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Modernism and Cultural Change in the Writings of Turkish Women: Three Authors, Three Works

G. Gonca Gökulp Alpaslan
Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Ankara

Abstract: The works of Ayla Kutlu *Emir Bey'in Kızları* (1998), Erendiz Atasü *Dağın Öteki Yüzü* (1996) and Mîna Urgan *Bir Dinozorun Anıları* (1998) represent a feminine point of view to the history of the Turkish Republic, all of which have taken up almost the same periods as a theme. In the three works, which were published in the late 1990's, the pure idealism of the Kemalist period is discussed.

Key words: modernism, Turkish Republic, woman, Kemalism, Ayla Kutlu, *Emir Bey'in Kızları*, Erendiz Atasü *Dağın Öteki Yüzü*, Mîna Urgan, *Bir Dinozorun Anıları*.

There have been many changes in Turkish social life with the declaration of the Republic from ways of production to daily objects. However, cultural changes do not take place overnight. There may be painful periods with conflicts during the transfer from one culture to another. Literature, which cannot be alienated from the social life and events, is by no means indifferent to periods as such. Literature does not only reflect the ongoing process, but it also interprets, analyzes and discusses an old period turning back the hands of the time.

The works of Ayla Kutlu *Emir Bey'in Kızları* (1998), Erendiz Atasü *Dağın Öteki Yüzü* (*The Other Side of the Mountain*) (1996) and Mîna Urgan *Bir Dinozorun Anıları* (1998) represent a feminine point of view to the history of the Turkish Republic, all of which have taken up almost the same periods as a theme. *Emir Bey'in Kızları* depicts a fictional reality, while there is the interplay between fiction and reality in *Dağın Öteki Yüzü*; and as for *Bir Dinozorun Anıları*, it is a book of memories; and thus, it is totally based on reality. There does not seem to be a

generation gap between Mîna Urgan who was born in 1916, and Ayla Kutlu in 1938, and Erendiz Atasü in 1947; yet the events which Mîna Urgan eye-witnessed in the very formation of the Republican Turkey must have reached out to Ayla Kutlu and Erendiz Atasü through the memories told to them by their mothers and grandmothers, or through the research they carried out. Objective and sensitive point of view to the years that saw the foundation of the Republic, which comprise the theme in the three works, can be regarded as an implication of that. In all of them, the generation that saw the late Ottoman Empire and the Turkish War of Independence, the enthusiastic generation that saw the foundation and developmental phases of the Republic until 1950s, and the post-1950s generation who comprise today's elder population have been taken up in continuum. The primary characters of the chain of events in these works, which have been rendered to the reader in fiction, half-fiction or reality, are mostly women. This is a way, adopted by the women intellectuals and writers of the Republic, of settling up with their own generation and their own past. It might be the reason of the authors for staying away from the chronological order and following a continuous interplay between yesterday and today, instead.

Ayla Kutlu's works *Bir Göçmen Kuştı O*¹ (1985), and its sequence *Emir Bey'in Kızları* (1998), start with the Ottoman-Russian War in Caucassia and end in Istanbul in 1991. In telling the interlaced story of a family and the ongoing wars in 100 years, at first glance it seems that the author introduces Adil Emir Batubeg, the first man of the family whose story is being told, as the primary character; yet, in reality, the focus is the lives of the women. In the first novel, Emir who witnesses the death of his father by the Russians in Caucasia runs away from his country on the back of his mother, Cevahir. On their tough journey to an uncertain future, Russians break into his mother. They cut the fingers in his one hand. In the Anatolian lands which they reach almost dead, they escape death thanks to Mahmut Aga, a clement land owner. Mahmut Aga and Gülüş Hanım, his wife, who do not have any kids, regard Emir and

¹This study focuses on the second sequence (*Emir Bey'in Kızları*) of the double work *Bir Göçmen Kuştı O*. However, inevitably there will be reference to the first book to clarify some events, people and situations in the second one.

Helal, Cevahir's disabled baby to which she got pregnant after being raped, as their own children. Emir, who studies law and following the traditions gets married to Gülhayat, the daughter of Güllüş Hanım's sister, after turning back to the farm in Urfa, has two sons and a daughter of his own. This commitment based on a deep cultural difference with no emotional ties collapses when Emir leaves for Istanbul before the War of Independence. The new spouse of Emir Bey, who gets married once again, is Nevnihal, who is the daughter of a well-mannered middle-class family. Deputy Emir Bey, who is involved in the liberation movement, goes to the Anatolia with Mustafa Kemal. On the declaration of the Republic Nevnihal goes to Ankara, the capital city of the Republic, to her husband, after long and overwhelming separation. Emir Bey goes back to Urfa with his young wife, as he is offended by the state during the term of Courts of Independence. The baby Nevnihal gives birth to comes into the life he has built up with his first wife, his children and Nevnihal. Life in Urfa, which depicts the return to patriarchal and rural life style, comes to an end on the brink of the Second World War, and the whole family moves to Istanbul.

With the death of Emir Bey in June 1941, the following book *Emir Bey'in Kızları* starts and the effects of the Second World War, which has been the biggest trauma since the foundation of the Republic, and the national dimensions of the economic and social order in 1950s were presented with the elder sons Mehmet and Batu, soon-to-be-bride Hüsra and the little child Leyla in focus. As the author points out "the years of total belief in that enlightenment was taken for granted with republic just faded away" (Kutlu 1999: 11). Hüsra and Leyla are Emir Bey's daughters, which is the title of the book. In fact, it would be more appropriate to call it "Emir Bey's Women." Because, in both of the volumes, the author renders the events through the eyes of the women in the family. Thus, Kutlu who tells each event from any other one's point of view as if turning around, presents various dimensions of the reality. This way the author studies the ideological problems stemming from the characteristics of that period as well as the individualistic problems which always affect humanity such as love, marriage, sex and money.

Nevnihal whose youth was told in *Bir Göçmen Kuştu O*, and whose maturity was told in *Emir Bey'in Kızları*, is the focus of the events.

Nevnihal is an intellectual young woman who takes part in the Sultanahmet Meeting of Halide Edip with her mother, who reads, thinks, supports her husband and is a graduate of Darülmüallimat; she supports War of Independence with the influence of her mother, father and husband; not fully conscious, though. Although Nevnihal easily adapts to the new way of life after the declaration of the Republic, she fails to quit old habits. In clothing, which marks one of the notable differences between the Ottomans and the Turkish Republic, and the old and new life style, Nevnihal sets aside the garment covering her from head to foot; yet, can not go outside without covering her head. She adopts the clothing style of the '20s and '30s with elegant turban, long coats and high-heeled shoes.

She has high heeled shoes with laces to tie in the ankles, and she has voile socks. Her outfit is not that up-to-date. Her coat is large, it is long but coat, anyway. It is not loose cloth without sleeves, nor turban. Not black but a beige like pink. Her head cover she tied and let loose down in the back till the bottom of her coat is made of Indian silk. It has yellow and blue gildings in the bottom. Pink silk covering enlightens Nevnihal's face in the auroral glance of a raw peach (Kutlu 1999 : 316-317).

Restricted yet big change in Nevnihal Hanım's clothing reminds us of the changes in young Turkey in parallel with the women's outfit in the first years of the Republic. Women represent the identity of the new individuals of the new, modern and Western state with open minds and open horizons. Deniz Kandiyoti comments on this change as the following:

"Modern" woman had to build up a series of new signs and patterns to enable her to work in the public life without being disturbed, which was the first time ever. Unlike the turban, which identifies the noncontestable sexuality by hiding the person who wears it, the modest suit and open face of the woman worker could only give the message that she was out of reach as it freezes femininity and depicts an "asexual" identity. This way, controlling sexuality and sexual modesty became the main elements of the semiotic armour of the "modern" woman (Kandiyoti 1998: 113-114).

While Nevnihal Hanım represents Mustafa Kemal's Turkey in many ways with her characteristic features and her open mind to changes;

Gülhayat Hanım, the second dominant woman in the novel represents the Anatolian woman, who has no idea of the rights granted to women with the declaration of the Republic. Gülhayat Hanım, the first wife of Emir Bey, leads her life in Istanbul the way she used to in Urfa; she does not change her clothing, her manners, and her attitude. The fact that the regime, the signs of the social life style, the way of thinking have changed does not make a change in her life. This woman who learned how to read and write all by herself, and who does not know any other learning tool than Yunus Divani is a fragile, oppressed and touching villager (Kutlu 1999 125). Gulhayat Hanim never looks for something more than life could offer. Just for once, she reacts to her obligatory marriage to Emir Bey which lacks love, passion and sex by running away; yet she comes back as she can not stand the life outside the mansion and pays for that running away all her life. Because `she melts like a snail when salt is sprinkled once she gets out of that house` (Kutlu 1999: 13).

The works *Bir Göçmen Kuştı O* and *Emir Bey'in Kızları* focus on the basic difference between Nevnihal Hanım and Gülhayat Hanım. On the other hand, the two women cooperate under the same roof as family and raise their children hand in hand. In the novels, we witness them getting mature and stronger. Nevnihal Hanım, who gains in power and influence as she gets older, is the intellectual and social representative of the things which Republic offers to Turkish woman; whereas Gülhayat Hanım represents obedient and fatalist Anatolian woman unaware of her rights. However, the author does not present Nevnihal Hanım as an ideal person or Gülhayat Hanım as pitiful; she presents them with their rights and wrongs, weaknesses and maturity, instead. She sets a balance between the reason and strong-will of Nevnihal Hanım, and the wisdom and patience of Gülhayat Hanım; the fear deep inside Nevnihal Hanım and the reaction Gülhayat Hanım suppresses inside; the dominance of Nevnihal Hanım outside and the skills of Gülnihal Hanım at home. Despite the deep cultural, moral and practical gap, harmonious and caring cohabitation of Gülhayat Hanım, the first wife of Emir Bey, and Nevnihal Hanım, the second one, represents the unity of uneducated villager women and well-educated metropolitan women on the Anatolian lands.

The children of these two women who witnessed the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the foundation of the young Republic are totally different from their mothers. Hüsra, the daughter of Gülhayat, and Leyla, of Nevnihal, are the woman types far much closer to the ideals and identity of the new state. Hüsra, who has been taken away from the mansion when she was about to be brought up as a villager girl in Urfa to Dame de Sion as a boarding student – without her mother's opinion being taken at all, gets stronger than ever once she has overcome the adaptation problems to school and Istanbul. In the novel she is the first woman to change the course of living of the women in the family and to strive for the life outside the house. Hüsra starts to work for a bank before the outbreak of the Second World War. She is appreciated for her beauty, education and hardworking. The fact that her mother has been oppressed at home where she has been treated as a servant although she is Emir Bey's wife makes her introvert, tough and mean; and the fundamental reason behind her honorable yet obstinate nature and low self-esteem is the passivity, oppressedness and indistinctiveness of her mother. She chooses toughness and silence so as not to share the destiny of her mother who is one of those women "who lead the life by always expecting approval and reaction," and "who are conditioned to live the life this way" (Kutlu 1999: 129) and she builds up high and thick walls around leaving even the loved ones outside. The moment she falls in love with Kaya Kartal, a friend of her brother's, is that which makes the first crack on this wall, as Hüsra leaves the guy she plans to get married and starts having a relationship with Kaya Kartal in the most chaotic days of the Second World War. This relationship does not only teach her love and sex, but also gives her the courage to have and express her feelings freely. Hüsra, who bears a responsibility too big for a woman to handle, seems to prove that the new generation of Republican women towards the second half of the 20th century claimed their emotional, economic and physical freedom. That Kaya Kartal is arrested and killed by the police for political reasons at the end of the one and only night they spent together comes to mean that the only emotional light fades away in her life. Nevertheless, towards the end of the novel, we see Hüsra as a woman tougher than ever before, tired and unhappily married

to her previous lover. Thus, the process of liberalization of the Turkish woman is not yet complete.

In *Emir Bey'in Kızları* the representative of freedom is Leyla. Leyla, who is 11 years younger than Hüsrâ distances herself from her with “11 centuries of difference of life style” (Kutlu 1999: 155). She is the youngest and most fortunate member of the family, feeling the comfort of being satisfied of having fully enjoyed the mutual love of two mothers, a father and two brothers. She is the source of joy, elation, hope and motion at home. She represents the post-second world war women generation in Turkey. Leyla is the woman of the term in which all the troubles and problems of how to wear, to work and of economic freedom came to an end, it was the term of individualistic choices and freedoms. There are some guys she dates with, yet she never gets married or has children, but opts for traveling along the academic career path. Leyla is an active, powerful, hopeful woman; she is a fighter. On seeing Leyla, Nevnihal Hanım comments: “In the years of my upbringing, just being brought to life was enough. Leyla does not approve that. She thinks that being brought to life means changing and enriching things” (Kutlu 1999: 263). It brings to mind not only the gap between the mothers and daughters during the transition from the Ottomans to the Republic, but also the change undergone from decades to decades during the Republican period. Because, Leyla is the one who practically experiences those her mother and Gülhayat Hanım can not even think of, and those Hüsrâ can only imagine. Yet, that does not mean that she is very happy; she also has pain, offense and isolations. The difference is in her power to struggle. The things for which the late generation of Ottomans fought and the second and third generations of the Republic fought have been a lot different from one another.

The course of change between the generation “who have no time for love,” (Kutlu 1999: 23), do not know love, but live for their responsibilities, families and their country, and the second generation comprised of their children is the theme of *Dağın Öteki Yüzü*. The work which Erendiz Atasü briefly calls “a narration wandering between story and novel,” has been put to words influenced by the mutual correspondence of the parents of the author in ‘30s and ‘40s. The author

takes the first steps of the narration and creates the atmosphere in the “Introduction” part as the following:

That is where the generation of my mother and father stood still, the pain of lost lands and immigration... Orphans of the First World War, the children of the resurrection of the people who were destined to die, the youth of the Republican enthusiasm... Resistance and fight that lead them from the dormitories of the boarding schools to join the architects of the “resurrection”! Their devotion to their ideals in the youth, their resentment and silence in later life...

The century has almost elapsed... Those who were left to us from the early century close their eyes to life one by one... A generation is fading away, just like a receding tide. Each recent death revives the memories of the old... And Kemalist generation comes to life once again in my imagery (Atasü 1996: 15).

Reviving the Kemalist generation in her novel, Erendiz Atasü comes to terms with her own generation and the past, in the quest for the lost spirit of the present generation. The main character of the novel is a woman, again: Vicdan. Vicdan is a character which the author created under the inspiration of Hediye, her mother; Vicdan shows resemblances and difference with Hediye (Atasü 1996: 16). Vicdan who witnessed the Balcan war, the first World War, economic crisis in 1929, the life and death of Veteran Mustafa Kemal, the second World War, Korean War, and the term of Democrat Party, was born in 1910 in Selonika, and is one of the first beneficiaries of the fellowship programme offered by Cambridge where the Turkish Republic sent. Vicdan never gives up in a century full of war, pain and collapse, which she describes in the following terms: “The world has always been taken apart, ever since her childhood till her maturity” (Atasü 1996: 100), but wages a struggle as an honest, devoted Kemalist with principles, and as a patriot and is thus centralized in the novel. Nefise, the secondary character in the novel, who represents the same generation, seems to have a complementary nature. She is less emotional, less bound to principles, further away from idealism and perfectionism, more realistic, more liberal, and much more fond of art and literature when compared to Vicdan.

Four generations are presented in the novel around Vicdan: Vicdan’s mother’s generation, Vicdan’s generation (Vicdan’s brothers, husband

and Nefise), Vicdan's daughter's generation (that of the narrator and the author) and Vicdan's grandchild's generation. There is a constant generation gap in between; as the first two generations have witnessed the collapse and foundation, whereas the late two experience the disappearance of the merits and the adoption of personal interests in the expense of social enthusiasm and ideals. However, the notion of motherland, nation, state, citizen and duty differ from the first generation to the second one. Fitnat Hanım, Vicdan's mother, turns from a weak young woman, first into a tough fighter in her middle ages and then into an unhappy old woman constantly complaining. Fitnat Hanım is also a patriot, such that she only takes off her black hat she wears during the Greek invasion when the Istanbul is totally safe. Yet hers is a passive reaction against life. She makes effort for staying and keeping her children alive even under the harsh circumstances. On the other hand, for Vicdan the interests of her country come first, even her family and herself is of secondary importance. She is an idealist teacher and a woman actively involved in the new life. Vicdan represents a generation who believes in herself, her country and her future. Her generation is that which was brought up in poverty and war, thus who always had to be strong, and who witnessed the foundation of the Republic and thus experienced an honorable revival. Therefore, Vicdan feels a big responsibility when she was sent out to the Great Britain as a beneficiary of the fellowship programme. Vicdan, who never dates with any English gentleman, severely criticizes Nefise, her best friend, in the following terms: "As a young girl of the Turkish Republic, how on earth can you think of getting married to an officer of the imperialist British Army? (...) We are spiritually and legally bound to go back and work at home" (Atasü 1996: 78). Because Vicdan is an ideal example of the modern Turkish woman and she has total love and belief in her country, her nation and Ata when uttering these words: "I have comprehended the aim of the Veteran Atatürk to create living examples of the notion of 'modern Turkish woman.' I am serving to this aim; and I know that this is of no less importance than the army, tax, education and domestic organization. I feel that He has trust in me and I am grateful to Him. I love Him very much" (Atasü 1996: 252).

The moment Vicdan turns back to Turkey after having completed her education abroad, she applies for teaching but she can not be appointed due to the slow functioning of the bureaucracy. However, she is ready to go and work anywhere she is appointed. In the meantime, she goes to the Great Britain, appointed by Mustafa Kemal himself, to deliver speech on the 'woman of the revolution' in BBC. She replies the question posed by a British journalist "Did you not like English gentlemen?" as "My friends and I were in love with our country" (Atasü 1996: 72). This reply identifies the principles and ideals of the Kemalist generation. Vicdan is intellectually, spiritually and physically in love with Raik who has almost the same qualities as herself, when they get married; yet she is also in love with somebody else, though she never overtly expresses: Mustafa Kemal. During their education in the Great Britain Vicdan and Nefise keep a photo of Mustafa Kemal with his coat on at their bed side. This feeling may be common to all the young girls of that generation. Because Mustafa Kemal is the loved one as a leader, as a symbol of the country and nation; he is an idol to be faithfully devoted to.

Vicdan whose various sections of life were presented all through the novel is also one of the founders of an education institution whose name is not given. Vicdan is the ideal woman type of Kemalism with all aspects: a hardworking educationist, an initiator and fighter with principles never violated; and a tender, loving, joyful, active, productive and beloved young woman. Raik and herself represent the ideal, modern and intellectual family of the new country as educationists working hard to bring up new generations of the Republic. Vicdan's daughter evaluates this ideal coupling as "Though he did not know my mother yet, he was in love with her, with the 'modern' woman in his dreams" (Atasü 1996: 265), by centralizing her father. It indicates that the new woman type and the family model to be raised by the new woman, which has been introduced by the Republic have been adopted by every man and woman. Because they make up a generation to stay alive with the support they have given one another as "orphan children of the defeated people" and "the creators and witnesses of the resurrection" (Atasü 1996: 100). Their sincere devotion to the foundations and the principles of the Republic seems a little dull to the next generation. The first person

narrator in the novel, who gives out her own voice in an attempt to re-know her mother and father, is the daughter of Vicdan. Her regard of her mother is the regard of the second generation of the Republic of the first one, which is sometimes cruel and disavowing:

Mustafa Kemal was one of the building blocks of the existence of the generation of my mother and father and my uncle, which I would find hard to understand. Yet again, I was aware of the fact that the love of Mustafa Kemal was materialized in a simple way of life for my mother and father, and in shiny, glorious words for my uncle and his family (Atasü 1996: 197).

My mother and father would only dance tango and waltz in Republican balls... (...) Provincial Kemalists dancing waltz in heart and soul breaking out in sweat in the unfamiliar swallow-tailed cloths, without even complaining about the rugan leather shoes pinching them...

They used to look funny through the eyes the '70s, which only look tragic now... (Atasü 1996: 27).

The reason behind the regard of the second generation of the Republic of the first one which is funny or tragic is the culture and generation gap; not a difference of literateness-ignorance, life inside and outside the house or dependence-independence as in *Emir Bey'in Kızları*. Both Vicdan and Nefise are economically and intellectually free women who are literate and active inside and outside the house. So what has changed? It is not only the people but also the system of social merits surrounding them that has changed. Those the generation of Vicdan deem valuable, meaningful and holly do not carry the same value and meaning for the next generation. Vicdan's daughter is aware of the resentment and hopelessness in her mother's looks to the next generations; she expresses that in the following terms: "According to my mother and father, the Republic deviated from the right path; they were so sorry, I knew; they were broken. This mutual resentment was binding them even closer. Both retreated to the shelves of inactivism which would only get permeable through emotional interaction; which was not 'seeking refuge' but deigning not to take part in a life contaminated" (Atasü 1996: 222-223). On the other hand, the second generation which was symbolized in Vicdan's daughter undergoes a profound change in the post-1980s and the family structure cracks which 'looks' and is

'supposed to be' happy. In the end, Vicdan divorces her husband and after a few trials she completely disregards men. Because '80s saw the alienation of everyone, no matter if woman or man, from the political life, as well as the beginning of a new consciousness in women in Turkey and the awareness of the 'feminine' identity. Vicdan's daughter evaluates the women of her mother's generation who she describes as "the generation to divide its existence clearcut as the 'body' and 'soul' (Atasü 1996: 220) in the following terms:

The idealism of these women and my generation was not the same. Too emotional, but not conscious enough! It was possible to describe their behaviours in this way; yet, to what extent could this austere description reflect the reality of existence? Politics was the thing which my mother and those like her would entirely experience internally; however, our internal lives were almost destroyed in the years we were involved in the politics.

Such an interaction between the world outside and inside would place the insight of my mother in a different orbit. The contentments she remained deprived of were not so important for her as I deemed them to be. (...) She was aware of the fact that her whole life ever since her childhood was a fight demanding a huge energy; which kept her satisfied. She lived the days of the foundation of the Republic just like a big love, a happy one! It was this love which honoured her emotional life (Atasü 1996: 219-220).

The narrator looks for her mother with the call in the beginning of the novel: "I want to find you, my mother whom I failed to know. Where are you?" (Atasü 1996: 39), and fails to understand her mother's generation and their patriotism and idealism. Yet the narrator figures out that her generation is made up of their children, -though still going on to consider her generation different from them- comes to terms with them, herself, her child's generation and her country; thus, the women of the four generations in conflict throughout the novel are settled and unified on a joint land, Anatolia:

Born out of Vicdan and Nefise, breast-fed by Kybele, made out of Raik and Turkey... I plunge my hands into the time, the past touches my skin... The old times, which rise out of the tombs of the Kemalists giving me life, start to go round over my body, touching the memories gathered

in the protein spirals of the cells before and after the birth of my conscious, moving them and making them ‘mine’ (Atasü 1996: 279).

What a contrast there is between me and my country in pain and blood, my country poor but cruel – fire. It is this contrast that I am born out of. Here I am, who is born out of the wounded children of the defeated people –the creators of the miracle of revival- in the narrow spiral of the opening and close of the century! (Atasü 1996: 281)

Another woman writer who expresses, through critical discourse, the deep difference in understanding and notions between the intellectuals of the first generation of the Republic and those that follow, is Mîna Urgan. In *Bir Dinozorun Anıları* Mîna Urgan sincerely shares those she witnessed in the early 20th century with the reader. Apart from Ayla Kutlu and Erendiz Atasü, her work is not fiction but the rendering of the real life. The author does not follow a chronological order; following the first episode where she puts forth her ideas on aging and death she goes back to the days of her childhood and youth describing some people she knew then and pointing out the political events she has witnessed since her youth. Mîna Urgan, who defines herself as a “Kemalist, and a Kemalist every inch” (Urgan 1998: 158), was born in 1916, graduated from Arnavutköy College for Girls and the Department of Romanology of the Faculty of Letters of İstanbul University, and built academic career in the Department of English Language and Literature. Urgan, who was raised in a modernist, matriarchal, free and individual-oriented family by her mother with the conscious of becoming an independent woman who has a career, says that she fully enjoyed the freedom in Mustafa Kemal’s term. For instance, she chooses her surname herself which she appreciates by saying, “There were such nice things in Mustafa Kemal’s term” (Urgan 1998: 96). Brought up in a wide, colorful and intellectual environment witnessing the late Ottomans and the foundation of the Republic, and attending the occasions where Mustafa Kemal was present, Mîna Urgan does not live under pressure but feels free to make her own decisions thanks to the foresightedness of Şefika Hanım, her mother, and she leads a life independent, happy and esteemed. She comments on this freedom in the following terms: “I have never felt the oppression of being a woman in this conservative society

bounded by the tradition, thanks to the foresightedness and modernist mind of my mother” (Urgan 1998: 119).

In *Bir Dinozorun Anıları* Mina Urgan tries to settle with her mother and her mother’s generation, just like in *Emir Bey’in Kızları* and *Dağın Öteki Yüzü*. In that settlement, the notable thing she finds in common with her mother is the Republican, Kemalist and patriot identity with full trust and belief in her state, as well as the individualistic features such as being well-educated, having a wide intellectual background and an elite culture with good manners. On the other hand, Mîna Urgan’s primary settlement in the novel is with the ‘80s generation. The author expresses this fact in the first pages of the novel within a comparison in the following terms:

I suffered too much when I was young, but I guess the pain of the youth today is even greater than mine. Because, my generation enjoyed its youth and had the problems of being young in a period of hope. The one and only Republic was being founded just before our eyes. We knew that we would not suffer famine or despair as long as we worked hard and managed to receive a good education. There was such a high hope deeply rooted inside our hearts that the social catastrophes we have today, and even the extreme conservatism arising once again, has not overwhelmed the dinosaurs like me.

On the other hand, the poor lads of Turgut Özal, who seem to stumble in the destructive competition of that plundering and wild capitalism, so-called liberal economy, have nothing of that hope, at all. They can by no means overcome the fear that they will starve, even if they work hard or graduate from the university. Unfortunately, the objective of the majority of them is totally different than that of our generation. We would like to educate ourselves as best as we could to be of use for the people around us and to live in peace. As for them, they want to earn as much money as possible; because money, which we never considered to come first in life, is their only assurance (Urgan 1998: 10-11).

The deep difference Mîna Urgan so overtly and simply expresses by enriching with her experience and observations has been dealt with in a critical realism in the essay “Kemalism and Modernism Between the Old and the New” by Reşat Kasaba as the following:

The defeated and tired people of the Anatolia were tempted to adopt the radical message of Atatürk in the first decades of the 20th century; therefore, some of them supported the determination of the nation's leader to reconstruct the Turkish state with a sincere enthusiasm. Yet in 1980s, Turkish people, the majority of whom lack the personal experience related to the first years of the Republic, seem tired of all discourse stressing "bright and prosperous future," receiving all promises with doubtful and sarcastic attitude. Turkish people opted for questioning their history, past institutions, beliefs, identity and culture instead of sacrificing for a future constantly being delayed. This tendency, which was first distinctive in the recently-urbanized population, soon spread out to the other sections of the society and started to influence clothing, popular music, architectural style and the ideas on Turkish history.

As a part of this new evaluation of where Turkey stood in 1980s and how she ended up this way, Kemalist modernization programme was started to be criticized (Kasaba 1998: 13).

The personal existence of Mustafa Kemal and the relationship of the young generation to him has an important role in *Bir Dinozorun Anıları* as in *Dağın Öteki Yüzü*. Vicdan, the character Erendiz Atasü has created as half-fiction, and the devotion of the young people of that generation to Mustafa Kemal also exists in the memories of Mîna Urgan. Urgan, who was one of the young people who waited outside Dolmabahçe Palace when Atatürk was ill, expresses the feelings his death evoked in them as "It was a personal suffering which those who are not at my age can not comprehend at all. Apart from the pain, we had responsibilities. Because Mustafa Kemal entrusted Republic to the young people, especially to our generation" (Urgan 1998: 165). This sincere love and trust in Atatürk and Republic is the principal feeling of the first and second generations of the Republic, not solely that of Mîna Urgan. It was this feeling which gave them the power to adopt and preserve the principles and reforms. However, this love and trust was replaced firstly by self-seeking, and then insensitivity, especially after 1950s. Critical analysis and discussion of this course of change has been the interesting mutual grounds which propelled the three women writers to question the first

Among the women presented in *Emir Bey'in Kızları*, *Dağın Öteki Yüzü* and *Bir Dinozorun Anıları* Nevnihal, Gülhayat, Fitnat (Vidcan's mother) and Şefika (Mîna Urgan's mother) represent the first generation to witness the Republic; Hüsra (Gülhayat's daughter), Vidcan, Nefise and Mîna Urgan, the second generation who were brought up in the time of the Kemalist reforms and have worked in the modern institutions of the Republic; Leyla (Nevnihal's daughter), Vidcan's daughter and Mîna Urgan's children, who were sometimes referred to in the novel, the third generation; and the grandchildren of Nevnihal, Gülhayat and Vidcan, the fourth one. Apart from the narrative differences of being fiction, half-fiction and real life, in the three works the first and the second generations have been questioned in an attempt to understand and express; as for the late generation, it is the one which is the least dealt with, yet most criticized for their insensitivity to the principles, ideals and the problems of the nation. Thus, the reason for existence of these works is the attitude of the late generation towards the concepts such as nation, state, motherland, future, money and modernism. In the three works, women of the second and third generation of the Republican Turkey have been praised to skies as they are free, strong, active, independent, well-educated, fighter, Kemalist, modern and productive, as well as devoted to their families, respectful to the social merits, conscious of the duties of citizenship and working life, and individuals with no fear of representing a political attitude. Next generation, on the other hand, seem to be more worried and unhappy in the family and community despite being more individualistic, free and critical when compared to the previous one. Because they do what the women of the previous generation did not: constantly discuss and come to terms with self, life and the world. The outcome of that discussion has been these three works. As for their children, they are unhappy without questioning, opposite without discussion, and selfish with no one to care about. The first generation fought the independence war of this occupied country, the second one made endeavor to represent and maintain the new merits of the Republic, the third one fought for approval of the women in the society; and there seems to be no war left for the fourth generation to fight.

In the three works, which were published in the late 1990s, the pure idealism of the Kemalist period is discussed –and can not be fully comprehended- and a longing is felt to that period and generation. In late ‘90s, dissatisfaction of the cultural identity and the system of merits comprise the primary reason for the discussion and longing. The enthusiasm of following the path from collapse to revival in the early 20th century, was replaced by overwhelm and despair at the close of the century. Because we do not have ideals any more to live for today and hope for the future. It is this lacking we have which the authors question and discuss.

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