif gives birth to her daughter and she turns into the Turkish mothers who do what may be considered as impossible:

*"As for me, I do not sleep at all...I have not been able to sleep properly for days"* (p. 207). *"I want to be a brilliant, perfect mother, but I end up doing everything wrong"* (p.209). The protagonist's transition to classical Turkish mothers will not stop at that point and she begins comparing her motherhood talents with other mothers from Turkey, but not from West: *"Spending time with my lovely daughter makes me feel good, elated and blessed... And when I weigh myself against other moms, how can I not be envious of their accomplishments and ashamed of my deficiencies?"* (p. 216).

"In past, I used to fix up my world with merely reason and look down on the other world: maternal and domestic responsibilities. To tell the truth, I used fear that I would have given damage to my world of reason if I had taken pleasure from maternal activities. However, such type of things did not happen. What I fear did not occur"<sup>127</sup>.

When someone gave birth to a baby, she used to constantly talk about it and She in fact hated it, when mothers used to say "are we hungry" as if the mother and the baby are a whole body, she used to hate it. However, she stated saying to her baby; "Are we thirsty?" She cannot believe herself, but she does not get angry about it anymore.<sup>128</sup>

127. Safak, Elif. "Well! I Have Got Rid of my Djinniof post partum Depression!", "<http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=188>", retrieved at 11 of March, 2019, page 5 of 8.

128. Elif, Safak, "I Had to Gave Birth to myself after I Gave Birth to my Daughter", "<http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj>

“For instance, I do whatever I negatively criticized. I have remembered recently that I used to criticize the mothers who speak with their baby by using the pronoun ‘we’ instead of the pronoun ‘I’. I could not understand why they do it. For instance, they say ‘We are not hungry’. However, I said a few days ago “Are we thirsty?” I immediately bit my tongue”<sup>129</sup>.

“I do not look down on writing about womanhood and motherhood. Anything which exists in life exists also in literature”.<sup>130</sup>

However, she penned in *The Black Milk* that she wrote The Manifesto of the Single Girl in which she explained her being against being a married and mother individual, which she considered as block to her professional career.

In Binyazar’s point of view, “a society’s coming out of its shell and open up the gateway to earth depend upon his self – realization about his national identity. The national identity requires presenting his history, language, his native literature, his artistic reservoir, which he has created. The nations who have achieved it can comprehend and become aware of his existence”<sup>131</sup>. Therefore, it is undeniable that the national dilemmas which the protagonist experiences may come to an end if she notices and accepts the richness and fruitfulness of national resources. The way to the universality of the Turkish artists has merely one path:

“Turkish artists today consciously take up their position in a clear – cut way. S/he is well aware of the fact that s/he cannot universalize by imitating the others or by writing for the others because the way to the universality is nationality. For instance, Cervantes is Spanish, Shakespeare is British, Hugo is French, but at the same time, they are German, Turk, Japanese and Ghanaian... It is not possible to achieve universality without pushing the limits. Unfortunately, we were a bit too late to benefit from national elements”<sup>132</sup>.

In spite of the fact that Elif Safak experiences national dilemmas densely, she stresses in all of her novels including *The Black Milk* that the constraints, which take

129. Elif, Safak, “The Portrait of an Author as a Mother”, Cited at “<http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=241>”, Retrieved at 12 of March, 2019, page 4 of 4.

130. Elif, Safak, “A Child at the Age of Two and a Baby of Two Months at Home”, Cited at <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=229>”. Retrieved at 12 of March, 2019, page 1 of 7.

131. Binyazar, Adnan. “*Toplum ve edebiyat*”. Can Yayınları, İstanbul 2010, p. 4.

132. Kırımı, Bilal. “ELİF ŞAFAK’IN ROMANLARINDA MİLLİYET VE TÜRKLÜK ALGISI.” *Türklük Bilimi Araştırmaları* 28 (2010): p. 273.

their sources from the sense of belonging lead to conflicts and dilemmas in their inner world (p. 273). As an individual whose both private life and professional career is dominated by international journeys and multi - cultural studies, she strives to stress that she cannot live within the boundries of a nation because of her absence of the notion of nationalism although her mother worked for the state as an ambassador, who represented the Republic of Turkey in many countries all over the world and her father was an advisor for the Republican People's Party for years, in other words, this situation is anpther dilemma of its own.



### 2.3 Gender and Sexual Dilemmas

*Black Milk* is a novel which questions the possibility of being an author, a mother and at the same time a spouse and additionally it deals with the problems of the women. Therefore, Elif Safak benefits from the term 'gender' in terms of both its social and biological lexical meanings.

The period of development of the characteristics of the gender necessitates the existence of a role model, who can be continuously observed and imitated. The absence of such a figure or the deficiency of the frequency of the model do not allow the observer female child to initiate an association with her and the figure. When it comes to Elif Safak, her situation becomes more complicated as each girl's first role model is her mother, but she cannot share enough time with her mother and her second model becomes her grandmother, who is completely in contradiction with her daughter's characteristics. When Elif's perspective does not meet what society demands from the women, her gender dilemmas come into being and forces Elif to reach to decision.

In order to come to a decision about her dilemmatic situation, Safak favours taking into consideration of female writers' biographies – biographies in a biography like matryoshka dolls – from all over the world and period. Unhappily, the wide scope of female authors with their own stories cannot help Safak to find out a clear cut solution for her dilemmas.

The prescription for her gender and sexual dilemmas is love, which caused Safak to swallow each word, which she said about marriage, being a wife and mother. Love certainly cannot put an end to her gender dilemmas, but this dilemma is the type which Elif Safak gets over best. Lack of female, mother and father figures still makes their authority felt. Nevertheless, it will be enough for Safak to realize that she cannot terminate her dilemmas and she should learn how to deal with them.

## 2.3 Gender and Sexual Dilemmas

*The Black Milk* necessitates analyzing this chapter, Sexual Dilemmas, in terms of its two lexical meanings: one of which refers to the “either of the two main categories (male and female) into which humans and most other living things are divided on the basis of their reproductive functions”<sup>133</sup> and other of which signifies “the instinct or attraction drawing one sex toward another, or its manifestation in life and conduct”<sup>134</sup>.

Initially, the first meaning which conveys the meaning of gender as the division of the species whose distinction with regard to the reproductive functions is dominated in this aforementioned novel. As a biographical bildungsroman, the female character who is called Elif pens her all life by focalizing to the period of being against a married and mother, and the second period in which she is a married and mother author accompanied by post partum depression.

The characteristics of female gender may vary from country to country as the cultural codes and lifestyles dramatically change although there are also common rituals either because of the impact of the globalization or the generally well – accepted features which we can face in nearly every corner in the world. In spite of the fact that shifts and transfigurations in the institution of marriage especially since the 1940s<sup>135</sup>, there are still some rituals, which bestow an element of stability, and consistency includes symbolism with the aim of having the impact of significant and abiding impact on marriage<sup>136</sup>.

When we focalize on *The Black Milk* in terms of this chapter’s topic, we again run across dilemmas. Initially, many women all over the world have dreams about their marriage since their childhood and when they are proposal, they immediately start to plan their wedding ceremony meticulously from choosing the wedding rings, jewellery, the place where the ceremony takes place, to the flowers, the white wedding gown to the food which is served to the guests who attend the event. In general, a classical wedding organization takes months; however, the case is

133. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/sex>.

134. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/sex>

135. John Hajnal, "European marriage patterns in perspective." (1965): 101-43. p. 101. <https://www.poline.org/node/517620>

136. Barbara Jo. Chesser, "Analysis of wedding rituals: An attempt to make weddings more meaningful." *Family Relations* (1980): p. 204.

completely different when it comes to our protagonist, Elif.

Initially, the step of the wedding proposal is exactly out of ordinary because the partner who proposed is not male, but our protagonist, Elif. However, the point which makes this offer is the content of it:

“Are you still against marriage?

I certainly am.” I say with conviction, but then add, “*Theoretically*”.

“And what exactly does theoretically mean?” he asks sweetly.

“It means, generally speaking. As an abstract idea. As a philosophical model –“I try to explain.

“I mean, I am against human beings getting married, at least most of them, because they really should not, but that said”-

That said? He repeats.

I am not against *me* marrying *you*, for instance” p. 169 and 170.

Elif’s approach towards marriage before falling in love with her husband is rather negative, prone to come to an end, psychologically devastating institution. However, her happiness in marriage proves her prejudice against this kind of legal union. According to Allport, prejudice signifies “antipathy based on a faulty and inflexible generalization”. His view assumes that if we search for the reason behind our extended treatment of prejudice, we can see that it lies on the discrepancy between the beliefs about the attributes in most cases owned by the participants of a social group (that is, their stereotype) and beliefs about the attributes which open the door for success in valued social roles.<sup>137</sup>

What Allport wants to underline here is that the treatment of prejudice ensues from the mismatch between the opinion about the quality of the stereotypes and the opinions about the quality, which follows accomplishment in precious social roles. It is not only a hurried prejudgment but it is also a precise thread in a relationship. Also, prejudice may be considered as an antipathy, which takes its root from defective and unalterable generalization or stereotyping. It is important is that prejudice leaves an individual a wrong sense of identity and self – esteem, in other words, the person with

137. John F., Dovidio, Peter Glick, and Laurie A. Rudman, eds. “*On the Nature of Prejudice: Fifty Years after Allport*”, John Wiley & Sons, 2008.

p. 19. [https://scholar.google.com.tr/scholar?hl=tr&as\\_sdt=0%2C5&q=the+nature+of+prejudice&btnG=](https://scholar.google.com.tr/scholar?hl=tr&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=the+nature+of+prejudice&btnG=)

prejudice in general owns more power and nurture his / her own self – respect. The prejudice is called a kind of categorization and stereotyping, which paves the stone for finding a victim for individual or group problems. Therefore, it is an appropriate treatment when we are in need of a scapegoat. Apart from all these points, it also shadows facts and by disregarding reality and honesty. As a result of it, it causes indefensible ideas about opinions or thoughts which are related to a group as a whole.

Elif's expressions about marriage before she proposes her partner reveals her prejudice against marriage. In addition, her generalization on marriage by taking into consideration merely by her parents' divorce promotes her prejudice and pens this institution of legal union in her articles and columns in an argumentative style of writing.

Nonetheless, Elif's prejudices do not block her from marriage, which stimulate a dilemma in terms of female point of view about marriage. However, Elif's way of wedding ceremony is quite different from other women, in other words: the same sex with two different views on an ideal wedding event. In the beginning of the novel, she states that:

We refrained from having a wedding, as neither of us was fond of ceremonies. So we simply walked into the Turkish Embassy on Kbaum Avenue and announced our intention to get married (p. 2).

I did not wear a wedding gown not only because of my distaste for such a ritual but also because I do not even wear white. For years I have always had a hard time understanding how other people can (p. 2).

In any case, on that day in May, I adorned myself in my preferred colour of choice: black. As for Eyup, he wore dark pants and a white shirt, to honor tradition to some extent. That is how I said "I do." Without fuss and on a whim (p. 3).

However, Elif's confrontation with Mama Rice Pudding for the first time when she is on plane to arrive America in order to forget her instinctive wish to be a mother proves us Safak's female desires which is in conflict with her intellectual and a – feminine side:

Like many young women I, too, want to get married, wear a wedding dress, have a diamond ring, raise children and cruise the sales aisles of supermarkets. But you pushed away all my desires and looked down on them. I was silenced, suppressed and denied (p. 110).

The way Elif gets married is absolutely not common among her sex. However, the dilemma nurtures itself when we read the same page with the quotations, which takes place above:

As followers of my novels and essays, they had always been the first to understand what I felt. Nevertheless, this time they showed more shock than understanding. In letters, e – mails and postcards they expressed their surprise. Some even sent me clips of my earlier interviews where I had said “Domestic bourgeois life? Forget it! It does not suit me”, and, “I do not think raising kids is my thing, but I believe I could make a good stepmother some day”... Now, with a “gotcha” moment in their eyes, those smart readers with humour demanded to know what had changed (p. 3).

In order to shed light on this issue, we may be able to have a close look on her interviews, which were made by different journalists at different times, one of which is made by Tuba Akyol as a journalist from one of the most common Turkish daily newspaper, Milliyet. Akyol asks Elif whether she wants to get married or not. Safak’s answer to this question is negative by adding that she is not into marriage and she would prefer living with her partner. When Akyol wants to learn whether she wants to be a mother one day, Safak says that she would rather adopt a child because of the fact that she is not so fond of babies or children except for some of them win her love and compassion. She also wants to explain that this love does not mean loving all the children. In addition to not loving every child, she stresses that she is not completely sure whether she may love her own children or not<sup>138</sup>.

The protagonist is also aware of her dilemma about her being against marriage and suddenly marrying in Germany by stating in 2005 that it is absolutely ironic of her getting married while she still does not have a home or even homeland. Nonetheless, she still emphasizes that both she and her husband are not fond of marriage and they have even prejudices against this issue. She says that it was as if a period ended and another period needs to start, so the marriage became a current issue in their lives, yet they did not want to marry in Turkey because both of them dislike splendid ceremonies. Then, she did not wear wedding gown because of the fact that she hates

138. Elif. Safak, “Literary Sphere does not Like my Appearance”, “<http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=59>”, retrieved at 17 of March, 2019, page 3 of 3.



wearing in white as she feels as if she is in a deadly monotony and she would rather have worn a wedding gown in black, purple or yellow, but it would have been a weird situation, so they wore casual clothes in the ceremony and there was merely one of her closest friends as guest<sup>139</sup>.

However, not alone satisfying the journalist's wonder, her mind gets more confused and she asks Safak whether she has ever asked herself why she got married. Safak gives amore indirect, but honest reply that she used to be like a nomad who lost his / her compass and used to move to one place to another one as if she had no capability of setting anywhere before her marriage. She also adds that her art of literature has benefited from these immigrations<sup>139</sup>.

The way of Safak's expressions proves us her misperception about marriage and her frank overgeneralization the marriages which she has come across leads her to protect herself from the idea of marriage. She admits that she felt worn down in this period and at the same time; she started to think about the paths, which she had not stepped, different kinds of female models in her mind. As a result of this period of transition, she became aware of the fact that her darling helped Elif to balance her life and then she gives herself in to the hands of love, which she considers as the about the paths, which she had not stepped, different kinds of female models in her mind. As a result of this period of transition, she became aware of the fact that her darling helped Elif to balance her life and then she gives herself in to the hands of love, which she considers as the core of the life and the universe. While she strived to be at a distant from the opinion of a stable life, and she is still to some extent, she realizes after her meeting her husband that each relation has its own characteristics<sup>139</sup> Elif's saying that she has times when she feels surrounded leads us to realize that her dilemma about marriage has not come to an end she may go on experiencing the drawbacks of it throughout her life. She confesses that when an individual takes place on center, s / he is surrounded, yet this the border which she is within by the surround contributes her life to the existence of internal serenity. Because of her assumption that if she had settled, it would have been a serious block to her writing career, she did not lose her

139. Elif, Safak, "I Engaged myself into Four Walls by Marrying, but inside the Weather is Gentle and Cool", [http://www.elifsafak.us/r\\_oportajlar.asp?isle m=roportaj&id=95](http://www.elifsafak.us/r_oportajlar.asp?isle m=roportaj&id=95) ", retrieved at 17 of March 2019, page 1 and 2 of 6.

attention on novel writing<sup>140</sup>

Safak's finding a positive relationship between the feelings of being within a circle and experiencing serenity there shows us her stepping into a higher level on her comprehending the nature of marriage via her personal observation from her own life. When we put into consideration of the reasons behind such kind of thinking, it is explicit to realize the author's ego conducts her defense mechanism in order to ward off unpleasant feelings and anxiety<sup>141</sup>. Initially, we see that the main character strives to hide her ideas about love, marriage and being a mother by keeping under control the impacts of worrying and instinctual - internal realities.

Initially, if we prefer concentrating on the most commonly applied defense mechanism in *Black Milk*, we had better start with repression, which is an unconscious regulatory process signifying refraining from conscious representation of appalling memories, wishes, fantasies or undesired emotions. Then, repression brings about conscious content by means of displacing, condensing, substituting, symbolizing, or secondarily elaborating the (assumed) underlying unconscious opinions and their impressive charge<sup>142</sup>.

She looks at her left and right. The woman who sits next to her does not give the impression that she could help her. There seems to be a bulk of knickknacks in her shopping bags, yet she is not sure whether she has at least a piece of paper among them. The moment she carefully looks at her, she notices what a young woman she really is. She appears to be nearly twenty – five. Her overweight is the reason why cause her, at first glance, ten to fifteen years older. She puts on a balloon – sleeved, puffy – skirted azure dress – as if she is a movie star who acted in a 1930s movie and gets on a steamboat in Istanbul. Her hair, which is a wavy dark brown, is cut at shoulder length and newly combed. She puts on a pair of golden earrings, which are hung from her ears. .. Although the buttons of her dress seems as is they are on the verge of darting like arrows, she does not look to care about it. She has accepted the dimensions of her

140. Safak, Elif, "I engaged myself into four walls by marrying, but inside the Weather is Gentle and Cool", <http://www.elifsafak.us /roportajlar .as p?islem=roportaj&id=95>, retrieved at 17 of March 2019, page 2 of 6.

141. Anna, Freud., *The ego and the mechanisms of defence*. Karnac Books, 1992. p. 10.

142. Jerome L., Singer, ed. *Repression and dissociation: Implications for personality theory, psychopathology and health*. University of Chicago Press, 1995. p. xi and xii

breasts as a gift from God and expose them as a bestowal to all mankind without discrimination. A woman who is pleased with her female characteristics and all the more womanly in her pride, she gives off a powerful, courageous and attractiv femininity” (p.15).

The last quotation above can be taken into account as one of the best examples for repression. In the passage, the protagonist insists on describing the woman who sits next to her in the boat negatively by looking down her physical appearance, her wear style, jewelries and female figure although she strongly critized modern Turkish people and intellectuals’ focusing on appearance and she even wrote a novel, *Mahrem*, (*The Confidential*) which deals with a plump woman who is looked down on by the society and whose communication gets weaker.

The repression in *Black Milk* is exposed when Elif encounters with one more Thumbelina – Mama Rice Pudding – who is in favour of classical bourgeois lifestyle after Miss Ambitious Chekhovian and Miss Highbrowed Cynic convince the protagonist to focus on her professional career in order to repress Elif’ female desire to be a mother:

Like millions of other women all around the world she also wants to marry, buy a wedding dress, put on a diamond wedding ring, rear children and be in chase of having shopping insupermarkets. But she ignored all her desires and mercilessly insulted them. She was muffled, oppressed and rejected (p. 110).

The advantage of the repressive defense mechanism is that it is a crucial apparatus of controlling instinct and affect<sup>159</sup>. It is inevitable to put a faraway distance between the defense systems, and ourselves yet the pressure, which prevails as a conclusion of the stressful modern life, we sometimes demand some means in order to relieve the mental or the emotional tension or strain because of forcing or demanding circumstances. When the individual receives a break, which helps to find a chance to recover, the nerve system gains a temporary but reasonable enough time to pull itself together. However, the frequent application to it causes serious psychological illnesses, which cannot be got over without a careful, meticulous and professional medical help.

Elif's incessant conducting to defense mechanisms in *Black Milk* leads to the recurring detection of the dilemmas, which constitutes the main issue under discussion in our thesis.

Another sexual dilemma, which pushes Elif's constraints of her identity is her maternal side versus her professional career by forcing herself to reach to a decision between these two alternatives which she cannot come to a conclusion about which one of them seem more undesirable:

She was not aware of the fact that she had the inclination to become a mother and it really shocked her. However, she desired to have her baby. It seemed as if another side of her who is a domestic, compassionate, maternal part, was now revolting against the side, which had suppressed all those years. The rebellious forces of motherhood penetrated into the tiny little corners south of her personality with surprising speed and flexibility, yet the dominant authorities who settles in the capital were still resisting hard (p. 5).

Thus, her pregnancy began with complicated emotions, which caused her to feel as if she was being pushed through the unidentified by an underlying feeling or influence, which was stronger than her soul (p. 5).

The paragraph, which takes place above, helps us to perceive the two contradictory forces of decisions, which strives to put dominance on each other. The denial mechanism of ego is no longer activated and hence the uncontainable wish of maternal emotions come to the surface in spite of the existence of the intellectual career. Nevertheless, the perplexed mind of the protagonist's mood cannot help herself from giving in the feelings of joy with the birth of her first baby:

Elif's daughter was born in in September 2006, which she sees it as the most important time in her life. She felt merry and special, yet she was also baffled, unready and off guard" (p. 5).

Inevitably, this fairy – tale – like mood does not last longer as a result of her discovery that how deeply and suddenly her whole life changed without her anticipation by triggering her sexual dilemmas again. However, this contradicting

feelings and opinions stimulate her previous fears and anxieties about being a mother and a writer at the same time:

She was abruptly captivated by the horror that she had gone through a change which hinders her to go back and she could not have the chance to be the same person again. A sudden and harsh mood of panic had stricken her psychology. She began to believe then that she had become a mother, a souse and housewife, she might not possibly pen novels again like an old dusty carpet, her old 'Self' personality was drawn out from under her feet (p. 6).

Unfortunately, her psychological confusion on her life turns into the fear of being an insufficient mother and in case that her fear would result in a physical reaction, which might affect the baby:

What would happen if my milk curled? Would it darken, acquiring a thick and murky texture? The thought of this not only alarmed me but also made me feel guilty. The more I tried not to cry the more I felt like doing so. How come every other woman I knew adapted to motherhood so easily, but I could not? I wanted to best – feed my child as long and best as I could. The image of spoiling milk nagged at me during the day, and attacked me in my dreams (p. 7).

The dilemma in terms of sexual characteristics is nurtured by the lack of experience and role model reveals itself via unconstrained nervousness. However, this circumstance is not shared with any person from the family and her friends or a professional expert. The fact that Elif does not express or interject her sentimental condition requires her to find an apparatus to put an end to the pressure:

She admitted that she was alarmed and could not help herself crying. She admitted that she was scared for the reason that she would not manage her professional career and motherhood together. She accepted the possibility that her milk not been as white as snow, that, too. If she wanted to write a novel about her experience after pregnancy, she might change her depression into a literary work since writing had always helped her to recover her psychological problems, she might take a further step in order to heal her wounds by

benefitting from the way which she knows the best; in other words, writing (p. 7).

The way to give a sense of relaxation for Elif is to learn that she is not the sole woman who experiences such kind of a process:

She was shocked to learn the amount of mothers who had experienced such kind of emotional turmoil. She could not understand the reason why we women have no information about it. It is generally claimed that all the women who gave birth to their babies are full of happiness and excitement the moment when they embrace their babies. However, it is not pronounced in the society the reality that not all the women experience the same feelings (p. 7).

The reason behind this kind of issues is especially the determinant noteworthiness of the relationship between parents and children. When the time that is shared between the mothers and their children became less, the position of the women as a role model has been hit. In addition to it, the position, which belonged to the mother, was not replaced by an alternative by leaving the future female adults unequipped for life. Therefore, Elif's maternal dilemma takes its root from the "zeitgeist" (spirit of times), in other words, this dilemma in fact belongs to the period that she lives in:

Interestingly, women knew a lot about this in the old days. Our great – grandmothers were aware of all kinds of postpartum instability and therefore better prepared. They passed on their knowledge to their daughters and granddaughters. But today we are so disconnected from the past that we have no real access to this wisdom. We are modern women. When we are weary and bruised inside we hide the signs with the latest makeup techniques. We think we can give birth one day and go on with our lives the next. Some of us do, of course. The trouble is, others simply cannot (p. 8).

What I am saying is that women of pre - modern times – through their old wives' tales, traditions and beliefs – recognized an essential fact that we are not good at acknowledging: throughout her life, a woman goes through several stages, and the from one to the next

might not be easy. She might require additional help, support and guidance before she starts living fully in the present again (p. 8).

Prior to modern times, women used to be more ready for female problems such as postpartum depression although they named it with different words, yet they accepted this process as a normal and part of motherhood and strived to produce alternatives as solutions for it and majority of these resolutions worked well. The problem these older generation could not deal was the transformation of this knowledge. Thus, the modern women who considered herself educated endowed with information and technology has fallen into conflict with themselves when they have failed in being ready for health problems distinctive to female world. Therefore, this sexual dilemma is rooted to external factors. As it is expressed in the beginning of this chapter that the word “sex” includes two meaning and it is essential to focus its second meaning which refers to “the instinct or attraction drawing one sex toward another, or its manifestation in life and conduct”<sup>143</sup>.

As the last Thumbelina, Blue Bell Bovary, which the reader comes across in the *Black Milk*, is attributed to Elif’s sexual side, which surprises the readers as this finger woman is completely different from the other ones. However, Elif used to form a completely contradistinctive attitude and behaviour so as not to lose her focus from becoming a successful professional writer and gain a permanent position in literary sphere, which is a dominantly male world; hence, she used to believe that the path to the authorship was up to the - style in accordance with male characteristics. Though it may seem strange, she vows in Chapter: ‘Brain Tree’ explain that she will not care for anything except for authorship:

I have traveled wide, I have traveled far, and I placed writing at the center of my life. At last, I have reached a decision between Body and Brain. From now on, I want to be only and only, Brain. No longer will the Body hold sway over me. I have no want for womanhood, housework, wife work, maternal instinct or giving birth. I want to be a writer, and that is all I want to pursue (p. 143).

May the Body rot and may the Brain glow. May the ink flow through my pen like oceans to nourish the novels that shall grow withi (p. 143).

143. Vaillant, George E. *Ego mechanisms of defense: a guide for clinicians and researchers*. American Psychiatric Pub, 1992. p. 4.

Satar resembles this oath to a nun's oath who dedicates all her life to all Mighty God and the nun who ignores all worldly pleasures and wishes in order to show the honesty, purity and the extent of her love to God.<sup>144</sup> In fact, what makes Elif's oath different from any nun's oath is that Elif's oath is unreservedly worldly and centers on her writing career by ignoring the rest of each elements in her life. This vow achieves its goal and her body gives its reaction to this action immediately:

Before two weeks passed, my body starts to show signs of change. First, my hair, then the skin on my face and hands, dries out. I lose weight. My stomach flattens. Then, one day, I realize I have stopped menstruating. I do not get my flow next month, or the one after that. At first, I do not pay attention to it – in fact, I am even relieved to be rid of womanhood. Would it not be liberating to free myself of femininity and sexuality, and become a walking brain? I feel like a crazy scientist who is experimenting with all kinds of unknown substances in his murky laboratory – except I am experimenting on myself. Not that I seem to be turning into a green, giant humanoid monster. But I am transforming into an antisocial, asexual, introverted novelist, who, perhaps, is no less scary than the Incredible Hulk (p. 144).

Elif's body gives reactions as if it belonged to a male soul in this process and she gets the product of it. She pens her novel, *Araf (The Bastard of Istanbul)* via the inspiration, which she considers it as the reward of her self – abandonment. Finally, she may be accepted as an author in the literature.<sup>145</sup>

The dilemma, which is quoted above, is the embodiment of the segregation between brain and body, which constitutes the basic contradistinction, which is generally naturalized as a canon by the male dominant world of literature. In this point of view, brain signifies manhood, reason, society and authorship while body represents womanhood, sentimentality, irrationality and “the other”.<sup>145</sup>

144. William G., Axinn, and Arland Thornton. “Mothers, Children, and Cohabitation: The Intergenerational Effects of Attitudes and Behaviour.” *American Sociological Review*, vol. 58, no. 2, 1993, pp. 233 – 246. JTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/2095968](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2095968). P. 233.



The author's preference the brain is in dilemma with her defense of women writers and the hardships, which they face in the process of professionally writing. The female writers who have been looked down on by their societies, the group of female writers who could not get price that they deserved, the female writers who are not criticized as fairly as male writers... all of these issues are dealt in *the Black Milk* yet Elif's attitudes cannot be assessed as a courageous and revolting reaction to the dominantly male sphere of literature in spite of the fact that she has devoted everything including her menstruating, which might have caused vital illnesses. In fact we can say that this process emasculate her<sup>145</sup>. In this sense, she represents the group of good woman writers. Nonetheless, she does not act courageously enough to be neutral, but prefers being on the strong side: male pole. She feels the necessity that she prefers a style, which is in line with male style of writing so as not to miss the chance of taking the approval of the authority. While she informs us about her dilemmas in terms of both being an author and being a woman, she cannot help herself from using this male language, which she is really proud of using with excellence – and certainly in her view.

Another issue, which takes position in our minds, is that whether the reason behind Elif's announces herself as the protector.<sup>146</sup> Negligence of *Mama Rice Pudding* and *Miss Ambitious Chekhovian* merely stem from Elif's intellectual and professional worries or there are other reasons for such kind of approach. According to Satar the reason, which lies behind it, is her emasculation, but these two fingerwomen's' being repressed is caused by Elif's preference of being bisexual.<sup>147</sup> she admitted in her speech that she is bisexual in TEDD Talks in New York by stating that

We are always in pursuit of stories all the time as being writers. We are also interested in the silence, which we cannot put into words, political, cultural taboos and also in our own reticence. I have always been an individual who speak about the minority rights, woman rights and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender / transsexual community aloud.

145. Nesrin. Aydın Satar, "Geleneksel Kadın Rollerinin Yeniden Üretimi: Elif Şafak'ın Siyah Süt Romanında Otoriteyle Uzlaşmak." *Monograf 3* (2015). p. 70.

146. Nesrin. Aydın Satar, "Geleneksel Kadın Rollerinin Yeniden Üretimi: Elif Şafak'ın Siyah Süt Romanında Otoriteyle Uzlaşmak." *Monograf 3* (2015). p. 68.

147. Nesrin. Aydın Satar, "Geleneksel Kadın Rollerinin Yeniden Üretimi: Elif Şafak'ın Siyah Süt Romanında Otoriteyle Uzlaşmak." *Monograf 3* (2015). p. 69.

However, while I was in deep thoughts of this speech, I have realized that I could dare to tell people in the public sphere for fear that I would be besmirched and be the topic of mock, hatred and stigma. Nevertheless, no one should keep silent because of the complicity of this matter.<sup>148 149, 150</sup>

Another dilemmatic point in the novel is Elif's oath takes place in the campus of Mount Holyoke College, which is known, as one of the feminist universities all over the world. This college welcomes merely female students whereas they can study on whatever topic they want to study. Nevertheless, this emasculated period does not last long, too. When she falls in love, her mood changes and forgets the oath, which she takes under Brain Tree. Thus, her Body starts recovering itself with a high speed, by her skin getting softer and her hair getting brighter. She admits that when she is in love, she treats her body in the best way, which she can do. She even becomes a regular visitor to the Body Shop and she buys and uses the creams, powders and lotions, which she did not use to be interested in. When she realizes the last Thumbelina, whom she calls Miss Blue Bell Bovary, she is shocked to come across a Thumbelina whom she cannot even imagine:

*“Her honey – blond hair is loose and hangs down to her waist in waves. She has penciled a mole above her mouth and painted her lips such a bright red that reminds me of a Chinese lantern on fire. Her arms are encased in skin - tight black gloves that reach up to her elbows. She is wearing solitaire rings of various colours over she gloved fingers and has squeezed into a crimson stretchy evening dress. Her breasts are popping out of the décolletage neckline, and the right leg – all the way to her hip – is exposed by a long slit in her dress. On her feet are pointy red stilettos with heels so high I wonder how she manages to walk in them (p. 156).”* The style of her speech, choice of words and the attitude which she owns are the most feminine and the most different one among other finger women' styles, which shocks Elif:

148. cnnturk.com, “A Surprising Confession from the Famous writer: I am Bisexual”, <https://www.cnnturk.com/magazin/unlu-yazar-elif-safaktan-sasirtan-itiraf-biseksuelim?page=1>, retrieved at 10 of April, 2019, page 1 of 1.

149. hurriyet.com, “Elif Safak: I could not Admit that I am a Bisexual till Now”, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/kelebek/magazin/elif-safaktan-itiraf-biseksuelim-40610823>, retrieved at 10 of April, 2019, page 1 of 1.

150. haberurk.com, “I did not Have the Courage to Say that I am a Bisexual in Public Sphere”, <https://www.haberturk.com/elif-safak-biseksuel-oldugumu-kamusal-alanda-aciklama-cesaretim-olmadi-1672854>, retrieved at 10 of April, 2019, page 1 of 1.

“You do not recognize me, right? She says in a half – velvety, half-naughty voice like Rita Hayworth in Gilda. Of course, that is very normal. When did you ever recognize me?” She leans forward, exposing the deep cleavage of her breasts. I avert my gaze, feeling uneasy. Has this woman no shame? “But darling, I am not a stranger. I am you. I am the member of the Choir of Discordant Voices. You expressed the wish to make peace with your body and I gladly took that as an invitation” (p. 157). “Why not wear fire – red lipstick, flowery dresses, and show a bit of your skin? Would your writing career decline? Would you be less a woman of letters? You are terrified of being a Body – Woman” (p. 158). “Unlike you, I am a great fan of everything bodily and sensual. I adore the sweet pleasures bestowed on us mere mortals. After all, I am a Scorpio. Hedonism is my motto in life. I enjoy my womanhood”, she raves on. But because of those boorish Thumbelinas, I have been censored, silenced, suppressed (p. 158)”.

The characteristics which belongs to Miss Blue Bell Bovary reveals that this Thumbelina is the one who physically admires herself the most and the same time loves and respects herself by letting herself every pleasure the world possess and constantly in need of excitement and happiness. Thus, this Thumbelina is totally different from Mama Rice Pudding and Miss Highbrowed Cynic by building a considerable dilemma in terms of sexual characteristics. When it comes to Miss Highbrow Cynic:

She wears slovenly hippie dresses that reach the floor and mirror – threaded Indian vests. She wraps bright foulards around her neck and wears bangle bracelets of every colour up her elbows. When she feels like it, she goes to get a tattoo or another piercing. Depending on the day, she either leaves her shoulder – length hair loose or puts it up in a haphazard bun. She does raja yoga and advanced Reiki. All the acupuncture she has received has yet to help her quit. If she is not smoking a cigarette or a cigarillo, she chews a tobacco (p. 55).

In addition, Mama Rice Pudding is described as:

She is no taller than them, but probably weighs more. She has a kind, round, freckled face, a pointy chin, hair the colour of Turkish coffee and eyes so blue they suck you in. She is wearing no makeup except for eyeliner and perhaps some mascara on her long lashes, it is hard to tell. She seems to be in her early mid – thirties, and I am sure I have never seen her before (p. 108).

She is wearing an aquamarine dress that reaches her knees, red shoes without heels, a belt of the same colour, beige nylon stockings. Her wavy hair is held back in a ponytail by a modest hair band. The chubbiness of her cheeks is due to her extra pounds, but she seems to beat peace with her body. She does not have the tense air that the calorie – counting Little Miss Practical radiates (p. 109).

Miss Blue Bell Bovary, Mama Rice Puding and Dame Dervish speak for female consciousness in the Black Milk. The impact, which the last three quotations leave on us, helps us to perceive denial defense mechanism as an apparatus for Elif to relieve from anxieties, which are stimulated and confuses her mind. In denial mechanism, the individual plainly declines to accept that something, which is true, is in actual fact are true. The examples of this kind of defense are in general legion and differ in respect to the existing scope of the reality distortion.<sup>151</sup> The protagonist in this novel strives to reject the finger women who are seen as blocks for her career and intellectual image. Then, the nervousness which is triggered by the possible hazard, which may destroy her plans require to be relieved by gaining time and finding temporary solutions via denial.

In this respect, Blue Bell Bovary's inclusion to the novel so late cannot be thought as an abnormal act as we perceive the frequency and intensity of the defense systems in this novel. Also, she stands for her shadow side. Miss Bell Bovary's inclusion to the novel lays the path for the exploration of the protagonist in one more self – expression area in terms of her sexual side in order to put a brighter shed on Elif's life while Miss Ambitious Chekhovian, Miss Little Practical and Miss Highbrowed Cynic, who exemplify male consciousness.

151. Mark, Dombek, "Defense Mechanisms", American Addiction Centers Group, San Francisco, California, USA, 1995, [www.mentalhelp.net/articles/defense-mechanisms/](http://www.mentalhelp.net/articles/defense-mechanisms/), retrieved at 9 of April, 2019, page 4 of 6.

Another defense system which is detected the quotations above is reaction formation which means that the individual react to their powerful wishes to their own unrecognized wishes by acting to oppress or damage those wishes which exist in others and at the same time denies that he/she himself/herself owns these desires.<sup>152</sup> While Elif accepts the existence of Blue Bell Bovary with all her female characteristics, she harshly criticized the woman on the boat at the beginning of the novel although she had the female air and Elif felt the urgent necessity to write the manifesto:

As I do next to all women who glow with this kind of femininity, I feel like an impostor, a poor imitation of my gender. To her, womanhood comes naturally, like a yawn or sneeze, just as effortless. To me, womanhood is something I need to observe and study, learn and imitate, and still can never fully comprehend (p. 16).

In addition to it, she emphasized that she would not marry and be a mother:

8. If I must resort to marriage as a metaphor, I can claim that literature is my husband and books are my children. The only way for me to get married is either to divorce literature or to take a second husband (p. 18).

9. Since divorcing literature is out of the question and since there is no man among mankind who would agree to become “husband number two” in all likelihood, I will be single all my life (p. 18).

The dilemma which is activated by the preparation of the manifesto in *Black Milk* is penned as a revolutionary voice which criticizes the standard of judgment which prioritizes and extols the institution of marriage. “The woman is in pursuit of power and authority and no matter how kind and easy going she may be, she will be cruel and aggressive by shutting her eyes to reason substantially when her animus is stimulated. It will not be a simple process to make judgments in an unprejudiced way. She always feels the necessity to keep watch of against her inner conflicting desire, which constantly insist on ordering, “You must do it in that way”.<sup>153</sup>

169. Dombeck, Page 3 of 6.

170. Gariper, Cafer, and Küçükcoşkun, Yasemin. “Hayatla Kurmaca Arasında Elif ŞAfak’ın Siyah Süt Romanı”, Aarayışalar – İnsan Bilimleri Araştırmaları, Yıl:9, Sayı:18,, 2007. p. 192.

Elif's being in a constant pursuit of power and authority as she considered the male qualities, reveals her insistence on male features, which empowers her sexual dilemmas.

Elif, who pretends to be against her being a wife and a mother, she is deeply and involuntarily affected woman with two sons on the boat at the beginning of the novel, admired her lifestyle unconsciously, yet her conscious became dominant in order to persuade her to be against domestic lifestyle; therefore, she felt the obligation to pen "the Manifesto of the Single Girl" as a clear cut impulse. This process may be accepted as reaction formation in terms of Freudian terminology because of the fact that she misleads the reader by expressing the feelings and thoughts, which are vice versa to what she feels.<sup>154</sup>

Nonetheless, she even proposes her partner and has a baby. In addition, we know that she gives birth to a boy two years after her first pregnancy. If we focus on the depictions in the previous page in turn, it is inevitable to notice that the Miss Blue Bell Bovary explicitly reflects womanhood and sexuality with its highest capacity. According to Satar, this Thumbelina Elif owns all of the potentials, which are the key points in order to tempt men like the image of witch – woman, which is depicted in Hollywood movies.<sup>155</sup> However, she cannot interiorize the existence of this woman and she cannot help hesitating about paying attention to her explanations or ignoring them completely. Even she tries to defend her point of view; she cannot stop wondering whether Miss Blue Bell Bovary has any point in her view. In spite of the fact that her thoughts about this issue may be right, there is an undeniable reality that this angle which is defended by a finger woman who signifies love, womanhood and sex<sup>154</sup>, is not appropriate for the public sphere, which is dominantly male – social structure.

In addition to the public sphere, but also her view about literary world are not so easy to pen or pronounce in a clear – cut way:

154. Aydın Satar, Nesrin. "Geleneksel Kadın Rollerinin Yeniden Üretimi: Elif Şafak'ın Siyah Süt Romanında Otoriteyle Uzlaşmak." *Monograf 3* (2015). p. 66.

155. Nilüfer İlhan, "Conflict in Siyah Süt." *International Review of Turkology* 1.1 (2008). p. 70.

Oh, nothing, it is just that sometimes I get the impression that you female writers cannot write about sexuality as freely as male writers do. Your sex scenes are always short, almost nonexistent. You know how, in the old movies, when a couple was about to make love, the camera would drift off to the side? Well, that is precisely how you women write about sexuality. Your pens drift off the page when you run into a sex scene! (p. 159).

The paragraph above stresses that male writers are more courageous to include sexual topics than female writers are. Certainly, Miss Bovary erotic books are not the genre that she talks about. She centers her view on literary books as the matter of the debate. Miss Bovary extends her idea that the public sphere merely via three exceptions does not confine female writers:

“Women writers can pen indendently about sex merely under three conditions.

Which are?

Article one is lesbianism. If the female novelist is lesbian and not against talking about it, why is she to be afraid of? Lesbian novelists have the tendency to be freer at penning about sex than heterosexuals a lot (p. 160).

Perhaps the reason is that they are already discredited, they have the freedom to write about sensitive topics without fear of taboos. This situation helps them to write more honestly and frankly (p. 160).

Satar expresses in her article; *Reproduction of Traditional Femininity: Negotiation with the Authority in Elif Şafak’s Siyah Süt* that if a female writer wants to write about sexuality, she should tend to be homosexual and should not hide it from the society, which is already heterosexual. In that sense, lesbianism means the state of being object or enduring to the disgracefulness in again a disgraceful way.<sup>156</sup>

What Satar implies in these statements has two sides. In one hand, she criticizes Elif’s inappropriate and provocative idea about writing in this issue and on the other hand, she stresses the position that Elif assigns for the lesbians by meaning that there is no point in abstaining from such kind of issues as their state is the worst one. Therefore,

156. Aydın Satar, Nesrin. "Geleneksel Kadın Rollerinin Yeniden Üretimi: Elif Şafak’ın Siyah Süt Romanında Otoriteyle Uzlaşmak." *Monograf 3* (2015). p. 66.

whatever angle she aims at revealing, her approach to this issue merely is insulting although she symbolizes ‘female consciousness’<sup>157</sup> in the novel.

Miss Blue Bell Bovary goes on expressing her ideas by mirroring her second exception for writing sexual scenes in the novels by female writers:

The article Two is darling, is age. If you are an ‘old female novelist’ in society’s view, you own the permission to write about sex as much as you desire. Old females are considered to be above nature. They may write about sexuality to as much as they desire and it will not be called immorality (p. 160).

“And the third condition?” Elif wonders.

The article three is about being a reckless novelist who is afraid to be the source of the gossips to be harshly criticized (p. 160).

You have to be brazen enough so as not to care what people will think of you when they read your passages on sex” p. 161 “As for you, I am sorry to say you do not fulfill any of these conditions. Seriously, darling, you are in some kind of a fix. You never write openly about the body. Of course, I am the one who bears the brunt. My entire existence is censored! (p. 161).

Elif cannot be completely sure about Miss Blue Bell Bovary’s criticisms because of the fact that she symbolizes female sexuality in the *Black Milk* this characteristic is not accepted by public sphere, the majority of whom is constituted by male members. In fact, we can witness Elif’s point of aspect about female sexuality when she directly opposes Miss Blue Bell Bovary’s opinions.<sup>158</sup> Miss Blue Bell Bovary’s is not constrained within the framework of fashion style and she leads Elif to think about her approach on her writing about sexual scenes, but she does not immediately gives in when she put into account the sociological realities in Turkish literature:

She could have a reason behind what she claims. But the point which she does not pay

157. Aydın Satar, Nesrin. “Geleneksel Kadın Rollerinin Yeniden Üretimi: Elif Şafak’ın Siyah Süt Romanında Otoriteyle Uzlaşmak.” *Monograf 3* (2015). p. 67.

158. Gariper, Cafer, and Küçükkoşkun, Yasemin. “Hayatla Kurmaca Arasında Elif Şafak’ın Siyah Süt Romanı”, *Aarayışalar – İnsan Bilimleri Araştırmaları*, Yıl: 9, Sayı:18,, 2007. p. 26.



attention is that she or other women novelists refrain from writing such kind of topics in order to protect their social and literary position by excluding scenes within the scope of graphic sexuality in our books. The same goes for female academics, female reporters, female politicians and those women who tread into the business. We all are a bit desexualized, a little defeminized. We cannot carry our bodies comfortably in a society that is so bent against women. In order to be a “brain” in the public realm, we control our “bodies” (p. 161).

Nevertheless, she cannot help but admit that Miss Blue Bell Bovary is right about this issue:

In traditional Muslim society, where Rabia serves as an ideal woman, women can meet our bodies only inside closets or behind closed doors. The same impulse is reflected in our story telling. More often than we care to admit, we women writers, especially those of us from non – Western backgrounds, are uncomfortable about writing on sexuality (p. 162).

The fact that the discrepancy between women writers who do not pen about sexual expressions and The three types of women writers who can freely write about sexuality in their fictions stem from the pressure of the society in which they live is Elif’s explanation for these two different approaches. The protagonist wants to reveal the power of the society who has the capacity to manage, shape and impress the people within their scope of interaction.

Thus, the *Black Milk* hosts differing views about conditions, which, are related with being a woman; that is, the role distribution, which is charged by the social life. Initially, the women’s point of view is constructed within a passive framework by accepting the role, which is given by the society.

The traditional social structure is constructed in a male – dominant order while women are predestined in a more obedient and passive role. In this respect, women have felt the necessity to follow this order, which is designated by male authority. As opposed to this perspective, some of the women have objected to the prototypes for

women many of which have been drawn without taking into account the benefit, the view, and the opinions and the women sphere.

In addition, Blue Belle Bovary's zone of affect is not limited to fashion in theory no more. Elif starts to assess Miss Bovary's criticism about Turkish women writers' approach to writing about sexual scenes and also Elif's dressing style, which is far away different from Miss Bovary's style:

Could I ever be like Blue Belle Bovary? Could I wear ostentatious lipstick, teeny – tiny skirts and low – cut necklines like she does? Could I flip my hair as if I were in a shampoo commercial? Probably not. Two steps forward and one of my heels would surely get stuck in a crack and break. I would never make it (p. 162).

Have you ever tried to be sexy, darling? She asks as if she has read my thoughts (p. 162).

I went to a hairdresser this afternoon and had my hair dyed, my nails manicured and my eyebrows plucked. It was fun for the first ten minutes, but then I got so bored I could have run out with a towel on my head and my hands dripping soapy water. There are very few things to read at a salon, only hairstyle magazines that contain hundreds of photos but roughly only twenty words. Finally, the protagonist puts her thoughts into action and tries a female fashion style on her:

Yet I made it. And here I am, my hair nicely shaped, my face shining under layers of makeup, and though I did not dare to wear the crimson dress Blue Belle Bovary was wearing, I managed to get into a tight, long gown – black, of course – with a feather boa. However, this sudden shift is not as easy as she has thought, but entering public sphere in such a style requires courage to step forward:

Thirty – five minutes later, I walk out of the ladies' room, not because I am ready but because there is an increasing number of women coming in and going out of the restroom, all of whom stop and eye me with curiosity they do not bother to hide. So I leave my shelter and, trying not to trip on them of my dress or break my or break my four – inch heels, ask the waiter to take me to the table where Eyup is waiting patiently, having eaten three rolls of bread and half of the butter (p. 162 and 163).

Under the inquiring eyes of the customers, the waiter and I cross the restaurant from one end to the other, he marching steadily, me hobbling behind, totally out of sync but with the same unnaturally serious expression carved on our faces (p. 163).

Thus, the Thumbelinas fall into dilemmas with Miss Ambitious Chekhovian, Miss Little Practical and Miss Highbrowed Cynic, who exemplify male consciousness. Friedrich Nietzsche states in the beginning of the novel that; “If a woman possesses manly virtues, one should run away from her; and if she does not possess them, she runs away from herself.”<sup>159</sup>

This quotation from Nietzsche leaves us in gray area, where the novel’s theme is constructed. this area is the junction point of the plot structure which is the opposite poles between the mission and the responsibilities which are loaded on women’s shoulders by the social conditions of life in company with their position in life and the profile which the women wants to possess.

The benefit of the inclusion of the Miss Blue Bell Bovary to the story is that the protagonist perceives womanhood as a state, which is to be ashamed or repressed like a burden she is destined to carry no more although putting this new theory in practice may not be so easy for Elif.

According to Gariper’s view, these divided and eight various little personalities divide Elif’s time sense. She will strive to postpone the previous lifestyle again but it will not be completely possible to adapt to this new lifestyle. In fact, these pieces of the fragmented sense of time are an imposed phenomenon of being a woman, and she has to accept the reality that her biological existence will outweigh her mind, which is control of her intellectual identity.<sup>160</sup>

The rises and falls in Elif’s world do not reach to an agreeable level in spite of the fact that she married, but this situation has not affected the time and the frequency of her travels abroad. The sole event, which changes this order, is not her husband but her pregnancy. This news prompts a new wave of sexual dilemma because of the fact that the protagonist is not sure about whether she wants this baby or not. Then, she

159. <https://www.quotetab.com/quotes/by-friedrich-nietzsche/2#x0FI1qfTjA6vjUCc.97>, retrieved at 16 of April, 2019, page 1 of 1.

160. Gariper, Gariper, Cafer, and Küçükcoşkun, Yasemin. “Hayatla Kurmaca Arasında Elif Şafak’ın Siyah Süt Romanı”, *Aarayışalar – İnsan Bilimleri Araştırmaları*, Yıl: 9, Sayı: 18., Isparta 2007. p. 173 – 218, p. 194.

gives birth to her baby yet she is captivated by the postpartum depression and she neglects herself in a contradictive way with the period that she discovers Miss Blue Bell Bovary:

I am wearing a long, lavender nightgown with sporadic shapes across the breast line. One of the shoulder straps has snapped and been tied to the neckline – from a distance – looks sloped, giving the impression that I am sliding to one side, like a sinking ship. Perhaps I am. As for the shapes on the gown, though they seem to be the creation of a crazy fashion designer, they are in fact breast milk and puke stains (p. 209).

Elif look at her mirror and watches her reflection on it while she pass the expression in her mind. In Garipoğlu's aspect, this mood in her soul reveals deeper meanings; "The reflection which Elif watches on the mirror is not Elif's own image, but it is the reflection which is stranger to Elif, and it is the reflection which is different from herself, it is her sexist identity which she could not interiorize in a way".<sup>161</sup>

A person who cannot express herself, meet and adopt various characteristics which in are in fact her inborn potential in different periods in her life, Elif has had experienced the pain and difficulties of these segmentations which results in dilemmas at different dimensions, scope and depth. Elif's image on the mirror in fact reveals the discrepancy among these segments some of which belong to her identity while the rest of which is an alienation as the output of her repressions.

Another wave of conflict in terms of social sexual side of the protagonist comes to the surface after she gives birth to her baby but cannot feel herself well enough to meet her baby's requirements although she loves her deeply:

I want to be a brilliant mother but I end up doing everything wrong. I am all thumbs when it comes to changing diapers, burping the baby or figuring out how to end bouts of hiccups. My self – confidence has become a scoop of ice cream melting

161. Gariper, Gariper, Cafer, and Küçükcoşkun, Yasemin. "Hayatla Kurmaca Arasında Elif Şafak'ın Siyah Süt Romani", Aarayışalar – İnsan Bilimleri Araştırmaları, Yıl:9, Sayı:18,, Isparta 2007. p. 173 – 218, p. 175.

fast under the duress of motherhood (p. 210).

Although it may seem like that Elif's *the Black Milk* centers on her problem of being a woman, being a writer and being a mother on surface, the deeper layer of the structure of the fiction shelters various dilemmas, which are in fact her substantive issue with deep roots. Gariper assumes that these dilemmatic circumstances are nurture with the problem of identity and the problem of the deficiency of the sense of belonging.

Erik H. Erikson as one of the most prominent psychologists states in his masterpiece, *Identity, Youth and Crisis* in order to explain identity hat: "a conscious sense of individual uniqueness, a striving for continuity of experience, and a sense of belonging or solidarity"<sup>162</sup> while Collins expresses that the crisis of identity signifies the portrait of the individual who could not preserve her position in the culture. In another aspect of view, this term symbolizes that human being constructs his identity on the sense of either continuance or discontinuance and on his position in the larger culture and on his sense of status.<sup>163</sup>

Baumeister et all show that each individual has the necessity to constitute and preserve at the minimum of the lowest level of amount of interactions or interpersonal relationships<sup>164</sup> since human being is a social being who cannot hold on to life without interpersonal attachments as a basal human motivation as John Donne put this reality into words in *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions – Meditation XVII*:

No man is an island entire of itself; every man  
is a piece of the continent, a part of the main;  
if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe  
is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as  
well as any manner of thy friends or of thine  
own were; any man's death diminishes me,  
because I am involved in mankind.

And therefore never send to know for whom

162. Floyd Collins., *Heaney Seamus: The Crisis of Identity*. University of Delaware Press, Newark, Delaware, USA. 2003. p. 17.

163. Floyd. Collins, *Heaney Seamus: The Crisis of Identity*. University of Delaware Press, Newark, Delaware, USA 2003. p. 16.

164. Roy Baumeister, F., and Mark R. Leary. "The need to belong: desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation." *Psychological bulletin* 117.3 (1995): 497. p. 499.

the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.<sup>165</sup>

In this respect, we can see that the difficulty about perception of her identity and the issue, which stems from her incapability on defining her ‘Self’ and evaluating her position in the society, Elif falls into dilemmas, which results in confusion, irregular lifestyle in search of self-identity and a position in the community.<sup>166</sup>

The protagonist is prone to be more shocked in the process of discovering Blue Bell Bovary, which triggers her sexual side. While she strives to question the problem of being a woman, she finds herself “an impostor, a poor imitation of my gender. To me, womanhood is something I need to observe, study, learn and imitate, and still can never fully comprehend” (p. 16). According to Gariper, Elif’s describing herself as “poor imitation of my gender” reveals the results that she cannot accept her gender identity - as a woman – by shedding light to her sexist identity and one of her conflict area. Hence, she cannot associate herself with either woman identity or normal woman identity.<sup>167</sup>

This kind of approach in the *Black Milk* takes its root from environment, which Elif was born in and the cultural codes, which this environment own. When we take into account the variety of the place she has been to, it is not surprising for the reader to face such an identity. Elif’s intellectual circle, her constant move from one country to another one and the effect of the globalization lead to both changes and degeneration of the norm of the culture. In addition to it, the role model woman who have Elif had grown up were two different kinds of the portraits of the women:

I grew up seeing two different types of womanhood. On the one hand was my mother – a well - educated, modern, Westernized, secular Turkish woman. Always rational. Always to the point. On the other hand was my maternal grandmother, who also took care of me and was less educated, more spiritual and definitely less rational (p. 127).

165. Hannah, Ward, Jennifer; Wild, “the Westminster Collection of Christian Meditations”, Westminster John Knox Press, 2000, Louisville, Kentucky, USA, p. 27.

166. Gariper, Gariper, Cafer, and Küçükcoşkun, Yasemin. “Hayatla Kurmaca Arasında Elif Şafak’ın Siyah Süt Romanı”, *Araştırmalar – İnsan Bilimleri Araştırmaları*, Yıl:9, Sayı:18,, Isparta 2007. p. 173 – 218, p. 175.

The women who had the major contribution in the growth of Elif has had two different poles apart, with jarring opinions. However, these women could not be successful at this knowledge or they did not try it, but Elif questions this problem as the source of her sexual dilemmas:

How much of my womanhood is biological, how much of it is socially learnt? Of the will to become a mother, which part is innate, which part is imposed? It is sheer coincidence that I have started contemplating motherhood in my mid - thirties? It is because my biological clock is ticking. Or is it because the social chronometer, which continuously compels us women to measure ourselves against one another, is speeding ahead? (p. 130).

The fictitious sphere of the Black Milk does not welcome the notion of being a woman in accordance with the norms, which have been shaped, constrained, defined or coded by the society. The main objective is to escape from the results and the outcomes; in other words, the characteristics and the impacts of the womanhood. However, it is a demanding process to stray off the beaten path; that is, the way of her existence. In this respect, a resistance area as a block in the condition of the womanhood is inevitably constructed. The woman at first rejects then postpones and then starts to accept the state of the womanhood step by step. The woman's way of her existence necessitate this period of transition by extending it over a period of time. The 'Self', who falls into the condition of accepting the condition of the womanhood, will recommend and reformatize her life and environment within the framework of sexual identity and will attempt to give newer meaning to them in that way. She will be in pursuit of undeniable period of changing her environment, while she changes herself and synchronously canalize her inner conflicts / dilemmas to outside, and later, she will perceive her problematic side via her consciousness of 'Selfness', which her sexual identity constituted. The life will put the burden of owning the consciousness of positioning, being a mother and start a family in an area while she pass through the labyrinth like process on the woman who gained the psychology of being a woman at the end of inner conflicts and dilemmas. At this point, love will be the element which

will trigger this chain of changes. The sexual consciousness may be able to break the resistance of the lifestyle, which was romantized by the ‘Self’. The woman is destined to realize the core of her creation and existence sooner or later. From this aspect, the *Black Milk* may be able to assessed as an autobiographic novel which is the protagonist’ victory of the consciousness of being ‘Self’ and female nature of her ‘Self’ against her horizontal personality, which was idealized by being endowed with male characteristics.<sup>168</sup>

If a person can balance between her ‘Self’ and the word outside by means of her persona, she will get the chance to be successful and organizing her relationships. If she cannot apply to her persona in the appropriate time and place, it will be inescapable for her to fall down by being drifted towards personality disorders. The persona (the Mask), which is the manager of one’s own personality for the outside world, is important in terms of defending herself against the outside world and also to preserve her inner world in that way. An individual may be able to successful to the extent that she can maintain her balance between her persona and the outside world and promote her net of relationships. However, persona is a mask, which covers her face. “Excessive identification with persona signifies the requirement of adaptation, uniform and inferiority while inferior persona signifies for inadequacy of adaptations in terms of common and social expectations.<sup>169</sup>

Human being owns a hidden area, which can call it shadow, which s/he hides, from the others and even from herself in addition to her persona, which regulates her daily attitudes that is observed by everyone. “Shadow is an individual unconsciousness. It comprises all of the emotions and wild desires, which does not accord with social standards and our ideal personality. It is all of the things, which we feel embarrassed and the self - information which we do not want to learn.<sup>169</sup> The more a person strives for go through the path of her ideal personality which s/he shapes his destiny, the more s/he moves away from and repress this *shadow*. However, this condition cause to the tension and depression for people.<sup>170</sup> The autobiographical novel: *Black Milk* reveals the dilemma between the individual’s persona; in other

168. Gariper, Gariper, Cafer, and Küçükcoşkun, Yasemin. “Hayatla Kurmaca Arasında Elif Şafak’ın Siyah Süt Romanı”, *Aarayışalar- İnsan Bilimleri Araştırmaları*, Yıl:9, Sayı:18,, Isparta 2007. p. 173 – 218, p. 194.

169. Anthony Stevens, *On Jung: Updated Edition*. Princeton University Press, 1999. p. 41.



words, the mask which s / he wears in order to protect herself / himself from the outside world, and the ‘Self’, which settles in the deep down. We should pay attention to the fact that the shadow aforementioned above constitutes her darker side on the condition that it is not malicious to the extent of Carl Jung’s statements. When the protagonist of this novel comes face to face with her shadow – in fact her shadow personalities - in the period of postpartum depression, her psychology may be able to relieve from the pressure and the bulk of the polyphony. Facing with her shadow helps her to know, control, be in peace with it and to improve the capacity of it.

When it comes to the case of Elif, it is not possible to stand face to face completely and make peace between her persona and shadow, but she can relieve the pressure of it to some extent. Because of the fact that the Thumbelinas are so in contrast sharply with each other that one of them’s coming to forefront is up to the repression of another one. Nonetheless, these finger women will never give up fighting against each other and shadow and persona strive to take place of each other.

All in all, the sexual dilemmas in Elif’s life causes serious problems, which are not possible to come to an end completely, but she has realized and accepted the existence of them at least. However, this does not mean that she may come to a decision about this conflict by the improvements in her social or sexual definition of being a woman. Her late acceptance of being biosexual in front of public sphere does not help her terminate her sexual dilemmas.

170. Gariper, Gariper, Cafer, and Küçükkoşkun, Yasemin. “Hayatla Kurmaca Arasında Elif Şafak’ın Siyah Süt Romanı”, *Aarayışalar – İnsan Bilimleri Araştırmaları*, Yıl:9, Sayı:18,, Isparta 2007. p. 173 – 218, p. 184

### III. CHAPTER THREE: CHARLOTTE ANNA PERKINS GILMAN'S *HERLAND*

#### III. i: Cultural Dilemmas

#### III. ii: National Dilemmas

#### III. iii: Gender and Sexual Dilemmas

Charlotte Anna Perkins Gilman wrote the *Herland* in 1915 as a utopian novel, which was shadowed by the World War I and had to wait for years to be evaluated within the framework of literature. However, the postponed period does not hinder the novel to cause a social, cultural, literary and political turbulence in America. Gilman's great admire for Plato's one of the famous work, *The Utopia* magnetizes her and she comes to the idea that why she does not write a novel about a utopian country for the women by benefiting from the same formula with Plato. The opinion of the ideal country, which made up of merely female population becomes Gilman's own plan. The author forms a special system in this country by demolishing each male element in this country from the ecological system to the social structure. However, her way of dealing with such an extra ordinary theme causes the dilemmas to come to the surface and this condition stimulated the requirement to search about these dilemmas in the same way with the approach, which is preferred in the *Black Milk* in the previous Chapter. In this sense, we see that the reason behind the conflicts in the *Herland* possess substantial association with Freud's psychoanalytic defense mechanisms.

Although this book is not a biographical novel, we think that this novel owns considerable similarities and impacts from Gilman's private life. Therefore, it is inevitable to put into account the psychological background of the dilemmas in this Chapter.

### 3. i Cultural Dilemmas

Culture as the outcome of the accumulation of the experiences by transforming them to the future generations and making contribution to the formation of the characteristics of a community or people is one of the prominent topics in *Herland*. When Herland is isolated from rest of the world and the extinction of male gender there, this country forms its own way of structure of the culture.

Lack of enough experience and ignoring the characteristics of the experiences as a pragmatist country triggers dilemmas in *Herland*. A culture, which is based upon motherhood and children in accordance with communal benefits in order to preserve the continuity of the generation, causes the formation of conflictive situations.

Although Herland is depicted in terms of its cultural features, the explanations, which belongs to the three explorers and visitors, Terry, Van and Jeff, about the culture in their homeland enables the condition to compare both of the cultures. In order to shed light on the conflicts in this Chapter, past, history, tradition, religion are evaluated as the some of the most important elements in culture. Also, Van's being a sociologist and at the same time the narrator of the novel enables the culture to be a dominant element in *Herland*.

What is so critical point here is that their acceptance of being pragmatists and at the same time their claim of creating a new culture although it is in general known that this term requires the accumulation via the transforms from the past and their another claim that they have no relation with past because what they produce is better than the previous ones as they always aim at improving their conditions as a general rule in their country.

In conclusion, this Chapter aims at mirroring the characteristics of the culture in *Herland* by pointing out and the the reason behind the formation of the dilemmas in this utopian country.

## CHAPTER THREE: HERLAND

### 3. i Cultural Dilemmas

As it is explained in Chapter 2.1 the meaning of culture, it refers to intellectual or artistic effort – activity and products, which is in general called high culture.<sup>78</sup> In this sense, culture involves purifying and improving factors by benefiting from each community's resources.<sup>188</sup> According to Hanson, culture is the accumulation of faith, social values, tradition, social and economic organization. The culture's capacity which includes an organic structure, in other words, it is not only arranged, but it also grow up, is transmitted from one generation to the next one via the perseverance and the determination of the society where the culture takes root.<sup>171</sup>

In another view, culture symbolizes the common models of attitudes and communication, cognitive structures and perception, which are achieved via socialization. Therefore, we can express that this term may be defined as the growth of a community's identity, which is adapted by social models distinctive to the community.<sup>172</sup>

We can deduce from the quotations which take place above that culture reveals our lifestyle, history, customs and language. Thus, the culture of a nation gives people information about the characteristics of the culture, where it take its root and at the same time the path which the culture follows for the future of it. It is a prominent fact that each person is a member of the all of the human being and his / her interaction with other people is inevitable. An individual who has the consciousness of his / her culture also possesses the sense of belonging, the reception in a social group or community as a participant or a member. The existence of this sense promotes his / her happiness, motivation and also health.

When the individual sets up interaction with other people, s / he may own the chance of observing other people's all kinds of experience of life, which help him / her

170. Mathew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), p. 6.

171. Edward D. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, Vintage, New York USA, 2012, p. xiii.3. Hanson, F.Allan, "*Meaning in Culture*", Routledge Library Editions, 2004, Abington, Oxon, p.4.

172. Kim Ann, Zimmermann, *What is Culture? – Definition of Cultuer*, "<https://www.livescience.com/21478-what-is-culture-definition-of-culture.html>", retrieved at 21 of April, 2019, page 1 of 3.

to see that each member of her / his society face similar experiences to him /her, so this individual will not lose himself / herself within the sense of loneliness. The prominence of the existence of the sense of belonging requires building and preserving it for each member of a society. The way to the achievement of the sense of belonging goes through the acceptance of other people in company with their positive side and their defects. The key point in participation in a social group is ‘acceptance’, which we will frequently come across in *Herland*.

The culture helps us to realize an individual’s quality of life, his / her personal and cognitive growth and his / her transportation them to the other generation as heritage. The existence of culture necessitates some processes such as adaptation, recording, empowerment, expression, preservation, reinterpretation and transformation. These studies and outcomes about culture contributed to improvements in the science of anthropology by opening a new window through the culture as the accumulative treasures of the human being. “The scientists assessed culture in terms of social evolutionist scientists such as Tylor by concentrating on the idea of the universal characteristics of merely one culture accompanied by different societies who are ranged from savage structure to more civilized forms until the eighteenth century, Franz Boaz and his study group rejected Arnoldian and Tylorean points of angle about culture by refusing the notion of value judgments while they focused on the meaninglessness of drawing distinction and compare culture by arraying them from high to low and so, people cannot ascribe value to culture as savage and cultivated.”<sup>173</sup>

*Herland*, which is penned by Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gilman in 1915, she narrates the story of a feministic utopian society who constitutes of merely women, who enables the continuity of their generation via parthenogenesis reproduction, which means asexual reproduction without mating, which is in general a kind of breeding which is peculiar to some species of ant and other insects. She initiates the novel with the narrator Vandyck Jennings, who is a sociologist with great wonder for learning in company with his two friends; Terry O’Nicholson as a rich man of perfect stereotype for masculinity and Jeff Margrave romantic nice guy. While the three good friends on

173. Alexander, Lesser, “Franz Boas”, (Ed. Sydel Silverman), *Totems and Teachers: Key Figures in the History of Anthropology*, Alta Mira Press, Walnut Creek – California, USA, 2004, p. 1 – 26, p. 17 and 18.

a scientific exploration, they learn the existence of an extra – ordinary society whose member are merely made up of females without exception. In spite of the hardships of travelling to this land and the stories, which they heard from the guides whom they hired, they decided on starting an expedition for Herland. After a long and dangerous voyage, they come near to their destination, yet they are trapped by the residents of Herland and they pass their two years by learning the characteristics of this land in amazement and at the same time teaching their civilized world to the residents of the female – country.

What draw the three explorers' attention most is the culture, which is built with no male power or intelligence. Thus, we will begin by concentrating on the cultural structure of Herland, yet the dilemmatic elements are our main point of focus thought the rest of the thesis. A country without the existence of men for two thousand years, the cultural and traditional structure of *Herland* was constructed on the notion of motherhood. Before the establishment of this matriarchal society, they were once polygamous people and had slaves. Their society was destroyed because of war, left their land, which was on coast line, but they moved to hinterland with the diminished society with fewer men. However, the men, who survived after battle were killed by the slaves when they found a chance to revolt against their masters, and later these slaves decided to kill mothers who would take the responsibility of governing the land. Thus, the rest who could be able to survive were the young women in complete despair. As a result of their past experiences, they could not trust men; either master or slave, then cut all their connections with the rest of the world. For five or ten years, they worked hard and improved their capacities. In that period, one of these women bore a child miraculously. They attributed this event as a gift from their Goddess in the temple of Maia, who is also their Goddess of Motherhood. Each women bore five children and all of the babies were girls.

Although the novel insists upon the reflecting a utopian country, which has not been seen before, “The reaction of these women is different from any that I have ever met”.<sup>174</sup> The same narrator comes across with the similar systems with the Western world: “This is a civilized country!” I protested.<sup>175</sup>

174. Herland, p. 31.

175. Ibid, p. 13.

*Herland* consisted of cities with plains and every part of the land was like park – like places and open places with clean, carefully built roads in accordance with excellent architecture, which was based upon beauty and order.<sup>176</sup> However, we can notice that Herland is in fact far better organized than the civilized part of the world: “I never saw a forest so petted, even in Germany. Look, there is not a dead bough – the vines are trained – actually!”<sup>177</sup> The situation gets clearer as the exploration group observe the land more: “The rest, splendid hardwood. Call this forest? It is a truck farm!”<sup>178</sup> The architectural culture was quite different in Herland although they call it civilized within their framework of the meaning of civilization. Initially all of the houses in this feminine country were in pink with green fields and gardens, which were carefully arranged. Nonetheless the dilemmatic approach does not end “Inhabitants evidently arboreal”, I grimly suggested. “Civilized and still arboreal – peculiar people.”<sup>179</sup>

The existence of an indecisive narrator, which we frequently face in this novel, is not a rare situation in the world of literature. Inevitably, an author’s choice of unreliable narrator forces the readers’ limits, but what is more difficult situation is the co – existence of the unreliable narrator and his / her being in serious and various dilemmas. As a problem, which includes undesirable two alternatives, dilemmas in literature bring two opposing ideas, which the characters have to choose one of. The strive between two different forces like ethics or reason, good or bad comes to a conclusion in accordance with the author’s way of presenting them. However, the frequency and the degree of power of the effects of these dilemmas may be more prominent than the objective of the writer. The rate of occurrence of dilemmas, which are in general the product of the narrator, Van, is an instance supporting this situation. His comparison *Herland* with his homeland, California and Europe cause the loss of balance of the plot.

Another issue, which confuses the reader, is the dilemma of motherhood and marriage. Because of the fact that there were not any men in Herland for two thousand

176. Ibid: p. 12 and 13.

177. Ibid: p. 14.

178. Ibid: p. 15.

179. Ibid: p. 18.

years, when every member of it were mothers, but no fathers.<sup>180</sup> In fact, *Herland* is so literally matriarchal that they fed merely cats: “We have cats. The father is not very useful.”<sup>181</sup> These women upgraded their rule of demasculinization all of the country even in the animalia, in other words, the animal kingdom. When Van asks whether they have any cattle, sheep or horses for various uses, the answer he takes is perplexing for anyone who hears it: “we do not want them anymore. They took up too much room.”<sup>182</sup> What is so dilemmatic here is the one whose face went white because of the shock and terror that they felt were not the explorers, but the Herlanders. In addition to it, the species of the cats that they fed were limited via meticulous selection and exclusion for the sake of getting the species, which do not sing and do not eat birds, mice or moles. While Herlanders believe that their segregation was reasonable and the cats, which they want to feed, were happy and friendly, they felt horrible when they learnt that the rest of the world fed dogs although they sometimes bit the children. This somewhat intervene to the balance of nature may merely be linked to the existence of rationalization. The defenses preserve the individual from detected threat.

The reason that the Herlanders keep the cats with the help of intervening to the circle in nature will cause to make irreversible error as nature take its revenge eventually. In addition, bringing the extinction of the dogs for they consider them not being useful animal cannot be accepted a valid motive for their extinction. Holocaust survivors in general conduct denial mechanism in order to relieve from the trauma. The Herland’s virgin birth capability and their way for rearing children are another issue, which is open to debate within the sense of reason. Certainly, the absence of male gender necessitated an alternative way for the continuity of their race. Nevertheless, putting children to the center of everything in *Herland* causes dilemmatic situation to come to the surface frequently. Although they assume that their system depends on the norms of “peace, comfort, health, beauty and progress”<sup>183</sup>, it is rather clear to see that motherhood is much more above the standards

180. Ibid: p. 47.

181. Ibid: p. 49.

182. Ibid. 50.

183. Herland; p. 70.



that they give prominence for the benefit of their peoples. The fact that "...conscious Makers of People. Mother – love with them was not a brute passion, a mere 'instinct' a wholly personal feeling; it was – a religion."<sup>184</sup> as a matter of fact, people with the consciousness of national identity do not hesitate to sacrifice their life for their countries; however, what they have to do for the continuity of Herland is to keep of the continuation of their race, to be alive and also help the survival of the others. This ideal has been accepted as the most important public service and the highest social rank in terms of aristocratic class-consciousness as "Over Mothers". What is more, there is not any application to put an end to the life of unborn child; that is abortion. Certainly, their way of being a mother; in other words, they miraculously become a mother after they deeply long to be a mother and after that process<sup>185</sup>, they have babies up to five times, causes the formation of another dilemma because of the fact that the narrator stresses that the Herlanders are the cleverest women he had ever met.<sup>186</sup> They thought this miracle as a blessing from the gods and they accounted for Maia who was their Goddess of motherhood whose temple they kept under strict watch.<sup>187</sup> Maia represents powers of transformation, productive capacity, preservation of life as a caring mother of Hermes and a nurse for Alcas. Maia gave birth to her son Hermes who is Zeus's son by settling in a cave near the peaks of Cyllene in Arkadia. Aeschylus personifies Maia "the nursing mother". Thus, she was also named as the goddess of midwifery. Goddess Maia signifies being young, rebirth, love and sexuality, and Month of May is symbolizes Maia in Roman Mythology. Besides, they claim that any woman who long to be a mother is allowed to be a mother<sup>188</sup>, while the narrator states that the women who are not found appropriate are not even permitted<sup>189</sup>, which constitutes two opposing views about whether each woman who desires to be a mother may be able to achieve her goal. Furthermore, Somel, one of the Herlanders who helps Van to comprehend the cultural, social national and economic structure which dominate in

184 Herland; p. 71.

185. Herland; p. 73.

186. Herland; p.30, 71, 74, 87, 110,

187. Herland; p. 58.

188. Herland; p. 71.

189. Herland; p. 61

Herland expresses that they decided to put limit on the number of women who would bear children, the women who wanted to have babies were persuaded to postpone their decisions and those women were kept occupied by giving them the physically and mentally energy demanding works and even let them to console themselves by being baby – sitters<sup>168</sup>.

Their culture of belief is another Matter of dilemma in *Herland*. Although the women expressed that worshipped the Goddess Maia, they systematized the tradition of cremation in order to get extra space for settlement and agriculture<sup>190</sup>. However, we see no evidence about their praying or worshipping except for wishing to be a mother. Hence, it may be said that their approach to the tradition of culture depends upon pragmatic benefits. When the Herlanders initiated the formation of a new race, they felt the necessity of centralizing on a faith and they preferred various gods and goddesses like the deities of old Greek religion, yet their attention on Mother Goddess. The more sophisticated they became the more they inclined to Maternal Pantheism, which bore fruit.<sup>207</sup> The faith in more than one or all gods, or the faith that God exists within the universe in the same way as everything like animals, plants and people which takes place in the universe,<sup>191</sup> Pantheism represents the concept that the universe is indistinguishable from the god, or utterance of God's nature. Therefore, pantheism means, "God is everything and everything is God". It does not accept the opinion that God is transcendent, so it defends the idea that god is not above the entirety of the objects in the world. Besides, pantheism does not welcome the view of God's personhood. According to it, God is not an individual deity. The God cannot possess disposition or desire, belief, goal, or apparatus. God in pantheist view cannot take action in or upon the universe. All of such kind of things, which will be done by a person or a person – like being, could do. In pantheists' point of view, God is not a personal holly existence, which permeates all existence. It is called the holly entity of the world.<sup>192</sup> It is stated in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy that "God is

190. Herland; p. 57.

191. Cambridge University Press. (2019). English Dictionary. Cambridge – United Kingdom. CUP. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/pantheism>.

192. Laura, Maguire, *Pantheism*, Stanford, Philosophy Talk by KALW, Humanities Outreach Initiative – Stanford University. California, USA, retrieved at 26 of April 2019, page 1 of 2.

identical with the universe, and nothing takes place which is outside of God, or as the refusal of any idea which claims that God as different from the cosmos.”<sup>193</sup> In this sense, pantheism defends the claim that God cannot be an arbitrary existence and cannot be more powerful than the nature and human being. The fact that women in Herland with their faith system which makes the children, motherhood and nature as a fertile and efficient source of life its shared points with pantheism as a system which is highly respected as a religion in countries such as India while it is positioned to the category of philosophy in Christian countries. When both the Herlanders and the followers of pantheism equal God with human and nature, it seems that the people in this feminist country give prominence to the female existence a bit more than the God. Planning the rebirth of the country meticulously from its reproduction to the belief system and cutting its all connection with the rest of the world are in fact serious challenges, which may easily force even the developed countries. Nevertheless, a small country, which is, comprised of merely female members with a limited population challenges all the hardships, which they confront with by establishing an ideal country. Therefore, their success, achievements and the outcomes of their strives gave way to their Christian belief and replaced it with a more humanistic belief system.

Another part of their tradition in *Herland* is the process of giving name to the newborns. In traditional or classical sense, people pay special attention to choosing the best name for their babies. The meaning of the name, the cross – cultural meaning of it, the easiness or hardship of writing of and pronouncing it are all the criterias, which people take into account for taking the first step for their babies. While people prefer their parents’, grandparents’ or any other people’s name, some cultures reject such preferences in order to prevent the transition of the negative experiences of the elder generations; in other words, a kind of protection of the babies from past and negative energies. When it comes to the women in Herland, they again have their own way of giving names to the babies. First of all, the majority of the population has more than one name, as they get through in life; they gain a second and descriptive name or they can completely change it. For instance, their present, which is called “Land Mother”, people in Herland called her Mera when she was a child which meant ‘thinker’. Then,

193. William, Mander, "Pantheism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/pantheism/>>.

the residents of her country gave her another name 'Du – Du Mera' which meant 'the wise thinker' and they called her O – du – Mera, which signifies for the great and wise thinker while the explorers were in Herland. Also, they do not have a surname which creates a dilemma as they expressed that their population reached to six million and they said that they had the culture of archiving in a detailed way. The high ratio of the population in Herland and their way of naming children without the use of surname not excluding keeping the record of each details about the country. Their explanation of the reason, which they based the system of their country falls in conflictive situation; "We are all descended from a common source – all one 'family' in reality. You see, our comparatively brief and limited history gives us that advantage at least"<sup>194</sup> However, they still express that they archive the information about their country in the most careful way by keeping the definite line of family from their First Mother to the last - born member of their family, yet there is a point which causes the existence of two opposing point of view; "But as to everyone knowing which child belongs to which mother – why should she?"<sup>194</sup> While Moadine express that they give the highest importance to keep record of the line of decent in a clear cut way, she then criticizes the reason lying behind the archiving and name giving in as if she implies that it is not of a great significance to know another person's family line. It is clear that Herland is in some points a well – organized country, which was based on a system taking its basis from the way of its structure, which helps a land to be turned into a country via having the arrangement whose elements work together like parts of a mechanism with a complex form. Therefore, not understanding the significance of having the record of the population is an opposing view with defending or living in Herland where each factor about the country is revised and renewed by gaining the best system, which they assume that it is the best system, which is in harmony with their happiness and welfare. This dilemma stimulates the ideas on the reader that either these women could not perceive the basis of their country or they are not happy with the recording and naming system in their country. Furthermore, the other conflicting situation about this issue is although they claim that they do not possess the system of

194. Herland; p. 77.

surname, they may be able to own more than one name, - in fact the majority of the population does not have less than two names just like the system of surname or second name in the western culture and civilization – which causes the reader to think about the distinguishing differences between the Western way of application of the system of surname and the system of using more than one name in Herland, which it is not possible to find out the so –called difference which is claimed by Gilman.

As one of the dominant themes in *the Herland*, the education of the mothers and their children owns a pragmatic system in the traditional and cultural side. Pragmatism, which is one of the philosophies in education in accordance with the framework of the objective to educate the learners about growth and life, centralizes on the ideal of the outcomes within the realm of viable and possible knowledge. The pragmatic education aims at educating the learners by preserving them from gaining useless information, which the students may not be in need of applying them in real life in that way. As for teachers, the pragmatism helps them to reach as many students as possible, and the learners may be able to get the opportunity to take education via workable and experiential learning environment.

Taking its root from the beginning of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century in America, education turned into a requirement for all the men rather than a small and highest social class. The changes within the framework of economic, social, political and scientific path which America went through, pragmatism became an urgent solution for the problems which America confronted because of its converting to a state with various races, technologies, but lack of communication, interaction and inequality among people in terms of knowledge and experience. According to Cambridge Dictionary, pragmatism signifies for the coping with issues in a rationale way which is appropriate for the conditions, which really exist, instead of following stable theories, opinions and rules.<sup>195</sup> The value of a thought is evaluated by the consequence and outcome which are achieved when it is converted into action. In this concept, the customary way of thinking and finding experiential ways are combined to new thoughts to reach to the objectives and outcomes, which are desired. This approach helps people to go on discovering new productive methods for

195. Cambridge University Press. (2019). English Dictionary. Cambridge – United Kingdom. CUP. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/pragmatic>.

fulfilling distinct tasks.<sup>196</sup> Because of the fact that the world continually experiences transformation, people are in demand of changing and improving the elements of the past. When the culture of education in *Herland* is under consideration, the similarity between the pragmatism as in the form of its early ages in America and the education system in Herland is not open to debate. A country which survived after a bloody war and unexpected inner revolt by losing all of the male population, reconstruction of the state is based upon efficiency and practicality. The recovery of the country and at the same time the continuity of the generation cause the reconsideration of the existing system and recovering it by paying attention of the absence of the men and the slaves, the hazard which is on the border of the state, the loss of trust towards the rest of the world and master on many other issues which they did not handle with before. Therefore, the system which they implement requires an educational system which may help them to keep on their basic needs and feasible to be able to conduct by the female power and capacity. The careful education in Herland is a topic, which the women of this country attribute their success that they achieved. They call education their best art in their country.<sup>197</sup>

The major part of their education comprises motherhood and baby – care. If the mother is not successful enough to take the responsibility of her baby, other Herlanders who are wiser, studied on it and got experience more than the mother are given the care of the baby: “we have, of course, made it our first business to train out, to breed out, when possible, the lowest types.”<sup>198</sup> Their education system’s national ideal and short and long term objectives depend upon the reality that they reconstruct a country which is a race via children, so the Herlanders achieved a great improvement in child health by studying on it with utmost care and they put an end to diseases of childhood. What these women have as a point of view in child education is the simile of tree; that is they liken a child to a tree and they believe that a child should be reared in as a natural way as a tree in the way of learning via each of their senses, leaning uninterruptedly but not becoming aware of the fact that they are taught.<sup>199</sup> Their trainers are educated when they are not grown up under the supervision of the experts. Hence we can easily express that how they conduct the education system and the

196. Bansal, Suraksha; Maheshwari, V.K.; Agarwal, Saroj. *Pragmatism and Education*, tr.scribd.com, <https://tr.scribd.com/doc/30853941/Pragmatism-and-Education>, retrieved at 28 of April, 2019, page 2 of 21.

197. Herland; p. 85.

Western world differs completely from each other. The dilemma in this culture let us feel is that how a child can both learn freely and learn the “chosen subjects”<sup>199</sup> for them. What is so ideal about their education is nurturing the children with knowledge but they strive to refrain from overfeeding them by planning a model, which include the sum and diversity of the perceptions and expressions which may be embraced by the children. The conflicting issue in this part is the women’s great proud of the education which they improved in spite of the various hardships which they have encountered and their admittance of the condition of being extremely restricted in knowledge.<sup>200</sup>“The very rudimentary<sup>200</sup> and “extremely limited”<sup>200</sup> knowledge causes the conflict by the low degree of the possibility of exceedingly restricted information within a system which is the source of the highest proud in their country. Certainly, it cannot be claimed that the world has reached to its peak; however, the close relationship between the scope of knowledge and the methods how to transfer this information cannot be denied.

The culture of child rearing in *Herland* is another issue, which is open to debate. The early period of the children is not completely dissimilar to the way of childrearing in the real world. The new – born baby from Herland spend his two years or more with intimate care with his / her mother and co – mothers in the warmer areas of their country and as they get older, they are moved to the colder part of it by means of a slow transition of climate. Changing the environment of the many babies, striving to acclimate them to a different nature and again bringing back to his native settlement are not justifiable. While the women in Herland put stress on being loyal to what is natural, they destroy the order and the conditions surrounding the babies even in the earlier periods. Another particular issue is the artificial environment, which is prepared for the babies of a nation. In one hand, they claim that their education aims at preparing the children for their adulthood, a period when they will take the responsibility of their country and will contribute to the improvement of it, on the other hand, they eliminate each hinder physically and mentally in their environment where the babies grow up as if they would not confront with any hardships in the

198. Herland; p. 84.

199. Herland; p. 98.

200. Herland; p. 108.

future or they would be able to get over all the intricacies without any hesitation or difficulty. Van expresses that he did not see any stairs corners or any small or soft object, not even fire in so as not to hurt or wound. The objective of bringing up children for a system which centers on the young members of her race in order with extreme protection can include neither cohesion nor consistency as an integral function and alternative for the continuity and welfare of a nation which is up to the a generation who can own an important role in the rearing of the country. Therefore, such excessive practices may be merely with dilemma as a confusing and complicated situation. Van's insist upon the functionality of this style of baby growth: "They were taught, as rapidly as feasible, to use and control their own bodies..."<sup>201</sup> nevertheless this observation merely proves the reader that and their method of child rearing challenges against the objective of the Herlanders in a dilemmatic way. One of the education objectives, which deeply concern the women in Herland, is a clear, far – reaching judgment, and a strong well – used will"<sup>202</sup> initially seems a reasonable and tangible educational ideals, which should possess a position in each culture of education for the development of each child as an individual. However, "... misdeeds in childhood never presented of them as sins; merely as errors and misplays – as in a game"<sup>203</sup> gives the impression on the reader that the co-mothers and educators in Herland do not follow a right path in teaching the sense of what is right or what is wrong when we take into consideration the values education. Additionally, another point, which confuses the reader's mind because of the fact that Van, assumes that the women in Herland have no idea about the "shame – no knowledge of anything to be ashamed of"<sup>203</sup> is another conflictive situation since it is not clear how the women achieve – as they claim it – to teach the sense of personal decorum without being aware of the opposite of what is moral. When a culture is based on wisdom"<sup>204</sup>, the possibility of transforming of the meaning and the significance of this norm is a questionable. The possibility of a culture, whose members are grown in accordance

201. Herland; p. 110.

202. Herland; p. 109.

203. Herland; p. 104.

204. Herland; p. 105.



with the richest and freest style – as the women claim it – is not high when we know that the Herlanders own no idea about even the fundamental opposition of ‘good and evil’ as their complementary and explanatory sides requires the existence of the opposite one. As a result of this circumstance, when the assumption of the excellence of their education culture and the impact of this claim which causes us to think about the substantial defects, faults and gray areas of the their education system make it for the reader to be beyond the bounds of possibility to make a clear cut choice between these two alternatives.

The culture of marriage is an issue of the primary challenge because of the fact that this country utterly comprises of females and because of this; there is no institution of marriage until the wedding ceremony of Van and Ellador, Jeff and Celis, Terry and Alima. Furthermore, this country’s previous experience, tradition and culture about marriage are presented in a rather limited scale.

Religion in terms of one of the prominent element of tradition and culture can be assessed within the framework of pragmatism. Pragmatism in the native land of *the Herland*, in America, goes in alignment with many characteristics of the American pragmatist intellectuals. This philosophy in terms of religion decline and abandon religious point of views, which strive against one another from the Catholic to the Reformed to the Baptist. The nonconformity of the pragmatist is complete in that it finds the beauty and honour human condition or state in his synthesis with nature. This point of angle stresses that the continuance of the humanity is up to the unity with the natural world and turn down the opinion that human being is distinctive and unique in the nature in terms of ontological side. The pragmatists assume that human being do not own *telo*, in other words, an end do not own a natural everlasting destiny, do not possess the potential or the capacity of cognition which helps them to have the knowledge of free – thinking reality when this faculty is appropriately put into practice and as a result of it, they do not own any moral law or rule within.

Gilman’s expressions about the period of the bloody war, which caused the majority of the male residence in Herland, lead us to understand that this country was Christian. However, the revolt, which was initiated by the slaves in Herland caused the extinction of the male participation. However, the long period with no marriage or childbirth, the parthenogenesis reproduction, which stands for the reproduction from ovum without the process of fertilization particularly a usual procedure which is valid

for invertebrates and lower plants.<sup>205</sup> this reproductive strategy requires merely the existence of a female gamete (sex cell) without any contribution from a male gamete. Such kind of development undermined the Christianity in Herland and this miracle, which was sent by gods and goddesses and their lifestyle caused them to centralize their faith in Maia who represented motherhood for Herlanders, and she stood for the goddess of earth. According to Greek Mythology, Maia gave birth to Hermes who was the inventor of magic alone in a cave. Also, she brought up Arcas, who is her husband son from another goddess, so she was attributed to the title of nursing mother and midwifery. Youth, rebirth, love and sexuality are the other qualities, which are associated with her. The miracle of motherhood, which saved this female nation from coming to extinction, empowered their loyalty to a goddess who is the grandmother of the magic, and her compassion for the children even one of them was her husband, Zeus's son from Callisto. Such a dedication to the children, which shadows her husband's betrayal is rewarded with the admiration of Herlanders, and her shyness which causes Maia to live alone in a cave resembles the loneliness of these women who strives to hold on life without men and the rest of the world. The aforementioned similarities might have subverted their belief in Christianity whose chief figure, Christ is a male individual who take position in a religion which is regarded as masculine belief by many non conformists, thus, the female portrait in Christianity, who is Virgin Mary is replaced with Mother Maia as a figure of leading role in the story of the *Herland*. However, the fact that the women in the novel prefer worshipping in a goddess who gave birth with mating stimulates dilemma in the reader's mind because of the existing of a female figure; that is Virgin Mary, who gave birth to her child – son of God in Christianity - without mating. While Maia married to Zeus and gave birth to Hermes from her husband via sexual production, not by means of virgin birth, the stimulus, which causes the women in Herland to worship in Goddess Maia seems open to debate for the readers. It is clear that the author appreciates this belief by stating in the novel that; “Then, as they grew more intelligent, this had turned into a sort of Maternal Pantheism.”<sup>205</sup> In that sense, we can deduce that Maternal Pantheism developed over successive generations as a result of natural selection<sup>206</sup> through a

205. Cambridge University Press. (2019). English Dictionary. Cambridge–United Kingdom. CUP. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/parthenogenesis>.

206. Herland; p. 61

regular and complete elimination of polytheism and Christianity, and the ultimate focusing on their Mother Goddess, Maia. In addition to it, Gilman 'deities of war and plunder' shows the reader that the deities which are aforesaid subjects are not welcomed or found unsympathetic in *Herland*, where women are against brutality. This proves us the end of polytheism and the development of the pantheism in *Herland*. The monotheism which flourishes via 'intelligence' enables the pantheism to have position in Herland permanently.<sup>207</sup> While the women in *Herland* explains their rules and laws in their country, their meticulous expressions about their belief system falls into dilemmas when Moadine states that they have laws and rules for nearly twenty years.<sup>208</sup>

Additionally, the religion culture in Herland is accompanied by the conflictive elements in it. While Van explains that there are temples even in the smallest village in the country, he does not give any idea the architectural structure of it, the way the women worship as if they are a participant of a secret sect. the only information about this religion is that they attribute the asexual reproduction in their country to their Mother Maia, who is the goddess of motherhood and earth. When Van wants to learn information about the history and background of their belief system, he learns that they do not have respect for the past because of the fact that past is gone and they are more experienced and better than the people in the past. It is dilemmatic situation that the reader cannot perceive the blanks within this point of view as how can a generation know that they are better than the previous generation without the existence of the knowledge of the past. We feel as if we are between two poles although we want to reach where we have to be. The Herlanders must be either aware of their past as they compare themselves with the quality of the previous generations or she in fact has no idea about the past and what she says about the past are only estimation. Nonetheless, the reality that they admitted that they have a detailed recording causes us to remember the issue of the past as if a vicious circle of dilemmas in term of their belief system which never seems to come to an end.

207. Cambridge University Press. (2019). English Dictionary. Cambridge – United Kingdom. CUP. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/evolve>.

208. Val, Gough, Jill Rudd, and Gillian Rudd, eds. *A Very Different Story: Studies on the Fiction of Charlotte Perkins Gilman*. Vol. 14. Liverpool University Press, Liverpool – United Kingdom, 1998. p. 119.

The religion, which can be understood from the angle of philosophy, but shadowy when it comes to the content of their worship in a Loving Mother, what we deduce from it, is their appreciation of it. The dilemma in terms of religious services are complicated since they state the absence of no rituals or divine services except for the pageants in the temples while they says that their minds are filled with the thought of God and they explains that this inner power requires to be reflected outside. It is chaotic to understand whether they have religious services or not as it is said by the experts of theology that thinking about God is a kind of worship in God which is an upper level of preying. Another point they are in dilemma is that they say that all the thing that they do and the progress which they the women have made is their religion, which seems a materialistic way of expression rather than religious, while they also add that “ They lived as if God was real and at work within them.”<sup>209</sup> Another point that is a gray area is their having no belief in afterlife, which reveals the effect of pragmatism as a philosophy against any ideas, which do not enable any benefit or gain to people who are alive. The motto of ‘past is past’ which is frequently used by the pragmatists prevail into the Herland when the women do not see any gain or profit in a work or conduct. However, these disregard and neglect only stimulate the dilemmas in the fiction.

A country of merely female population, we cannot talk about the institution of marriage in *Herland* in a detailed way. What we possess about this subject includes merely two instances: the period before the reconstruction and the marriage of Terry, Van and Jeff. According to the Herlanders’ account, the polygamous marriage was common in the land and a man was able to marry four times or more. This point confuses our mind because of the fact that we know the reality that this country before the destruction which they had confronted with was Christian, so how could a man could have a polygamous marriage life in a Christian country as we are sure about the fact that Herland was in the America, a state which comprises of people who immigrated from Europe to the New Land for the reason that the they had serious problems because of the different sects or cults in Europe and the problem reached a point which caused them to immigrate to a far away continent which had no

209. Herland; p. 117.

relationship with the civilized world in order to follow their belief system. At his point, it is not to find it out whether the ancestors of the women had polygamous marriage life or they were Christian are two conflicting alternatives which are the opposing options which does not help the reader to pick up only one. Therefore, the reader comes across a cultural dilemma again which s / he cannot reach clear-cut knowledge to perceive the system, which the author aims at presenting the reader.

The second marriage ceremony in *Herland* after two thousand years is the triple marriage of Van with Ellador, Terry with Alima and Jeff with Celis. However, we cannot go beyond the existence of another dilemma since we cannot come to a definite conclusion whether the author defends the marriage system in traditional matrimony system in the Western world, she utterly favours the life without men and marriage in Herland, or she supports any other kind of systems as alternatives to classical matrimony system. We know from the novel that the Herlanders were in along exploration to go back to their traditional matrimony and sexual reproduction system and they were in search of detecting males whom they found near their boundaries and hey picked up the three friends; Van, Terry and Jeff whom they believed that they could educate these men in accordance with the system in their country and initiate the old traditions again. Nevertheless, we cannot comprehend why the women's objective turns to the system, which they completely quitted two thousand years ago while they expressed the excellence of the non-existence of marriage and asexual reproduction. This is another dilemma, which hinders us from understanding the author's view that she wants to transform to us whether defends or she is against the traditional matrimony system. It seems as if we wants to mean that she has put forward various options to the reader and it is up to them to decide on which one is the best choice. Thus, the author's thesis about this issue does not help us. First of all, we know that the friendship among these three couples turn to love and the time which they share lead the three men to put a name to their relation as the absence of the tradition of matrimony confuses them. Nonetheless, a distinctive culture without the male gender constantly for two thousand years which is likened to Turkish harems which consists of female genders subverted the notion of 'home' in western sense which takes its root from the Roman based family structure. Instead of it, they built up

a system, which based upon compassionate sisterhood by taking its power from cooperation which nurtures their devotion to strive for their country which improves the sense of patriotism as a notion which helps a nation's continuity. Van expresses their approach towards their sense of family and country as; "All the surrendering devotion our women have put into their private families, these women put into their country and race."<sup>210</sup> As a result of this strong sense of sisterhood, the service for their country at the point of devotion cause the misconception of true sex feeling with friendship.

The traditional matrimony system requires a couple's sharing the same house for years, but the work life in *Herland* necessitate the women to move constantly all through the country, so staying in the same house means imprisonment for the Herlanders. The communal life in *Herland* causes the women to consider traditional matrimony system too personal and limited to endure. Also Van emphasize that the women considers that the mere importance of the male gender was due to the norm of fatherhood.<sup>211</sup> Therefore the absence of the notion of being a spouse on the basis of personal love is in general in dilemma with their new goal of initiation of the matrimony culture in traditional sense. Ellador' acceptance this reality is quite clear when she calls the Herlanders at the time of her conversation with Van, Terry and Jeff 'half a people' who does and appreciates everything ant at the same time being limited within the framework of womanhood. For instance, they did not comprehend the importance of the wedding ceremony in western and Christian way. When Jeff tries to explain the value of announcing their relation to everyone, sharing a surname, a home a life; however, Ellador, Alima and Celis misunderstood the marriage as a man's strive to prove his intention by giving a kind of gift instead of the sense of belonging. In spite of the existing dilemma in the notion of marriage, the women accepts a ceremony of a Quaker triple wedding, yet this service took place in the biggest temple of the country. What lack in these marriages is the sexual love, which causes Terry to see themselves as "High Priests of Philoprogenitiveness!"<sup>212</sup> This kind of marriage and non – existence of men and marriage remind us the philosophy of pantheist and pragmatist characteristics of both of the systems which reject any dogma, established laws or

210. *Herland*; p. 97.

211. *Haerland*; p. 126.

212. *Herland*; p. 122.

rules, the prints of the past. As we have mentioned before, Bansal et al states that the pragmatists create their own value system in harmony with their requirements in the process of action when the reality of the system is constantly shaped the completion of it is the mission of the future that never ends. Then, the truth as the manmade output of the pragmatism may go on to the extent of the future which the human being understands.<sup>228</sup> Comparing the conditions with the characteristics of the pragmatism, we can say that the orders of the matrimony, region and reproduction are arranged in line with the changing circumstances in Herland. The periods before and after the war, the coming of the three explorers, the love which flourish within the hearts of the three couples, Terry's attempted rape, Jeff's romantic mated love with Celis, Van's faithful affectionate and love for Ellador, and Van's wish from Ellador to be 'I' instead of being 'we' for the benefit of their relation and future which is witness by the whole country as a new stage in the period of their turning to the culture of traditional matrimony had gone through new adjustments thanks to the flexibility of the pragmatic approach.

In conclusion, Herland shlters a considerable quantity of cultural dilemmas, which mainly stem from the women's approach towards religion, tradition, rules, being a mother and child rearing in a communal point of view. Because of the fact that Herland renovates itself as a result of the war which bring the end of the male population, which is a kind of milestone dividing the history of the country into two periods and causind the formation of two different cultures, which fall into dilemma with each other.

### **3. i.i Nationality Dilemmas**

A country with two different periods in its history, Herland undergoes two types of national identity, the first one of which possesses many characteristics with America of the early 1910s and the second one of which resembles Amazons because Herlanders own completely female population. As a country which gets over a disastrous war which brings the end of the male members of Herland, this country experiences a trauma which causes them to move to the hinterland of their land and cutting all of their ties with the rest of the world, even with their neighbouring countries with their national boundaries. Such circumstances paves the path for the formation of new conditions for the perpetuity of their generation, parthenogenesis reproduction, which is a kind of breeding without the existence of a male partner and without mating.

Such kind of a special and extraordinary experience causes the Herlanders to see themselves as a nation of its own qualities, but their assumption neglects to notice that a community's being accepted as a nation necessitates the coming together of the elements such as sharing a past, history, race, language, culture...etc among the same people in a community. Herlanders are not distinctive enough to call themselves a new nation, which triggers a dilemma in this work. This Chapter will focus on meticulously these dilemmas by shedding light on the nature of them and taking into consideration of the definition of the term of nation.

Another point, which this Chapter will focus is this community's putting the children and motherhood to the centre of their short and long-term target as a country. However, the rules or precautions which they take for the future of the country is another point which will be dealt in this Chapter since they will lead to come into the existence of new dilemmas by the formation of conflictive situations which opposes to each other.

In short, this Chapter will try to consider the definition of the term nationality and their reasons of the assumptions themselves as a nation and the applications, which they follow to preserve this community although these applications are taken without giving prominence to the women's taking their own decisions, which constitutes a new dilemma, as well.



### 3. i.i Nationality Dilemmas

Nationality is socially a part of an individual's identity. However, the construction of an identity is up to the existence of a nation on a land. According to Connor, there are four criteria to accept the emergence of a nation: initially, the consciousness of a nation which is internalized by the majority of a society, rather than a select or privileged group the second, the establishment of a nation is a proceeding, a series of events and developments in order to form a nation but it cannot be seen as an incident which happens abruptly, and it requires to reach a level of internalization of the national identity since a few occurrences or activities are not enough to inspire the nationalism for the crowds to become effectual element in order to stimulate them. The third criteria is that the process which a future nation in the way of the sharpening of it cannot be predetermined in succession, yet it may be brought to an end at any moment and the last criteria for the formation of nation is the perception or the consciousness of comprising associated people on the basis of the ancestral side, because of the fact that blood bond is a focus point to evoke the perception of nationality.<sup>213</sup>

Sharing the same origin, language, tradition and culture are inevitable components of a nation. Parekh states that a nation cannot be thought as a structure without a neutral perspective about ethnicity or culture owing to the fact that neutrality cannot be strong enough to awaken historical background, which the nation goes through. In addition to it, it is stressed that each nation is in need of cohesion and focal point in order to adjust a balance.<sup>214</sup>

When it is taken into account the approach of nationalism in *Herland*, we can notice its common features with the existence, the potential, the liberty and the independence of the nation is in accordance with civilized successes in the history. The nations which are insufficient in the potential of civilized successes are prone to no longer have their liberty and independence eventually. The nations who quit following the route of civilization and the nations who are unenlightened and negligent by

213. Connor, Walker. "When is a Nation?." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* – Routledge <press, Oxfordshire, United Kingdom, 13.1 (1990): 92-103. p. 92.

214. Ian, McIntosh, S. (2003). Review: people, nation and state: the meaning of ethnicity and nationality. *Cultural Survival Quarterly Magazine*. retrieved at May of 4, 2019. "ht tp s ://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/review-people-nation-and-state-meaning-ethnicity-and". page 2 of2.

focusing on the past as the center of admiration instead of concentrating on today and the future will be suppressed by the developed civilization.<sup>215</sup> However, reconstruction of a nation in Herland leads to dilemmas because of the basis which is formed within the framework of excessive charges which are loaded on the constrained elements in Herland. Batchelor explains that other rights are built upon the basis of nationality. Besides, the constitution of the nation cannot be in dilemma with international laws although it may seem as if the issue of nationality is a merely national issue.<sup>216</sup> as a nation, which is made up of merely women, Herland seems a civilized country which is located on a spur surrounded by thick forests. This nation is reconstructed because of the war and revolt, which cause the massacre of the all of the male population and as a result of the disaster which they encountered; the female survivals moved to the higher parts of the land and cut all of their connections with the rest of the world. Because of these circumstances, the country included female gender and when they introduced themselves, they preferred the title of ‘mothers’ instead of any other expressions such as, females, women, community or any other words. In addition to it, they in general used the pronoun of ‘we’ instead of ‘I’ even when they talked about individual issues. However, they aim at get into interaction with the rest of the world without the explanatory reason behind the abrupt change of policy, which lasted for two thousand years.

Another point, which confuses us is the extent of the emasculation of the country from peoples to animals. The end of the male gender may be acceptable to a substantial degree via the massacre and the revolt of the slaves, yet the underlying reason for the applications such as evolutions of the cats to stop their singing, exclusion of the horses and cattle are not reasonable enough to defend this system. Their claim that these animals cover so much space and they use each piece of land for the benefit of agriculture, it neither sounds reasonable nor it is in consistency with their

215. Orcl., Sander. "Nationalism and Peace." *The significance of Atatürks Movement*, "Turkish Yearbook 1981 (1980). Cited at "[http://www.politics.ankara.edu.tr/yearbook/dizin/dosyalar/MMTY/20/12\\_oral\\_sander.pdf](http://www.politics.ankara.edu.tr/yearbook/dizin/dosyalar/MMTY/20/12_oral_sander.pdf)", retrieved at 5 of May, 2019, p. 260.

216. Carol A., Batchelor., "Statelessness and the Problem of Resolving Nationality Status." *International Journal of Refugee Law* 10.1-2 (1998): 156-182. p. 156.

assumption that they are against violence. In fact, the children in Herland are put to the position of ‘the raison d’être’; in other words the reason for being.

The narrator, Van says that this race is in fact “white”, yet they had darker skin than the people are in the north of America because of the fact that they were in general unprotected from the all kinds of weather conditions. He guesses by taking the location of the place where he was in that this community was Aryan stock who spoke an Indo – European language and they occupied northern India in the second millennium BC and took over the place of the Dravidian and other aboriginal people.<sup>217</sup> Herland was dominant with polygamous people and had slavery system.<sup>218</sup> The narrator resembled the disasters which the Herlanders confronted with the most bloody Roman tragedy of Titus and it is the first literary work which was written by William Shakespeare and it is accepted as the most bloody drama, which was penned by Shakespeare. The narrator transforms the mood of the nation in that way that the numbers of the survivors were almost six hundred with harem- bred people while the younger part of the population were grown with superhuman strive in order to save the food stock somehow. As a result of being in sheer loneliness, they held on to each other backed up each other, which undiscovered talents within the pressure or tension of the existing requirements. As it is aforesaid explanations, the consciousness of the nationality which is also one of the criterias of accepting the emergency of a new nation.<sup>213</sup>

The sense of motherhood in *Herland* triggers the consciousness among the women and in view of the fact that they owned a new power and it is inherited, they constituted a new race, which is parthenogenesis; thus, any women at the age of twenty-five can begin her pregnancy, which results in giving birth to five children. The point of care is here that the motherhood, which the women miss for a long time, causes the initiation of the reproduction again to be accepted as a nation’s hope instead of being an individual happiness.<sup>219</sup> Another step which they take is the keeping the

217. Cambridge University Press. (2019). English Dictionary. Cambridge – in United Kingdom. CUP. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/aryan>.

218. Herland; p. 56.

219. Herland; p. 59.

records of the past<sup>220</sup> although this situation bears a dilemma as they express in other chapters that they never try to remember past. They say that past is a time which has no place in the moment as the women believe that they have more knowledge than the old generations and in case they are in a lower level in terms of progressive developments in their country. This generation is not valuable for the previous peoples and it means that this generation is not valuable for the children who must be at a better level than the adult generation (p. 113). In this sense, they find it a must in order to take a step further the ignorance of the past. However, we cannot come to a clear cut decision about whether we should believe that the Herlanders indeed keep recording of their nation or they do not conduct such an application; if they in fact do it, we have no idea about why they keeps archives and when or in what situations they benefit from the records. The existing dilemma is in an insoluble position under these circumstances.

The issue of the ideals of the Herland forces the reader to reconsider the differences between the existent ideas and the alleged ideas and their reflection on their nation. In one hand, the Herlanders claim that their high ideals<sup>221</sup> are “*Beauty, Health, Strength, Intellect, Goodness*” (p. 61) on the other hand we frequently come across their long and short term ideals of their nation are based on motherhood and the children. Nonetheless, we cannot find out the settled centre of the ideals in *Herland* owing to the fact that the focus of the narration slides from the childhood and beauty in accordance with health, power, mental capacity and welfare to motherhood thorough the chapters Chapter – Five by stating that: “All that they ate was fruit of motherhood, from seed or egg or their product. By motherhood they were born and by motherhood<sup>222</sup> they lived--life was, to them, just the long cycle of motherhood.” (p. 61 – 62). Therefore, the problematic situation, which forms the dilemma of the ideals in Herland cannot help the reader to make a choice among the alternatives since all of them are unquestionably illogical.

Nevertheless, the problem of settling the ideals of the nation in *the Herland* on a stable axis gets more complicated when the author begins comparing the position of

220. Herland; p. 58.

221. Herland; p. 56, 58, 59, 65, 77, 78, 84, 97, 126.

222. Herland; p. 61, 70, 82, 103, 119, 120,

the women in the Western world and the mothers in Herland, we can notice that the axis of the national ideals transform through being the ideals of belief in their nation instead of the ideals being stabled. The mother – love turns from an innate urge to a completely individual emotion, which Van calls a religion within the framework of unconstrained sense of sisterhood, the sense of togetherness in service and national, racial and compassionate structure.<sup>223</sup>

The criticism about what Herlanders experienced from the deadly wars to bloody inner revolt and Van name it a period of “negative eugenics”, a term which lexically means ‘good birth’ yet it means the system of choosing desired transmissible features in order to develop future generations of the human being by slaughter. The system takes its root from Plato who defends the view of the ideal society whose each member’ breeding is carefully selected in order to enhance human life.<sup>224</sup>

Plato who expressed his ideal society in his prominent work, Republic became inspiration for the other generations to improve his view via following two paths; the first one is to support people whose health conditions are good to mate together to help the birth of good births and the second path is to terminate particular diseases and disabilities by means of disheartening or hindering people the reproduction.<sup>225</sup> what is so critical here is that when the narrator compares the extent of the sacrifice which any person who loves his / her country can do, the expression he uses may be a clue about the alternatives which will probably reveal the national ideals of the female country.

Van sets by side any person’s degree of the love which s / he possesses for his country to the extent of giving his life and deter from being a mother the most significant labour or even a ritual practice.<sup>223</sup> This point of angle towards motherhood causes us to think about whether motherhood is national or religious anxiety. On the other hand, their not allowing any women who is not well – qualified enough to be a mother is another conflicting applicatio. It resembles us the negative eugenics which

223. Herland; p. 71.

224. Philip K. Wilson, “Eugenics”. *Encyclopædia Britannica,\_\_\_Online*. Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., n.d. Web. 11 Feb. 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/science/eugenics-genetics#ref919660> retrieved at 6 of May, 2019.

225. Sara, Goering, "Eugenics", *The Stanford Encyclopædia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/eugenics/>>.

the author prefers using for the slaughter of political occurrences lead us to be in favor of the using this term for the Herlanders' direct intervention on the reproduction of the women without taking into account the desire or the choice of the women whose highest reward and honour in Herland is to be a mother. We can attain the instances of positive eugenics in Herland, too.

The period of the emergence of the pathogenesis reproduction in Herland helped the population growth and each woman in this country educated for the benefit of improving her background for motherhood and prepared every necessary conditions in order to protect the health and comfort of the future mother.

When we look through the history of the manhood within the framework of the existing archives, we cannot find a race or nation who undergo both positive and negative eugenics. However, *the Herland* embraces both of the selective breeding as a policy of their country. The contradictive policies for the same nation seems awkward for us, as the conduct of the two different systems for the same community in such a short period does not appeal our senses. Thus, this situation do not transcend more than being a dilemma.

The issue of the equality in the female nation seems as an unstable topic when we focus on the claims of the women, which do not own a coherent and consistent view to be expected as reasonable. First of all, they says that they do not own a system which is based upon the order of rank in terms of social position by putting emphasis on their mere social rank 'being sisters' and stating that their system did not include a king, a clergywoman or any aristocratic social class. (p.62) While they gave information about the reaching the level of "over mothers" which the narrator defines as the system which possess a close resemblance with aristocracy; (p.71) hence this situation proves us that the women in Herland own class consciousness in spite of the fact that they claim the opposite point of angle. In addition to it, the title of 'Land Mother' corresponds to the position of king or president (p.77) in the Western political system backs up the existence of dilemma in their explanations about social class in their nation. The expression that they did not any clergywoman in their system cannot be accepted as a valid information since the narrator gave account about Queen-

Priestess (a female priest who is a member of a non – Christian belief system<sup>226</sup>)<sup>227</sup> who was the first mother of them all by giving birth to girls via pathogenesis reproduction. (p. 59)

The sense of nation in the Herland forms a mood of togetherness and sisterhood, which lead the women in Herland talk in the pronoun of ‘we’ instead of ‘I’ seems as if they want to stress the extent of equality in their community. Nevertheless, the law of mutation (p. 79, 80) and evolutionary explanations (p. 105, 145), which constitutes a substantial value in the novel by evoking the stimulus of conflict, which takes its basis from the definition of the term revealing that “the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing speedily over the less suitable”. The key point of the natural selection by means of conduct of the advantage of the more powerful one and the extermination of the weaker members of the race unbalance the condition of the equality among the nation who are assumed to be in the same line of sisterhood. Nonetheless, the narrator cannot help himself from defending the view of the non - existence of class - consciousness in *the Herland* (p. 83) merely confuses the readers’ minds.

Although the women in Herland put stress on every opportunity which they find to reflect the perfection of their nation with its own characteristics such as cutting all their communication with the rest of the world, reproduction via pathogenesis, and such other ways, their change of mind from a female country to a bi – sexual social structure does not give a complete sense of consistency because of the absence of a clear – cut reason for such kind of a revolutionary change. The fact that a nation who has just formed their structure strives to initiate a new nation again in company with all of its hardships and problems causes the emergence of complicated dilemmas in the novel.

The narrator passes from the topic of nationalism to patriotism by depicting the notion of patriotism by benefitting from the impressions, which he gained from his observations and the patriotism, which took its shape through degenerations and immoralities, which was the reflection of the Western world. They loved one another

226. Cambridge University Press. (2019). English Dictionary. Cambridge – United Kingdom. CUP. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/priestess>.

227. Herland; p. 59.

with a practically universal affection, rising to exquisite and unbroken friendships, and broadening to a devotion to their country and people for which our word patriotism is no definition at all. (p. 97).

The quotation above shows us the sense of patriotism in the Herland comprises love for each participant of their country, devotion which neglects individual profit or gain, yet centralizes on the benefit of the all of the country, affection and fondness to the motherland and kinship with other members of the community who share the same goals and emotions. The loyalty for Herland and the pride, which the women feel for their nation are far above the classical definition of the term. The root of the patriotism dates back to 2000 BC, which is a much longer period than the duration for the term of nationality, which originates in almost nineteenth century. In the past, the term patriotism took its power from the people's love of the law in their state and common liberty, being in pursuit of common welfare, the responsibility to be fair towards their citizens. The citizens' love for the common liberty gave them the means to perceive their individual and special interests as a constituent of the common serenity and welfare, and this situation assisted them to withstand against any corruptions and despotism. This kind of patriotism is attributed not to a political merit, yet an inner and psychological bond to the nation. Under these circumstances, homeland possesses the identical meaning with the nation and easily distinguishable language and culture by enabling harmony and consistency.<sup>228</sup>

When we look into *Herland*, it is noticeable that the notion of patriotism in Herland owns substantial similarities with Herder's explanation for the same term. The women's loyalty to their country, their strive to take their country to a higher level of civilization, giving priority to the benefit of the other members of their society and the decisiveness to give up any individual desire which are not in accordance with the national benefits are the spiritual values which are far above the patriotism in the political sense. However, the narrator's understanding of patriotism within the framework of the standards of Herland is utterly non – identical with the term of patriotism in the Western World. The narrator, Van explains it as a very exciting, in harmony with the existent act of disregard of national regard, untruthfulness, a cold

228 Anrea Baumeister. Patriotism. *Encyclopædia Britannica*. (Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. July of 10, 2017.) <https://www.britannica.com/topic/patriotism-sociology>. Retrieved at May of 7, 2019.



uninvolvement with the pains of millions of people. Patriotism is in general dignity or honour and militant attitude. Patriotism commonly owns a chip which is fixed on its shoulders.<sup>229</sup> The narrator applies to irony as a literary device which signifies for using the words in a way of indirect expression of the intended meaning is given with the words in fact different from their lexical meaning. Thus, irony puts forward the complete opposite meaning of the implied meaning. As a result of this, the actual and the deeper meaning, which lies under various layers of expressions are not, exposed directly, instead of it, the context and the conditions in which the words take place assists to convey the actual and definite meaning.<sup>230</sup>

While the author tries to shed light on the notion of patriotism, which is in fact, degenerated and has turned into the act of showing off, she strives to the extent of the loss of interest in national issues, corruption and immoralities and individualization by neglecting the problems, requirements of the members in their society. Gilman also lays stress on the degree of the gravity, which is the result of people's indifference to each other and to their country although they share the same history, land and destiny. The two different kinds of patriotism, which mirrors Herland's and West's national situations reveal the existence of the national dilemma in the novel. Besides, this dilemma seems absolutely as a literary art, which is applied deliberately in order to expose the corrupted sense of patriotism and other related issues. The narration enables the existing problem in the Western world by benefitting from the available utopian country; in other words, the opinion of the ideal society in which each system works in perfect order, everyone in this society is happy and lives in harmony with each other.<sup>231</sup>

Gilman aims at conveying the space between what is ideal and the available conditions in her society by bringing these two types of countries together, yet the dilemma, which is positioned here takes on a different mission from its former duty. Although the former dilemmas included being in complicated circumstances in which a decision should be taken between two or more options in spite of the fact that these options are undesirable<sup>232</sup>, aforementioned dilemma shows us that the problem does

229. Herland; p. 97.

230. Literary Devices. Irony. "Literary Devices". Irony. Retrieved at May of 7, 2019. Retrieved from "<https://literary-devices.com/content/irony/>".

231. Cambridge University Press. (2019). English Dictionary. Cambridge – United Kingdom. CUP. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/utopia>.

232. Oxford University Press. (2019). English Dictionary. Oxford – United Kingdom. "<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/dilemma>".

not stem from the undesirability of the best option, but the hardship originates from the degree of the low possibility of people's tendency to change in the direction of an ideal nation. In addition to it, the use of both political and spiritual dilemmas in the same work enables us to see the ideal approach of nationalism. Gilman conveys the style of nationalism which belong to the Herlanders by saying that the reason of their love for their country which takes place behind the curtain is that they love their country since it is not a mere piece of land, but it is the place they grow up, take education, playground and it belongs to each citizen who lives there. Everything which they produce and do cause them to be glad and the outcome of the production that are meticulously recorded as the evidence of their success caused them to resemble their country to heaven for their children.<sup>229</sup> According to the narrator, the basis of the nationalism which constitutes in Herland is formed on the children, who are the Herlanders' hope for the future of initiating a magnificent nation with the help of the half holy mothers who are cared with great attention. Since their birth to death. In Gilman's view, the an ideal country can be formed by putting the children on the centre of the objectives of the nation and the mothers who rear the children should be paid utmost attention since she cannot imagine the existing of a child who is grown by a mother with limited capacity. In order to show the limit of the devotion of these women for their country, the author applies to an analogy; that is she compares the extremity of the Herlanders' strives for their whole country with the Western people's struggle for their families. Furthermore, Gilman states that; "the women in Herland show the attachment and treatment for their country to a woman's loyalty and service for her husband."<sup>229</sup> The literary device, which is applied here, helps us to see that the Herlanders' service of the country is above its literal meaning and reveals how delicate, meticulous and pleased these women are even when they do their professional jobs as if they deal with a personal relation.

The point, which blurs the reader's mind about the nationalism in Herland is that the term nationalism comprises the element of 'past' and 'history' while the women in this country transforms that they do not give importance to past because of the fact that they are purely into the future as a nation who has just taken its shape. Lexically, nationalism signifies for "the desire for political independence of peop

who feel they are historically or culturally a separate group within a country.”<sup>233</sup> In this point of view, the saying ‘history’ takes on an important mission in the definition of the notion of nationalism. History and past are thought as a prominent figure in the formation of national identity while past is found guilty for stimulates inner conflicts in a country or international chaos such as genocide, discrimination, xenophobia, violence, exclusion, discrimination and warfare. Therefore, the word ‘past’ divides the intellectuals into two groups. However, what is confusing about this literary work is that the author gives all-inclusive account about the history of the country and at the same time they underline that they neglect everything which is related with the past. If we consult to the Oxford Dictionary in pursuit of looking through the meaning of ‘past’ for its noun form, we can see the definition of ‘the history of people or areas’<sup>234</sup> and when we go on reading and looking up the synonyms of the ‘past’, we immediately see the words ‘history’ and ‘background’. In this context, we cannot comprehend the reason why she tries to do such a division between the two words. Although we cannot notice the distinction between history and past, what we know for sure is that Gilman’s approach causes a mere national dilemma in the *Herland*.

All in all, we see that Charlotte Perkins Gilman intend to comparison between Herland as an ideal country to live and Van’s fatherland as an instance for the existing circumstances of Gilman’s period when the social, economic and political condition in America. Nevertheless, there may be considerable distinction between what they plan to write and what they have written and the frequency of these situations will possibly lead to literary problems like the dilemmas in the *Herland*. The national dilemmas in this novel are only some instances by means of the meeting of the opposing ideas.

233. Collins Dictionary. HarperCollins Publishers. Glasgow, United Kingdom. “<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/nationalism>”.

234. Oxford University Press. (2019). English Dictionary. Oxford – United Kingdom. “<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/past>”.

### **3. i.i.i Gender and Sexual Dilemmas**

This Chapter will try to concentrate upon the dilemmas in terms of gender and sexual side from apying attention to the term, gender, from its both two lexical meanings as the biological groups (male/female) additional to its cultural and social qualities.

Because of the fact that Herland undergoes a national disaster as a result of the war, which initiates a trauma in the country leads to moving their country to the hinterland part of it to the higher mountainous areas from the coastand cuts all their ties with the rest of the world, even with the neighboring countries with their national borders as a precaution for national security. Since they lose the majority of their male population in the war and the restof them is killed by the slaves in their country, the male members of Herland comes to extinction, therefore the perpetuaty of the nation comes close to the danger of extinction.

Within the constraints of such circumstances, the women in Herland cannot escape from the dilemmas because of being the mere gender, which leads to the taking responsibilities of both sexes, from the working in each areas of life to maleless reproduction. Nevertheless, their perspective cause serious dilemmas when they welcome three explorers from California; Van, Terry and Jeff and reveal each setails about their social life.

This Chapter will aim at bring the light to sexual dilemmas, especially to the conflicts which stems from the existence of the two strong voices which are opposed to each other's vew and own nearly equal power of defending their ideas, which forces the reader to figure out and follow the author's own point of angle. Also, the strong emphasis of being a country which makes up of female gender which falls into conflict because of their transition to male characteristics will be another issue which will be dealt in this Chapter.

### 3. i.i.i Gender and Sexual Dilemmas

The country of merely female citizens, *Herland* embraces dilemmatic issues in terms of both gender and sexual sides. The word ‘gender’ signifies for either of the male or sexes particularly when the social and cultural distinct are taken into account instead of biological differences<sup>235</sup> while ‘sex’ represents for sexual affair which includes particularly sexual intercourse<sup>236</sup> and reproductive mating or inner urge appeal pulling one sex to another one, or its manifestation in life and behaviour<sup>237</sup>. The way of Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s handling with the issue of feminism requires the analysis of the notions of gender and sexuality in the context of dilemmas.

Initially, the term of gender is formed via the society in which a woman inhabits; therefore, the structure of the society including its traditional, cultural, historical, economic and political factors both directly and indirectly affects the female characteristics in terms of gender roles. While the society to whom we belong to attribute some fixed patterns of behaviours for the benefit or loss of the women, status is a factor, which predominantly determines the position or the group in which the individual takes part by predestining how she should be defined and treated. We own the chance of hold the position of various statues synchronously such as daughter, mother, sister, lawyer, a neighbour or a witness. The status is divided into two categories as achieved status and ascribed status and gender, race, nation, and social class are some of the statuses, which belong to the category of the ascribed. Also, these groups of ascribed statuses trigger distinctive degrees which are the cornerstones of the social stratifications. The extent of the classification within the framework of social values constitutes the levels of ranks from low to high ranked statuses in the community are in jeopardy of social stigma, biases and discriminations. The existence of a society in which women’s status is continuously higher than the male sex is not proved by any academic or intellectual study. Our social roles are the sets of behaviours, which possess a direct relationship with our status and we stage our role in line with the social norms or criteria, which are common rules which adjust our

235. Oxford University Press. (2019). English Dictionary. Oxford – United Kingdom. “<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/sex>”.

236. Oxford University Press. (2019). English Dictionary. Oxford – United Kingdom. “<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/sex>”.

237. Sex. (2019). In Dictionary.com. Retrieved from “<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/sex>”.

behaviours according to the situations which we occupy. For instance, being a mother necessitates ascribed characteristics such as compassion, love, devotion, strive, patience, loyalty and household duties.<sup>238</sup> When women go beyond these rules and ascriptions because of any reasons which cause to act different from what is expected from her by the society, the community commissions itself to judge the misfit participant of the society and come to a verdict upon the person for bring individual. The extent of the guilt goes hand by hand with the type of the punishment because of the fact that the sword of justice has no scabbard. However, the person who steps beyond these norms are judged in a system in oral tradition. Although it is not as authoritative as the written and legal justice system, it has a significant extent of impact on the individuals which enables itself to mould the person's attitude without taking into account the individual's view or the gain or the loss of the individual. Gilman questions the rationale of this social system and decides to establish her own norms and statuses by imagining an ideal utopian county in *the Herland* in order to defend the alternative of a life by conducting to form new statuses which are established via new rules and norms. Nevertheless, Gilman's approach moulds conflicting outputs by bringing together some situations, which puts forward undesirable alternatives, which acts against each other instead of presenting a solution.

The author uses double voice in the novel by comparing the Western world and the Herland in order to shed light on the differences between the existing conditions in America and the ideal country in her view. Preferring double voice in the same work is a risky narration style since it compels the authors to preserve his / her point of view; therefore, it requires the author to balance the views cautiously. Writing a fiction is a hard process as it necessitates bringing together numerous elements and literary devices. When the authors apply narrations such as double voice complicate the writing of a novel much more. When it comes to the Herland, we notice that Gilman has difficulty in weighing the balances between the Herlanders and the three explorers. Furthermore, this loss of balance causes the reader to get confused about following author's view, so the notion of dilemma comes to the surface of the novel.

238. Linda L. Lindsey, *Gender Roles: A Sociological Perspective*. Routledge, 2015. p. 2 and 3.

First of all, Van, the narrator, describes Herland even from the earlier stages of the novel, and also who is considered a calmer character when he is compared with the other character, Terry who is an utterly misogynist as awkward and dreadful female Land (p. 3). In addition to it, Terry the lady - killer in the novel is depicted in such a strong and dense way that it causes the reader to be affected by the dominance of Terry. Also, Ban's harsh criticism about Jess' optimistic point of view by stating; "*He had such rose – coloured halos on his women folks*" (p. 10). and other instances empowers Terry's patriarchal attitude, which also undermines the ideals which the author strives to transform to her work. In addition, Terry's insistence upon that there must be men somewhere in Herland (p. 15) because of the fact such improvements and level of civilization cannot be achieved without the contribution of male knowledge, experience and the physical capacity. The voice, which Terry owns constantly gives examples the characteristics of the patriarchal society. While Terry stress on his view that females want to be chased after (p. 18), he ignores the reality that the women in Herland has never seen a man before and no men stepped in this land for two thousand years, so they have no idea about the traditional female tricks to attract men in the Western world; therefore, his reflection from his Californian experiences merely empowers patriarchal angle.

Furthermore, Terry says that he if he sees a woman while she knits, he will accept her as a woman (p. 33), which reveals one of the rules of the patriarchy which ascribes anti – social activities and handworks such as sewing, embroidery, painting, knitting and playing musical instruments; that is, activities which women can do at home without any other person's support and enable them to occupy their mind and time so that they do not demand communal spaces where they might interact with men and jeopardize their morality.

The patriarchal voice, which turns to an insulting mood when Terry cannot take any positive reply from the Herlanders, likens the women in this country as tomboys (p. 89) by calling them "colonels" and "no young women" surprises the reader as his passion to go to the women country turns to rage. This aggressive and insulting

Note: See; "Projection: The Narcissists' Greatest Weapon." *Psikologofisi.com*, 2015, [www.psikologofisi.com /blog/narsistlerin-en-buyuk-silahi--yansitma](http://www.psikologofisi.com/blog/narsistlerin-en-buyuk-silahi--yansitma)."

dilemma can be dealt in terms of defense mechanism; projection, which signifies for ascribing an individual's unacceptable distinguishing quality to other people. When we think about Terry's conditions, we see that Terry's fondness of women, which is seriously criticized by his friends and the Herlanders, and his offence and abuse the women as if the problems entirely belong to them are not rare occasions. They are his deep-rooted qualities, which does not seem to change in a positive direction as he never accepts his guilt and faults, and he is in fact successful at finding excuses and anyone to put the blame on. Such strong sense of denial cannot pay the way for the behavioral change in a positive way. Hence, it is easy to discover or predict Terry's patterns of behaviour are also not hard to follow: he initially shows behaviours and uses expression which cannot be seen as respected or intolerable towards opposite sex and when he cannot achieve a positive reaction from the women, he gets angry, look down on all of the women and finally starts to blame the interlocutor in extremity. If we attempt to evaluate the possibility of Terry's finding remedy to correct his behaviours and points of views, we cannot claim the existence of a high potential of Terry's recovery under these circumstance. His personality with the mixture of pride and snobbery curtails his consciousness of realizing the extent of the danger, which may affect his entire life.

People with narcissist character have the tendency to blame people around them as the source of the problems, which they have. In the case of Terry, we know that his wealth nurtures his pride to the extent that he finds himself handsome, bright, well - educated and civilized, which proves his self admiration as a power which convinces himself to position his being perfect. The reason why people with narcissist personality apply to the projection, which is one of the various psychological defense mechanisms is that they have broken up all of their connection with facts and reality. The reason or motivation which stimulates these people to strive to accuse their partners because of the fact that they think that their partners question and oppose the narcissist partner's limits and rules is that they are in general worried and anxious about losing their control in their lives and the danger of the destruction of the perfect world which rotates around them. People with narcissist personality are in general aware about the

Note: See "Projection: The Narcissists' Greatest Weapon." *Psikologofisi.com*, 2015, [www.psikologofisi.com/blog/narsistlerin-en-buyuk-silahi--yansitma](http://www.psikologofisi.com/blog/narsistlerin-en-buyuk-silahi--yansitma)."



existence of the difference between what is right and what is wrong, yet they are never willing to accept the reality that the rules are valid for them, as well. Therefore, they accuse other people so as to protect themselves no matter how hard it may be since their world, which takes its basis upon their ego is oversensitive even to their own faults. This situation is more dangerous for romantic relationships because the partner who possesses no narcissi problems finds himself / herself in the position of being the one who is always wrong or guilty for irrational reasons. Therefore, Terry's flirt with Alima cannot reach to a point of continuity and harmony because of his giving prominence merely to his own desires without taking into account the reality that a relationship between a couple comes into being via the happiness, desire and hopes of the two people, not with only one of them. Thus, Terry's psychological defense bring the end of their marriage and his insistent denial of his blame within the frame of the degree of his guilt does not give any hope to other people about his probability of changing his bad behaviours.

As far as we can deduce from the work, even the appearance of the women in Herland does not follow one path without confusing the reader. First of all, their short hair, close tunics and knee breeches cause them to seem like a man although they always express their being proud of being females. In addition, the author's description about the young girls and the language she prefers seem quiet masculine such as her depiction on Alima: "along – limbed lass, well – knit and evidently both strong and agile" (p. 17). This masculine appearance of the women is criticized by even Jeff, who idealized these women by stating that they would have a more feminine appearance if they at least they had longer hair (p. 32). However, Van, as narrator, cannot give a clear-cut opinion about whether he shares his friends' ideas or not. While he shows his dislike about the women's hairstyle in many different parts of the novel, he also look down on people' giving so much importance to the issue of hairstyle by making an analogy between women's hair and the mane of the both wild and domestic animals' mane (p. 32), which cause confusion because it is not easy to find out whether he favours the women's hair style or look down on it.

The women's physical capacity is another awkward situation in terms of gender issue in Herland. Each girl's talent of running like a marathon winner",

“running like a deer” “leaping like a deer” does not give us the impression that she evidently appraises or make fun of them since the narrator constantly compare the talent of the women with the capacity of the animals instead of making comparison with processional people. Therefore, Gilman’s descriptive narration goes between two opposing alternatives on what she wants to support as her point of view without giving the reader to chance to come to terms with one of the options.

When it comes to the sense of motherhood in terms of gender matter, the dilemmas reach to the point of chaos since the absence of male gender and the type of reproduction, pathogenesis bearing a child in the Herland hinder the reader from evaluating this issue barely considering the criteria of motherhood because of the fact that the continuity of their race, and their attribution this extraordinary kind of child bearing to a holly essence bridge this issue with cultural, traditional religious, social, economic and political elements. In this context, it is not possible to deal with the gender matter by focusing on its biological or social sides as they constitute the core of the term of gender. For instance, the gender issue is directly relates with the national survival since the country has cut away all its connection with the outside world as a precaution which they find it a critic requirement. Also, the belief system the Goddess of Mother, Maaia originates from the type of the reproduction, which leads the Herlanders to see the miracle as a gift from a goddess, but not from a god prevent the evaluation of the gender on its own way. Therefore, the gender necessitates being in search of external norms in order to notice the dilemmas completely.

The gender matter is lost among the chains of events to reestablish the country via following the path of masculinization in terms of physical appearance and capacity, and feminization by seclusion of the male gender even for the animals, reproduction without mating. Van states that; “To them the longed-for motherhood was not only a personal joy, but a nation's hope” (p. 59). In addition to it, his assessment about the change of gender roles requires reconsideration; “... had eliminated not only certain masculine characteristics, which of course we did not look for, but so much of what we had always thought essentially feminine” (p. 71). These women do not find it necessary to have men for protection or security since they can deal with these needs themselves.

Although Terry's behaviors and their results are not open to debate, we are sure that there are some subjects, which his point of view is right and one of them is that these people are concentrated upon solely motherhood instead of womanhood. However, the author's dilemma about this issue is that she claims that the qualities which men favour such a woman's hairstyle, clothing... etc. are not as feminine as people assume while the author frequently make distinction about the Herlanders' appearance as masculine and the Western women's clothing style feminine. Therefore, Gilman's point of angle prevents us from coming to a definite conclusion about her side about the norm of femininity.

As an issue of inconsistency, the approach of the population control and their sense of freedom and equality fall into conflict. Although they state that their country is established on the basement of liberty, equality, sisterhood and motherhood, it is stated that they select the women who are better equipped in terms of physical and educational standards. Thus, if they think that a woman is not appropriate for motherhood, they do not allow or support her to be a mother no matter how deeply she wants it. They give extra works and give the mission of the care of other women's babies. In addition, they call this system as birth control in order to limit the overpopulation in their country. Although they proclaim that motherhood is above being only an instinct, but it is a religion for them<sup>241</sup> they do not hesitate to intervene directly with women's instinctive desire.

Another issue of specific attention is their claim of equality by taking care of communal benefit (p. 71) versus their social consciousness by positioning the motherhood to the highest point of social rank. The gender and sexual dilemma is observed in Van's point of view about these women since he has said numerous times about the excellence of these women and assumed that the men's sense of femininity does not mean that the definition of this term should be reconsidered within male view until Chapter Eight. However, Van's point of view begins to turn to the opposite pole when he states that they did not select darlings; they own no information, opinion or experience about love – sex – love because of the fact that the norm of motherhood is positioned to each element of life in Herland so deeply and awaited for it with pleasure to the extent of devotion that they did not hesitate to turn back to their bi – sexual

harmony of nature (p. 91). Moreover, Somel vocalizes the three explorers' ideas about the characteristics of the gender, which they see among the Herlanders and admits that it is time for these women that they focused on the distinguishing qualities of each sex. As they are definitely in favour of turning into a bi –sexual nation, yet she promptly stimulate a dilemma by uttering that they possess the necessary features to be accepted as a person, which intends to convey the meaning that the most important reality is to be people and implying that the subject of gender is on a secondary level compared with the norm of being a human. Therefore, we see that the term of gender includes two opposite polars in Herland, which begins the explorers to get bewildered about it.

No matter how the narrator strives to live in harmony with the order of Herland, he cannot help himself from swinging through Terry's opinions about the asexual characteristics of the women in the country and this situation begins to extinguish his sense of empathy by contradicting himself with his own criticisms and ideas about Terry's negative and insistent approach towards women:

The long courtship in many couples leads to sexual magnetism inevitably. Later, the friendship slowly evolve as far as the couple's personality permits. The couple develops either the basement of a gradually growing, which takes its root from comradeship to the extent that no relationship is more intense, more compassionate and more pleasant than any other kind of relationships after marriage and it is triggered and empowered by the recurring; or the procedure turns upside down, love weakens, comes to an end, friendship does not develop; thus, the courtship change from attractiveness to nothing (p. 94).

The quotation above us proves us that Van's attitudes comes to a point of u – turn from a high admire of a gender to anger which stem from a long suit without sexual intercourse. However, his expression gets more clear and harsher as he concentrates on this issue: "He did not witness the essence of sex feeling to attract, virtually none. The separation from the male sex for two thousand years did not leave much urge or motive towards the opposite sex (Ibid).

It is clear to see that the narrator begins to deal with the negative side of Herland when his patience for his lover comes to an end and leaves evaluating this country from intellectual perspective. While he highly respected the sense of

motherhood until Chapter Eight, she begins to put the blame on the notion of motherhood in a dilemmatic way by stating that unless the pathogenesis reproduction, which is an inherent way of child bearing and also – certainly from Van's point of view – the secondary guilty for the problem of sexual union (p. 94). Nonetheless, this reality disappoints Van because of the fact that the intrinsic giving birth to child is embraced in Herland in extremity and expecting a sudden shift on such a sensitive and interdisciplinary subject does not sound realistic. The absence of sex convention hinder him from any attempt to find a reasonable and noble solution for his problem(p. 94) what is so interesting at this point is that it is the first time that the narrator reveals his point of view about the fact that he did not witness any pre- established criteria which expresses the distinguishing features between manhood and womanhood (p. 94).

No matter how hard the narrator strives to display his intentions without irritating his partner, Ellador, what she perceives from Van's explanations and what Van aims at uttering convey two opposing meanings, which does not allow the seclusion of one of the alternatives. The sexual love which Van looks for and the friendship that Ellador understands from marriage hinders them from coming to agreement on a decision. Nevertheless, the narrator expresses Terry's getting more impatient as if he does not share similar emotions with Terry. In fact, Van seems as if he tries to show how his condition is by curtailing his true emotions via his friend, who frankly lets his attitude to be seen. Van's attitude especially at the time of sexual problems with his partner can be evaluate din terms of projection defense mechanism, which refers to the Freudian unconscious defense system which is identified by an individual without conscious by ascribing their own matters onto someone or something else or a way of putting the blame on others the negative opinions with the help of repressing them and then ascribing them to other people. The easiest target for Van to relieve his anxiety is unquestionably Terry because of his fondness of women, his outspokenness and his aggressive attitude when he cannot achieve his goal. However, he also causes Ellador to find herself guilty for Van's strives and he does not hesitate to blame her for her collective way of thinking, instead of personal mentality (100). Thus, the narrator muddy the water to hide his goal, so the dilemmatic situation is formed not because of the inability of making a choice between the alternatives, but the narrator's own desire to cover his unpleasant ideas.

The more Terry grows impatient, the more he gets aggressive by blaming the Herlanders, yet his attitude towards women ranges from the gorgeous girls, women, young ladies, youngsters, through a pack of females, boys, colonels neuters and finally old maids. The more he impatient gets and cannot get a positive reply from Alima, the harsher and the ruder his expressions become. His overgeneralization by his attributing the problems with Alima to all of the women in Herland by considering his experience with his partner acts as an impetus for the essence of dilemma as we cannot achieve a distinctive idea about his real thoughts about these women. The dilemma, which stems from Terry's approach towards parthenogenesis reproduction<sup>239</sup> and Ellador's unwillingness towards sexual union by showing pathogenesis as an alternative (p. 128). The problematic point here is the narrator's degree of criticism, anger and lower respect towards Terry, yet his calmer and more respectful attitude towards Ellador for the same issue. The chaotic situation, which exists between Van and Ellador stems from Ellador's no knowledge about the norm of individuality, which is necessary for the perceiving and accepting personal love, which an individual feels for the opposite sex. Since Ellador is grown up in a system, which is based upon the communal mentality, Van's individual lifestyle gets into conflict with his partner's view.

Van's conflict does not end here because of the awakening of sexual desires for Ellador by kissing her, which he admits that she was not willing for it. This event forms a quandary Van's approach towards Terry because of his forcing Alima. The difference between the explorers and the Herlanders are not awkward when we think about the characteristics of the two worlds, which are as opposing as black and white. While Van strives to reveal himself as a civilized, noble and respectful, we see that, what he asserts and how he acts are not in harmony with each other. When it comes to the subject of gender, we can accept his gentleman personality, yet the issue of sex requires a new depiction for Van and the layers of meaning within the text. In addition to it, the Herlanders' initiation of the heterosexual relation again in their land and Ellador and Alima's withdrawing themselves are conflicting situation and Ellador's insistence upon pathogenesis reproduction while her being marry with Van is another dilemma, which leaves the narrator hanging in midair. When the sexual dilemma were limited to other characters, it would be better for the preservation of the balance in the

239. Herland; p. 47, 49, 73, 79, 102, 125.

novel. Nevertheless, the narrator who is also the protagonist of the novel is a critical point to prevail into the deeper layers of meanings, which shelter the author's goal in penning the novel.

Furthermore, the main conflict in *the Herland* may be evaluated in terms of the fact that the three explorers do not pay attention to the difference between the terms of gender and sex, which takes its root from Plato's cave theory. Owing to the fact that the three friends cannot distinguish the characteristics of the terms, the intermingled elements of these words cannot bridge between the Western men and the women – country. Sex appeal, youth, motherhood, womanhood, reproduction are evaluated as if they may be used for both gender and sex. Another instance of the misuse of the terms the three explorers' understanding of womanhood and youth can be seen via the character, who realize their misconception about these words by stating, "They had all the time unconsciously presumed that the women, whoever else they may be, would be young" (p. 22). Van's misuse of the word is replaced which is evident from his confession; "'Woman' in the abstract is young, and, we assume, charming." The strives which the explorers spend to find femininity in youth; however, such an approach is perplexing because of the fact that the men in pursuit of femininity among women is today called middle age syndrome. Midlife crisis; in other words, middle age syndrome is defined as a series of changes of intensive transformation of the self including the reevaluation of point of the time, reanalysis of life, principle, objectives and scheme for the rest of life.<sup>240</sup> Nevertheless, when we reckon with the information about the main characters' age, the syndrome which is aforementioned cannot be a valid explanation for the question of debate. Instead of it, we come frequently come face to face with misconceptions, misunderstandings, misuse of the norms and new concepts by forming the quandary in this fictitious work. What is so peculiar at this point is that all of the misconceptions and misuses always belong to the Western explorers while new conceptions which are found hard to understand or adopt. Hence, symbolizes the land of new practices and approaches, which are not so easy to approve. In this way, Gilman endeavour to emphasize her idea that what the civilized

240. Hermans, H. J. M., & Oles, P. K. (1999). Midlife Crisis in Men: Affective Organization of Personal Meanings. *Human Relations*, 52(11), 1403–1426. p.

1403. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872679905201103>. Retrieved at 14 of May, 2019.

world possess as system, tradition, value... etc. are all not practical or valuable for people and all of them requires to put a clear cut end to them since they have already lost their function, and the welfare and serenity of the human being.

In conclusion, it is clear to realize that gender and sexual dilemmas in *the Herland* seem to lay the basement for all of the dilemmas in the novel, the interpretation of the distinguishing characteristics of the words 'gender' and 'sex' is an indispensable process in order to prevail into the essence of the conflicts in this novel.





## CONCLUSION

Elif Safak's autobiographical novel, *Black Milk* and Charlotte Anna Perkins Gilman's *Herland* as a utopian novel are evaluated in terms of their cultural, national and sexual dilemmas in this thesis. Comparative study is thought to be the best discipline in order to shed light on the sources and the characteristics of these dilemmas.

Feminism has deeply affected *Black Milk* and *Herland*. It has opened new doors to announce their perspectives such as six Thumbelinas in *Black Milk*, which constitutes Elif's, the protagonist's, different sides of her personality. Also, *Herland*'s narration which centralizes on a utopian country leaves the impact as if there is in fact such a country. Another important point that to be concluded in this thesis is that both of the novels strived to act against the established rules or orders in their own societies although *Black Milk* could not completely achieve its goal by holding on to the traditional structures such as marriage, tradition... etc. In that sense, *Herland* acted more courageously by deconstructing previous political, social, national and reproductive norms. However, *Black Milk* is in a better condition at defending the individual existence in each area of the society while *Herland* constrained itself within the circle of communal structure although it attempted to pronounce and defend the individual right and identity in the society. In addition, the problem of the identity is an indispensable crisis in modernism. Elif, the protagonist in *Black Milk* is in search of discovering her 'self', sometimes accepted some of her characteristics, and sometimes denied them.

The thesis also shows that cultural dilemmas in Chapter Two consist of numerous dilemmas, which generally stem, from in general, from Safak's private life from the beginning of her childhood to her adulthood times. Her growing up in different cities and countries, her being reared by her mother and grandmother, who owned different backgrounds, educations, and point of views. The modern mother and the traditional grandmother in addition to her education, travels and lonely life hinder her from standing permanently on a side. What is more, it is concluded that lack of family life, absence of her father, the limited time which was spent with her mother,

her frequent moving from one country to another one, her constrained experience in her motherland cause her the absence of and sense of belonging, which initiated her dilemmas in terms of nation and nationality.

In addition, it is concluded that sexual dilemmas in *Black Milk* that dominates the outer layer of the novel. Lacking female role model in Safak's life and misunderstandings, prejudices about being a woman crashes with her female instinct especially after her falling in love, when it comes to her job and motives to be a mother, the crisis constitutes the second layer of her sexual dilemmas. While she strives to get over social rules and releasing from all of the responsibilities that the community put on women's shoulders, she also becomes aware of the fact that some of these responsibilities are her female instincts, which she cannot quit and notices that being a mother is a part of being a woman.

Chapter Three sheds light on the culture stimulates and shelters considerable dilemmas in *Herland*. A nation, which is constructed on a female population in accordance with the notion of the motherhood and children do not mean that this matriarchal culture is formed for the benefit of women. The findings is that although utopia signifies for ideal country, it is not possible to call Herland an ideal country for women since individuality, freedom, the freedom of choice do not take place in *Herland*. Each decision is taken by the council of the women and a woman's decision to be a mother is up to the verdict of this council. Thus, the dilemmas in Herland on this issue stem from the pragmatic approach, which ignores past experiences and merely concentrates on monetary benefits.

Another conclusion which is drawn in the thesis is the national dilemma, which results from their claim about being a new nation merely basing upon their own way of reproduction 'parthenogenesis' and their type of population, completely female community, by ignoring key points of being a nation such as the common history, language, culture... etc. Therefore, their assertion about being a new nation is an issue, which is open to debate, and this forms a dilemma of its own.

Another deduction, which is detected in *Herland* is the negligence of the past, which is the result of the pragmatism in this novel. Furthermore, basing the structure of this community to motherhood is another source of dilemma in the novel.

Gender is inevitably another origin of the dilemmas in *Herland*. The women's insistence upon being a female country while their appearance, clothes hairstyles resemble men is a controversial situation. It is also conferred from the narration that the author's struggle to use double narrator fails in supporting author's feminist approach. While Terry's voice dominates Van's voice, which represents the author's perspective, it is not a clear-cut process to follow Gilman's original view. Therefore, we can easily see that the narration falls into dilemma while it should have functioned to mirror the author's view. Another dilemma, which has been concluded from this novel is the Herlanders' marriages with three explorers, opening doors to the rest of the world and their rejection of quitting polygenesis reproduction.

It is clear that the main reason of the existing dilemmas in *Black Milk* stems from individual perspective while the dilemmas in *Herland* result from the communal point of view in each issue. The authors' not changing their views without taking into account the core of the issue which may determine the type of the perspective which hinder them from following the right path to follow.

In addition to it, it is concluded that the authors cannot come to a clear cut, rational or valid resolutions or decisions as a result of their falling into conflicts with what they claim, and this situation causes them not to be able to go beyond the point of an experimental level without the possibility of coming to the level of being established or finalized as mature ideas or alternatives. Although both of the novels are claimed to aim at contributing to the improvement feminism, which in fact defends female rights and does its best to function for the benefit and ideals of women, these novels underpin and wear down the feminist movement instead of contributing the enhancement of it. In that point, it is seen that the approaches in both of the novels merely strengthen the hands of the people who do not agree with the principles of the feminism instead of making contribution to the improvement of it. *Black Milk* and *Herland*, which aim at fighting against the existing system and which nurture injustice for women, passes to the opponent side.

What is achieved in this thesis is that it detects the prominent dilemmas in both *Black Milk* and *Herland* and divided them into three categories by analyzing the root of the conflicts and the negative results which it is detected in these fictions. In this context, it has shown the negative effects of the dilemmas in fictitious works, which

wear down the ideals, which they aimed at supporting. There is a hope that the future studies will benefit from the conclusion in this thesis that it is inevitable to pay attention to the consistency and coherence in the novels with ideological and political goals.



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