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MELANCHOLY AS AN ASPECT OF THIRD WORLD LITERATURE

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Üçüncü Dünya Edebiyatının Unsuru Olarak Melankoli

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- 1) third world
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- 3) institutions
- 4) metaphor
- 5) period

ABSTRACT

In this thesis, first the consistency of the category of Third World is questioned, and then three countries thought to belong this category is chosen, and after a brief information about the histories of these countries, in the base of Fredric Jameson's controversial theory about the Third World literature's being necessarily national allegories and Ahmad Aijaz's anti-thesis, Asli Erdoğan's book *Mucizevi Mandarin* and Orhan Pamuk's novel *The Black Book* from Turkey, Ayelet Gundar-Goshen's novel *Waking Lions* from Israel and Sadık Hidayet's novella *The Blind Owl* from Iran are examined. As a result it is claimed that to mention a homogenized Third World literature would be incorrect, melancholy as a "First World" notion belonging to individual can be found in the third world literature which shows the inconsistency in Fredric Jameson's theory, and every text has its own uniqueness, but however provocative it is, it is not possible to deny the existence of a place called the Third World but for a literary text, to belong the Third World literature can only be an additional quality of it.

Keywords: third world, melancholy, institutions, history, period, metaphor, allegory

ÖZET

Bu tez boyunca öncelikle Üçüncü Dünya kategorisinin tutarlılığı sorgulanmış, arkasından bu kategoriye koyulan ülkelerden üçü seçilerek tarihleri hakkında kısa bir bilgi verildikten sonra Fredric Jameson'ın tartışmalı Üçüncü Dünya edebiyatlarının ulusal alegoriler olduğu ve Ahmad Aijaz'ın karşıt görüşleri de temele alınarak Türkiye'den Aslı Erdoğan'ın *Mucizevi Mandarin* ve Orhan Pamuk'un *Kara Kitap* kitapları, İsrail'den Ayelet Gundar-Goshen'in *Aslanları Uyandırmak* romanı, İran'dan da Sadık Hidayet'in *Kör Baykuş* novellası incelemeye tabi tutulmuştur. Neticede homojen bir Üçüncü Dünya Edebiyatı'nın varlığından söz etmenin doğru olmadığı, bireye ait oluşuyla "birinci dünya" kavramı addedilen melankolinin üçüncü dünya edebiyatında da kolaylıkla izlenebildiği ki böylece Fredric Jameson'ın teorisindeki tutarsızlığın ortaya çıktığı, her kitabın kendi benzersizliğine sahip olduğu, ancak kategori olarak her ne kadar provokatif olsa da Üçüncü Dünya diye bir yerin varlığının inkâr edilemeyeceği ancak bir metnin Üçüncü Dünya edebiyatına ait olmasının, fazladan bir nitelikten öteye geçemeyeceği iddia edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: üçüncü dünya, melankoli, kurumlar, tarih, dönem, metafor, alegori

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INTRODUCTION

When a country is called Third World, what is meant is understood immediately, even if the attribute is not accepted by the addressee. The notion was first used during the Cold War to determine which countries are aligned with NATO and Communist Bloc. Since then the political structure shaped accordingly, and the formation of a divided world is based on a loss in the war, and power games framed the world.

It might be bold to say that the literature of the countries are also shaped through the political processes changing accordingly with the world order. The main objective of this thesis will be to examine if this idea reflects the truth, if there is really is such a thing called Third World, or if it is a “radicalism” (65) like Ahmad Aijaz puts it? From where we stand, it does not seem to be possible to abandon this category, and this itself seems like a search for an identity, and Jameson takes over the position of the creating eye of melancholy here, and creates or writes a homogenised literary tradition with which we cannot also agree. Rather than drawing strict, impassable lines we will try to point the aspects that makes these countries Third World, and since we cannot explain this divided world with the war time categories, we will try to show what the Third World actually means today.

In this thesis, the literature of the countries Turkey, Iran, and Israel will be evaluated through one of each countries’ writers to see if Third World Literature exists at all, and if it is, melancholy as a form of denied loss, as a form of creativity, and more importantly as a concept belonging to the individual will be examined. Melancholy has always been thought as a notion belonging to the individual starting with the Ancient Greece. We also know that the Third World or the Orient or the East is lack of individual if those two parties –the East and the West– exists at all. Being a homogenous society, a society without individual is one of the characteristics of the Third World. So if melancholy can *easily* be found in the texts of the writers from this Third World, Fredric Jameson should be wrong, and we believe this is the utmost outcome of this thesis.

Aslı Erdoğan’s *Mucizevi Mandarin* (Turkey), Orhan Pamuk’s *The Black Book* (Turkey), Ayelet Gundar-Goshen’s *Waking Lions* (Israel), and Sadık

Hidayet's *The Blind Owl* (Iran) will be put to close examination for the melancholic narrations and affects. However, we do not wish to combine all of them under certain titles, and wish to do justice to each text's uniqueness. Therefore the books will be studied through their own unique features. For *Mucizevi Mandarin* we need to make feminist reading, other than the melancholy tradition. For *The Black Book* we need Edward Said's orientalism theory, for *Waking Lions*, we need to take byroads to philosophy and ideas of freedom, social structure. And to be able to read *The Blind Owl*, we need the theory of uncanny.

We should emphasize the fact that these writers are chosen on purpose, for all of the writers we chose are opposite of what is expected from Third World literary environment. Their writing does not represent the expected social reality of the countries in which they produced their works. On the contrary, they are exactly the opposite of the expected, but this does not make them lesser known to their readers or to the readers all over. For example Orhan Pamuk is a Nobel prized author, Aslı Erdoğan's and Ayelet Gundar-Goshen's books are translated into more than fifteen languages, Sadık Hidayet is called the "Kafka of Iran". This unrepresentative writers still belong to their language and literature, and by simply existing they refute Jameson's argument about Third World literature.

Fredric Jameson claims that Third World intellectuals speak in the name of "the country" and this idea actually homogenises the culture of the country, from which one might understand that individualism cannot be a part of the Third World countries and cultures. Here is Jameson's claim:

"... there is now an obsessive return of the national situation itself, the name of the country that returns again and again like a gong, the collective attention to 'us' and what we have to do and how we do it, to what we can't do and what we do better than this or that nationality, our unique characteristics, in short, to the level of the 'people.'" (65)

What we understand from Jameson's claim is that Third World texts always bear a national and indiscrete quality in essence, and it is always necessary to read them as national allegories, and the reason for this is that we cannot see this quality

in an American intellectual's discussion. We believe this is not the case and literary cultures of countries cannot be discussed with such a reductive point of view. That is why we choose to study the texts of writers whose novels are translated in many languages and who cannot be considered to represent the whole country's literature actually. However, Turkish writers Asli Erdoğan and Orhan Pamuk still belong to their culture and while they are considered Third World writers, and also belong to world literature. Belonging to the Third World literary tradition can only be a positive quality of these writers, they are in the scene of contemporary world literature with great many American, Italian, let us say European writers but their writing has one more quality, they are also Third World writers. And their writing has very specific individuals as main characters, and the individuals found in these writers' texts are actually not different from those of an acknowledged writer such as Faulkner whom Orhan Pamuk is always compared with, and this comparison also removes the borders between the First and Third World literatures.

Orhan Pamuk, Asli Erdoğan, Sadık Hidayet and Ayelet Gundar-Goshen are the elite, secular and well-educated writers of their countries, and we prefer not to say that they represent this part of the societies they live in. We prefer to understand that these countries called "third world" are not homogenised communities, and individualism both in their texts and their life experience can be served as an opposition to Jameson's theory mentioned above, and gives solid bases to Aijaz's antithesis.

Ahmad Aijaz also calls the "third world" term polemical but necessary, "Polemic surely has a prominent place in all human discourses, especially in the discourse of politics, so the use of this term in loose, polemical contexts is altogether valid." (96) Our approach to this term is similar, and we also believe that this might just be a quality of the texts from different countries, one might say, "Orhan Pamuk's *The Black Book* is a contemporary world literature novel with the third world quality which distinguishes it from other novels in the genre because it has one more quality, one more layer to discuss."

Jameson goes on as follows:

“Third-world texts, even those which are seemingly private and invested with a properly libidinal dynamic necessarily project a political dimension in the form of national allegory: *the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society.*” (69)

This aspect of Third World texts is one of our main concerns in this thesis, and with the close readings we believe that the characters of these Third World texts carry that political dimension, but what is controversial and what we do not agree with is the negative approach to this quality. Also this political dimension does not pertain to the Third World texts. Literature and language are, let us dare to speak similar to Jameson, always affected by politics no matter where and when the text is produced. At some point Jameson too agrees with this idea: “Such allegorical structures, then, are not so much absent from first-world cultural texts” (79). Here Jameson makes the distinction saying, “third-world national allegories are conscious and overt” (80) and this is how unconscious allegory takes precedence of conscious allegories which does not seem convincing to us. As a result, yes, Jameson is right, but his ideas are valid for the world literature, not only for the Third World literature. We believe that through literature and of course music, anyone from any country can find the same meaning and feel the same, no matter what the setting is, but through the individual reactions to the individual experiences which is basically the theory of catharsis and catharsis is universal.

When forms his antithesis Aijaz Ahmad reads the still orientalist point of view of the West: “the characterization of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* in the *New York Times* as ‘a Continent finding its voice’- as if one has no voice if one does not speak in English” (98). Aijaz Ahmad reveals that the approach of West has not changed, and actually this approach disguises itself as if it is a praise.

Aijaz also comments on Jameson’s “homogenized” society approach which we are also trying to defy here. We believe that there is no homogenized society and this makes a “third world” country impossible, and this term can only be understood as a quality of a society with the respect of a certain shared historical experience.

“As for the specificity of cultural difference, Jameson’s theoretical conception tends, I believe, in the opposite direction- namely, that of homogenization. Difference between the First World and the Third is absolutized as an Otherness, but the enormous cultural heterogeneity of social formations within the so-called Third World is submerged within a singular identity of ‘experience’” (Aijaz, 104)

We deliberately chose the writers in this thesis from the intelligentsia of the countries of Turkey, Iran and Israel, none of the authors can be considered as the representatives of the countries in which they produce their work. By that we want to dismiss Jameson’s insistence of the word “all”. Aijaz has a similar kind of opposition:

“Yet one knows of so many texts from one’s own part of the world which do not fit the description of ‘national allegory’ that one wonders why Jameson insists so much on the category, ‘*all*’ Without this category, of course, he cannot produce *a* theory of Third World Literature.” (107)

Aijaz continues to read Jameson’s theory as a fallible one because of Jameson’s sharp and limited approach to the literatures of the countries he calls “third world”. “[...]what he actually says: not that ‘*all* third-world texts are to be read as national allegories’ but that *only* those texts which give us national allegories can be admitted as authentic texts of Third World Literature” (107). Here lays the importance of our subject. According to Jameson, Orhan Pamuk or Sadık Hidayet cannot be read as Third World writers or at least according to Aijaz’s reading of Jameson’s theory. On the contrary we say that Orhan Pamuk is a very good example of Third World literature, for one reason among all, he writes about the history, the cities, his characters are people belonging to this country, but also he is one of the most translated writers in his country’s literature and we cannot possibly see him from the perspective of a European or an American who tries to see “the other” he or she creates as in Orientalism. We expect something else when

we look from the First World to the Third. Orhan Pamuk and his writing or Aslı Erdoğan's female character and her writing in general, Sadık Hidayet's writing's similarity to Kafka are most definitely not what we or rather, you expect to see. Now according to Jameson they cannot belong to Third World literature, but they are if there is such a thing, so Jameson's theory loses its base in scope of our thesis, and we have to say that Ahmad is right.

This thesis, although not postulating the Third World's existence as accepted in the Orientalism theory, cannot ignore the sociological division between Middle East and the First and Second World countries determined during the Cold War.

Bülent Somay brings an explanation to the distinction between the Orient and the Occident in his book *The Psychopolitics of the Oriental Father: Between Omnipotence and Emasculation*, and combines history with psychoanalysis which is also the leading theory for melancholy studies.

“...we can assert that the difference between ‘the Orient’ and ‘the Occident’ appeared at a certain moment in human history, and played a fundamental role, culminating in the 19th century European domination of the more or less accessible parts of the planet, and later, in the late 20th/early 21st century conflict of the so-called ‘clash of civilisations’. This difference, however, although crucial and significant, is by no means essential to the human race, and is, therefore, transitory and mutable.” (43)

Somay says that dualistic either/or epistemology is the main framework of Western thinking (47) which actually explains the idea behind Jameson's approach to the literature of the Third World. The Third World literature is a national allegory so that the First World is not, that is how the First World distinguishes itself from “the other”.

Bülent Somay explains the distinction starting from Ancient Greece and the basis of his idea is the slavery in the Occident. Slavery creates a leisure class free of work, and this leisure class accelerates the progress in art and sciences (68). Eastern side does not have this “free” group of people, it is a more homogenous society except the absolute despot (68), and “this asymmetry is what allowed the Western world to imagine an absolutely despotic Orient in contrast to the ‘free’

Occident, a notion which made its impact felt well into the 21st century” (68). This hypothesis, as Somay puts it, makes this fundamental distinction between East and West on the basis of slavery, because in the East there were only domestic slaves and the whole society was involved in production, and this difference created the achievements in technology, art and culture which makes the West superior to the East (68). Here we agree and actually postulate this idea about the distinction between the Occident and Orient, or as the accepted concepts today, the First and the Third World. Starting with Ancient Greece, and on to the Enlightenment the First World was and is the part of the world which “the rest” look up to. The cultural and technological developments, which are actually is a result of the slavery as Somay puts it, gives the First World right to subordinate the Third World. Probably that is how Jameson can see a united and homogenous literature.

Somay goes on and gives another explanation about this difference between the First and Third World, and he uses Freud’s mythical story about the devouring of the father. We know that, brothers revolt and devour the father who actually represents the ruler who is not subjected to any question, and by doing that they create the “civilization” (81). Somay argues that the Orient lacks this internalization of the father in a metaphorical sense. The Orient lives in “a fear of assassination by their peers/brothers” (88). According to Somay, that is what makes the First World see a homogenous community when they look at the Third World. Of course Somay does not call “first” or “third”, but in the scope of this thesis, when we apply his ideas to understand what is the difference between those lands, we prefer to use these terms. We believe that Somay’s historical reading and psychoanalytic approach sheds light on our path, and that is how we understand why Jameson writes about a homogenous literature.

When we consider Somay’s theory about losing the father, we also see the loss as in mourning, not in melancholy. Then we might say the First World knows what it lost, that it devoured it, and that the father became a part of their ego itself, while the Third World did not know if it lost the father who is it still here as the utmost ruler, not quite but not “not here” either. Then, loss is a part of each of these geographies but in a different way, and Somay claims that each wants what the

other possesses, and we think that is how they create each other as the creating eye of melancholy. And that is how we approach the difference between the First and Third World. There is not a dramatic difference, especially if here we consider literature, melancholy is a part of all the writer's works considered in this thesis, and we believe they create stories that belong to their land, and also exceed to the other parts of the world, and being a Third World author can only be an additional quality to their work. What is important might be the circumstances the writers were and are in while producing their works.

One of the writers examined in this thesis, Aslı Erdoğan, subjected to charges of propaganda for terror on account of her links to a pro-Kurdish newspaper (*The Guardian*). Sadık Hidayet was not able to publish his works for a long time, because of the pressure. He writes in his letter to Rypka: "Now I have a novella, several travelogues, and about twenty stories ready for publication. As of now, however, there seems to be no prospect of their being published at any time soon" (7). The translator of the book, Iraj Bashiri interprets the situation Hidayet found himself in as follows: "He felt that his career as a writer had gained him nothing but enemies. He even considered breaking away and entering a new venture" (6).

This feeling of alienation from home can be found when the lives of the writers mentioned in this thesis are examined.

After the trial, Aslı Erdoğan moved to Frankfurt permanently, and she says that for the first time in her life she feels grateful that she is not in Turkey because she wakes up from the nightmares of being taken in the middle of the night from home again. Orhan Pamuk is one of the greatest writers, novelists in Turkey with a Nobel Prize who faced charges of "insulting Turkishness" if this is a crime at all.

"Pamuk has long been politically outspoken. He was the first author in the Muslim literary world to denounce the fatwa against Salman Rushdie and has been heavily critical of his home country. The writer clashed with his government early last year when he told a Swiss newspaper that Turkey was unwilling to deal with its past. Turkey's insistence that the massacre of Armenians during World War I was not a planned genocide and its treatment of its Kurdish minorities are ongoing sources of tension and may even

present obstacles to the country's EU aspirations. Pamuk was charged with 'insulting Turkishness' by a group of ultra-nationalist lawyers in a case that raised issues of freedom of speech in Turkey. Charges were dropped this January." (*Spiegel*)

An award winning Israeli writer, Ayelet Gundar-Goshen says that "people in Israel call leftwing people like me traitors" (*The Guardian*). Israel's being a Third World country is controversial, but we believe, in the context mentioned above about post-colonialism which Somay explains, it is as controversial as that of Turkey's.

Being a First World country is not something to be celebrated in the scope of this thesis. It may even be worse, considering the dark history of those countries. The difference might be that the darkness is not the past, but the present in the Third World, and our subject here is the past and the present of Third World countries from the writer's life and work in Turkey, Israel, and Iran. Has anything really changed? Was this change positive or negative? Why are loss and melancholy so upstanding in our literatures, if melancholy belongs to the individual? These are our questions today, and we believe will be kept asking for a long time now.

1. MELANCHOLY: A TRACE

“When she speaks, she sounds silent.”

L'Ennui

Beginning from the Ancient Greek, melancholy was debated in pathological dimensions, however from the 20th century on, melancholy became the subject of psychoanalytical reading and feminist studies. Aristotle or an Aristotelian asks, “Why is it that all men who have become outstanding in philosophy, statesmanship, poetry or the arts are melancholic, and some to such an extent that they are infected by the diseases arising from black bile?” (155) Jennifer Radden takes a further step in the discussion, and says,

“...because of the authority of its alleged author and the boldness of its approach, subsequent thinkers, particularly during the Renaissance, which saw a revival of interest in Aristotelian writing on melancholy, accepted the assumption without question and proceeded to the challenge of answering the question posed.” (55)

Hippocrates explains melancholy as, “Fear or depression that is prolonged means melancholia” (185). In the ancient humours chart composed for the purpose of understanding spiritual and material existence which was the leading purpose of philosophy of the time,

“...humours corresponded, it was held, to the cosmic elements and to the divisions of time; they controlled the whole existence and behaviour of mankind, and, according to the manner in which they were combined, determined the character of the individual.” (*Saturn and Melancholy*, 3)

The melancholic character was despondent, sleepless, irritable. Salvatore Rosa depicts the melancholic as a man resting his head on his hand, in the middle of ruins, skulls around him, and deep in thought, even buried in thought and everything around him is in decay in his *Democritus in Meditation* drawing. With the Middle Ages, the representative of the melancholic character is more a woman than man in drawings. Matthias Gerung draws an overweight woman resting her head on her hand in the middle of his *Garden of Life* painting.

During the 17th and 18th century, the gender of the melancholic was a highly debated subject. There were claims such as cited by Foucault:

“This explains why women, who are little given to melancholy, suffer to a greater degree when affected: ‘they suffer more cruelly and become violently agitated, because as melancholy is more opposed to their temperament, it removes them further from their natural disposition.’”
(*History of...* 264-265)

When melancholy was examined in terms of the bodily liquids, and reduced to the black bile in the brain, it was claimed that the coagulation of the blood in women’s uterus is the reason of their melancholy. Foucault’s comment on the subject is:

“It is the distressing combination of this languishing flow, these engorged vessels, this heavy, laden blood that the heart pumps around the organism with considerable effort, and which penetrates the fine arterioles of the brain with great difficulty, where circulation needs to be rapid to maintain the speed of thought, that serves to explain the condition [melancholy].”
(*History of...* 267)

Planet Saturn and the Roman god of time were also important figures in the depiction of melancholy. Commenting on Albrecht Dürer’s famous *Melencolia I* engraving, Panofsky and other writers say, “We have discussed first the motifs associated with: Saturn (or Melancholy) -the propped-up head, the purse and keys, the clenched fist, the dark face- because they belong to the personal characteristics of the melancholic” (322). With Renaissance the general idea about the melancholic did not change much, at least not the humours chart, “apart from some controversy over it: starting point: it could begin with ‘phlegmatic’ childhood, passing through ‘sanguine’ youth and ‘choleric’ prime to ‘melancholic’ old age” (*Saturn and...* 10). It seems like there was always a connection between melancholy and intellectual capacity before it was degraded to illness.

With Modernity, melancholy became a subject of the psychoanalytic approach which was a bit different. Freud worked on the subject and made distinction between mourning and melancholy. His approach is more interesting and adds

meaning to our claim about the Third World literature having melancholic aspects as a result of an undefinable loss. Actually what Freud did is reading the melancholy tradition as a whole, and combining the ideas starting from Ancient Greek. Freud put together the already existing ideas, and reached a conclusion according to which melancholy becomes the loss of the self rather than the object, that is because of the melancholic internalization of the lost object, and this lost object becomes the loss of the ego itself, and by claiming that, melancholy becomes an individual concept about the “self” of a person. In the following quote, we can easily see the emphasis on “self” while Freud makes the distinction between mourning and melancholy:

“The distinguishing mental features of melancholia are a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment.” (244)

Melancholy has always been thought as a pathological disease at some length. First explained with the bodily fluids, then thought to belong to the man of high intelligence, Freud shows us how individualistic melancholy is.

“This picture of a delusion of (mainly moral) inferiority is completed by sleeplessness and refusal to take nourishment, and –what is psychologically very remarkable– by an overcoming of the instinct which compels every living thing to cling to life.” (246)

Which is actually the basic idea behind the melancholy tradition starting from the Ancient Greek, then how Aristotle reads it.

And this individualistic understanding of melancholy as an aspect of the Third World disproves Jameson’s homogenizing approach to these countries, and actually creates a bond between individuals no matter where they are born or live. In the following chapters, we will show the specific characters from Third World literatures and show what we mean. Freud says that “the analogy with mourning led us to conclude that he had suffered a loss in regard to an object; what he tells us points to a loss in regard to his ego” (247) which shows us that melancholy is an individual experience above all. What Freud points to is the state of the melancholic

as an individual. Mourning can be collective, but can melancholy belong to a society? In the West melancholy has always been discussed as a Western concept, belonging to the individuals, and the East is thought to be a unity, a society lacking individuals. That is the idea behind Jameson's theory. If the Third World is a homogenised society, lacking individuals, melancholy tradition should also be absent in literature.

While making the distinction between mourning and melancholy, Freud says "when the work of mourning is completed the ego becomes free and uninhibited again" (245). This distinction might also show that mourning might be collective, while melancholy is individual. And for melancholy he adds, "one feels justified in maintaining the belief that a loss of this kind has occurred, but one cannot consciously perceive what he has lost either" (245), and "melancholia is in some way related to an object-loss which is withdrawn from consciousness, in contradistinction to mourning, in which there is nothing about the loss that is unconscious" (245). What is more, "The melancholic displays something else besides which is lacking in mourning –an extraordinary diminution in his self-regard, an impoverishment of his ego on a grand scale" (246).

Melancholy was and is an important notion in art, philosophy, literature. Foucault says, "Aristotle was in the right, when he said, that melancholy people are most ingenious" (263). We believe it is also very important for understanding the difference between geographies, the division between societies, and as a result of that, the created literature and culture of this change. These melancholic societies are suffering not only from overthinking and undefinable loss, but also because of the real life challenges. When we use the term "melancholic society" we most definitely not talking about all the citizens of a country, but the ones perceiving the loss, struggling to reach that lost concept, not understanding that it is long gone. So here, we can only say that the homogeneity of Third World might only be found among individuals suffering from the same loss, but who still have their unique melancholy. That is why even though we will find the traces of melancholy in all the books, we are also going to see other unique characteristics in the following chapters.

2. *MUCIZEVI MANDARIN: A DELIBERATELY MELANCHOLIC BOOK*

“This is not our country,
this is the country of those who want to kill us.”
Tezer Özlü

The features of melancholic character is “acedia”, “void”, “extasis” and “atopia”, which are roughly alienation, emptiness and stateless.

The stories under the title of *In the Void of the Lost Eye* have more melancholic references compared to others. We know that attributed behaviour of the melancholic is slowness if not total stabilization at all. We know that our female character wanders night long and what she is doing is “the blessing of loneliness” (10). She says,

“I was a void in the heart of life, I was nothing but a comment, a question mark, a glance. Since that night, every night faultlessly, like the ghost of woman murdered in last century, I wander the streets of Genève.” (My translation, 38)

Other than this highly melancholic character, we also have a male character not so much different in attitude than the female one. He has just lost his wife and with the unopened, last letter from his wife in his pocket, in the dead of winter, he goes the hills of Çamlıca. He says, “All I found in my palms was the void, the void between my faith lines” (119). Neither the story does not really have an end, as if they could go on and on forever, because the mental state the characters find themselves in is endless, melancholy is an endless state of mind. However there definitely is a starting point. Everything starts with a loss in the stories, and once everything about “before” is consumed, the step to the endless void of melancholy is taken. We believe that Aslı Erdoğan purposefully wrote in the literature of melancholy. The female character keeps seeing this dream in “recent months” (62) which is the time after her losses took place.

“In a whitely yellow desert, among the rocks, I walk alone. A dull sun seems like hanging on the sky, it is more like a mask, even a silvery coin more than

sun, and frightening because it does not radiate warmth. I am looking for something I lost but I forgot what it was. One by one I lift the rocks, small and big ones, I put my hand in the holes and coves, look for it like a mad person. The sun watches me with its holey mask glances. At last I find it under a rock. With bliss and joy I take it in my hand, and hold it kindly, afraid to hurt. I am aware of its fragility, if I do not care enough, I will lose it immediately. It is cold and inanimate, but has an ambiguous vibration. It releases a couple of tears. Then dies with a vanishing scream in my hand, and becomes a silvery coin. I look up the sky, the sun is erased and gone, maybe what I am holding is the dead sun. And then I understand that what I am looking for is not under any rock. It is nowhere to be found. IT DOES NOT EXIST.” (62)

Indeed, that lost thing will never be found under any rock because it is a part of the self, half of her ego, and in this story the loss is kept reminding from outer voices, and becomes a void of ego rather than body. On later pages she is going to tell, “because I search for myself” (96). The silvery sun on the sky reminds the planet of melancholy, Saturn, the silvery coin represent the metal of melancholy which is lead, and this constant search unable to find what it seeks is the difference between mourning and melancholy. Mourning does not carry the search with it because we know what we lost, and accept this fact. Judith Butler reads Lacan’s approach to melancholy as follows:

“Lacan clarifies his own position as he remarks that ‘the function of the mask . . . dominates the identifications through which refusals of love are resolved’. In other words, the mask is part of the incorporative strategy of melancholy, the taking on of attributes of the object/Other that is lost, where loss is the consequence of a refusal of love. That the mask ‘dominates’ as well as ‘resolves’ these refusals suggests that appropriation is the strategy through which those refusals are themselves refused, a double negation that redoubles the structure of identity through the melancholic absorption of the one who is, in effect, twice lost.” (*Gender Trouble*, 62)

We find this double negation in the dream, the void is perceived with the Saturn like sun and the loss of silvery coin. The desert, the dryness and hole obviously represent the void, also the expressions like “mist in the colour of ash” (125), “blue-grey eyes, more grey than blue” (7), “dark and bottomless well” (97) are melancholic symbols. From the poem “Phaeton” to the narration of the lost eye, with the narration of two gender, *Mucizevi Mandarin* is a work belonging to the melancholy literature.

2.1 Loss as a Melancholic Notion in *Mucizevi Mandarin*

At first sight, *Mucizevi Mandarin* seems like an unsurprising and usual woman fiction of the 21st century postmodern world. However a close reading of the allegorical narrations, concepts like life stream, this idea falls apart and shows how superfluous this approach is to the women fiction, not that it is a negative prejudice, but all postulates have a tendency to misguide the path. Starting a new thread as “women writers” might be the real problem, but it is a reality in the Third World, and does not seem to be disappearing any time soon. But of course, creating an analogy between the writing of women being far from socio-realism and the history of the country is quite possible.

Mucizevi Mandarin is composed of the traces of two different characters and the narrator who have losses and absences of their own. The stories belongs to the present time, it is not easy to perceive the past and present, and the characters even do not have names. The “I” of the melancholic culture is present during the whole book. Actually the book is fragmented both as an object and in content. We cannot be sure of the time when the one eyed woman left, and who is the addressee of the letter of the possessor of the images or the gender of the character of the last story for a very long time.

This fragmented narration reminds us of Kristeva’s approach to female voice as fragmented, unstable, but provocative (133).

“Here, this means that the act of writing, without me or you, is in fact an obstinate refusal to let go of the third person: the element beyond discourse,

the third, the ‘it exists,’ the anonymous and unnamable ‘God,’ the ‘Other’ – the pen’s axis, the father’s Death, beyond dialogue, beyond subjectivism, beyond psychologism.” (153)

I believe that the narration of *Mucizevi Mandarin* has this kind of meta subjective quality with its fragment structure and vagina narratives. In the scope of this thesis, while examining the texts, the age it is written will always be part of the writing, because our main purpose is to find an answer to one specific question: Is a Third World literature exist?

Even though *Mucizevi Mandarin* is not identified as an autobiographic text by the author, the time it is written –during the writer’s stay in Geneva while working in Cern– and the resemblance of the character, and the idea that first writings are being almost always autobiographic, this analogy between the writer and the text is the main discourse of this part. Aslı Erdoğan is the first female physicist sent to CERN from Turkey, and from her life story, it is known that she felt the cold hand of discrimination very deeply during her work there. *Mucizevi Mandarin* as a book was her safe harbor. After long hours of work in CERN, she was writing all night long, and this writing created a book starting with a story called “In the Void of the Lost Eye” in which a woman is about to lose her eye with all that vivid imagery of the inflammation under her bandages all over her face, and ends with a story called “A Guest from the Land of Past” in which a man about to lose her wife stabs his own hand. The performativity of the female identity and deformity of the body are two striking elements of *Mucizevi Mandarin*.

Melancholic loss is actually the loss of the self and of the ego as Freud puts it because this is the distinction between mourning and melancholy. However in *Mucizevi Mandarin*, there are also very specific elements of loss. The source of melancholic narration in *Mucizevi Mandarin* is the female character with her lost boyfriend and her consecutive loss of the left eye which is the actual cause of her alienation because this suppurated eye “with the bandages right in the middle of her face which wholly swallowed her eye” (4). Far from her home, she dwells in the night of Genève with her “mechanical motions” (37), and she gets more and more alienated every day.

The melancholic character finds himself or herself in the void born from the loss of something. Not belonging anywhere, the idea of scattering in space carry the “atopia” notion with it. “Atopia” is the reason why Socrates was read as a melancholic character. The female character also lives in this void. She express her life after the loss of her eye as “I was a void in the heart of life, I was nothing but a comment, a question mark, a glance” (38). And her own comment on this disruption of the integrity, the fragmentation of her body is:

“To be able to continuously believe in their existence, people need eyes with sight. With this half glance of mine, I question their existence from the foundation. This one eye evoke something more terrible than death, splitting in two, disharmony, incompleteness, perish of the universal symmetry. They replace my lost eye with their own losses or the things they might lose. They make my eye a gap which they might roll in because of the appeal, as if it is their own. It becomes a terrible pit, a black hole which does not even send the light back.” (47)

Power of the gaze is mainly the subject of psychoanalysis, and psychoanalysts read the possessor of the gaze and the addressee, the gazee as the living’s power over inanimate and power of father over the child. The female character tells her situation as “the black ghost of loneliness. Without glance. With one glance” (16). “Without glance” is a notion used by Ece Ayhan in his “Blind Cat Black” poem. We do not think that “blind” is a correct translation. We will prefer “without glance”. Ece Ayhan is known for his metaphors about melancholy, also his poem “Phaeton” which narrated melancholy from A to Z is told to the boyfriend by the female character.

For melancholic people, mourning of the ego, the loss that matters is about the individual. Here she look herself from other people’s eye, and as a result she sees a void, a blindness and a bottomless gap. Within this setting she is actually a character trying to step out of performativity, however she is isolated from every single normative balance of society. Judith Butler underlines the importance of loss during the creation of self:

“In my view, the self only becomes a self on the condition that it has suffered a separation (grammar fails us here, for the ‘it’ only becomes differentiated through that separation), a loss which is suspended and provisionally resolved through a melancholic incorporation of some ‘Other.’ That ‘Other’ installed in the self thus establishes the permanent incapacity of that ‘self’ to achieve self-identity; it is as if it were always already disrupted by that Other; the disruption of the Other at the heart of the self is the very condition of that self’s possibility.” (*Inside Out...* 27)

We know that she created a character called Michelle who is the exact opposite of who she is with a happy and rich life but stops writing in the end. She narrates her creation process as, “I write under the spatial shadow of death to cope with my loneliness” (58). As a woman unable to make peace with the normative order of society, who faced violence, grown in an oppressive society and lost all her belongingness, maybe she refuses to play God, and prefers the nights and streets as a member of the melancholic society.

The stories in *Mucizevi Mandarin* are shaped around losses, and the hierarchal superiority struggle among individuals and the society’s view of the one who ruins the normal with her or his body with power balance, becomes the main objective of the melancholy of characters.

From Ancient Greece to the 19th century madness, mania and melancholy were ordinary daily life issues. Starting from Seneca, there was a search for remedies to this *taedium vitae*, yes, the suggested cures were consolidation to daily life or some curative herbs; however with the moral evaluation of the concept, the whole literature was carried to another level. Foucault evaluates the situation as the mother of scientific psychiatry and argues;

“What had been blindness was to become unconsciousness, what had been error became fault, and all that which pointed in madness to the paradoxical manifestation of non-being became the natural punishment of a moral wrong. In short, the vertical hierarchy that constituted the structure of classical madness, from the cycle of material causes to the transcendence of delirium, was toppled over and spread on the surface of a domain first

simply occupied and soon disputed by psychology and morality.” (*History of... 296*)

It has been two hundred years after the categorization of melancholy as the subject of scientific psychiatry, and today this moral basis normalized violence against the ones it calls “immoral”. The female character of Aslı Erdoğan’s book says, “Even in the middle of Europe, I could recognize Middle East women at a single glance. We all have that same deep fear and blues in our eyes” (14) and associate her situation with the moral of the society she was raised in. Freud explains the melancholic as, “one who thinks that ‘he has a keener eye for the truth than other people who are not melancholic’ (246). Later on we learn that this “too ethical” society also caused physical wounds on her body. When her boyfriend ask about the wound, thinking that he is doing something right, she feels that he “makes her a monument of pain where he can confess his sins on bended knees” (53) which makes her hate him. This is how we see the foundation of the power relation between individuals. As if the physical wounds were not painful enough, as a Middle East woman she very well recognizes the female and male roles and how they evolve to psychological violence.

Here we witness the simplest form of dominance of men over woman, and it is under the cover of affection performance.

Even though she is aware of this power balance, she tells a “Separation Story” and her mental state is as follows:

“In a fortnight, first Sergio, then my left eye which I thought would never leave me get lost. And so dies out Geneve, becomes just a stage and scenery [...] Sergio is gone and to kill the passion in me became as easy and impossible as killing a bird.” (66)

We have a figure who cannot actually live under dominance, but the loss still feels like a murder rather than suicide. Judith Butler reads this self-conflict as follows: “Certain features of the world, including people we know and lose, do become ‘internal’ features of the self, but they are transformed through that interiorization, and that inner world” (*Gender Trouble*, xv). Still this “murder” identify the self of the individual:

“The mask has a double function which is the double function of melancholy. The mask is taken on through the process of incorporation which is a way of inscribing and then wearing a melancholic identification in and on the body; in effect, it is the signification of the body in the mold of the Other who has been refused.” (63)

2.2 A Writer’s Exile Not as a Metaphor

Modern or rather contemporary Turkish literature, some might say “literature influenced by Western literature”, might be considered to date back to after the foundation of the Republic and mid-20th century. With the foundation of the Republic, Westernization and nationalism rather than religion were the state policy in Turkey. This change in regime was called a “revolution”, and culture was one of the first areas to be subjected to social engineering.

Mid-20th century was the time when important writers such as Sabahattin Ali, Nazım Hikmet, Yaşar Kemal, Ece Ayhan (who is a great poet, called the Baudelaire of his time, and Baudelaire is a great poet who used melancholic notions lavishly) produced their work. One of the two writers we are interested in, Orhan Pamuk was born in 1952, and wrote his first novel *Cevdet Bey and His Sons* in 1982. The other one, Aslı Erdoğan was born in 1967, and her short story “Wooden Birds” won the Deutsche Welle Award in 1997. Both of the writers’ works, novels, and stories are considered “modern classics” of their literature. They are important faces of Turkish literature to the world. One lives in exile, the other gets death threats constantly. This is not something new for the intelligentsia of this country or any Third World country. One of the writers mentioned above, Nazım Hikmet spent most of his adult life in prison and exile. He was even expatriated, however today it is a common thing to hear his lines from leaders of the country where Aslı Erdoğan was put in jail.

Ufuk Özcan says that “since the Epic of Gilgamesh, it is obvious that literary texts in the East are directly associated with political topics [my translation]”

(460). Here we claim that contemporary Turkish literature is allegoric and melancholic. One cause of this is the definition of melancholy: From the first day it is defined, the colour of melancholy is grey, the planet of melancholy is Saturn, the metal is lead. The features of melancholic character is “acedia”, “void”, “extasis” and “atopia”, which are roughly alienation, emptiness and without home. These notions can be found in the writings of the writers we chose. When we listened to Aslı Erdoğan in Frankfurt Book Fair in 2018, she was part of an interview called “Exile: Hopes and Hurdles”. There she said that she feels exiled as though she is only a writer. She thinks that living out of Turkey influences her writing negatively because she cannot hear the language she writes in anymore, which seems quite right and interesting. As a physicist working in CERN, Aslı Erdoğan quitted her job and became a writer, she could live in Europe if she wished, and this seems to be a good idea for many in Turkey. However she says that she wants to write in Turkish, which is a great contribution to literature and culture, and to be able to do that one should also hear it. And Erdoğan is deprived of this need right now. Her writing itself is *haymatlos*, lingering in “acedia”.

The writers we chose do not represent the conventional, traditional and “accepted” literature and culture. I believe that all four writers, novelists, let’s say storytellers are beyond their age, when the “general viewers” –which is a highly popular concept in Turkey– is considered.

In her speech in Frankfurt Book Fair, Aslı Erdoğan talks about her one eyed female character as an “unreliable” narrator, and says that this is a very strong metaphor. She considers the days in CERN as her “first and lightest exile but the metaphor as the strongest”. She confesses to the reader from the first book that she is half blind. She says, “I will tell the story from the night and void, don’t expect colours from me.” She says that she created a woman with one eye, which represent a void, lingering around the streets of a foreign city.

And in her second novel *The City in Crimson Cloak* she goes deeper into the notion of “haymatlos” with a traveller character who does not have harbour. She says, when she talks about the haymatlos, it is a metaphor for a human being and human condition. Her own words are: “With modernity the human lost its home,

land, the mother earth.” She believes with this loss of the mother land, with modernity, we started creating imaginary homelands. One was the country, one was nation, and all these are very deep in today’s mentality because they are quite new and fictional.

“People die for their country. 400 years ago there was no such concept, but today it is deeply installed in my nation. I actually never believed that I belong to Turkey or I own it but clearly I belong to my language, I am a writer and poet of Turkish. I can’t change it, I didn’t choose it.”

In her speech in 2018 Frankfurt Book Fair Aslı Erdoğan depicts the situation in Turkey from her point of view:

“I was only a writer, I was not an important political figure. I am a writer of mainly poetic prose. I don’t think I was a threat to the system. But I wrote on Kurds, Armenians, prisoners, but not only them, also gays, African immigration, my topic was the victim. I am a writer of literature, what can I write in a column? I can tell the story of the victim as a political word [...]”

She faced a trial for the destruction of the unity of the state. Aslı Erdoğan comments on this as the “...heaviest article in Turkish law, until 2000, punished death. I am the first female writer of literature actually asked a sort of death sentence in the whole history of Turkey.”

Aslı Erdoğan’s literature is appraised in the twelve languages it is published but, “200 literary people around the world reviewed a Turkish book which is a great honour, but Turkish authorities treat it as a criminal material. This tells everything about today’s Turkish mentality.”

Aslı Erdoğan and Orhan Pamuk are literary values of Istanbul, that’s for sure. Their literature actually creates this question: Does the Third World literature exist at all? The books of Orhan Pamuk are translated to sixty three languages, and Aslı Erdoğan’s books are translated in more than fifteen languages so far. If we stop seeing the world, at least the literary world without boundaries, those two Turkish authors are important members of the modern and postmodern literature, dismembering geography, history, and perhaps reality.

Even though Orhan Pamuk and Asli Erdoğan's works and words, and usage of language are not traditional, they still belong to Third World, and thus become proofs that Third World literature, and thus Third World itself exists. The melancholic characters of their texts, diminishes the distinction between their writing and the "First World" opponents. We believe that this is how being a "Third World" writer becomes a positive, an additional quality.



3. ORHAN PAMUK'S *THE BLACK BOOK* AS A MELANCHOLIC NOVEL

"The past is never dead. It's not even past."

William Faulkner

At first sight *The Black Book* seems like a detective fiction. A man, Galip looking for his wife who left one night with a single note composed of "only nineteen words" (Ch. 3). Galip's own idea about detective fiction is about the failure of the writer. He thinks that a good detective fiction would be the one in which the writer does not know who the murderer is. If *The Black Book* really is a detective novel, then it is the story of a failed detective. Our hero fails to reach the scene of the murder in time, he fails to find out the location of Rüya and Celal, none powers of interpretation can prevent the death of his wife.

Güneli Gün comments about the book as follows: "There are a couple of threads in 'Black Book' (of the many that are dangled, abandoned, or used as false leads) which wind together into a kind of yarn to take us through the labyrinth, the enigma, or the black hole which will not reflect" (59). The writing itself is a labyrinth, we as the readers are invited to wander in. Many critics call the story an easy one, for it is about a man searching his wife which is not the case at all. Ian Almond argues that, "Pamuk's controversial 1990 novel, *The Black Book* (*Kara Kitap*), constitutes his most intensive examination of Turkish national identity and the various layers of religion and history that have come to form it" (112).

Ian Almond takes a further step and calls Orhan Pamuk's writing "an oxymoronically comic melancholy" (110) with which we agree, because we know Orhan Pamuk's comments about the city of Istanbul and its people from his own nonfiction book *Other Colours: Essays and a Story*:

"The Westernizer is ashamed first and foremost of not being European. Sometimes (not always) he is ashamed of what he does to become European. He is ashamed that he has lost his identity in the struggle to become European. He is ashamed of who he is and of who he is not. He is ashamed of the shame itself; sometimes he rails against it and sometimes he accepts

it with resignation. He is ashamed and angry when his shame is exposed.”
(316)

While examining *The Black Book* from the point of view of the postmodern representation of Islam, Ian Almond takes his claim from Derrida’s description of metaphysics as the nostalgia of the lost presence, and says:

“The sadness that Pamuk forever associates with Islam would seem to fit this Derridean understanding of Western metaphysics as a semantically futile longing for a lost presence. Like Rushdie, Pamuk uses Islam as a synonym for metaphysics in much the same way thinkers such as Derrida and Nietzsche have used Christianity as a synonym for (and a symptom of) Western. Pamuk, writing outside the boundaries of the ‘Christian’ European tradition, has no Church or Enlightenment myth to rail against; Islam provides the ‘local’ version, the Turkish manifestation, of a universal metaphysical delusion.” (117,118)

If so, Orhan Pamuk’s usage of Islam is no different than the First World thinkers’ usage of Christianity. The land they are born and live in adds unique qualities to the texts and the way of thinking which is not what Jameson was saying. Jameson says that only certain texts can be read as Third World not the others and this is how Jameson builds his idea about national allegories. Then Ahmad was right at interpreting Jameson’s idea in this way.

The characters of the book at first seems like “Westernizers”, a lawyer, a columnist, a woman who loves to read mystery novels. As the story develops, more and more contents from the Ottoman history, rather the history of this land appear. The idea of a Marxist-Sufi messiah and the book called *Mystery of Letters and Loss of Mystery* are beautifully reconstructed notions, and perhaps a mock of this history. However as the novel develops the fiction takes strange roots on the cobblestone streets of the back alleys of Istanbul and in the mind of the protagonist. According to Freud, “In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself” (246). When he understands that his cousin, and her wife Rüyâ’s, which means dream in Turkish and has a significant importance in the novel, half-brother Celal is also missing, Galip walks backwards in a way to the

root Celal used to walk, and starts to live his life, and at some point while living in Celal's house, he wears his clothes, and even starts to write his column. Güneli Gün reads the name in the same manner: "The wife's name, Ruya, inasmuch as it means 'dream,' clues us that we have here a persona who is not only a Platonic Ideal but an identity closely related to the protagonist's as an Idealized Self: a narcissistic and incestuous anima (or the female double)" (59). As we know *The Black Book* is fragmented as the object. It is composed of parts narrated in the third person, and parts, the columns of Celal, narrated in the first person. The "I" of the melancholic culture is also present throughout the whole book.

Karim Mattar conveys the attributed features of Orhan Pamuk's writing as:

"...the mediation between East and West, religiosity and secularism, repression and democracy which is attempted in novels like *The White Castle* (1985, translated 1990), *My Name is Red* (1998, translated 2001), and *Snow* (2002, translated 2004); his cosmopolitan ethical stance on Turkish minorities such as Armenians and Kurds; his advocacy of free speech under repressive Turkish governments; and his adoption of what Adam Shatz calls 'the Esperanto of international literary fiction', a 'playful postmodernism' that mixes genres and pays homage to Western models like Mann, Faulkner, Borges, Joyce, Dostoyevsky, and Proust." (45)

Karim Mattar's review also shows the similarity between the First and Third World writers. To produce one needs to start from somewhere, and the writers of postmodern literature write about the individual in a certain situation and setting and we see the reaction, the development of the characters or the change in the way they think. Jameson knows this very well, and that is why he tries to justify his claim by saying that "*the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society*" (69) which is both groundless and irrelevant, because why should this story be different from, let's say Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*?

Even though *The Black Book* seems like a fiction moving towards, it actually does not move at all, and only dwells in the mind of Galip as he wanders in Istanbul nights to the places most strange:

“You’ve been wandering around the ghost streets, haven’t you? Seeking out shady deals, strange mysteries, phantoms, people who’ve been dead for a hundred and twenty years, combing through mosques with broken minarets, ruins, condemned houses, abandoned dervish lodges, consorting with swindlers and heroin dealers, decking yourselves out in gruesome disguises, masks, these glasses ...” (Ch. 28)

When Galip learns that Celal and Rüya are murdered that very night they just left to see a movie at the corner of their house, coming back home; all the story makes much sense, compared to Galip’s theories. Rüya left a letter of nineteen words. It is because she just left to see a movie. She asked Galip to handle their parents, because they were going to have dinner that night, but Galip’s interpretation is that Rüya is leaving the home for an indefinite time. He “carefully considers every possible meaning, intended and unintended, that these words might convey, and then, to hide the emptiness of my thoughts” (Ch.3). Foucault reads the melancholic’s mind “entirely preoccupied with the vivacity of his own ideas” (*History of...* 230).

From the first page we know that Galip is obsessed with his wife and very jealous of her. “The first time Galip saw Rüya” (Ch. 1) can be read as the first time Galip dreamed. He even calculated the time between their meeting and marrying, “exactly nineteen years, nineteen months, and nineteen days after their first meeting” (Ch. 1). This man is losing his dream here, and he is seeing himself as a heavy melancholic which is actually the translator’s comment. He sees himself as a “hüzünlü” man, which might mean “sadness, grief and also melancholy”, and we believe melancholy is the right comment. When she learns that Rüya and Celal were meeting without her notice he wonders whether, “they wanted to escape from the heavy melancholy he carried with him everywhere, like a contagious disease?” (Ch. 36)

Well, is this a Third World text? When defining the Third World, we tried to examine the history and the literature of the countries in relation to Bülent Somay’s ideas. We believe that this story belonging to the city of Istanbul, is a Third World text with an abundance of melancholy references. The narrations of the city, culture,

unexpected back alleys are what cultivates Orhan Pamuk's writing where again "Third World" becomes an additional quality, and Orhan Pamuk's writing is a very good example of this. His long sentences sometimes read more easily in English, his usage of language is obviously deliberate, and Istanbul being the setting of the novel with the dark, even grotesque and post-apocalyptic narrations of Bosphorus and other less well-known streets, Orhan Pamuk is the master of the city which is both oriental and modern. We believe there is no doubt that *The Black Book* is no lesser than its contemporaries in the First World, it has only some more qualities as being a Third World literary text with references to religion, society, politics of its age. Orhan Pamuk belongs to the intelligentsia of this country, we believe, it is mentioned above what he has been through as a writer. Besides he is a Nobel prized writer, and in *The Black Book* he or the narrator narrates the people as follows:

"The statue of Atatürk told him that a soldier had played an important role in this country's history; the crowd idling in front of the bright muddy lights of the movie theater told him that on Sunday afternoons people in this country escaped boredom by watching dreams imported from abroad; the sandwich and pastry vendors waving their knives, as their eyes darted back and forth between the display windows and the pavement, told him that their sad dreams and sadder memories were fast fading from their minds; the line of dark bare trees running down the center of the avenue told him that they would grow darker still as evening fell, to signify the sorrow of an entire nation. Dear God, what is there to do at a time like this, on an avenue this dreary, in a city this lost?" (Ch. 19)

This is a very dark narration, and it seems like the narrator sees the people of this country very sad with which we agree. Quite similar to Aslı Erdoğan's idea of "middle east woman in the middle of Europe".

Galip is the main melancholic hero in this book, even with the things he eats every day which is detailed. After the change in his life, which is sharp because he says that before Rüya left, he was an ordinary man going to work every day, and finding reasons to call his wife during the day, and coming back to her at the evening, everyday" (Ch. 5). Before the incident, he was "the innocent child he had

once been, the good-natured teenager, the devoted husband, the ordinary citizen teetering on the brink of the unknown” (Ch. 28), but now he becomes a wanderer and a man without an identity. And he gets obsessed with the idea of finding where Rüya is. He feels like he lost the core of his life, and does not possibly know if it is gone forever or not. As we know the melancholic identifies the lost object with his or her ego, and what is lost becomes the ego, the self of the individual suffering, and here Galip is a perfect example of the melancholic as it is explained by Freud. That is how his journey starts as the melancholic character. Freud explains the melancholic character as follows:

“If one listens patiently to a melancholic’s many and various self-accusations, one cannot in the end avoid the impression that often the most violent of them are hardly at all applicable to the patient himself, but that with insignificant modifications they do fit someone else, someone whom the patient loves or has loved or should love.” (248).

As in the case of Galip, because his accusations to himself as being incapable, his idea of his wife leaving him because he was a simple man were not actually reflecting the truth because we know that Rüya and Celal did not run away from him, they were just victims of a gun shooting.

While studying the history of madness, Foucault explains the melancholic in the same manner.

“For when the melancholic becomes focused on one delirious idea, it is not solely the soul which is involved, but the soul with the brain, the soul with the nerves and their origin and fibres, a whole segment of the unity of the soul and body, which breaks away from the ensemble, and above all from the organs through which the perception of the real is operated.” (*History of...*231)

As mentioned above, melancholic loss is actually the loss of the self and the ego because this is the distinction between mourning and melancholy. This loss of Galip is the melancholic loss if nothing, because of this undefinable loss. He cannot mourn, he keeps closing to himself, circles around her life with Rüya, and even

before that, when they were children. He remembers things from his childhood, looks out from the window to the well of the apartment and:

“[...] an ugly odor wafted up to him, the stink of a half century of pigeon droppings, discarded belongings, apartment dust, city soot, mud, tar, and hopelessness. This was where people got rid of the things they wanted to forget. He was seized by the urge to throw himself into its bottomless depths too—to plunge into the discarded memories of all those who had once lived here, into the dark hole that Celâl had been constructing so patiently, and for so many years, from the wells and fears and mysteries of old poetry—but all he could do was stare into the abyss like a drunk.” (Ch. 28)

Galip now lives in the void, in the “atopia”. He feels he belongs there. And when he leaves the house for the search of his wife and cousin, he feels the presence of the “eye” which we also read in Celal’s columns. The eye makes Celal exist, and this is what psychoanalysts also claim. He says, “The eye was my creation, just as I was the eye’s!” (Ch. 10). This is actually the basic idea of the power struggle between the gazer and the gazed:

“In the beginning, it was I who created the eye. My aim: I created it, of course, so that it could see me, watch me. I had no desire to escape its gaze. It was under its gaze that I made myself—made myself in its image—and I basked happily in its warm glow. It was because I was under the eye’s constant surveillance that I knew I existed. If the eye didn’t see me, I would cease to exist at all! This seemed so clear to me that I soon forgot I was the one who had created the eye in the first place and began to thank it for allowing me to exist. I longed to obey its every order!” (Ch. 10)

The mourning of his ego makes him feel exist only with a gazer, he creates the eye, and becomes dependent on it. He looks at Istanbul but sees a different city. He sees the back alleys, reads between the lines and finds or rather creates secret messages, believes that there is an unknown and a great conspiracy behind Rüya and Celal’s loss.

Galip character, the protagonist is, no doubt a melancholic hero. The fragmented narration, the switch of “I” between chapters, the dark vision of the city are the main melancholic aspects of the novel. This is a melancholic novel with a lot of Orientalist references. The metaphorical aspect of Third World narration is combined with the melancholic loss. *The Black Book* carries too many features of melancholy literature, and it is not possible to disagree with the main concern of this thesis.

3.1 The Obsession in *The Black Book*

The parts with columns in *The Black Book* tells the stories of unfitted people or incidents. The very first column written by Celal Salik called “When the Bosphorus Dries Up” is the most striking one. Bosphorus may be one of the most important possessions of the history of this country. To dry the waters of it is a provocative thought. This apocalyptic vision is:

“All I know is that the water is drying up faster than ever, and soon no water will be left. What is beyond doubt is that the heavenly place we once knew as the Bosphorus will soon become a pitch-black bog, glistening with muddy shipwrecks baring their shiny teeth like ghosts. But at the end of a hot summer, it’s not hard to imagine this bog drying up in some parts while remaining muddy in others, like the bed of a humble river that waters a small town in the middle of nowhere. Nor is it difficult to foresee daisies and green grass growing on slopes irrigated by thousands of leaking sewage pipes. Leander’s Tower will at last become worthy of its name, terrifying us from its giddy heights; in the wild terrain beneath, a new life will begin.” (Ch. 2)

This seems like the dry, desert dream in *Mucizevi Mandarin*. The dryness is attributed to melancholy, starting from the Ancient Greek. And this image is so much like the depiction of the melancholic man by Salvatore Rose, among ruins and decay. The decayed Bosphorus creates a decayed city of Istanbul which coincides with the later narrations of back alleys of Istanbul.

We never really meet Celal and Rüya as the reader, we learn them from Galip, and we know that Galip idealizes both of them. Celal kind of has his own voice, but Rüya does not. Celal actually tells the half of the story with his columns, but Galip takes this from him when he writes his columns while he was missing. Celal's "I" narration gives a certain point of view to the story, but the woman has no agency, other than her idealized version in Galip's mind. This is not a first wave feminist claim, this is more about the quality of the "lost" in melancholy tradition. Seems similar to the male character in *Mucizevi Mandarin*. Both of the woman are narrated as "free souls" not fitted to traditional marriage life, not cleaning around, smoking and reading all they long, and embrace the melancholy. This is actually the one view of the melancholy, as it is in the movie *L'Ennui*. The woman is so idealized that she becomes something other than herself, the creation of the gazer. When Galip talks about Rüya, he says that, "He was happy to hear that Rüya was no longer wandering though the garden of her memories and was back in the real world with everyone else" (Ch. 3). She belongs to that surrealistic world for him. And, "he made an effort to draw a line in his mind between his memories of the real Rüya and the Rüya he'd invented" (Ch. 3).

Karim Mattar reads this "I" narration as follows:

"As Galip puts it in the novel's closing chapter (Ch. 36, 'But I Who Write') when, constituting a dialectical synthesis of the hitherto separate but intertwined 'Galip' and 'Celâl' strands and chapter styles, he finally becomes the first person and narrator of his own narrative, 'writing . . . writing . . . writing' is 'the only consolation' for the losses of Rüya and Celâl, for those wrought by history (p. 461)." (65)

Galip's situation seems pathological as melancholy is first thought to be in the Ancient Greek. His prolonged grief becomes the core of his life. To find Rüya and Celal is an obsession now. He cannot find meaning in the world anymore, "it occurred to him that the world was too large a place to fit into one man's head; an hour later, when he was back in Nişantaşı, heading for the apartment, he concluded that whatever meaning a person found in the world, he found by chance" (Ch. 3). Now a wanderer in the streets of Istanbul, he understands that this "was a state of

mind that would be his forever” (Ch. 19). However at the end “he himself (as the author) fulfils his dream (Ruya) to become the writer (Celal) by submitting his alter selves to the mystery of art (death). In terms of the mystery in ‘Black Book,’ who stood the most to gain, after all, by his love objects’ (alter egos) deaths? The Author, of course!” (Güneli Gün, 59). As the ghost writer columnist, he writes these lines from Celal’s mouth:

“I was the sad resourceful hero of the book you are reading; I was the traveler who, with his guide, went slipping around the marble stones, giant columns, and black rocks among the fretful souls banished to the underground, who climbed the staircase to the skies to visit the seven starry heavens, who gazed at his love at the far end of the bridge leading over the chasm and cried, ‘I am you!’ I was the hard-boiled detective who, led on by his kindly author, found traces of poison in the ashtray and knew what they signified ... while you impatiently—wordlessly—turned the pages. I committed crimes of passion, crossed the Euphrates on horseback, buried myself under pyramids, assassinated cardinals. ‘What’s that book about, darling?’ You were a contented housewife, I was a husband who came home every night. ‘Oh, nothing, really.’ When the last bus, the emptiest bus, passed by in all its emptiness, our armchairs would tremble together. In your hands a paperback, in mine the newspaper I couldn’t manage to read. I’d ask, ‘If I were the hero, would you love me?’ ‘Stop talking nonsense!’ The books you read talked of the night’s cruel silence. I knew just how cruel silence could be.” (Ch. 29)

So this is how one day Galip wakes up and finds himself as the writer he always wanted to be. Before, he had the “the heavy melancholy he carried with him everywhere, like a contagious disease” (Ch. 36).

For a long time he sees letters on his face, and thinks he found who he really is. “The strangest thing of all, thought Galip, as he lost himself in the bazaar’s tangled streets, is that once I’ve read the letters on my face, I am absolutely certain I can really be myself” (Ch. 30). Later we understand that they were the letters he needed to pour out. At the end he is joyous because now he writes. “He began his first

column with the words, *I gazed into the mirror and read my face*. He began the second with the words, *I dreamed that I had at last become the person I've always longed to become*" (Ch. 28). Foucault reads this quality of melancholy as a paradox:

"Joining vision and blindness, image and judgement, phantasm and language, sleep and waking, day and night, madness at bottom is *nothing*, for all that it unites in them is the negative. But its paradox is that it *manifests* this *nothingness*, causing it to overflow with signs, words and gestures. It is an inextricable unity of order and disorder, of the reasonable being of things and the nothingness of madness. For madness, if it is nothing, can only show its face by emerging from itself and assuming an appearance within the order of reason, thereby becoming its own opposite." (*History of...242*)

In *The Black Book* we can identify all the features of loss in melancholy tradition, which roughly have the form of denial, and the form of creativity. In the end these losses he has been through makes a writer out of him, he becomes the person he was admiring.

4. *THE BLIND OWL AS A TIMELESS AND MELANCHOLIC NOVEL*

“The past is a foreign country.”

David Lowenthal

In this thesis, Sadık Hidayet was chosen especially for being the writer of the time when things started to change completely. After the 1979 Iranian Revolution, some vital elements went missing from this country, and Sadık Hidayet’s writing might be considered as the outcome this feeling of losing something for good. He was studying Iran history, and Western Literature at the same time. He was losing the thing he was studying, the culture and history, folklore of his homeland. A man turning his face to Europe, slowly becomes the part of the Middle East, tries to change it with his intellectual works, but cannot. Michael Beard calls *The Blind Owl* “an insufficiently known masterpiece of world literature” (ix) and we agree. *The Blind Owl* is considered to be one of the first examples of Western style novel.

The narrator sees the dead woman with closed eyes in *The Blind Owl*, but cannot open the eyes. Was that woman there at all? Was it possible to save Iran at all? As Bashiri frames,

“In a letter to Rypka he says:

But I believe that this [i.e., learning Pahlavi] will benefit me neither here below nor in the hereafter ... Now I realize that all that I have done and do has been and is futile... Recently I have been entertaining the thought of going into business with some partner and opening a small shop. But we lack sufficient capital ... I sent you a copy of a story entitled ‘Alaviyeh Khanum’ (‘Madame Alaviyeh’) some time ago. Now I have a novella, several travelogues, and about twenty stories ready for publication. As of now, however, there seems to be no prospect of their being published at any time soon.” (5-6)

Iran was and is a politically unstable country. Losing its values and culture continuously. A melancholic country by nature, we may say. The writing of Hidayet is melancholic, he seems like he was feeling the loss deeply: “It was in India that Hedayat began seriously to question the merit of a literary career in Iranian

circumstances. He felt that his career as a writer had gained him nothing but enemies” (Bashiri, 6). When he left the country, there was only one official literary magazine in the country of which the editor was held in trust by the police (Bashiri, 6).

We will see the effects of the history on Sadık Hidayet’s writing in detail in the following chapters. Maybe the geography would not necessarily identify the destiny of countries, but the country he or she is born in might seriously affect the writing of an author.

As mentioned above, Sadık Hidayet is one of the prominent prose writers of modern Iranian literature. Born in 1903 and died in 1951, his life passed between Europe and Iran. He belongs to the intelligentsia of modern Iran, he is a well-educated man from an aristocratic family. He himself seems like a melancholic man, we know that he tried to committed suicide more than once, and his death also comes from his own hands, through gassing himself. For his first attempt he writes, “I did something really crazy, but luckily it did not do me in!” (4) Iraj Bashiri writes about this attempt as: “Upon his return to Paris in 1927 he tried to commit suicide by throwing himself into the river Marne; he was rescued. The reason for this attempt at self-destruction is not known” (4). Also, as Bashiri quotes, “In Europe, Hedayat became extremely self-conscious, devoting a good part of his time to the resolution of the problem of life and death” (2-3). The notion of life and death is present in all the texts we are working on, and in *The Blind Owl* we see the death through the narrator’s obsession to an ethereal woman, his wish her to stay in the world of death. On this work *The Blind Owl*, we will not repeat the theories above, we will study the novella on the basis of melancholy tradition mentioned above.

Sadık Hidayet’s writing might be compared to H.P. Lovecraft and Edgar Alan Poe, and the tone reminds of Franz Kafka. He is also the translator of Kafka when Kafka was not as well-known as today, and much less appreciated. Hidayet’s writing is metaphysical and very dark, especially in *The Black Owl*. The tone of his writing is unsettling, above all. Beard reads this as if it is intentional: “*The Blind Owl* seems to have been designed quite systematically to be unreadable within its own culture at its own moment in history” (x). He writes about some spiritual

dimension but this dimension also does not provide refuge from the human condition. The narrator is a painter who makes confessions to the shadow in the house he lives in which is kind of abandoned, and he thinks that the shadows look like owls. The narration is not linear, and his stories are nightmarish, and often repeat themselves, and the themes are usually about finding something that is lost, reaching to something that cannot be caught; the themes keep repeating too. Yasamine C. Coulter reads the narrator as an alienated character; “Thus, he is doubly alienated. On the one hand, he distances himself from his native culture by posing as an Orientalist. On the other hand, he cannot fully immerse himself in modernity, because he remains rooted in ancient tradition” (6). There is not a linear fictional story, so there cannot be a summary for this novella. This is a highly metaphorical and metaphysical story about a man’s dreams. Coulter reads the metaphysical writing as an equal uncertainty between the East and the West: “The concept of universal metaphysical uncertainty theoretically ‘humbles’ the West and places it on the same level as the East” (7). This metaphysical quality of *The Blind Owl* makes it a universal text, and also a Third World one. The metaphorical aspect is also a common one in modernity tradition, the criticism of the ruling ideology, especially towards the sub groups of society.

The narrator, the pen case painter is the basis of our claim as the melancholic aspect of *The Blind Owl*. He sees his profession as: “I had chosen the ridiculous profession of pen-case-cover painting to confuse myself, to kill the time. By a lucky chance my house is located outside the city, in a quiet and restful spot, away from the hustle and bustle of people’s lives” (26). We can understand that the painter is very alienated from the society, and wanders at night. There is very little human contact during the novella, and conversations are made with the walls. Book starts with the idea of sores, gnawing the soul:

“There are certain sores in life that, like a canker, gnaw at the soul in solitude and diminish it. Since generally it is the custom to attribute these incredible sufferings to the realm of rare and singular accidents and happenings, it is not possible to speak about them to others.” (25)

This unspeakable happenings makes the narrator a man talking to himself, contemplating and making reflections constantly. When he talks about the past, we know that he tried to make connections with other people, but he found emptiness. He went to a mosque, tried to pray, and did not do well to his soul.

“Never have any of these—the mosque, the call to prayer, the ablutions, the noisy spitting, the bowing and prostration in front of the Almighty or absolute Creator with whom one could converse only in Arabic—none of these has ever had any effect on me. Even when I was healthy and attended a mosque several times, my efforts to harmonize my thoughts and feelings with those of others were futile. My eyes scanned the glazed tiles and the intricate designs on the walls. Those designs then relieved me from the obligations of the mosque and transported me into a realm of delightful dreams.” (50)

He passes to the dream state immediately, and finds no relief in human connection or religious institutions. In *The Blind Owl*, we see a series of characters but they seem to be the creation of the narrator or the same person; the girl he sees from the crack in his house at first part, reminds us the wife in the second part. This girl with black eyes holding a lily becomes a corpse with the same black eyes. These black eyes are the object of desire for the painter, and we know that object of desire cannot be reached, because once reached, it stops being the object of desire. “I learned all these things. I found this girl, or should I say this angel, to be a source of astonishment and indescribable inspiration for me” (29). This also reminds us the obsession of Galip while he is transforming into a writer. The painter needs this woman’s eyes which is the “identifying eyes” of the melancholic hero: “Nevertheless, I needed those eyes. A single glance from her was sufficient to solve all my philosophical difficulties and theological enigmas” (30). And before we learn the scene, we know that he lost it. As the reader, first we have the knowledge of the loss, the story is told backwards and this is how the tone of melancholy, the unending sentences about the search is created. And before the scene about the painter’s obsession, we learn it from his painting on the pen cases. He keeps drawing the image of this girl without knowing why and then he remembers the

scene. He was looking for a wine flask for the wine his uncle, who he had never seen before, brought, and when he finds the flask, through the air inlet he sees the scene he kept drawing:

“In the field behind my room a bent, stooped old man was squatting under a cypress tree, and a young girl, no, a heavenly angel, stood in front of him. She was bending forward to give the old man a black lily, with her right hand. The old man was chewing on the index finger of his left hand. Although the girl was standing exactly opposite me, she was not paying any attention to what was happening around her. She was looking without seeing anything. An unconscious, involuntary smile had dried to the corner of her lips; it seemed as though she was thinking of an absent person. It was from the stool that I saw her dreadful charming eyes, eyes that, at the same time, were enchanting and reproachful. It was to the shining and dreadful balls of those worried, threatening and inviting eyes that my single beam of life was attracted, and it was to the depth of those same eyes that my life was drawn and in them was annihilated. This attractive mirror, in an unthinkable way to any human being, drew my whole being to itself. Her curved Turkmen eyes with their intoxicating supernatural beam frightened as well as attracted. She seemed to have witnessed, with those eyes, supernatural happenings beyond those any mortal could witness. Her cheeks were high, her forehead wide, her eyebrows thin and connected, and her lips meaty and half open. Her lips seemed to have just finished a long, warm kiss with which they were not yet satisfied. A tress of her disheveled, uncontrolled black hair that framed her silvery face was stuck on her temple.” (19)

It is as if he is dreaming. And in this dream he finds his obsession of a girl with black eyes and holding a black lily. Here if we read this scene from the creation of the identity through the gaze, the painter is the creator of these very unrealistic characters. This must be a metaphor for something. At the end of the book Bashiri reads this scene as a reference to Tibetan death ritual, he thinks that old man represents the Lord of Death, and the young girl is the representation of “the narrator’s soul” (85). So, this is the scene he loses against the death. And when the

girl falls and the old man laughs, the narrator startles so much that he himself falls to the bed, and when he is back with the flask, his uncle is gone. Has he ever been there, at all? And after that he tries to see the girl and the old man, he cannot find the air inlet, but “upon pushing aside the curtain that covered the entrance to the closet, I was confronted with a dark, black wall, a wall as black as the darkness that permeates my entire life” (29). That is how his search starts for them and it has been exactly “three months, no, two months and four days ago that I lost her. However, the memory of her enchanting eyes, no, the attractive malice of her eyes, has remained in my life forever” (26). With this loss of the dream, he becomes a wanderer at nights just like Galip and the female narrator of *Mucizevi Mandarin*: “I was not allowed to rest. How could I rest? I formed the habit of taking promenades quite late—at sunset” (30). This “I” narration also makes the narrator an individual separate from the society, and cultivates the melancholic narration. His continuous search arrives nowhere, after seeing her the painter cannot draw anything anymore, although before seeing her, he was drawing her exactly the way he saw her from the air inlet. Now this man is sleepless and anxious:

“If I could find that place, and if I could sit under that cypress tree, I was sure some tranquility would appear in my life. But, alas, there was nothing there but refuse, hot sand, the ribcage of a horse, and a dog sniffing the top of the trash. Had I really met her? Never. I only saw her stealthily through a hole, through an ill-fated hole in the closet of my room.” (30)

And then he finds her, but she is dead, standing in his room. “I stood petrified in my place. I felt like someone who is dreaming, and who knows that he is asleep, but who cannot wake up when he wants to” (31). This is how he finds her in his room, “had always imagined our first meeting to happen like this. For me, this state was like an endless, deep sleep; one has to be in a very deep sleep to have such a dream” (31). Here he accepts that he is dreaming, and in this long dream of his, “In her eyes, in her black eyes, I found the eternal night, the dense darkness that I had been searching for” (31). Then he touches her and sees that she is dead, it is as if she is stillborn:

“Then I sank my fingers in her locks. Her hair was cold and damp, cold, absolutely cold. It was as though she had died several days ago. I was not mistaken. She was dead. I passed my hand in front of her chest and placed it on her breast and her heart. There was no sign of a heartbeat. I brought the mirror and held it in front of her nose. There was not the slightest trace of life in her...” (32)

When the writer kills the woman his narrator was searching passionately, the narrator starts to write, and this second part he is the writer, and his story is going to bring people from the real world. Now he will have neighbours, a butcher, a wife, a family, a nanny. The tone will not really change, he is a man searching his soul, this does not change, however when he kills and breaks her into pieces, his melancholy takes another step, because he kills the object of desire. “When she was still alive and her eyes were brimful with life, only the memory of her eyes tortured me; but now, devoid of feeling, motionless, and cold, with her eyes already closed, she surrendered herself to me. With closed eyes!” (33) After the realization of her being dead, he dismantles her with a knife. And puts the pieces in a bag –“The only thing that I felt was the weight of the suitcase on my chest. It seemed as though this weight—her dead body, her corpse—had always been pressing on my chest” (36)—and get rid of her. “Her soft, lax muscles, her veins, tendons and bones waited to rot. A delicious feast for the worms and rats that dwell under the ground!” (33) Is now the time for mourning? He searched and searched, and the moment he found her is the moment he truly lost her. No, this is time for creation for the melancholic character:

“At such times everyone takes refuge in a strong habit, or in a scruple that he has developed in his life: the drunkard becomes drunk, the writer writes, the stone-cutter cuts stones, each giving vent to his anxiety and anger by escaping into the strong stimulant of his own life. It is also in moments like these that a real artist, using his talent, creates a masterpiece.” 33

4.1 Uncanny as a Feature of Melancholic Literature in *The Blind Owl*

Sadık Hidayet is a creation of his age, this is a story written in 1930's, and it is infested with folkloric and religious references. Hidayet even puts a note on the first page and says that this book will not be released in Iran. The narrator seems to try to find the "I" throughout the story in a land of losses. Third World countries can be defined with their losses, as Sirkit says in *Waking Lions*. All these characters are individuals created by their history. That is why the narrator does not have a perception of time:

"Because at this moment all my restless thoughts belong to here and now, it is difficult to know where to begin. My thoughts do not recognize any hour, minute or history. For me, something that happened yesterday might be more ancient, or less effectual, than an event that took place a thousand years ago." (34)

The story of his father's obsession to his mother is very similar to that of the dead girl with a lily. Which means this loss and obsession, feeling of becoming "I" is timeless in this lands, we could see the same in *Waking Lions*, we know that Eitan's brother was killed during the war, his mother's story was vividly a melancholic story. Here the combination of the story is very interesting.

We know that the painter is now writing and tells his story, this story seems like a linear fiction, but a fiction cannot possibly be the real story, and as the writer, one can deform the events. However this story of the painter creates the feeling as if we are back to earth. And then it also twists, we do not know if his father is his uncle, and when he tells his marriage, he says it has been "For two months, no, for two months and four days, I slept away from her and did not dare approach her" (40). Exactly the same time span above. The story keeps taking turns in itself, and this is the moment we understand that this will always be an uncanny story for us. The uncanny is explained in certain aspects by Freud, one is:

"This is that an uncanny effect is often and easily produced by effacing the distinction between imagination and reality, such as when something that we have hitherto regarded as imaginary appears before us in reality, or when

a symbol takes over the full functions and significance of the thing it symbolizes, and so on.” (“The Uncanny”, 15)

Unheimlich is a German word, and Freud tried to explain it in his uncanny theory. He claims that *unheimlich* creates the meaning of *heimlich*, not the other way around, and it roughly means creepy, scary, and uncanny. Feeling of unease. This is a very important notion for this novella, everything feels so *unheimlich*, so much uncanny, and there is no start or end, nothing to make the reader feel safe. This insecure feeling might very well reflect the age Hidayet was writing. Of course this is quite hypothetical, however in this thesis we believe in the “period centric” reading of the literature, we think that literature and art and philosophy cannot be separated from the effect of the age in which it is produced. The narrator seems to agree: “Tales are only one means of avoiding unfulfilled and unattainable desires imagined by storytellers, each according to his own mentality and hereditary traits” (42). Beard says,

“*The Blind Owl* is profoundly representative of themes and conventions central to European literature. What sets it apart from Persian writing is, beyond its formal complexity, the uncanny authority with which it adapts a Western heritage to its ends.” (19)

If this novella written in 1940s belongs to the European, let’s say First World heritage, and if the individualistic melancholy is also part of the First World literature and culture, then an Iranian author writing during the mid-20th century here makes Fredric Jameson’s distinction between literatures invalid, as we already said in the “Introduction”. Because we cannot say that allegory and metaphors lack in the First World literature, can we? Beard goes on and says, “It is as if the sense of absence Westerners perceive in Middle Eastern writing generally had been absorbed into the work itself and made a functioning component of the narrative” (19-20) for *The Blind Owl* which again proves our point.

In the second part which is thought to be the story that makes peace with the logic, which we understand it is not, and that makes it more uncanny, our writer or painter is again obsessed with the woman with whom he married. He defines his existence, the fulfilment of being through that woman. “I wished we could spend

one night together and die in each other's arms. This seemed to be the sublime culmination of my life –of my existence” (41). That one night is the one night he finds the dead girl in his bedroom. This is how the circle is completed. He explains his situation as “helplessness” (41). And soon the story of the painter becomes metaphysical. He leaves his home one day, leaves behind the city gates and arrives a place with black lilies all around. And again he loses the girl, and we understand that whole story is actually about his wife and all these female characters are her representations as the unattainable lady. Whenever he tries to reach, she disappears and the feeling left behind is:

“At moments like this, I withdrew from the world of matter, and gave myself up to annihilation in an eternal flux. Several times I murmured to myself, ‘death, death... where are you?’ This calmed me down and my eyes gradually closed.” (46)

This melancholic narrations are to be found in almost every sentence of the novella. With its intermingled fiction, at some point the painter becomes someone else, and the writer is the person who just uses that pen case and does not even know who draw it. And at the end he kills his wife, we are never sure if it is a fact or not, we just feel an unease as the reader through the book.

The Blind Owl might be the strangest book we have ever read with all its metaphorical and metaphysical narrations. Here, Sadık Hidayet might seem like justifying Jameson about the metaphorical aspect of Third World literature, but metaphorical narration is not something belonging to Third World. If it is how are we going to read Kafka? Beard's approach opposes with Jameson's, Beard says, “Among the many elements that make *The Blind Owl* an extraordinary work of art is a design that puts into question the very notion of national literature” (xi) but he adds, “All Third World writers are comparatists: either they know foreign languages directly or they read translations, and the result is a tradition that refers inevitably outward” (12). In his book called *Hedayat's “Blind Owl” as a Western Novel*, Beard reads the novel as a Western one, and tries to prove his point. And here, similar to Jameson, he calls “all” and creates a homogenous writers group but contrary to Jameson, he believes the tradition of Third World literature is outward.

We might disagree with the word “all”, but his holistic approach is more realistic, at least for the scope of this thesis, since the translations are available to all the writers considering this thesis, Sadık Hidayet himself is the translator of some of them.

We believe that there is not one sentence that is without a metaphor. We believe that *The Blind Owl* is about the age in which it is written, about the censorship in Iran under Reza Shah’s order, about the uneasy feeling of an author, a painter, an educated man, no matter who he or she is. What is lost is perhaps freedom, the Islamic Revolution is close, and today we know that for the intelligentsia, things always got worse in Iran since then. His writing actually opposes what is happening in Iran which can be found in separate times in the World Literature, or else how can we read dystopia novels from the First World? Beard thinks that is what Hidayet did too: “He consistently—in his vegetarianism, in his opposition to Islam—took extreme positions and made no visible attempt to accommodate himself or his fictional narrators to public opinion” (39).

Pegah Ahmadi, an Iranian poet, was one of the participants of the panel called “Writers in Exile” and to our surprise, she said that she is happy to be in exile, it is better than living in Iran, and she feels lucky that she was able to leave Iran. The political situation in Iran is mentioned above, and we believe that the hero of *The Blind Owl* is a product of the age in which the book was written, Sadık Hidayet is a literary man, and would probably be able to foresee the worst days. This is a story about the artist as an alienated man, and at the end he kills the subject of desire, the “nag serpent”, “the whore”, and lives with the “the weight of a dead body pressed against my chest...” (66) Because to be able to live, he has to kill the dream, the desire, and this is how he can adapt to the society.

5. *WAKING LIONS AS A MELANCHOLIC NOVEL*

“I didn't see her die,
but I did hear her one and only scream.”

Aharon Appelfeld

Ayelet Gundar-Goshen's writing carries the constitutive notions of melancholy as a genre. The country itself composed of people who had great suffering in World War II. Geographically Israel belongs to the Middle East, but from the aspect of economic and political power, it does not really resemble the other countries mentioned in this thesis.

History of Israeli people is very complex. From the foundation till today Israel was home of people who had strange historical experiences. Today Israel is a country with a high percentage of refugees, especially from the African countries. Last year Israeli prime minister called the African refugees “infiltrators” and added, “This removal is enabled thanks to an international agreement I achieved that enables us to remove the 40,000 remaining infiltrators without their consent. This is very important” (DW). Of course there cannot be 40.000 infiltrators, they must be refugees. Foucault says that, “For a justice system to be unjust, it does not need to convict the wrong individual; it only needs to judge in the wrong way” (*Power*, 429).

The contemporary times, the interwoven structure of countries, movements and literature together is very well discussed by Bülent Somay below:

“The importance of 1968 lies in the fact that it did not merely try subverting the economic foundation, but brought the entire political, cultural, ideological (super)structure into question. It involved a vast transformation in sexual traditions, national affiliations, religious and moral beliefs, and the concept of race, class, and gender. It also did not take place in a single country, nor was it limited to a nation. It was the first truly trans-national anti-systemic movement; it took place all over the world, in the United States, in almost all Western Europe, and also in the “Socialist Bloc” and the Third World. It was not shaped by the existing subversive or anti-

systemic ideologies only, but represented an amalgamation of the old and the new, combining elements of Marxism, anarchism, feminism, and national liberation ideologies, with psychoanalysis, sexual liberation, radical pacifism, and the first inklings of trans-nationalism (instead of the older 'internationalism'). (*The View From...* 184)

Then again the movements, situations in different countries are not that different to create worlds with ordinal numbers, at least not in the modern times. Thus writing a hypothesis about a certain Third World and its literature is invalid even at the beginning. We know that Somay also reads this distinction to be temporary. Here we claim that to show the distinctive qualities of cultures, literatures, countries would only make them unique at certain points and it could only be done on this purpose, not by creating a homogenous point of view.

Israel is composed of suffered people, Germany paid reparations to Israel because of the Holocaust. Now Israel becomes the oppressor for those people in need. The book of Ayelet Gundar-Goshen shapes around this immigration policies in Israel. The writing is very vibrant, and the criticism is not subtle.

Waking Lions is in a sense a political irony novel. Throughout the novel two most important institutions of a country are deconstructed. We believe for a post-war society and state, Israel is a good example of the Third World. The narration technic seems linear but actually with a lot of flashbacks to childhood, and the omniscient third person narration makes the story a case story and the narration is based on individual experiences throughout the novel. That's why experience takes up an important role, and individual relationships with the institutions justifies misrepresentations of this fictionalized governmental institutions.

In the Prologue of *Waking Lions*, we see the triggering moment that gives the novel its identity. This is a novel reconstructing every piece of established order in the country of Israel, and also in the "home" and family. The main characters are a policewomen, a neurologist, and two refugees. The man works in Soroko Medical Center which is the biggest employer in Beershaba. With this structure of characters, one may expect a story about the situation the refugees are in in this country, and maybe two nice persons helping them. To help, one should be in the

dominant position, in *Waking Lions*, all the hierarchy is upside down. This is the scene where the doctor kills the Eritrean man by his SUV not on purpose. Okay, so a refugee is dead, one would expect an unfair trial, probably a conditional release. One would not expect this man's wife to show up and make the doctor her subordinate. This is the scene:

“He's thinking that the moon is the most beautiful he has ever seen when he hits the man. For the first moment after he hits him he's still thinking about the moon, and then he suddenly stops, like a candle that has been blown out. He hears the door of the SUV open and knows that he's the one opening it, that he's the one getting out now. But that knowledge is connected to his body only loosely, like a tongue skimming over gums shortly after a Novocain injection: it's all there, but different. His feet tread the desert gravel and the crunching sound he hears confirms that he's walking. Somewhere beyond the next step the man he hit is waiting for him; he can't see him from here, but he's there, another step and he's there. He slows down, tries to delay that final step, after which he'll have no choice but to look at the man lying on the side of the road. If only he could freeze that step, but of course he can't, just as he can't freeze the previous moment, the exact moment he ran him down, the moment a man driving an SUV ran down a man walking on the road. Only the next step will reveal whether that man is still a man or is now –something else. The mere thought of the word paralyzes him because when he takes that last step, he might discover that the man is no longer a man, but the cracked, empty shell of one. And if the man lying there is no longer a man, he cannot imagine what will become of the man standing there, shaking, unable to complete one simple step. What will become of him.” (3)

In the 8th Century Homeros writes about “noos” in his famous book *Illiad*. That “noos” as a notion has been transformed into “intellect” but what we understand from “intellect” in the modern era also changed. The notional frame has evolved since then, but starting with René Descartes when we say “intellect” the subject of mind becomes the power of judgement and it is where we distinguish “true” from

“false.” The mind is also the subject of melancholy tradition with the narrations of black bile, the continuous boredom. Ayelet Gundar-Goshen’s novel *Waking Lions* deconstructs this accepted rights and wrongs, and also creates this dusty melancholic land with people who lost their home, their identity and become “refugees”, not even African, Moroccan or Eritrean.

We know that with modernity, the search for justice through the faculties of mind and within society becomes the main concern. The main theme of Ayelet Gundar-Goshen’s novel *Waking Lions* is the corruption of both individuals and institutions such as hospital and police force. In this Third World country, Israel, the social balances are shaky. We mentioned the situation about refugees, the approach of the rulers on this global problem above. This novel gives a picture of the malfunction of the government about the subject of refugees in the country. The writer damages the institutions on purpose and redefines them. So, it is a political mockery in this aspect.

5.1 Institutions of Israel as a Third World Country

Institutions as a constituent part of societies are one of our main topics here because we believe that the land we live in defines the psychology of us, as the Third World citizens. We claim that the loss as one of the constitutive notions in melancholy tradition can be caused by political malfunction. Here we wish to remind Bülent Somay’s “devouring of father” idea. We know that the Third World rulers rule by fear in a psychoanalytic sense while the First World rulers internalize “the father”. Then we may say, this difference in unconscious created the institutional difference, and the distinction between the institutions of the First and the Third world. Thus *Waking Lions* shows a realistic picture of what the institutions are today. *Waking Lions* actually examines two basic institutions of society through a married couple, Eitan and Liat Green. Eitan is a neurosurgeon and Liat is a detective, and through their professional lives, as the reader we walk into the reality of these institutions, and the distinction between individual and society becomes clearer. First we learn that Eitan’s professor takes bribes and when he

opposes, he is sent to this city in which “dust is everywhere” (5). Then Eitan himself kills a refugee by his SUV and runs away, and never gets caught. Liat is a detective, but never suspects his husband. Here the problem of Liat is not the institution itself. As Foucault puts it, her problem is not about being liberated from the government and its institutions; but from the meaning, the individualization, and the identifying imposed by such powers. As a mother and wife Liat is a constructed individual already, and family as a social institution ties her hands.

Police force is the second institution which carries importance in the novel. *Waking Lions* starts with a murder and ends with another one. In both cases an illegal refugee is killed by Eitan Green, one by mistake, and the other in self-defence, and he is not convicted for any of them. An Arabic young man is caught for robbery, and incidentally he had passed from that road on the night of murder. Everybody is sure that he is the murderer. And even though he tries to explain, they make him confess a crime as the reader we know he did not committed.

These illegal immigrants are already condemned in the eyes of white Israeli policemen. This boy is a thief, yes, but being an Arab makes him a murderer immediately. Therefore, captivity of our perceptions creates the society we live in and as Foucault puts it, “A manifest criminal has therefore taken the place of an obscure crime” (*Power*, 431). This might be universal, the justice systems of all the countries we mention is corrupted, but this injustice is not unique to Third World countries, we know that Foucault was not writing about a certain geography, but about a certain deed, to rule, to be a state and this is universal. On the other hand, this confession scene is not a shock to anyone, that’s for sure, becoming hardened for such deeds is a part of all the other sicknesses of the lands mentioned in this thesis. The situation of immigrants carries importance for both the philosophical base and the institutional corruption in *Waking Lions*. Sirkit is first of all an African and a woman. Sirkit is the subject race here, her being the controlled is the expected. This given identity is a constraint which is eluded by a killing. So the act of a murder equals being black in this society. “No one would believe that she was the one who had organized it all. Too stupid. Too black. A woman” (324-325). This black woman takes control of the white male doctor after the murder of her husband. And

when Liat, Eitan's wife interrogates her in station, "It never occurred to her that such a woman could be defiant at all" (343). Sirkit was the possessor of power for a short time: "And once again, the controller became the controlled, the authoritative doctor doling out generous greetings became the extorted doctor stumbling into another unpredictable encounter" (126). We know that she is not going to submit in her own way. At the end she also deceives the police force in some way, by not declaring Eitan's crimes, and becomes his saviour this time, and when she is in the detention camp, she already plans her escape through possessing one of the guards.

Sirkit has the power of knowledge, and this power corresponds to transformation from object to subject. Young argues this fact as, "All hierarchies, together with their cultural values, can, it seems, be assimilated, so long as the white male remains at the top" (quoted by Somay, *The Psychopolitics...* 39). Bülent Somay takes the discussion a step further and claims that colonialists consider "the Orient as a Woman [...] who is unable to speak, but has to be spoken for, to be represented" (*The Psychopolitics...* 38). The notion of free will has a quite slippery ground in terms of *Waking Lions*'s setting. Sirkit is a founder of a hospital, superior of a doctor in this upside down world. Butler says that, "the judge who authorizes and installs the situation he names in variably cites the law that he applies, and it is the power of this citation that gives the performative its binding or conferring power" (225). At the end of the novel, Eitan Green is cleaned out of all the crimes he committed, and spends only one night in the jail. Yet Sirkit is sent to a detention camp. This black, African woman disturbs order only by existing and building a hospital which is not approved by the authorities.

At the end the roles determined by the neoliberal societies are applied. The tacit claim of every society is to provide conditions to make the good life possible. In *Waking Lions* all the institutions founded in need of the conduction of welfare becomes insubstantial. Relations between individual and duty becomes blurred. The boundaries of social status are easily passed in contrast to the boundaries of countries for an illegal immigrant.

Eitan kills the Eritrean man, and for a long time he does not even think that man has a name. Eitan kills a man and invents a medical negligence lie, thinking:

“Medical negligence was embarrassing, even disgraceful, and yet the consequences for a doctor who errs at work were not the same as those for a doctor who hits and runs. The first would probably be fired, that was all; the second would certainly be sent to prison” (297).

And his wife is the one who is going to put him in prison. So these two institutions will guide us about the Third World approach, but first what Foucault says about these might be guiding:

“Foucault’s histories aim to show the contingency – and hence surpassability – of what history has given us. Intolerable practices and institutions present themselves as having no alternative: How could we do anything except set up asylums to treat the mentally ill? How deal humanely with criminals except by imprisoning them? How attain sexual freedom except by discovering and accepting our sexual orientation? Foucault’s histories aim to remove this air of necessity by showing that the past ordered things quite differently and that the processes leading to our present practices and institutions were by no mean inevitable.” (*The Cambridge Companion...* 10)

In *Waking Lions*, the answer to some of these questions can easily be found, “*I will not let one baby bring down a whole hospital*” (242) says Sirkit, the wife of the Eritrean man, for the garage Eitan treats refugees. With this “I” narration of a refugee, she becomes an individual, separate from her community. The main character of the novel *Waking Lions*, Eitan Green is a neurosurgeon who hits and runs an Eritrean immigrant in the middle of the night, but there is a witness. This witness is the wife of the Eritrean we mentioned above, and what she asks from Eitan Green is to treat all the sick Eritrean immigrants at night in an abandoned garage. This abandoned garage becomes a hospital.

After Eitan hits and runs the Eritrean man, the orientalist point of view comes from a Third World man. What is these people’s country, the Fourth World or Fifth, or is it impossible to determine? He thinks,

“He was Eritrean. Or Sudanese. Or God knows what. A man of about thirty, maybe forty; he could never determine with any certainty how old those people were [...] Those people were born old and died young, and the in-between wasn’t much to speak of.” (20)

The setting of the novel is narrated as if everything we see from the first page on is under the dust. This is the perspective of the doctor, narrated in the third person but this narrator always able to see the mind of the characters, and narrates through their point of view. Even before he hits the Eritrean refugee, he sees everything under dust, and hates being in this city. He is obliged to come and work here by his superiors in Raanana, and already hates this city in the middle of a desert:

“The dust was everywhere. A thin white layer, like the icing on a birthday cake no one wants. It had accumulated on the palm tree fronds in the central square, mature trees that had been trucked in and planted in the ground because no one believed that young seedlings could take hold there. It covered the local campaign posters still fluttering on apartment balconies three months after the election: balding, mustached men observing a crowd of voters from beneath the dust, some smiling authoritatively, some looking grave, each following the advice of his latest media consultant. Dust on advertising billboards; dust on bus stops; dust on the bougainvillea straggling along the edge of the sidewalk, faint with thirst; dust everywhere. And yet no one appeared to notice. The residents of Beersheba had grown accustomed to the dust, just as they had grown accustomed to all the rest – unemployment, crime, public parks strewn with broken bottles. The people of the city continued to wake up to dust-filled streets, went to their dusty jobs, had sex under a layer of dust and produced children whose eyes reflected the dust.” (5)

He feels like he lives in a cemetery. He is in a way exiled, and cannot fit in where he is. The reason of his installment is not shutting his eyes to his professor’s illegal doings. “And when the faithful dog refused to play dead, to play deaf-dumb-blind, the living god poured out all his wrath on him and drove him from the Tel Aviv Garden of Eden to this wilderness, to Soroka Hospital” (9).

However at some point he actually walks at the path of his professor, maybe not by choice but bad luck, but still. When Eitan spends hours with the hurt refugees, their being becomes his founding identity. He starts to see them equal at some point. He answers Sirkit's questions and becomes his teacher, he switches the roles with his professor who Eitan hates and this is the man Eitan despises because of his immoral use of his profession, however he is that man know, stealing from hospital, gives treatments to patients in a garage hospital. "The sterile operating room in Soroka was exchanged for an abandoned garage in the middle of the desert and a rusty table that creaked whenever he sat a patient on it" (68).

This is a question about morality itself. Which is the right thing: giving treatments in need or dehumanise them and supply any treatments and leave them be whatever they can? Now as a doctor what is Eitan Green's duty? Durkheim claims that duty is to do the "right" thing even if it is not interiorized:

"There is no longer need to pursue desperately an end which recedes as we move forward; we need only to work steadily and persistently to maintain the normal state, to re-establish it if it is disturbed, and to rediscover the conditions, of normality if they happen to change. The duty of the statesman is no longer to propel societies violently towards an ideal which appears attractive to him. His role is rather that of the doctor: he forestalls the outbreak of sickness by maintaining good hygiene, or when it does break out, seeks to cure it." (104)

According to Durkheim, social fact constrains individuals, and this organic society model needs a pathologic limb to amputate. Now in Eitan Green's case, as a neurosurgeon he is expected to cure, but he becomes the murderer of an illegal immigrant who represents the infected limb of the neoliberal society. Durkheim is interested in the cultural aspect of social reality, and claims that what is happening in collective mind is different from the individual mind, and through the observation of society, rules of sociology will be determined. For Durkheim social sciences are objective, specific and methodical. Yet in this postcolonial world order, what is the specific society? Is this Eritrean part of the society or the other Eritreans in need of

treatment, and for example, what makes a place a hospital in the eyes of authorities? Narrator answers this question as followed:

“The other doctors barely spoke to [Eitan Green], and he was too tired and upset to carry on a real conversation anyway. Even the young nurse had stopped smiling, deciding to invest her energy in the new intern. Perhaps she might have behaved differently if she’d known that the tired, unshaven doctor was actually the chief director of another hospital. Less well known, less legal, but nevertheless, a hospital. With medical equipment and a variety of injuries and illnesses, and since yesterday, with patient fatalities as well – it wouldn’t have been a hospital without them.” (182)

5.2 Melancholic Obsession in *Waking Lions*

When the Eritrean woman learns Eitan’s secret, actually witnesses his crime, she, one of “those people” Eitan cannot distinguish from one another, becomes the neurosurgeon’s superior. This switch in roles makes Eitan slowly get obsessed with her.

After hitting the man, Eitan’s choice is to run away, “He couldn’t save this man. At least he’d try to save himself” (24). From this point on his transformation starts. He will become the illegal practitioner of immigrants, under the rule of an Eritrean woman, working in a garage, stealing from Soroko and working at night. From this moment, he becomes someone else, his identity shatters, this desert he so much hates becomes his prison, he loses all his agency, and becomes our melancholic hero, but he is not the only one in *Waking Lions*. *Waking Lions* tells a political irony story. The writer purposefully makes the stable, ongoing, the supposedly ordinary idea of this country an unstable, deconstructed one. This novel more likely displays the loss as a result of false political structure, and wrongdoings. The immigrants are living the real “atopia” in this world order. To make one of them superior to this doctor is very well constructed irony. “[...] as if she understood that only now was he actually seeing her, nodded and said: *I am Sirkit*” (34). She already knows his name. She is superior here, she has the knowledge, and this woman away from her

home is the one who gives instruction of what Eitan is going to do. "Sirkit wasn't asking him to help the man on the table. She was ordering him to do it" (39).

Sirkit is Eitan's torturer but becomes the object of his obsession. At first he sees the refugees as if they are a different kind of being, not human, not animal but something. "After endless hours of working together, this revelation of her abilities was enormously exciting to him, almost embarrassingly so" (114).

Michel Foucault says that the represented cannot be a part of representation. Now in *Waking Lions* Eitan Green being a representation of white male good citizen in the eyes of society also represents the corruption of the individual. When Sirkit comes to his door, he thinks that she wants bribe, however she will be his possessor. No, she claims his life actually. She is going to make use of this doctor for the benefit of her people. She assumes the role of an entire state, and provides health care to her people who are "the residual population" of this country.

"An hour and a half later, he could almost persuade himself that the visit had never taken place at all" (34). His brain starts play with him, he remembers what his professor once said about denial. From then on he will live a double life, and with a constant denial process. His melancholy is in a way a defence mechanism, he escapes from the truth. And with his journey to this "dark netherworld of the garage" (39), Eitan, the neurosurgeon, arrives at his "haymatlos" hospital from a garage.

While becoming the melancholic hero that he is, Eitan also starts an obsession with his extorter which is common among melancholic tradition. He sees this woman as an abyss with flowers around:

"Filling his mind now was the she-devil waiting for him in the garage. Those two black eyes. And he was almost angry at himself for remembering, apart from the eyes, apart from the extortion, also the contours of the body beneath the loose cotton dress. Like someone about to fall into an abyss who takes the time to consider the flowers blossoming in the bottom of the wadi." (64)

The more Eitan is involved, he becomes a man living in his mind. He "...sat there thinking, considering, debating, deliberating, agonizing, philosophizing, wavering" (321). He also lacks speech without Sirkit. These people do not know

Hebrew, and Sirkit translates only the ones she chooses to translate. “Without language, without the ability to exchange a single sentence the way people do – one speaks, the other listens and vice versa – without words, only flesh remained” (56). Eitan needs Sirkit to be able to communicate.

When Sirkit’s story starts, the scenery completely changes. This is also a fragmented narration. She lives in a caravan full of refugees, and her story is not told as a linear fiction. Her story takes byroads through her mind. She is a woman who needs to survive, and that was all that matters for a time, it is the issue for all refugees all around the World. This is what survival is: “they don’t really remember how to sleep with their entire bodies – there is always some part of them that remains awake. And the opposite is also true – when they’re awake, it’s never total. Something remains asleep” (44). Freedom is also a strange concept for these refugees.

“Their skin was covered with lesions. They had difficulty breathing. Their legs could barely carry them. But their freedom was undisputed: they could still stand under the moon and the stars; they sat when they wanted to and stood up when they wanted to. If they went to the hospital now, that freedom might be taken from them.” (109)

That is why they need this garage hospital, this is their only way to the freedom, freedom to stay alive and not getting deported at the same time. In Eitan’s mind, what he sees is a monstrous physicality:

“The bodily fluids. The hair. The bits of peeling skin and scars on filthy fingers. One lifted his shirt and another took off his pants; one opened her mouth and another bent over to show him. One after the other, they exposed their bodies to him, filled the garage with that monstrous physicality, skin and limbs, wrath and enmity and messengers of evil.” (55)

Eitan, a neurologist, becomes a general practitioner in this garage hospital, treating small cuts, genital fungi, intestinal infections (55) and they have more and more work to do every day which also shows the situation the refugees are in. In this refuge they found, in this hospital as Sirkit sees it a “whole hospital”, they are at the edge of dead. Sirkit says through the first person narrative, “If we are defined

by what we have, then your situation is very bad, but if we are defined by what we've lost, then congratulations, you're at the top of the list" (106).

Eitan involves in this new life of his so much, he keeps hating, for a continuous length of time, but keeps coming here, he even performs surgery here. He steals from his "real" hospital, and treats these people. He does not even sleep, calls in sick, but comes to this place. He becomes the shadow of himself, and needs to understand who he is. "Eitan didn't know that a glance was freedom. But Sirkit did" (129). This is the glance that makes one exist. And glance and gaze are very important notions in the book. Eitan needs the gaze of his wife and children. "You look into people's eyes, into your wife's eyes, and see yourself reflected back at you, and there you are, clean and attractive" (62). The gazer makes one who one is, and this is the way one finds one's identity. This notion is found in all the books we are working on. However in *Waking Lions* Eitan, a family man with a good profession first, and a murderer and illegal practitioner at last, sees himself as a better person when he looks himself through his wife's eyes. "You're a good man, Tani, you're the best man I know" (180). "The very fact that you don't know you're being looked at gives the observer the upper hand" (349). This power of the gazer also defines the hierarchy, the upside down hierarchy between Sirkit and Eitan. When Eitan kills the Eritrean man he did not even see Sirkit. "That night as well, the first night, she had looked at him without his being aware of her. Hidden by the night. It was that first look that had given her possession of him" (350). Sirkit, as a woman knows the power of the gaze. "Long after he left the garage, she still felt his gaze on her. Men can fasten their eyes on you the way people put a collar on a dog" (117). And she very well uses her power: "He would be there any minute and she needed her throat. Needed to break through the silence of the detergent so she could once again command him" (67).

At the end of the book, when Eitan again possess the role of the "white man", the neurosurgeon, he thinks, "They were Eritrean women waiting to be deported, and he was an Israeli looking at them." There these women becomes Eitan's creation as the Israeli white man. "Who is she when I'm not looking at her? When

I don't feel guilty about her or don't want her? Who is she when she's alone, as she was a moment before I arrived, as she will be a moment after I leave?" (350)

Waking Lions tells a very important story, not only for the land it is written, but for the whole world. The idea of justice through institutions, the given importance to social structure is demolished with a beautifully narrated story of three individuals. With the immigration and a Third World country's being the key holders for these people in need, the Orient becomes the power over these people as Eitan says, from "the Fourth World, the Fifth", and felt the right to speak about these people as a group of unidentified subjects. The upside down assignment of the roles creates a melancholic setting and characters who try to find themselves. With the all-knowing narration, we can see the past and mind of each character, and this is a story takes place in the minds. Both with the style and story, we claim that this is a Third World story and a melancholic one.

CONCLUSION

When the idea about the melancholic aspect of the literary tradition in some countries' literature occurred, we felt that some countries in a certain geography are prone to this tradition more than others. These countries are politically called "Third World" countries or "developing countries" economically, in contradistinction to the developed ones. This idea of categorization felt wrong at first, as Ahmad Aijaz feverishly opposes, "I also hold that this term, 'the Third World', is, even in its most telling deployments, a polemical one, with no theoretical status whatsoever" (96). From the beginning on we knew it was a polemical status, but was it possible to deny "The Third World"? In this work, we saw that it is not. We were hoping to support Aijaz's opposition to Jameson especially when he opposes "all" texts being national allegories:

"Jameson speaks so often of '*all* third-world texts', insists so much on a singular form of narrativity for Third World Literature, that not to take him literally is to violate the very terms of his discourse. Yet one knows of so many texts from one's own part of the world which do not fit the description of 'national allegory' that one wonders why Jameson insists so much on the category, '*all*' Without this category, of course, he cannot produce a theory of Third World Literature." (107)

On the other hand, we cannot share the idea of "I shall argue in context, then, that there is no such thing as a 'Third World Literature' which can be constructed as an internally coherent object of theoretical knowledge" (96-97). While doing a close reading of texts from Turkey, Iran and Israel, we could not ignore the metaphorical narrations, and this work takes its basis from a "period centric" reading as we call it. We studied two books from Turkey, because the idea of melancholic aspect of Third World literature was born from the literature of this country expanded to other countries close to this land. The writers chosen are very well-known in their countries, and translated into many other languages and they are all known in the "The First World". We believe these books belong to the "World Literature" if it is what Aijaz was looking for. However they are shaped and obviously effected by the political processes in the countries in which they were

born which is the case for all literature no matter where it is produced. We believe that if the research on these countries' literature and other countries called "Third World" is expanded, the traces of melancholy tradition would be more visible and believable. And this melancholic aspect of Third World literature itself makes it equal to the literature of the First World. Then being a Third World text can only be an additional quality of the work, and nothing more or nothing less.

While examining the melancholy tradition in these countries we took byroads to fields such as philosophy, feminism and psychoanalysis, and read the variations in the approaches of these fields. Michel Foucault and Sigmund Freud are the two important figures working in this topic. And Judith Butler's thoughts were important especially for Asli Erdoğan's writing. For example, in *Waking Lions* the literature of rationality gave light to our path, because it is a novel deconstructing the institutions. Each book is studied according to its own perspective because of the concern of to not homogenize them as Aijaz blames Jameson of doing. There are unique aspects of each of them, and we tried to show this uniqueness under separate titles.

After a brief look at the history and literature of countries, we tried to do a close reading of the texts. We thought it is necessary to look at history to understand why these countries and writers are chosen, and why there is a categorization called "Third World". Here again Turkey was the leading country with two important writers. That is why we also gave brief information about the literary tradition in the country. Afterwards, we explained what we are talking about when we say "melancholy", what this notion is as a tradition starting from Ancient Greece. Then a close reading is done of each texts in the light of all this knowledge.

Mucizevi Mandarin is read through the writer's experiences, the feminist aspects, and the melancholic narrations which are believed to be purposeful. While doing a close reading, the book as an object, and with its narration gave us the feeling that *Mucizevi Mandarin* was purposefully written in melancholy tradition. Its narration is fragmented, the "I" narration of melancholy literature is present in the novel, there is not a linear narration, but a wander both physically and mentally. We know that melancholic loss is the loss of the self and the ego, and it is found in

Mucizevi Mandarin. The void and “atopia” as the notions belonging to the melancholy literature are also aspects of the book. We also saw the power of the gazer in all the four books we worked on. Judith Butler’s idea of the creation of the self was enlightening for all the four books, and when an idea is formed, we applied it all the texts. Foucault’s work, *The History of Madness* was very important for our work, because his archaeological studies on madness and melancholy made it easier to make the distinction and put everything in the right place, and we used the information he gave to frame the idea that the books we are working on belongs to the melancholic literature, and melancholy is an aspect of Third World literature.

The Black Book and all other books of Orhan Pamuk was studied so many times. There are tons of theories and close readings, and here we added one more and we had to. Orhan Pamuk’s writing always includes the history and present time of Turkey. His way of working, we might say digging in the history, the art and culture of Turkey, and creating a myth, making history always an essential part of his books supports our “period centric” reading. We applied the same melancholy studies to *The Black Book*. We found that the protagonist is the melancholic hero. We gave some quotes to support our claim and Foucault was again guiding. The mention of melancholic notions or terms such as “void” and “atopia” were used numerous times, and the creation of “I” through an outer “eye” was manifested more openly than the other books. For the obsession as a melancholic notion we opened a title, and worked on it. As a result we thought that all the story was the struggle of a man trying to be a writer, which he did. His melancholy was the creative mind’s search for the “I”.

The third book we studied is from the Iranian literature, a book of a very important figure in Iran literature even today, after eighty years. We preferred to choose a book before the Islamic Revolution and belonging to modernity. We believe *The Blind Owl* is the perfect book for this. It was the hardest to work on, we should admit. There is even a belief in Iran that if one reads *The Blind Owl* he or she commits suicide. It was not hard to find the melancholic notions, however the novella itself is hard to read. As the reader one is always feeling uneasy, and that feeling made us work on the idea of “uncanny” as Freud puts it. That is why

psychoanalysis was the field that gives light to our path. And when we called it “uncanny” by nature, this reading and working experience made more sense. As this is a thesis, we tried to explain *The Blind Owl* in a systematic way, but it is a book purposefully complicated. We have a narrator, and at some point he rejects what he has told, and does not remember that he is the painter of the pen case he is using. Still we worked on the novella through melancholic literature, spotted the traces of melancholy. From a rational point of view, we believe that the narrator has many similarities with the characters of the other books studied, he just lives in his mind a step further and he is always under the effect of opium, and the harder we try to find ground, the more complicated and metaphysical it gets.

Our last book is a novel of an Israeli writer, and putting a novel from Israel seemed necessary to question the category of “Third World”. The history and actual politics are mentioned under the “Israel” title, here we made a close reading to the novel, and it was indispensable to work on the deconstruction of institutions, and the issue of refugees. This reading made *Waking Lions* separate from other texts, but still we read it as a melancholic novel, and made certain claims on our reasons. First of all we talked about the institutions in Third World, and this novel became our base for Israel as a Third World country. We found the melancholic hero, and the creating eye. The melancholic obsession was the core of the study of this book. And the female refugee played an important role both in the novel and in our work. We claimed that *Waking Lions* plays an important role for our work to understand the category of Third World countries and why the period is important for a close reading of a literary work.

As a result of the work on the books from Turkey, Iran and Israel, we believe it is not possible to reject the category of Third World, although homogenizing should be avoided. We believe this road we take made us arrive to the point that melancholy is not indisputably, but still an aspect of Third World literature, even though every text is unique in its own way. Also, “period centric” reading is important to have a better understanding of the text we were reading. We might take a further step and claim that literature reflects what happens in the lands in which it is written. Bülent Somay gives an account of this idea:

“It always seems to be an injustice to consider a work of literature solely from the point of view of its ideological content, by looking at what social or political message the author (who is supposed to be lurking behind their cunningly crafted creation) is trying to convey. There are, to be sure, a few authors who legitimately deserve such consideration, authors who write as if their natural habitat would have been political/social/philosophical essay, but who choose a “more literary” form either for censorship reasons or simply because there is a bigger audience for it... There are, however, times when a work of literature becomes an ideological beacon for a whole generation regardless of its author’s intentions.” (*The View From...* 183)

In conclusion we believe that Jameson’s distinction becomes invalid, and melancholy traces in the Third World texts is one of the proofs of this. Belonging to the Third World literary tradition is only an additional aspect of these literary works because of the additional historically and culturally distinctive contributions it adds to literature.

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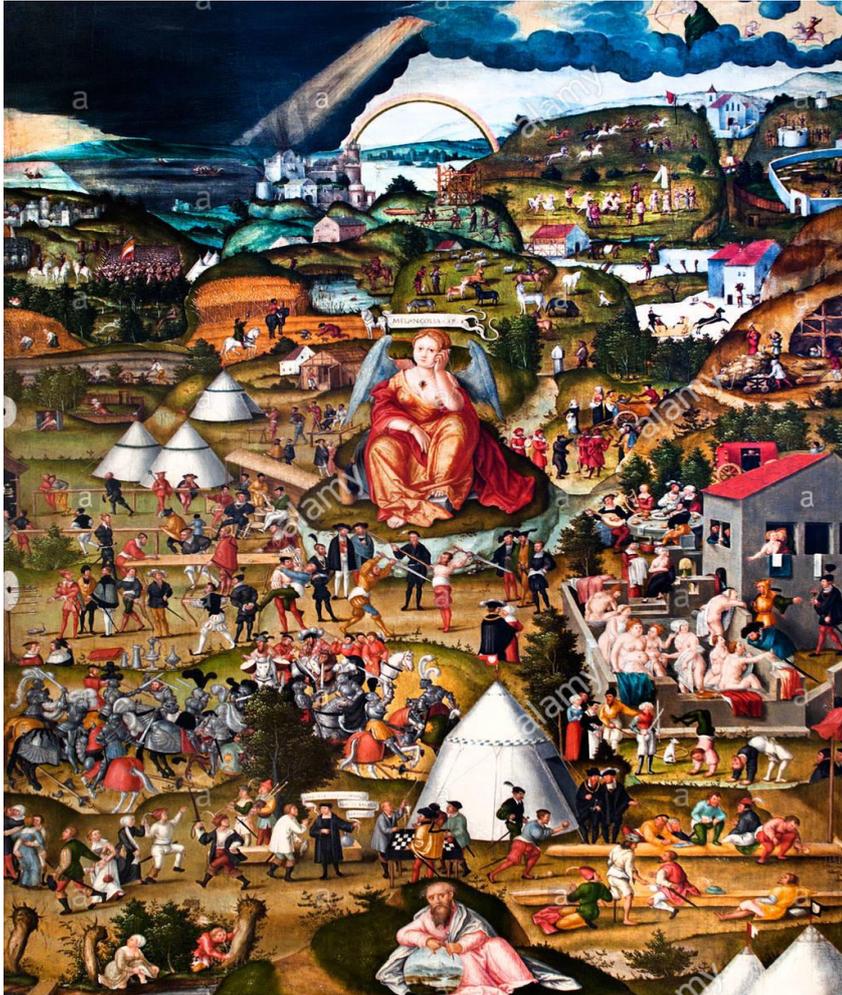
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APPENDIX 1.



Matthias Gerung, *Garden of Life*

APPENDIX 2.



Albrecht Dürer, *Melencolia I*

APPENDIX 3.



Salvatore Rosa, *Democritus in Meditation*