

**LIVING TO TELL THE TALE: READING 12 SEPTEMBER COUP D'ÉTAT
THROUGH NOVELS WRITTEN BY
SOCIALIST AND NATIONALIST AUTHORS**

by

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SOCIALIST AND NATIONALIST AUTHORS

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Abstract

LIVING TO TELL THE TALE: READING 12 SEPTEMBER COUP D'ÉTAT, THROUGH NOVELS WRITTEN BY SOCIALIST AND NATIONALIST AUTHORS

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Today, 12 September coup d'état is once again in the center of Turkish politics. It is also noteworthy that, with the turn of the century, there has been a considerable increase in the number of works written on this catastrophic event. It should also be emphasized that, unlike it once used to be, the subject is not only taken by authors from the left, but also by those from the right. The phenomenon deserves critical attention.

The aim of this study is the analysis of five novels written on the 1980 coup d'état after the year 2000. Two of these novels, *Tol* (2002) by Murat Uyurkulak and *Imitating Bird Language* (2003) by Ayşegül Deveciođlu, are written by socialist authors. The other three, *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life* (2002) by Naci Bostancı, *My Name is Greenl* (2005) by Remzi Çayır, *The Storm Hit Us* (2009) by Ahmet Haldun Terziođlu, are written by nationalist authors. The central question this thesis asks is the following: How and to what extent has literature remembered 12 September 1980 coup d'état? In order to be able to answer this question, some of these novels' formal feautres and themes will be compared and contrasted. Finally, the similarities and differences will be interpreted, and thus, some major effects of the coup upon socialist and nationalist discourses will be explained through these novels.

Özet

ANLATMAK İÇİN YAŞAMAK: 12 EYLÜL 1980 ASKERİ DARBESİNİ SOSYALİST VE MİLLİYETÇİ YAZARLARIN ROMANLARI ÜZERİNDEN OKUMAK

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Anahtar Sözcükler: 12 Eylül 1980 Askeri Darbesi, roman, sosyalist ve milliyetçi söylem, temsil

Bugünlerde, bir kez daha 12 Eylül 1980 askeri darbesi Türkiye politikasının gündemine oturmuş durumda. Aynı zamanda, 2000'lerde darbe üzerine yazılmış romanlarda ciddi bir artış gözlemlenmek de mümkün. Bu durum konunun Türkiye toplumunun hâlâ 12 Eylül darbesiyle yüzleşmemesi ve anlatıcağlarının olması ile açıklanabilir. Bu tez, darbe üzerine yazılmış romanların patlamasıyla ortaya çıkmış ve şu ana kadar yazılmış diğer tezlerden farklı olarak sadece sol yazını değil, sağ yazını da incelemeyi hedeflemiştir.

Bu çalışmanın amacı temel olarak darbe üzerine 2000'lerden sonra yazılmış beş romanı incelemektir. Bunlardan ilk ikisi sosyalist yazarlar tarafından yazılmış Murat Uyraklı'nın *Tol* (2002) ve Ayşegül Devecioğlu'nun *Kuş Diline Öykünen* (2003) adlı romanlarıdır. Diğer üç roman ise milliyetçi yazarlar tarafından yazılmış Naci Bostancı'nın *Hayatın Kıyısına Düşen* (2002), Remzi Çayır'ın *Adım Yeşil* (2005) ve Ahmet Haldun Terzioğlu'nun *Bizi Fırtına Vurdu* (2009) adlı eserleridir. Bu romanlar incelenirken şu soru etrafında dönecektir: 12 Eylül 1980 darbesi romanlar dolayısıyla nasıl temsil edilmektedir? Bu soruya cevap vermek için romanlar hem form hem de içerik olarak incelenip karşılaştırılacaktır. Nihayetinde, benzerlikler ve farklılıklar ortaya konularak, 12 Eylül 1980'in sosyalist ve milliyetçi söylemdeki etkileri incelenecektir.

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Chapter I

Introduction

In the thirtieth anniversary of 12 September coup d'état, on 12 September 2010, a referendum will be held in Turkey and people will vote to change the constitution which was enacted in the aftermath of the coup, in 1982 to give an exact date. That is why debate on the 1980 coup has arisen with renewed heat in all circles, especially the media. Indeed, some even argue that in actuality, the referendum will be on 12 September rather than the constitution. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in a speech he delivered in Yalova, complained about the coup with the following words: “We went through the pain before 12 September; we suffered from the persecution of 12 September as well; we also felt the repression of post-12 September in our souls and on our bodies.”¹ Afterwards, in a speech delivered at the caucus meeting of his party, he mentioned names such as Mustafa Pehlivanoglu, Erdal Eren, Nejdet Adalı, who were all executed just after 12 September. He read a letter Mustafa Pehlivanoglu wrote to his family just before he was executed. After this incident, an intense debate erupted: who suffered most after 12 September? Political parties, be they nationalist or socialist, began trying to prove how much they were persecuted by the coup. Thus 12 September once more came to the fore. Whoever was persecuted the most by the military takeover, we all agree on the fact that 12 September is a regime of harsh repression and systematic persecution. The ongoing debate, however, shows clearly that it is a catastrophe that Turkish society has not been able to face as yet. It also shows that it is impossible to understand the 12 September coup d'état only as a past event. In other words, although officially over on 13 December 1983 with Turgut Özal's government

¹ “Biz 12 Eylül'ün öncesinin acılarını da yaşadık, biz 12 Eylül zulmünü de yaşadık, biz 12 Eylül sonrasının baskılarını da bütün ruhumuzda, bedenimizde hissettik.”

being elected in the public election, the institutional and cultural effects of the coup d'état still prevail in Turkish society. That is to say, working on 12 September 1980 automatically means an attempt to understand today, and vice versa.

Apart from the recent and ongoing debates on 12 September and its aftermath, it is also noteworthy that there has been a boom in the number of novels written on it after the year 2000. There is not much statistical evidence to elaborate on the subject. That is, we do not have the exact figures. There is no analysis or interpretation of this drastic increase, either. Yet even a simple search through the new arrivals in a bookstore or the pages of a newspaper supplement of book reviews would be convincing. Having read a considerable amount of these novels, I could easily say that this boom, at least partially, can be explained with “the need to tell the tale”.

In my thesis I will discuss the possibilities of remembering 12 September 1980 through literature; through 5 novels written after 2000, to be exact. My main problematic will turn around the following questions: How and to what extent has literature remembered the 1980 coup d'état? When has it remained silent? What are the formal and thematic similarities and differences between the novels written by leftist and rightist authors? What do these similarities and differences tell us? What kind of a rupture does 12 September coup d'état represent in these novels?

Before going on, I should also note that, to understand the specificity of the 12 September coup d'état, a comparative reading with the 12 March 1971 military intervention would be crucial. Although 12 March is beyond the limits of this work, it is important to understand how 12 September restored the social order which 12 March failed to restore. In order to be able to understand what 12 September exactly means,

one should see how an “ideal”² was concealed by it. This “ideal” was still attainable in the aftermath of 12 March and enjoyed considerable social support. Therefore, in order to emphasize the peculiarity of 12 September, I will first give a brief historical background. Then I will argue that with 12 September the public space, in the meaning Habermas gives to it, disintegrated and this is where we should look for a rupture, and this is why revolutionaries felt lonely after the coup. Then, making use of literary theory, I will try to explain how and why literature can be used to understand 12 September. Finally I will describe briefly the content of each chapter.

1. Brief Historical Overview

In early 1971, Justice Party’s government was seen as being weak by the Turkish Military Forces because it was unable to stop the violent struggle between leftist and rightist groups in universities. It could not introduce any legislation to solve the existing social and financial problems, either. Due to these problems, the military High Command issued a memorandum which can be evaluated as an ultimatum of the armed forces to the civil government (Zürcher 258). In the memorandum the “civilian political authorities [were accused] of having led the country into ‘anarchy, fratricidal strife, and social and economic unrest’ and failed ‘to realize the reforms stipulated by the constitution’ ” (Schick and Tonak 366). The armed forces, on the grounds that it is their constitutional duty to protect and preserve the Turkish Republic, threatened the civil government with a takeover of the state’s administration. Afterwards Süleyman Demirel resigned and Nihat Erim became the head of the cabinet. Erim declared that law and order would be restored under his government. As Schick and Tonak argue, even

² Ideal is used to refer “dava” in Turkish which means the belief and action for the possibility of more just and fair world. In fact what I mean is the revolutionary ideal before 12 September Military coup.

though the civilian government was re-established after the 1971 military intervention, the Turkish Army, from then on, kept under surveillance and repressed the left; “students, labor leaders, artists and writers, journalists, academics, and politicians were imprisoned” (366). That is to say, Erim’s government tried to remove the “communist threat”. Although it was a civilian government, Nihat Erim accepted repression, torture, and the war against liberties which were secured by the 1961 constitution. Additionally, he opened the way for the establishing of State Security Courts³ which was one of the darkest parts of modern Turkish history. Almost 3000 people were tried in these courts. 44 articles were changed in order to delimit civil liberties and the autonomy of universities, radios and televisions. While civil liberties were being limited step by step, the power of the National Security Council was being increased. Nihat Erim, through all these repressions, planned to achieve economic stability for the Turkish State. This repression and violence, however, was not enough for the Turkish Army. Therefore, the National Security Council forced the cabinet to declare martial law in 11 provinces on 27 April 1971. This lasted for two years and covered almost all big cities in Turkey. Zürcher describes this martial law as follows: “Erim government used the situation to institute a veritable witch-hunt against anyone with leftist or even progressive liberal sympathies” (259). In this period approximately 5000 people were arrested, who were mainly intellectuals, writers, journalists, professors, trade unionists. “There were widespread reports of torture, both in the prisons and in so-called ‘laboratories’, torture chambers of the MIT” (Zürcher 260).

Between the general elections on 14 October 1973 and 12 September military coup, the government changed for seven times and most of these governments were coalitions. The “Nationalist Front” coalition government periods were the ones when a

³ Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemeleri.

civil war atmosphere was seen in the streets. As Schick and Tonak state, a civil war atmosphere prevailed during these periods: “There were 1,095 casualties in 1978 and 1,362 in 1979. The Kahraman Maraş massacre took place in December 1978, and resulted in more than hundred deaths after three days of intercommunal fighting sparked by NMP provocations” (370).

In short, there was a severe erosion in governmental authority before 12 September coup. In other words, Turkey was faced with a *crisis of hegemony* “which occurs either because the ruling class has failed in some major political undertaking for which it has requested the consent of the broad masses or because huge masses have passed suddenly from a state of political passivity to a certain activity, and put forward demands which taken together” (Gramsci 210). A crisis of authority is precisely the *crisis of hegemony* or general crisis of the state (210). As Gramsci states, the normal exercise of *hegemony* on the classical terrain of parliamentary regime is characterized by the combination of *force* and *consent* which balance each other reciprocally (Gramsci 80). As Yalman points out, the military rule played a significant role in the reconstruction of the Turkish state’s hegemony not only by establishing an authoritarian regime, but more importantly, by gaining the *consent* of the masses who were disenchanted by the repercussions of both the economic and the political crises during the pre-coup era (Yalman 41).

According to Schick and Tonak, there were basically two aims of 1980 coup d’état. The first one was to stop the violent struggle between the left and the right. Another aim was mass de-politization: “all parties, associations, and professional organizations were closed [...] strikes were banned, and labor disputes were subjected to compulsory arbitration” (Schick and Tonak 372). Indeed, the figures speak for themselves: more than 650.000 people were detained, police files were opened about

1.680.000 people, there were 210.000 political trials during which 7000 people were condemned to death, 50 of 517 death penalties were executed, 299 people died in prison, 30.000 people were fired from civil service, and 14.000 people were forfeited of citizenship, 39 tons of published material were destroyed, and 23.677 associations were closed down (Öngider 8)

At this point it would be significant to look at the economic reasons behind such a social trauma. Although violence in the streets is important, it is possible to argue that the growing crises towards the end of the 1970s played a crucial role and paved the way to the coup (Zürcher 267). According to Schick and Tonak, “particularly after 1977, capital increasingly became unable to reproduce itself through the traditional mode of accumulation based on import substitution and oriented towards the domestic market” (373). It is understandable that Demirel’s 24 January economic reform package was seen as a solution for the capitalist class, but he was unable to implement it due to social pressure. As Zürcher points out, unions’ oppositions, especially DİSK’s, made it impossible to implement the package. “Members of DİSK occupied a number of factories between January and April and there were strikes everywhere, often accompanied by clashes with the police or the army” (268). After the 12 September military coup, Turgut Özal, the architect of 24 January economic package, had enough power to implement these reforms without any social resistance. According to Schick and Tonak, radical economic changes followed this. Instead of import substitution industrialization, an export oriented strategy was encouraged. As Çağlar Keyder describes, “exports increased from \$3 billion in 1980 to \$13 billion in 1990 and \$50 billion in 2003” (68). These economic reforms were supported by big capital. Rahmi Koç’s words on 12 September military coup are telling in that sense:

Before the 12 September operation, we were obliged to do everything in the bureaucratic system. Thus, months were needed to secure a resolution or pass laws and regulations. [...] The difference under military rule is that- since there is no need for decisions to be sanctioned by parliament- rapid movement is possible [...] And most importantly, there is no question for political considerations. (373-74)

As it can be seen from the quotation, Rahmi Koç obviously sees a conflict between politics and economics. He argues that the military created a safe zone for economic “development” and liberalization. Here it should be noted that one of the first things the military junta did was to ask for the support of TUSİAD in transmitting this message abroad, while the activities of all other associations, especially the trade unions, were banned (Yalman, 39).

Up to now, I have tried to draw a general picture of the eve of 12 September coup d'état. It is obvious that during the 70's there were government instabilities and economic crises Turkey was faced with. Yet my main concern is when and why the mass support behind the revolutionaries who were imprisoned in 1971 disappeared because, as can be seen in the novels I will be analyzing here, in *Tol*⁴ and *Imitating Bird Language*⁵, the main problem for the narrators is the non-existence of a space in which they could express themselves and the loss of meaning of their words. This means that the novels could show us a rupture specific to 12 September: the transformation of the public sphere, the intellectuals who can only exist within it, and their representation.

⁴ “Tol” means “revenge” in Kurdish.

⁵ Kuş Diline Öyküen.

2. Intellectuals and the 12 September Coup d'État

The state of the intellectuals could be taken up on two levels: the approach of the public and the approach of the coup towards the intellectuals.

It is obvious that there is an enormous difference between the state of affairs before and after the 12 September coup d'état in terms of the representation of the revolutionaries. To make this difference clear it is worth mentioning Pınar Kür's explanation of her feelings about 12 March 1971 and 12 September 1980. Pınar Kür is a well-known author who has many novels on 12 March military intervention. In 3 March 2004, *Radikal Kitap* conducted an interview with her on her latest novel. There she explicitly says that although she mentions 12 March here and there, she never refers to 12 September since it does not give her any inspiration:

Let me first tell you why 12 March gave me this inspiration. I was closer to their age, for one thing. And for another, they were genuinely idealist and innocent. Their innocence is deeply poignant. Not a single man was killed on 12 March. I mean, only the state killed. These kids were hanged and bombed without having killed a single soul. Sinan, Deniz, Hüseyin, Yusuf, Mahir... These are all poignant events. I have not felt the same for anyone on 12 September. Young people died then, too, but they were too rapacious for me. They did not have the innocence of 12 March.⁶

As it can be seen in the quotation, Kür explicitly says that she sees the revolutionaries of 1980's as terrorists and criminals, unlike the innocent previous ones. The ones who were tortured and executed under 12 September military coup are not considered as "our children" by Pınar Kür. That is to say, for her, there are not any intersection points between the public and the intellectuals, and the "terrorists". Nurdan Gürbilek argues that, in the 70's, a special public sphere was emerged which was distinct from both the

⁶ "12 Mart niye verdi bu ilhamı onu söyleyeyim. Bir kere yaşım daha yakındı onlara. Bir de onlar gerçekten çok idealist ve çok masumdular. O masumiyetleri insanın içini yakar. Bir tek adam öldürülmedi 12 Mart'ta. Yani devlet öldürdü de. Bir tek insanı öldürmeden asıldı bu çocuklar, bombalandılar. Sinan, Deniz, Hüseyin, Yusuf, Mahir... Bunlar benim içimi yakan olaylardır. 12 Eylül'de kimse benim içimi yakmadı. Orada da gençler öldü ama onlar biraz yırtıcı geldi bana. 12 Mart'ta olan o masumiyet yoktu onlarda"

state and the private space. According to Habermas, unlike the private space which is the realm of civil society and the state, public sphere is the realm of politics (Habermas 30). It is composed of citizens who are united to make use of their own reason for discussing. Therefore, “a shared culture developed that, among other things, helped the participants to discover and to express their needs and interests” (Finlayson 10). With reference to Habermas, Gürbilek argues that the very specificity of 1970’s comes from the emergence of a public sphere where different classes of society come together and interact (64).

In 1970’s, politics provided a common ground for people from different classes, who, in the normal flow of life, would not come together. It brought together people with different means and ways of life, the rich and the poor, the ‘cultivated’ and the ‘uncultivated’; it brought together a worker and a would-be employer or director, one living in a *gecekondu* and a student from a rich family, one who has just migrated into the city and the son of an old Istanbul family, on the promise of the same common life.⁷ (Gürbilek 16)

Just as Gürbilek does, it is possible to talk about a public space in the 70’s and to say that the leftists, with the support they get from this public space, could raise their voice and get organized. The basic difference between the military intervention of 1971 and the coup of 1980 could be found here. It would not be wrong to argue that the experience with which Pınar Kür identifies herself, in fact, is the product of such a social space. The grief of Pınar Kür is shared by the public space and the leftists who were detained in 1971, once they get out, do not experience alienation; on the contrary, they resume their lives and are still committed to their cause. It would not be wrong to argue that the works of famous authors like Sevgi Soysal, Firuzan and Adalet Ağaoğlu

⁷ “1970’lerde politika, hayatın normal seyri içinde bir araya gelemeyecek farklı sınıf kesimlerden insanlara bir buluşma zemini sağlamış; farklı imkan ve hayat tarzlarına sahip kişileri, varlıklılar ile varlıksızları, “kültürlüler” ve “kültürsüzler”i karşılaştırmış, bir işçiyle normal koşullarda işveren ya da yönetici olabilecek bir genci, bir gecekondu sakiniyle varlıklı bir aileden gelmiş bir öğrenciyi, şehre yeni göçmüş biriyle, köklü bir istanbul ailesinin çocuğunu aynı ortak hayat vaadi üzerinde buluşturabilmişti.”

are products of such a public space, and they do address this public space. What is new with 12 September, as Şükrü Arın puts forward, is the disintegration of the public. Arın, with reference to Franz Kafka's famous protagonist, Gregor Samsa, argues that 12 September is the story of Turkish leftists' metamorphosing into Samsa and Turkish society's metamorphosing into his sister. According to Arın, a feeling of disgust enters between the revolutionaries and the society, just as in the case Gregor Samsa and his family. The feeling of disgust is the dominant feeling in the quotation from Pınar Kür above. The revolutionaries and the society become almost distinct entities with distinct experiences living in distinct worlds. *Imitating Bird Language* and *Tol* can be considered as novels that are seeking the language of this cleavage and that are trying cope with it as well as the alienation experienced. As will be analyzed in detail in the first chapter, there is neither a space nor a language that the revolutionaries can go back to after their defeat (Gürbilek 65). Arın explains the main difference between 12 March and 12 September thus:

Things experienced on 12 March were things which could be told then. Above all, there was a public that would listen to you. The 'fire ball' of 12 September fell on the 'social conscience' itself and destroyed it first. Therefore, when compared to 12 March, it allowed more people –not quantitatively, but proportionately– to stay beyond the reach of the public space.”(8)

The novels I will be concentrating on in the first chapter are, indeed, novels that are attempting to make heard the voices of those who are beyond the reach of the public space. Leftist narrators who, with the repression of the possibility of a revolution, are not cared about by anybody find the “place they are worthy of”. The society and the people around the leftists remind them of their “real place” repeatedly. That Yusuf in *Tol* works as a proofreader, whereas Gülay in *Imitating Bird Language* works as a janitor is explained by the following quotation from Gürbilek:

In the 80's, we witnessed that, while polarities in cities were on the increase, those who once gathered around the promise of a collective life were returned to where they were worthy of; one as manager to a bank, the other as janitor to the same bank; one to torture, the other to unemployment. [We also witnessed that] not only a collectivity, [but also] [...] a ground for interaction was totally destroyed⁸. (69)

As can be seen clearly from the quotation, with the shaking of the common ground, everybody is left imprisoned in their private spheres which are their destinies. It is as if there is no more a common will or a “cause”. The novels I will be taking up in the first chapter can be read as stories by narrators who lost the ground and the language to express themselves and who are striving to make their pasts meaningful.

At this point the rightist authors' position, whom I will be dealing with in the second chapter could lead to an interesting speculation. It is possible to say that in their novels one cannot find an answer to the question “How did they experience the disintegration of the public?” It would not be wrong to say that the *ülküçüs*, who were part of a highly hierarchical party structure and tied to each other with fellow-countrymanship, were not part of the public space in the 70's. Indeed, NMP, from the beginning, was displeased with the birth of such a public space and supported the martial law. As Semih Vaner states, NMP is an organization that has strong bonds with the army and many retired soldiers as senior executives. In this context, that the ground beneath them was shaken has nothing to do with the disintegration of the public space, but with their exclusion by the state. As I will be focusing on in the second chapter, the *ülküçüs* feel speechless and alienated since they cannot understand why the state tortured its own children.

⁸ “80'lerde şehirlerdeki kutupsallık artarken, eskiden ortak bir hayat vaadi etrafında bir araya gelmiş insanların “müstahak” oldukları yere-birinin banka müdürlüğüne, ötekinin aynı bankanın müstahdemliğine, birinin işkenceye ötekinin işsizliğe vb.- iade edildiğin, yalnızca bir ortaklığın yıkılmakla kalmadığına [...] bir geçişkenlik zemininin de tümüyle geçersiz kılındığına tanık olduk.”

While concentrating on the relationship between the intellectuals and the 12 September coup d'état, the second level of analysis is, as I mentioned in the very beginning of this section, the coup's discourse on the intellectuals. The coup labeled those who called themselves "revolutionaries" or "intellectuals" as "terrorists". The founding of The Council of Higher Education (CHE),⁹ the ban on newspapers and journals, books that are being collected and being burnt for fear of the state all show the anti-intellectualist thrust of the coup. As Fethi Naci emphasizes, it is impossible to forget how 12 September saw the intellectuals. Kenan Evren, in his speech in Manisa (28 May 1984), said of the intellectuals: "We have seen many intellectuals and their treasons. We had poets who fled the country, took shelter in another country, and died over there. Was he not an intellectual? What is the use of such an intellectual? (Naci 18). As can be seen in this speech, intellectuals are identified with treason and being constructed as the object of the society's rage.

3. Theoretical Framework

"history [...] is the ultimate signifier of literature, as it is the ultimate signified"

Terry Eagleton

Up to this point, in order to understand the very specificity of the 12 September coup d'état, I have tried to describe both the historical and the cultural changes it brought about. Now it is time to explain why I chose literature to understand this catastrophic military takeover. The novels I will be taking up are "historical" in the sense that they deal with a specific time in history, namely, the 1980 military coup in Turkey.

⁹ Yükseköğretim Kurulu (YÖK).

However, to be able to grasp these novels one should begin by asking questions on the relationship between “history” and “text”. Here I will draw heavily on Terry Eagleton and Fredric Jameson. According to Eagleton,

Criticism is not a passage from text to reader: its task is not to re-double the text’s self-understanding, to collude with its object in a conspiracy of eloquence. Its task is to show the text as it cannot know itself, to manifest those conditions of its making (inscribed in its very letter) about which it is necessarily silent. It is not just that the text knows some things and not others; it is rather that its very self-knowledge is the construction of a self-oblivion. (“Criticism and Ideology” 43)

Therefore, with reference to Eagleton, it is possible to say that the important thing is not to realize the relationship between history and text but to understand the ways in which history is represented by the text. Eagleton argues that, although literary texts make references to history and historical objects, we should pay attention to their ways of representing them. In this thesis, my main emphasis will be on the representation of the 12 September military coup in novels written by the carriers of different ideologies. In other words, although both leftists and nationalist authors try to deal with the coup d’état, they have totally different ways of representing it. As will be seen in the analysis of these novels in the second and third chapters, 12 September, as a historical event, enters the texts as ideology, which is a dominant structure determining both the content and the form of the text.

It is quite important, however, to note that Eagleton refuses any vulgar Marxist point of view which argues that a text, as part of superstructure, merely reflects the economic base. In other words, although Eagleton emphasizes that the literary text is product of history, he does not go on to say that there is a linear relationship between the two. Instead, he draws on Althusser’s argument that “art cannot be reduced to ideology: it has, rather, a particular *relationship* to it” (“Marxism and Literary Criticism” 9). Indeed, “It manages to distance itself from it, to the point where it permits

us to ‘feel’ and ‘perceive’ the ideology from which it springs” (9). In fact, with reference to Althusser, Eagleton tries to describe the highly mediated nature of literary production, which means that a literary text is relatively autonomous for him. The text establishes a relationship to ideology without merely reproducing it (Anderson 51). There is a complex relationship between the text and ideology. Here he makes an analogy between a literary text and a dramatic performance. The dramatic performance is different from the text and is a production of it because it is the product of a specific labor on the text and the interpretation of it (Anderson 52). Although dramatic performance has a relationship with the text, it transforms it into something else. According to Eagleton, we can consider the relationship between ideology and the literary text in a similar way. That is to say, the literary text is a specific production of ideology. On the other hand, “ideology is not the ‘truth’ of the text, any more than the dramatic text is the ‘truth’ of the dramatic performance. The truth of the text is not an essence but a practice – a practice of its relation to ideology in terms of that to history” (“Criticism and Ideology” 98). As will be seen in the analysis of the novels, for instance, once we take nationalism as the ideology and the novels I will be focusing on as productions based on it, we see that there are discrepancies between the ideology and the practice.

One other point Eagleton underlines is that “every text can be seen as a ‘problem’ to which a ‘solution’ is to be found; and the process of the text is the process of problem solving” (87). Taking into account Eagleton’s arguments, it is possible to argue that the novels taken up in this thesis set out with a problem and attempt to find out how and why the “new world” has isolated them. Despite their different ideological backgrounds, they basically try to find an answer to this same question. Overall, these

novels provide a useful tool for the understanding of the relationship between ideology and text, essence and practice, that is, between history and text.

Until now I have tried to give a basic outline of Terry Eagleton's arguments on the relationship between history and text. As I have mentioned above with reference to Eagleton, literary texts have a "mediated nature". That is, they do not represent history or ideology directly, but through mediation. Here it would be useful to comment on how this mediation is realized. This, according to Eagleton, is criticism's primary task:

It is criticism's task to demonstrate how the text is thus 'hollowed' by its relation to ideology –how, in putting that ideology to work, it is driven up against those gaps and limits which are the product of ideology's relation to history. An ideology exists because there are certain things which must not be spoken of. (90)

With reference to Pierre Macherey, Eagleton tries to delineate the ways in which literary criticism examines the unanswered questions and the answers given in the text in order to analyze its ideological map. Macherey claims that literary works are internally dissonant and this dissonance arises from their peculiar relation to ideology. There are significant silences, gaps and absences in the text, which is the basic evidence of its ideological structure. Therefore, the critic must make these silences of the text 'speak'. The text is ideologically forbidden to say certain things ("Marxist Literary Criticism" 16). "Far from constituting a rounded, coherent whole, it displays a conflict and contradiction of meanings; and the significance of the work lies in the difference rather than unity between these meanings" (16). That is to say, ideology is present in the text in the form of silences and contradictions, which constitutes its identity. The object of literary criticism is the unconscious of the work which is not aware of its unconsciousness ("Criticism and Ideology" 90). At this point, it should be noted that Macherey draws on Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*. Freud claims that the analyst,

like the literary critic, must “expose the meaning of the text-distortion itself” (90). So, analyzing the mechanisms that repress the unconscious gains importance.

The pressure of resistance, Freud believes, is at the very root of the genesis of the dream, responsible for the ‘gaps, obscurities and confusions, which may interrupt the continuity of even the finest’ of the dreams’. The dream, as distorted and mutilated text, is a conflict and compromise between unconscious material seeking expression, and the intervention of the ideological censor. The typical consequence of this is that the unconscious is able to say what it wanted, but not in the way it wanted to say it- only in softened, distorted, perhaps unrecognizable form. (90-91)

As it can be seen in the quotation above, Eagleton draws an analogy between ‘dream-text’ and literary text. The unconscious of the text is mediated by ideology, which appears in the text as a mode of disorder (91). Parallel to Eagleton’s point, Fredric Jameson argues that literary criticism should read the hidden economic and political manifestations that have shaped them. Like Freud’s distinction between “unconscious” and “conscious”, Jameson argues that a text has “manifest” and “latent” meanings (Roberts 58). The manifest meaning is on the surface. On the other hand, latent meaning is the meaning and contradictions under the surface. According to Jameson, the relationship between unconscious and conscious or latent and manifest meanings is not arbitrary. In fact, the force behind this relationship is history. This disparity between manifest and latent meanings is the result of “repression”. According to Freud, repression is a way of dealing with unacceptable and painful experiences. Repression, as a defense mechanism, copes with catastrophic experiences which are too heavy for the conscious mind. Therefore, these experiences are ‘buried’ in the subconscious (Roberts 60). On the other hand, these repressed experiences placed in the subconscious are not simply erased, but they return. The return of the repressed can take a variety of forms. The literary text can be evaluated as the return of the repressed. Like

Eagleton, Jameson claims that critics must pay attention to “symptoms” of the text through which they can access the unconscious of reality.

Jameson derived two important points from Lacan. The first one is that the subject can be seen as a textual site. In line with the Marxist tradition, he argues that the subject should be seen as an outcome of material, historical and social conditions (68). The second important point which Jameson borrows from Lacan is his notion of the “real,” which, with reference to Althusser, can be seen as “history”. History as Lacanian real can only be apprehended through its symbolic manifestations. That is to say, according to Jameson, “the surface narration usefully mediates the unconscious reality of the text’s relationship with history” (76). In other words, the political unconscious is ‘history’ which is present in each text. “Always historicize! This slogan –the one absolute and we may even say ‘transhistorical’ imperative of all dialectical thought – will unsurprisingly turn out to be the moral of *The Political Unconscious* as well.” (Jameson 9).

One of the most important points in *The Political Unconscious* is the usage of the term “mediation”:

[N]arrative, story-forms and plots that play a dominant role in mediating individual experience and social totality, according to a process of what he calls *transcoding* – the translating into an accepted code (which consists of certain narrative patterns and expectations) of social and historical reality to make it accessibly mediated for the individual. (Roberts 78)

According to Jameson, “mediation is the classical dialectical term for the establishment of relationships between, say, the formal analysis of a work of art and its social ground, or between the internal dynamics of the political state and its economic base” (Jameson, 1981, 39). He argues that story as a narrative and socially symbolic act expresses the unconscious totality of real life. “The narratives that mediate our existences from the myths and stories we tell ourselves, to the plot-lines of soap operas and novels)

symbolically embody our social reality” (Roberts, 2000, 82). On the other hand, the political unconscious is not only imprinted in the content of the text but also its form in which that content finds shape and expression.

Bearing in mind the arguments and concepts I mostly borrow from Eagleton and Jameson, in the second chapter of my thesis, I will analyze novels written by leftist authors, namely *Tol* by Murat Uyurkulak and *Imitating Bird Language* by Ayşegül Devocioğlu. I will look at their formal structure and try to read the latent meaning behind this formal structure. I will suggest that these novels have an “allegorical structure” in the sense that Walter Benjamin defines the term. I will try to understand why these authors chose the allegorical form to represent 12 September. Then, I will analyze the content of the novels and I will concentrate especially on the “representation of self” in order to capture how this representation is constructed and where it is shattered in relation to the coup d’état. This means that I will be looking at the silences and contradictions in these novels to grasp fully their way of representing history. Finally, in this chapter, I will analyze the language of the protagonists in order to see on which points they find themselves speechless and make use of mythical narrative structures to break this silence. Thus I will speculate on the possible meaning of these two opposite usages of language.

In the third chapter, I will look at novels from “the other side”. In other words, the novels of nationalist authors, namely *Bir Fitına Vurdu Bizi* by Ahmet Haldun Terzioğlu, *My Name is Green* by Remzi Çayır and *Hayatın Kısına Düşen* by Naci Bostancı will be analyzed. Just as I did in the second chapter, I will try to read the meanings of their formal structures. I will ask the following questions: Why do they use realist structures, unlike the novels I concentrated in the second chapter? What is the latent meaning behind this structure? Secondly, I will look at the content and read their

ideological standpoint upon which they construct themselves. Moreover, I will search for the impact of the 12 September coup d'état on their representation of nationalist activists. Finally, I will make a comparison between the representation of the revolutionaries in *The Storm Hit Us*¹⁰, *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life*¹¹ and *My Name is Green*¹² and the representation of nationalists in *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language*. I will basically ask the following questions: How do they represent each other before and after 1980? What is the effect of the coup d'état on the representation of “the other side”?

¹⁰ Bizi Fırtına Vurdu.

¹¹ Hayatın Kıyısına Düşen.

¹² Adım Yeşil.

Chapter II

Analysis of the Novels on 12 September Military Coup written by Revolutionary Authors

In this chapter of my thesis I will concentrate on the novels written by leftist authors and their representation of 12 September military coup. I will explain why I chose these novels as a tool of understanding 12 September coup d'état with reference to Terry Eagleton. According to him, the "textual real" is related to the "historical real". That is to say, the textual real is not an imaginary transposition of the historical real. On the contrary, the text is the product of certain signifying practices, of history itself ("Criticism and Ideology" 75). In other words, *Imitating Bird Language* (2003) and *Tol* (2002), as products of a certain historical reality, have a very specific way of representing it. At this point it is important to emphasize that both of them were published after 2000. Surprisingly enough, although there are not any official statistics, it is possible to argue that there is a boom of post-coup novels after 2000's. Therefore it is possible to assume that Turkish intellectuals now have the temporal distance to write on 12 September military coup. In fact, as it will be seen from Devecioğlu's and Uyurkulak's interviews below, they both muse on the possible ways of representing the coup d'état. This is why the literary value of their novels is important to them.

In this chapter I will first focus on the formal features of the novels and try to find the latent meaning of their fragmented structure. I will refer to Avelar's notion of "allegorical structure" which is adopted from Walter Benjamin. Although the theoretical framework of the chapter is not completely constructed upon Avelar's methodology which he uses to explain Latin American post-dictatorial novels, it would be fruitful to

think about the relationship between “allegorical structure” and post-coup novels in Turkey. Interestingly enough, both novels use the allegorical symbol of “child” as a signifier of the idea of revolution. These children are not like any other children but they are disabled and irritating. In this chapter I will also try to interpret the meaning of this allegorical symbolization.

Secondly, I will try to understand the content behind this formal fragmentation. There will be two subtitles in this part: “Untimeliness” and “Fragmentation of Self”. Although these can be regarded as individual phenomena, they should be considered within the social framework after 12 September military coup. The protagonists of these novels, as revolutionaries, are subjected to both the vulgar violence of the state and the symbolic violence of the society. They feel themselves suddenly alienated from the society, the new world and the new time. In this chapter I will also discuss how the revolutionaries place themselves in this new picture after the coup d'état in detail.

Finally, I will answer the following questions: How do the revolutionaries represent themselves on the linguistic level? How do they narrate their story? When do they become speechless and when do they speak? Therefore, there will be two subtitles under this part: “Speechlessness” and “Mythical Narratives against Speechlessness”.

A. The Allegorical Structure of *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language* in Terms of Form and Content

Before going into the details of the allegorical structure of the novels, it would be beneficial to mention briefly the plot of the novels.

In *Imitating Bird Language*, Gülay, the main character of the story, is integrated into the socialist movement and imprisoned after the 12 September military coup. She is a young girl who was raped and tortured many times in prison. She has some communication problems after getting out of prison since her family, her co-workers and the others live their lives as if 12 September military coup never took place. She becomes the “usual suspect” because of her political identity and she is exposed to a symbolic violence by the society. Thus, she feels lonely and isolated. At that point she meets Yavuz who is a member of the socialist movement of hers. Unlike Gülay, he participates in the illegal and militant part of the movement. He has been sentenced to death and is currently a fugitive. Like Gülay, he feels lonely and alien to the society. Neither of them can understand the great and sudden transformation the society has undergone. Thus, Gülay and Yavuz who have similar feelings and shocks meet each other one day. They fall in love with each other but theirs is not like other, “normal” relationships because of the traumatic experiences they share. This is the main plot of the novel and this story is interrupted by many side-stories, flashbacks and the return of the past in pieces. Thus, it is not possible to talk about a linear time flow in the novel. Devocioğlu uses the present tense and past tense together and they follow one after the other. Moreover, the letters and the diary of İbrahim who is a guerilla in the same socialist organization penetrate into the story in italics.

In *Tol*, Yusuf, the main character of the novel, grows up in an orphanage. His mother dies while he is in primary school and he has never seen his father. His parents

were revolutionaries like Yusuf. Both of them were subjected to the violence of the state and their lives were destroyed because of their revolutionary activities. Like his parents, Yusuf was arrested by the police because of his revolutionary activities in the socialist organization and gave away his revolutionary friends' names. He feels so ashamed and guilty that he thinks he will never be innocent or serene again in his life. When he comes out of prison, he is excluded from his socialist organization and he continues his life as an alienated person. He works as a proof-reader in one of the publishing houses of the day. He devotes his life to waiting for his suicide day. In a squared notebook arranged for 10 years, filling one square every hour, he waits for the day of his suicide to come. His past keeps haunting him though and he is fired. Having been fired he decides to commit suicide but he gets drunk, passes out, and finds himself in a train compartment where he meets Şair thanks to whom he will continue his life. Becoming a comrade of Şair, he gradually gives up the idea of suicide. Tol is the novel of a journey; a journey from Istanbul to Diyarbakır. Şair is a friend of Yusuf's father. He has not been able to write poetry for a long time. Indeed, in the novel a revolutionary story which passed from father to son is told. The plot is interspersed with stories Şair gives Yusuf for him to read. "The Stories" tell what has happened to Yusuf's father, Şair, and their friends. According to Şair, these are not stories from a distant past. On the contrary, they are dealing with 12 September military coup experienced by Turkey. In this respect, the journey from Istanbul to Diyarbakır is also an internal journey during which Yusuf learns about his past and Şair remembers his past. As Yusuf reads the stories Şair gives, the novel is being written.

In this part of my thesis, I will argue that the novels which will be analyzed here have allegorical structures. I will also show that these two post-coup novels, as products of a past catastrophe, have common fragmented structural characteristics. At that point,

I will make use of *The Untimely Present* of Idelber Avelar. In *The Untimely Present*, Avelar examines various literary strategies for responding to the violent transformation of Latin America's Southern Cone countries, including Argentina, Brazil and Chile, in 1960's and 1970's. Parallel to the Turkish case, there were/are many traumatic experiences of military takeovers and dictatorships in the Southern Cone which can be considered as a means to eliminate the opposition to transnational capital (Dove 183). The literary works Avelar discusses are postcolonial fictions and while defining these as "postcolonial fiction" Avelar is far from offering a new, univocal, and monolithic corpus. In contrast, these novels as products of societal disasters have ambiguities and internal contradictions among themselves. Their common feature is that they register the occurrence of a catastrophe of which the only distinguishing characters are fragments and ruptures (Dove 184). What Avelar puts forward with respect to post-dictatorial Latin American novels seems to be applying to the Turkish novels which will be analyzed here to a certain extent. In other words, although Avelar's method and questions will not be adopted entirely in this thesis, some of the concepts he employs are quite useful for the understanding of the post-12 September novels which are the subject of this work.

According to Avelar, "These texts seek to recover a past whose traces are in of being flushed by history, yet at the same time they endeavor to ward off paralyzing effects of a traumatic past that continues to encroach upon the present" (Dove 184). Avelar argues that the texts he examines in his book "insistently confront the ruins left by the dictatorships and extract from them a strongly allegorical meaning" (2). He states that post-dictatorial texts he has chosen are the ones which display a conscious effort to remind their readers that they are the product of a past catastrophe. Like Benjamin's angel of history, these books "look at the pile of debris, ruins, and defeats of the past in

an effort to redeem them, being at the same time pushed forward by the forces ‘progress’ and ‘modernization’ ” (3). One should, however, be careful while applying this image to the post-coup novels since, the catastrophe in them is caused by a military intervention rather than directly by modernity or progress.

Although the aim of this thesis is not to discuss the theoretical background and framework of allegory, here it is crucial to understand the concept of allegory Avelar borrows from Benjamin who interpreted the concept in an untraditional way in his *Ursprung des Deutschen Trauerspiels* (1924-25). Benjamin builds his argument on the difference between “symbol” and “allegory”. Traditionally, in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, allegory, as a mode of symbolic representation, was understood as one of the representational modes among others. It was depreciated for being too mechanical and capable of only an abstract depiction of its original meaning. Symbol, however, was favored since it supposedly suggested continuity between itself and the totality it symbolized. This continuity was most commonly understood as “the idea of a unity between the perception and thought (or imagination) of beauty.” Benjamin, however, rejected the suggestion that symbol and allegory were two distinct modes of representation. For him, symbol and allegory were two features of language and they co-existed in any discourse (Mieszkowski 45-6). Benjamin argues that “Allegories are, in the realm of thoughts, what ruins are in the realm of things” (Benjamin 178). Allegory is the form of a world falling apart where the link between things and meaning is broken (Gürbilek 21) and it cannot be understood but only interpreted. Avelar’s point of reference is the following quotation from Benjamin:

Whereas in the symbol destruction is idealized and the transfigured face of nature is fleetingly revealed in the light of redemption, in allegory the observer is confronted with the *facies hippocratica* of history as a petrified, primordial landscape. Everything about history that, from the very beginning, has been untimely, sorrowful, unsuccessful, is expected in a face -or rather in a death’s head. (Benjamin 166)

According to Avelar, allegory is the mode chosen by the survivors of a catastrophe who are faced with a contradictory imperative: to mourn and to resist the restitution of the lost object that the mourning entails. There is a dilemma here: on the one hand survivors, using the allegorical form, underline the impossibility of substituting the loss. On the other hand, they try to find a way of working through loss, which is necessary for the task of mourning to begin (García-Moreno).¹³ Avelar states that “the impossibility of representing the totality is one of the sources of allegory, because allegory is a trope that thrives on breaks and discontinuities, as opposed to the unfractured wholeness presupposed by the symbol” (11). In other words, allegory’s penchant for breaks, discontinuities and paradox makes it suitable to narrate the experiences of loss and exile. In this thesis, I will not dwell on the concept of “mourning” at length. The texts taken up here, however, can also be regarded as a tool for mourning from the perspective of Avelar. I will constrain myself with adopting his usage of Benjamin’s understanding of allegory and its structural manifestations. In this respect, I will claim that both of the novels, *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language*, have allegorical structure in terms of both form and content. First, I will show the fragmented structure of both novels in terms of their form and the allegorical impact of this fragmentation. Secondly, I will discuss the allegorical representation of socialist revolution as a child in both novels.

¹³ Avelar’s understanding of “mourning” is in a fundamental sense a confrontation of time and its passing. In fact, ‘insistence of memory, of the survival of the past as a ruin in the present, that mourning displays a necessarily allegorical structure’ (5).

a) **The Fragmented Form of the Novels**

According to Jameson literary critics should pay attention to the form of a given text which reflects the “political unconscious”. ‘Social and historical raw material’ such as social fragmentation and individual alienation has direct effects on form (Roberts 91). That is to say, political unconsciousness of the texts may return as fragmented narrative structure and impossibility of “linearity”. Parallel to Jameson’s point, one of the basic elements of allegorical structure, which post-coup writers choose, is fragmented form of the texts. That is to say, as products of 12 September military coup, the fragmented form itself becomes an allegory of the fractured experience of the victims of the coup as well as the difficulty of remembering and sharing those experiences.

At this point, it would be useful to briefly discuss the relationship between the allegorical structure of the texts and the military coup experience of Turkey. Parallel to Latin American cases, in the Turkish case, *raison d’être* of 12 September military coup is the physical and symbolic elimination of all resistance to the implementation of neo-liberalism in order to restructure the Turkish economy. The economy was liberalized and Turkey was rapidly inserted as a new market into the neoliberal global economy. It can be argued that one of the most visible obstacles against neoliberal economic transformation was an effectively organized socialist political mobilization against the Turkish State. In fact, the political mobilization of 1970s aimed not to reform but to overthrow the existing regime, “not to continue the Kemalist project, but to subscribe to a different project altogether” (Irzık). Therefore, the Turkish Armed Forces, as a guardian of the Kemalist Republic, abolished all “enemies”. Although the military regime ended in 1983, we are living in a country where the putschists or admirals of the 12 September military coup d’état haven’t been put on trial yet. 12 September is a systematical torture, the arrest of thousands of people, and the execution of Erdal Eren

who was then under 18 and therefore was “aged” by the court. At the same time 12 September means graves that have not been found and corpses that have not been delivered to their families yet (Kahraman 20). Nilgün Toker states that Turkish society needs a narrative and narrators of 12 September in order to remember and face that trauma but the potential narrators, since the incident, have been vanishing (Toker 52). Parallel to Toker’s point, according to Felman, “to testify is not merely to narrate but to commit oneself, and to commit to narrate, to others: to take responsibility -in speech- for history or for to truth of an occurrence, for something which, by definition, goes beyond the personal” (204). In this respect, writing a novel is to take side and to testify for that side.

At this point it is important to note that, both Ayşegül Devecioğlu and Murat Uyrukulak, as narrators of this brutal force of the Turkish state, try to make us remember the past. It is possible to argue that remembering that experience is *de facto* fragmented because of the very specificity of the event. If we look at *Imitating Bird Language*, we see that it has a highly fragmented form. There is no continuous time structure in the novel. In contrast, there are leaps in time. Ayşegül Devecioğlu, as the allegorical interpreter of the past, makes the readers aware of the fact that the catastrophe is not a past event. In contrast to a historicist understanding of the coup d’état which claims that the coup was over in 1983, she shows us where and how the coup persists. The past tense penetrates into the present. One takes place after the other. One of the best examples of the interweaving of different temporalities throughout the novel could be found in the part where Gülay is making love to her boyfriend, namely Yavuz:

Yavuz was touching her with great compassion. Gülay lay down without moving for a long while. Long afterwards, while taking off her clothes, what surprised her most was his admiring look. *'Shut up, you slut!' said one of them. 'Would an innocent come here? Who knows with how many people you slept? With how many people did you sleep, you whore? Do you have many clients?'*¹⁴ She shivered with Yavuz's stroke. She was filled with disgust. Her body was stretched tight; without being able to distinguish that moment from this moment, the touchings, and words from one another.¹⁵ (58)

The love scene between the protagonist and her boyfriend is interrupted by the fragments of the past when Gülay was raped in prison. Ruins of the catastrophe are imprinted on her body, on her sexual experience. Similar examples could be found throughout the pages. The other important feature of *Imitating Bird Language's* fragmented form is that the letter of the guerilla penetrates the narrative through italic words. Devecioğlu states that, he uses these italic letters and diaries of İbrahim to capture "lost time":

The parts I have used in order to add a dimension to the narrative and recapture lost time, those narrated from the mouth of İbrahim and written in italics, are partially based on real material. For instance, there are quotations from the diary of a guerilla unit, which was kept by my friends who took to the mountains after 12 September. A few letters left in the court files. Things that befell me or some anecdotes I heard from my friends, etc.¹⁶

Therefore, it is possible to claim that allegory is apparent in the very fragmented and ruin-like structure of the novel.

¹⁴ Emphasis belongs to me.

¹⁵ "Yavuz büyük bir şefkatle dokunuyordu ona. Uzun süre kımıldamadan yattı Gülay. Çok sonra, üstündekileri çıkarırken en çok Yavuz'un hayran bakışlarına şaşırdı. *'Sus ulan orospu!!!' [...]* *'Masum adam gelir mi buraya? Kaç kişiyle yattın kim bilir? Kaç kişiyle yattın kaltak: çok muydu müşterilerin?'* Yavuz'un okşayışıyla ürperdi. İçi tiksintiyle doldu. Hareket edemeyecek ölçüde kasılıp kaldı; o ânı ve bu ânı, dokunuşları, sözleri birbirinden ayırt edemedi."

¹⁶ Berat Günçikan, *Cumhuriyet*, 7 Mart 2004.

If we look at *Tol*, there are three stories penetrating into each other and the novel is composed of both the memoirs of Şair and the writings of Oğuz. The plot is interrupted by the stories of Oğuz which are narrated by Yusuf, his son. It is very difficult to follow a straight line. Uyrkulak says that the readers should take it easy while reading, without paying too much attention to totality, and enjoy the stories because the novel makes loose connections between the stories.¹⁷ The novel is composed of mainly three parts which are T, O and L. In one of his interviews, Uyrkulak explains the name of the novel as follows:

[It means] '[r]evenge' in Kurdish. I used this word for two reasons. I liked the word much since 'revenge' is a more familiar and loose word. 'Tol' is more like a hammer. And also it is Kurdish. The language of the most 'peripheral' in this country.¹⁸

As it can be seen from the quotation, Uyrkulak uses the "the language of those on the fringe" as the title of his novel in order to narrate "those on the fringe". The "revenge" is fulfilled word by word throughout the novel. While Yusuf is reading his father's stories, which have italic titles different from other parts of the novel, he makes an archeology to reach the real story. In other words, reaching the real story is equal to taking revenge from history. Indeed, Uyrkulak's following words are significant in this respect: "Time comes, one takes a gun in his hand, the other sits down to write a book and tries to take revenge for the period"¹⁹ Moreover, in some parts of the narrative it is almost impossible to follow a linear story of the characters. The narrative of one character melts into the other ones. It is almost impossible to distinguish between the stories of the characters in the novel. Indeed, Şair tells Yusuf that he liked him once he got to know him since Yusuf's story resembled his own story, as well as Yusuf's father

¹⁷ "Deliler, şairler ve devrim". Söyleşi: Nazan Özcan, *Milliyet*, 27 Ekim 2002.

¹⁸ "Deliler, şairler ve devrim". Söyleşi: Nazan Özcan, *Milliyet*, 27 Ekim 2002.

¹⁹ "Tol: İlk intikam alındı...". Söyleşi: Berat Günçikan, *Cumhuriyet Dergi*, 5 Ocak 2003.

story: “The more I learned, the more I liked you, your story... You were just like me, just like your father”²⁰ (213). In other words, *Tol* is a narrative composed of stories whose connections to characters are ambiguous.

b) “The Child” as a Symbol of Revolution

The other important feature of both novels is the representation of “child” as revolution. As I mentioned above, while I am using concept of “allegory”, I am not referring to the classical notions of it. In the traditional way, an allegory “is a narrative [...] in which the agents and actions [...] are contrived by the author to make coherent sense on the ‘literal’ level of signification and at the same time to signify a second, correlated order of signification” (Abrahams 25). On the contrary, according to Benjamin, there is no direct allegorical representation. When we think about the difficulty of narrating a catastrophic event, here namely 12 September military coup, it is obvious that there are fragmented and subversive relationship between symbols and the meanings carried by symbols.

Both *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language* use “a child” to symbolize socialist revolution. In *Tol*, Ada is the aborted child of Esmer and Şair. Additionally, he is not like “normal” kids; he is too ugly and freak:

Ada, you fell in a hotel’s toilet in Ankara, didn’t you? [...] It is unnecessary to say this but when I was your age, I would wipe myself with white towels and, with the big coat of arms of a high school in my bosom, would walk through streets without being beaten. [...] Welcome, you freak of nature. You the crooked branch that grew up from the turds of all sorts of creatures, you have brought pleasures [with you].²¹ (149)

²⁰ “Öğrendikçe sevdim seni, hikâyesi sevdim... Aynı benim gibiydin, aynı baban gibi”

²¹ “Ada, sen Ankara’da bir otelin tuvaletine düşmüştün, öyle değil mi? [...] Gereksiz bir lakırdı olacak ama, ben senin kadarken beyaz havlularla kurulanıp, göğsümde kocaman bir kolej armasıyla, dayak yemeden sokaklardan geçtim. [...] Hoş geldin *hilkat garibi*. Bin bir türlü mahlukatın bokundan büyümüş yamuk dal, sefalar getirdin.”

As it can be seen from the quotation, the notion of child is very different from its traditional or general meaning. On the contrary, ugliness is imprinted on his body. Here it is possible to argue that the body of the child is allegorical and carries allegorical fragmentation. On the other hand, although Esmer miscarried in a toilet, Ada is resurrected and appears with each possibility of revolution. Ada as the innocent and miscarried child refers to the revolution. Furthermore, his name is significant since an “island” is a space surrounded by water and it is cut off from the mainland. That is to say, although Ada is the miscarried child, anybody can do harm to him again. It is possible to say that his immunity is same as the socialist ideal’s immunity: “Ada is playing unimaginable tricks on us [...]. He is walking in the streets like a human being. He is spilling gas all over and setting himself on fire, he is sitting in casks filled with water for hours, he is building gallows and hanging himself”²² (155). Like socialist activists and socialist ideals, Ada is executed. He resurrects and returns home again and again. That is to say, Ada, who is too ugly and monstrous, is an immortal child and is the carrier of hope. For example, in one of the parts of *Tol* titled as “Kelimeler”, Oğuz is subjected to torture and is thrown into the garbage after torture. Then,

Then I saw Ada. He was sitting next to me. He had a wreath on his head... He licked and cleaned me up. [...] Ada went by the sewer and brought a handful of something. Then he turned them over and over, mixed them with some soil, and kneaded it thoroughly. As he kneaded, the brown and black soil took a whitish color. Whitish. This color white; it has a hard life. It is hard to stay white; there is something called black... Dirty white smoke began to belch out from the surface of the soil. Then, Ada slowly smeared the substance on the parts of my body in pain.²³ (174-76)

²² “Ada akla hayale gelmedik numaralar çekiyor bize. [...] Sokaklarda insan gibi dolaşiyor. Başından aşağı gaz döküp kendini yakıyor, su dolu fiçilerin içinde saatlerce oturuyor, darağaçları kurup kendini asıyor”

²³ “Sonra Ada’yı gördüm, yanı başımda oturuyordu, başında yapraklardan, çiçeklerden örülmüş bir taç vardı...Yalaya yalaya temizledi her tarafımı [...] Ada lağımın başına gidip avuç avuç bir şeyler taşıdı yanıma. Sonra onları elinde evirip çevirip, biraz toprakla karıştırıp güzelce yoğurdu. O yoğurdukça kahverengi siyah topraklar beyazımsı bir renk aldı. Beyazımsı. Bu beyaz rengin hayatı zor, beyaz kalmak zor, siyah

Ada, as a symbol of socialist revolution, heals the tortured who was subjected to this act of violence for the sake of it. At this point it is possible to argue that the only cure for Oğuz comes from the image of revolution. This is the basic motive behind the book because Yusuf and Şair also hang onto life through the possibility of revolution. They are tortured because of the ideal of revolution and healed by the same ideal. On the one hand they miscarry it in a hotel room and liken it to a freak, on the other they immortalize it. Oğuz tells that Ada is eating red flowers. That is, the ideal is killing its followers.

I don't know how much time passed. One morning when I half opened my eyes I saw that a deep red flower was blooming in my cheek... When the flower completed its blooming I slowly poked Ada's shoulder. Ada grabbed the flower, picked it, and quickly put it in his mouth. Dribbling red saliva, he chewed and ate up the flower... I got furious at the death of the flower; I launched myself at Ada and gave him a little slap on the head... I opened my mouth to say something but did not know what to say. Words kept flying like moths in my throat but I could not catch any of them, give it a proper shape and let it out.²⁴ (177)

Ada eats the red flowers which burgeoned next to Oğuz who is healed by Ada. Ada, as I mentioned above, is the life-giver and life-taker at once. As can be seen in the last sentence of the quotation, Ada is portrayed as the one who supplies words and makes the conversation meaningful, and the one who takes away words at the same time. Here

diye birşey var... Toprakların üzerinden kirli beyaz dumanlar tütmeye başladı. Sonra maddeyi yavaş yavaş ağrıyan yerlerime sıvadı Ada.”

²⁴ “Aradan ne kadar zaman geçti bilmiyorum, bir sabah gözümü araladığımda yüzümün hemen yanında kıpkırmızı bir çiçeğin açmakta olduğunu gördüm...Çiçek açmasını tamamlayınca Ada'nın omzunu dürttüm yavaşça. Ada çiçeği yakaladı, koparıp ağzına atıverdi. Kızıl salyalar akıta akıta çiğnedi, yedi bitirdi çiçeği... Çok öfkelenmiş çiçek ölünce, atılıp Ada'nın kafasına küçük bir şaplak indirdim... Ağzımı açtım birşeyler söylemeye çalıştım ama ne diyeceğimi bilemedim. Kelimeler boğazımda pervaneler gibi hızla dönüp durdu, ama ben onların içinden bir tanesini bile yakalayıp, derleyip toplayıp dışarı çıkaramadım.”

it is possible to say that there is an allegory in the sense that Benjamin gives to the concept. Ada is amorphous and has silences and contradictions in itself.

Like *Tol, Imitating Bird Language* also uses “child” as a metaphor of revolution.

At the very beginning of the novel, Gülay describes the Child as follows:

The Child was almost 5 years old but he was very frail. [...] He was the remembrance in the flesh of a sorrow he was not responsible for. [...] It was as if he was keeping guard over the times everybody was looking forward to forgetting about, over lands that had been abandoned long ago. Sometimes, from within that single eye, a wild beast that was hurt would look at Gülay.²⁵ (22)

The Child loses one of its eyes due to an infection and the neglect of the family. The reason for this neglect is Gülay’s being detained. Therefore, the Child, with its non-existent eye, reminds the family of Gülay’s being detained and tortured in the police station. Here, the Child’s looking around with its one eye in an angry way brings into mind Benjamin’s “angel of history” which gazes at the tragedies of the past and makes remember these tragedies. Until the end of the book, no one mentions the name of the Child and everybody calls it “Child”. As if its name was cursed and no one wanted to remember it. Gülay sometimes buys beautiful clothes for it and tries to make it look like other, beautiful, healthy children but she cannot succeed. Just like Ada of *Tol*, this Child is also a freak and quite bothering. And just like Ada, it has a fragmented, amiss body and this gives it only anger. Just like Ada eating and killing the red flower, the Child becomes merciless. Gülay likens it to a mythological hero with one eye.

In a book that she borrowed from her friend, a god who reigned in northern countries was mentioned. The god, with white hair, great height, long beard, had sacrificed one of his eyes for wisdom. [...] Could that god really obtain wisdom after all this? [...] Gülay, with surprise and

²⁵ “Çocuk 4,5-5 yaşlarındaydı ama çok çelimsizdi. [...] Sorumlusu olmadığı büyük bir kederin, kanlı canlı anısıydı o. [...] Herkesin unutmaya can attığı zamanların, çoktan tek edilmiş toprakların nöbetini tutuyordu sanki. O tek gözden bazen canı yanmış, yabani bir hayvan bakardı Gülay’a.”

curiosity, gazed at this picture drawn by an unknown painter or illustrator, at the single eye that was blazing with fury. The eye which was pictured with navy blue lightning coming out from its center was far from having the wisdom that the god was said to have. Maybe humans got duller instead of wiser when their losses were greater. The hatred they felt because of their loss burned down their minds. [...] He had not gained wisdom.²⁶ (95)

Here the analogy Gülay makes between the Child and the god ruling over the winds from the north is obvious. The myth that the god in question gained wisdom through its loss is belied through the picture. It is possible to say that Ada's loss turns into anger. Here we also see that the image of "innocent child" loses its meaning. We learn that the Child's name is "Revolution" at the end of the novel.

In fact, in both novels we can see the driving force of the Child image. On the one hand they are present in the novels with their fragmented bodies and bothering natures, on the other they are the carriers of hope. For instance, what dissuades Yusuf and Şair from committing suicide is the Child's bombing of capitalism various centers from the very beginning of the novel. Banks, state buildings, torture centers are periodically bombed by it. The explosives are placed from within the sewer system. Likewise, in *Imitating Bird Language*, in the last pages of the novel, Gülay utters the Child's name repeatedly. The Child, that is, the "revolution", having gained its name, seems to have calmed down and to be playing with other children in a playground.

²⁶ "[A]rkadaşından ödünç aldığı bir kitapta, soğuk kuzey ülkelerine hükmeden bir tanrıdan söz ediliyordu. Beyaz saçlı, uzun boylu, uzun sakallı tanrı, tek gözünü daha bilge olmak uğruna feda etmişti [...] Bütün bunların sonucunda gerçekten bilgelik edinebilmiş miydi o tanrı? [...] Gülay kim bilir hangi ressamın, çizerin elinden çıkmış bu resme, öfkeyle yanan tek göze uzun uzun, şaşkınlıkla, merakla baktı. Resimleyen tam ortasından lacivert şimşekler çakarırken çizdiği göz, tanrının sahip olduğu söylenen bilgelikten çok uzaktı. Belki kayıp büyüdükçe akıllanacağına büsbütün alılaşıyordu insan. Yitirdiği şeyden dolayı duyduğu nefret, aklını yakıp kavuruyordu. [...] Bilgelik kazanmamıştı."

At that point it is important to ask the following question: Why are both Ada and Devrim portrayed as ugly and disabled children. If we look at it from the point of view of revolutionary protagonists, the ugliness of the children is not only related with the repression of the 12 September military coup, but also the defeat and disappointment that the movement suffered. In other words, this disability is the outcome of the protagonists' disappointment with the revolutionary socialist movement rather than the brutal violence of the state. It is possible to speculate that being defeated is the fundamental reason behind the trauma which the protagonists of both novels faced.

Up to now I have tried to concentrate on the formal structure of the texts. Allegorical and fragmented structure is the basic stylistic feature of both *Imitating Bird Language* and *Tol*. At this point it is important to problematize the latent meaning behind this fragmented form. These narratives in pieces give the narrators who cannot express themselves a form to achieve their goal. In the following part I will look at the experiences behind these stories which can only be told in pieces. As I will be dealing with at length below, the main reason for this fragmentation is the feeling of alienation. This alienation, however, has many layers which cut across each other.

B. Representation of Self

a) Untimeliness

At this part, it would be useful to refer to Avelar's *The Untimely Present* to make clear the relationship between allegorical form of representation and "untimeliness". Avelar states that the authors examined in his book have in common the feature of "untimeliness" which makes them alien to their present. In other words, there is an essential discomfort with both past and present so "allegory emerges as the preferred

mode to address the current challenge to rethink the relationships between past, present, and future” (García-Moreno). One of the major themes of the novels which are being analyzed here is the problem of adaptation to the present. The main characters of the novels feel themselves in between past and present. As I mentioned in previous paragraphs, to understand the main characters of these novels we should understand the social atmosphere before and after 12 September military coup. The novels I have mentioned try to recover “lost time”.

Avelar argues that growing commodification denies memory due to the fact that new commodities must always replace previous ones and send them into the trashcan of history according to free market rules. Therefore, the free market established by dictatorships enforces forgetting since it needs to erase the reminiscence of its barbaric origins and can only survive in an eternal present. Moreover, he argues that the market erases the past as past to make it yet another commodity for sale in the present, and replaces the old or the obsolescent by the new without leaving a remainder. Here Avelar puts forward that the duty of an oppositional intellectual is to indicate the residue left by every substitution. The oppositional intellectual, in doing so, should show that “the past is never simply erased by the latest novelty” (2). Ayşegül Devocioğlu and Murat Uyrkulak might be considered as oppositional intellectuals in this sense. In fact, *Imitating Bird Language* and *Tol* can be considered as efforts to show the residue of 1980 coup d'état in Turkey.

As it is obvious from *Tol*'s title, the novel is about taking revenge from history and forgetting. Murat Uyrkulak explains the link he establishes between writing and revenge as follows: “A day comes, one takes a gun in her hand, the other sits down to write a book and tries to take revenge for that period”²⁷ He adds that he is trying to

²⁷ "Tol: İlk intikam alındı..." Söyleşi: Berat Günçikan, *Cumhuriyet Dergi*, 5 Ocak 2003.

write the history of the last fifty years from the view point of poets, mad people and revolutionaries.²⁸ In another interview he clarifies the meaning of writing for him as follows: “Well, to keep writing like this means putting my life of thirty years in a trashcan and these 30 years is quite important to me. My pals, my dead friends, my tortured friends are very valuable. When I put all these together, my life is valuable.”²⁹ Uyrkulak feels himself worthy as long as he narrates about his and his revolutionary friends’ stories. Parallel to Uyrkulak’s point Ayşegül Devecioğlu says that she tries to capture a “lost time” and recover history. As an oppositional intellectual she makes people aware of the fact that the dominant hegemonic discourse which was drawn by mainstream media does not represent the real case. Moreover, she argues that there is not a frozen history which is waiting for enlightenment. On the contrary, it is not a history at all because it penetrates into the present and breathes with us. Furthermore, it is not a mythical past like the revolutionaries think it to be. “This piece of time will become history when it begins to breathe again. And for it to be history, it is necessary to look at the world with the confidence that a better and a more human life is possible, just like before 12 September...”³⁰

At this point, as it can be seen from the following paragraphs and quotations from both *Imitating Bird Language* and *Tol*, both of the novels try to describe the era before 12 September military coup d’état. This attempt is the result of societal forgetting. The days before the military coup are described by Gülay as follows:

Then, the atmosphere of those days was reappearing in her mind like the murky memories of a creature even older than ancient times. Girls going from villages and towns to cities in order to study, renting apartments together, young people laughing hand in hand in meetings, crowds blooming like an unusual flower in the streets... [...] New shoots were

²⁸ "Deliler, şairler ve devrim" Söyleşi: Nazan Özcan, *Milliyet*, 27 Ekim 2002.

²⁹ "Tol: İlk intikam alındı..." Söyleşi: Berat Günçikan, *Cumhuriyet Dergi*, 5 Ocak 2003.

³⁰ "Yasaklanmış sesler birlik olmalı!" 30 Kasım 2009 Işıl Öz (Turkish Journal).

beginning to sprout everywhere; the most miraculous colors were springing from the most modest, lichen-like plants. Freedom that poured like miraculous rains that fertilize even the most barren lands, the passion for changing what existed, for remaking it... The stones that come to life under feet; musky odor of human everywhere... [...] In furnaces, by assembly lines, in street corners, behind counters, in schools, something uncontrollable was swelling like yeast.³¹ (104)

Although the plot of *Imitating Bird Language* takes place in 1984, just after four years from 1980, the social atmosphere is totally different. Gülay remembers these days as if they belonged to a very old time. She says that the people she met are totally different from those around her. All the revolutionaries were honest, trustworthy and nice people (94). People from all over the country and all parts of the society were integrated into a mass socialist movement but this social atmosphere disappeared in a few years. Let's look at how one of *Tol's* main characters, Oğuz describes the society before the coup d'état:

The country was inflating like a red balloon and heading towards a dispersed uprising to which honest and honorable people could not be indifferent... Those honorable and honest people... [...] They were so hard-working, so resistant, so romantic, but at the same time so impatient, drunk and touchy that, one day, with the hooks of an epauletted arm swung in all four directions at different heights and accompanied by the sound 'gharr gharr gharr ', they scattered.³² (220)

³¹ “Sonra o günlerin havası, zihninde, çok eski zamanlardan bile eski bir yaratığın anıları gibi bulanık, canlanıyordu. Köylerden, kasabalardan şehre okumaya giden kızlar, birlikte ev tutmalar, mitinglerde el ele tutuşan, gülüşen gençler, sokaklarda hiç görülmedik bir çiçek gibi açan kalabalık... [...] Her yanda yeni sürgünler boy veriyor, en mucizevi renkler, en gösterişsiz, yosunsu bitkilerin içinden fişkırıyordu. En kurak toprakları bile bereketlendiren mucizevi yağmurlar misali sükün eden özgürlük, var olanı değiştirme, yeniden yapma tutkusu... Ayakların altında canlanan taş; her yanda, mis gibi insan kokusu. [...] Çelik fırınlarında, montaj bantlarında, sokak başlarında, tezgah arkalarında, okullarda ele avuca sığmaz bir şey maya gibi durmaksızın kabarıyordu.”

³² “Ülke kızıl bir balon gibi şiştikçe şişiyor, dürüst ve onurlu insanları kayıtsız kalamadığı, dağınık bir isyana doğru yol alıyordu... O onurlu ve dürüst insanlar... [...] Öyle çalışkan, öyle dirençli, öyle romantik, ama öyle de sabırsız, sarhoş ve alingandılar ki, günün birinde apoletli bir kolun, ‘gar gar gar’ sesleriyle dört yandaki havadar yüksekliklere çıkarttığı kroşelerle darma duman oldular. Ne kadar çalışıp direnip bağırırdırsa da kar etmedi, ülkeye dokunamadan kaldılar.”

In the quotation, the red balloon is obviously a symbol of the revolutionary mass movement. Like Gülay, Oğuz romanticizes people and environment as if they belong to a world different from this one. Moreover, they feel themselves abandoned by people who were integrated into the mass revolutionary movement and who, like them, dreamt of revolution. In *Imitating Bird Language*, while İbrahim and Yusuf are talking to each other, İbrahim says the following:

‘I had never seen so much benevolence in one place. [...] I do not want to say that they are benevolent people. It was as if the most benevolent states of humans had come out from the quiet corners they had been hiding, walking around, and wanting to hug each other, unite, grow up, and develop [...]. The most inimitable flower in the world was blooming before me. [...] And I say it was then that I believed, more than anything else, that life could be transformed into something unimaginably beautiful, supreme, and humane...’ [...] Then, the one who brought everything into existence, who nurtured and gave life to everything, receded like a tide. Only they were left on the beach. Now they were like shellfish roasting under the sun and waiting for someone to pick them up and take them away: the sea was unreachably far away from them.³³
(105-106)

As it can be seen from the quotation, Yavuz feels himself left behind and very far away from the sea and from life. The dream of revolution disappears with people who believe in it. They find themselves in emptiness where nobody cares for them. They feel alien to both the society and the time they live in. As I mentioned in the very beginning of this part, untimeliness is one of the main feelings of the protagonists. They are excluded from the rhythm of life. Although they see themselves as the founders of future which

³³ “Ben hiçbir zaman o kadar iyiliği bir arada görmemişim. İyi insanlar demek istemiyorum. İnsanların en iyi halleri, sanki saklanıp, gizlendikleri kuytulardan çıkmış, ortada salınıyorlar; kucaklaşmak, bütünleşmek, büyümek, gelişmek istiyorlar [...] Önümde dünyanın en benzersiz çiçeği açıyordu. [...] Diyorum ki, o zaman herşeyden çok inandım hayatın hayal bile edilemeyecek kadar güzel, üstün ve insani olan başka birşeye dönüşebileceğine...’ [...] Sonra, her şeyi var eden, besleyen, canlandıran şey, dev bir med-cezir dalgası gibi çekilmişti. Kumsalda yalnızca onlar kalmıştı. Güneşin altında kavruan, çaresizce birilerinin toplayıp götürmesini bekleyen kabuklu deniz hayvanları gibiydiler şimdi: deniz ulaşamayacakları kadar uzaktaydı...”

would be better and fairer than the previous one, after the coup d'état they become audiences. They are not active participators anymore, but only passive spectators. To make my point clearer, it would be beneficial to look at the following quotation:

Gülay is watching all these as if she is totally out of them; as if it is a movie, a play. It is as if everything is happening in another universe. She, on her spot, without moving, is watching this weird, incomprehensible universe to which she is totally alien.³⁴ (29)

Untimeliness is the basic feeling which the protagonists face with after 12 September military coup. They feel themselves as if stay in-between day and night (Devecioğlu 95). All of the societal values changed in a few times according to Gülay. Throughout the novel, she repeats that she cannot recognize the new people who emerged while she was in prison. These people are too cruel and they do not have any human values. Some magical power takes all humanity, love, beauty and fraternity from them (106). Before the coup, Gülay thinks that nobody is after money, kiosks and cars. People are interested in the wind or a flower which bloomed in an unexpected time and place. The same feeling about the aftermath of 12 September military coup is shared in *Tol* as well. Çoşkun, one of the revolutionaries before the coup, comes out of prison and his girlfriend thinks that “this coup does not like revolutionaries and also the girlfriends of the revolutionaries” (205). She wishes that she had a “normal” boyfriend which would normalize her life. At that point Oğuz, the narrator of the story, says that a coup is what teaches people to calculate: “You see, a coup d'état is sometimes this. Indeed, it is often this. A coup d'état teaches people how to make calculations”³⁵ (209).

³⁴ “Gülay bütün bunları kendisinin tümüyle dışındaymış gibi izliyor; bir film, tiyatro gibi. Sanki herşey başka bir evrende olup bitiyor. O, bulunduğu yerde, devinimsiz, taşına toprağına yabancı olduğu bu tuhaf, anlaşılmaz evreni seyrediyor.”

³⁵ “İşte darbe biraz da budur. Aslında çoğunlukla budur. Darbe, insanlara hesap kitap öğretir.”

The other example from *Tol* with respect to the difference before and after the military coup is the story of Atakan Koral. He is one of the most important journalists of a prominent newspaper. He makes political news and pages for the newspaper but after the coup the newspaper administration makes him feel redundant:

Because tyranny and discovery were hand in hand and a huge void emerged in between. After the discovery of a machine for watching movies at home, aerobics, spotlights, sound filters, computers, color TVs [...] and many other things, there was not much left Atakan Koral could transfer from his ideas which are always and will always be obsolete and incomplete to the pages he edits.³⁶ (221-22)

That is to say, according to the novels, the world after the coup is totally different from the world before it. The values of everyday life, the meaning of life, and the shared expectations from life become invisible. This alienation from the outside world and society synchronically brings alienation from “self”. To make this argument clear, I will concentrate on self-alienation in the following part.

b) Fragmentation of Self

As I mentioned above, alienation from self as a revolutionary cannot be separated from alienation from society. Here it would be beneficial to refer to Şükrü Argın’s interview on literature of 12 September military coup. He uses Gregor Samsa, the protagonist of Franz Kafka’s famous novella *Metamorphosis*, as a metaphor for the situation of the socialist activists of 1970’s. That is, to him, the dramatic unexplainable distance between Samsa and his sister is the distance between socialist activists and the Turkish society of the time. The activists and the Turkish society have totally different regimes of truth as if they do not belong to the same society. Therefore, this rupture made the

³⁶ “Çünkü istibdat ve keşif kol kola girmiş, ortada koskoca bir boşluk hasil olmuştu. Evde sinema izleten bir aletin, aerobiğin, spot ışığın, ses filtrenin, bilgisayarın, renkli ekranın [...] ve daha bir yığın hususun keşfiyle Atakan Koral’ın hep eski ve eksik kalacak fikriyatından sayfasına taşıyabileceği pek bir şeyi kalmamıştı.”

middle class, who were supporters of the previous socialist movements, accuse activists of terrorism and say that they deserved their misfortunes. At this point, it is possible to argue that not only the society makes them feel like Gregor Samsa but also the revolutionaries themselves behave like Gregor Samsa but also they feel themselves as if they themselves are Samsa. This claim is obvious in the following quotation:

However, while in bed trying to go to sleep at nights, she would liken herself to a big clothes moth; to one that cocoons in old and musty places in the dark; to one, when the time comes, flaps its gray and brown wings to fly over to the world of humans who will receive it with disgust and anger, not with affection and cheers; to that sad creature which keeps being thrown out of its hiding place.³⁷ (50).

Throughout *Imitating Bird Language*, the feeling of unworthiness is visible in each self-description of the protagonist. Gülay feels like an “unwanted guest”, “a thin shadow which is provisionally attached to life”, “an ugly stain”, “a weird creature”, “a worn-out, desperate, dilapidated, hopeless boat”, “a dead body”, “a foreign land”, “a blind beast”, “a musty and lifeless plant”. She says that she sees herself as an animal which is alien and disabled and it should be destroyed by others just because it is not like them. Moreover, she pities herself: “‘Poor girl’; this was what Nusret Bey (her boss) had told her mother. Poor girl... This was also what friends who had visited them had said. Poor girl... Now these words almost gained personality and began to live in her body”³⁸ (12). Gülay’s internal gaze degrades herself like other people who make her invisible. Both her co-workers and her boss think that she is abnormal because of her prison

³⁷ “Ne var ki geceleri yatağında uyumaya çalışırken kocaman bir güve kelebeğine benzetiyordu kendisini; karanlıkta, eskimiş, küflenmiş şeyler içinde koza yapan; vakti geldiğinde gri, kahverengi kanatlarını açıp onu sevinç çığlıkları ve sevecenlikle değil tiksintiyle, kızgınlıkla karşılayacak insanların dünyasına uçan, saklandığı yerden kovulup duran o hüzünlü yaratığa.”

³⁸ “‘Zavallı kız’; böyle söylemişti annesine Nusret Bey (patronu). Zavallı kız... Eve gelen tanıdıklar da böyle söylemişlerdi; ‘Zavallı kızcağız...’ Şimdi bu sözcükler, adeta kişilik kazanarak bedeninde yaşamaya başlamıştı.”

experience. They always make her remember her difference and disappointment.

Therefore, she does not enjoy life and she cannot be sure whether she is alive or not:

She remembered the lively, brave and confident woman who once used to live in the body of that timid, weak, modest creature; in this sheepish creature. She did not know how much of that Gülay had died in the torture room or had been left in prison and how much of her was still alive.³⁹ (70)

Like Gülay, Yavuz feels himself imprisoned in this alien world because people who can understand him are scattered due to prisons, tortures and violence. Some of them fled the country and so Yavuz has to stay alone in this world:

Everything, everybody in this universe was alien. In the incomprehensible geography of the new time, everything took a scary shape. She had nullified, they all had nullified. [...] The world in which she was forced to live, like a menacing dark swamp, moved around her.⁴⁰ (107)

This alienation from time and society makes the revolutionaries insignificant and unimportant because no one remembered or cared for those days, memories, struggles which constructed their identity. Therefore, Yavuz begins to question his being. At this point it is important to note that both Gülay and Yavuz have a tendency to commit suicide and at the end of the novel Yavuz decides to die. This tendency can also be seen when we look at the protagonists of *Tol*. At the very beginning of the novel, Yusuf, using a notebook of 300 squared pages and filling 24 squares each day, waits for the day the notebook will be filled and he will kill himself. Things, however, do not unfold due to his expectations and he decides to commit suicide before the notebook is filled.

³⁹ “O korkak, silik, gösterişsiz varlığın, şu süklüm püklüm yarattığın bedeninde bir zamanlar yaşamış olan canlı, cesur, kendine güvenen kadını anımsadı. O Gülay’ın ne kadarı işkence odasında ya da hapishanede kalmıştı, ne kadarı hayattaydı; bunu bilmiyordu.”

⁴⁰ “Bu evrende her şey, herkes yabancıydı. Yeni zamanın akıl almaz coğrafyasında, her şey ürkütücü bir biçime bürünmüştü. Hiçleşmişti, hiçleşmişlerdi. [...] Yaşamak zorunda olduğu dünya, karanlık bir bataklık gibi tehdit dolu, çevresinde kıpırdanıp duruyordu.”

I was not to leave any traces behind. I did not want it to be known that I was alive. At worst, I had to get out of this trouble under a title of single line in a small typeface which took place in the corner of any newspaper even smaller than an ID photo.⁴¹ (17)

As it can be seen in this quotation, Yusuf tries to erase himself from the world and history. He tries to destroy himself. Moreover, all of the characters are drug-addict, alcoholic and on the verge of madness. They cannot adapt to daily life and become marginalized day by day. Let's look at the conversation between Yusuf and Şair:

-There have been too few who went mad (Yusuf).
-Is this something good or bad? (Poet)
-Bad, too bad. Would the country have been in such a state otherwise?
-I went mad many times but I do not know if this has done any good to the country.⁴² (58)

Being alien to this world and alone, brings all men in *Tol* to the point of losing their mind. Yusuf, at the very beginning of the book, says that he does not have an "integrated soul". Şair, just like Yusuf, is an alcoholic and becomes an unbearable person step by step. There is almost no scene where they are sober. They drink endlessly in order to be able to read, to talk, and to bear doing these. The 3rd character of the novel, Yusuf's father Oğuz, loses his mind and takes to the mountains. All alone, he pretends shooting the soldiers passing by.

Moreover, it is obvious that alienation from self reaches a peak when protagonists give information to the police under torture. Especially in *Tol*, giving away names is strongly emphasized. Yusuf gives away names but his father Oğuz does not. "You have betrayed your friends and you are about to curl up and die. Your reputation,

⁴¹ "İz bırakmamam lazımdı. Yaşadığının bilinmesini istemiyordum. En kötü ihtimalle, herhangi bir gazetenin bir vesikalığı bile taşıyamayacak kadar küçük bir köşesinde , tek satıra 11 puntoluk bir başlığın altında sıyrılmalıydım bu belalı işten."

⁴² "-Çok az deliren oldu (Yusuf).

-İyi bir şey mi bu, kötü mü? (Şair)

-Kötü çok kötü. Yoksa şimdiye kadar böyle mi olurdu memleketin hali?

-Ben çok delirdim, ama memlekete bir faydası oldu mu bilmem."

you think, will be restored only if half of the world is blown up.”⁴³ (22). Yusuf, with the shame of giving away names, gradually becomes silent and hates himself. Yavuz in *Imitating Bird Language* also gives away names and turns his friends in: “He had to run away; he had to be freed from torture and the shame of having betrayed his friends”⁴⁴ (101). Alienation from society, when combined with alienation from the movement, madness, alcoholism, or suicide becomes inevitable for the narrators. It is possible to argue that self alienation and self destruction of the protagonists is connected with not only isolation from society but also their socialist organization.

That kind of an alienation from society and self also brings the feeling of not being able to belong somewhere. Yusuf and Şair are already “homeless”; the whole story takes place in a train travel. It is not possible for them to feel attached to or miss a place. Yusuf’s place is full of empty bottles and porn CDs, and no personal details or items. Like Yusuf, Gülay, in *Imitating Bird Language*, cannot belong to anywhere and she is alien to all places she lives:

She did not put any personal items in the drawers either; neither a toothbrush nor a tea mug. [...] Yet Gülay had nothing personal there. [...] If she had such a mug, if she put odds and ends in drawers, [...] could she be one of them? Could she reverse time [...] or get attached to the life in which others keep living without ever complaining?⁴⁵ (15)

As it is obvious in the quotation Gülay tries to like other people who have signs in places where they live but she cannot do that. She lives as if she does not exist and is ready to disappear. This tendency is also visible in Yavuz’s place:

⁴³ “Çözüldün ve utancından ölecek haldesin. Adın ancak dünyanın yarısı havaya uçarsa temizlenecek diye düşünüyorsun.”

⁴⁴ “Kaçıp gitmeli, işkenceden, arkadaşlarını ele vermenin utancından kurtulmalıydı”

⁴⁵ “Çekmecelere de kendisine ait hiçbir şey koymamıştı; ne diş fırçası ne de çay kupası[...]Gülay’ın kendine ait hiçbir şeyi yoktu orada[...] Kendisinin de böyle bir kupası olsa, çekmecelerine öte beri koysa [...] aralarına karışabilir mi? Zamanı geri döndürebilir [...] Başka insanların şikayetsizce yaşayıp durdukları hayata bağlanabilir mi?”

Thus the apartment turned into sinister waiting rooms where helpless patients leave behind impersonal and faint traces (magazines thrown aside after leafing through the pages, pieces of paper put in all sorts of shapes out of boredom, extinguished cigarettes), into desolate train stations which give the onlookers a feeling of sadness for no good reason.⁴⁶ (91).

While Gülay is defining Yavuz's place, she makes analogies between a waiting room, a station, a hospital room, and his apartment. It is obvious that Yavuz feels himself as a guest in his apartment and moreover refuses to place any evidence of settlement. Gülay thinks that the similarity between Yavuz and his apartment is obvious (91). At this point, Gülay tries to settle down and clean the apartment. She does shopping for Yavuz's apartment to make herself believe that he is permanent. Thus she tries to resist dissolution.

These alienations I mentioned up to now find expression in language and speech. When the protagonists try to narrate, they feel alienated from their experience, memory and ideals. That is, narration becomes meaningless. Although they need to talk about their experience, they are subjected to do it only within the borders of the new world which is dominated by market rules. This is closely related with the social conjuncture of 80's in Turkey and this issue will be explained in detail under the title "Speechlessness and Fairytale like Narrative".

⁴⁶ "Böylece ev, çaresiz hastaların, hiçbiri kişisel olmayan, belli belirsiz izler (şöyle bir karıştırılıp atılmış dergiler, sıkıntıdan bin bir şekle sokulmuş kağıt parçaları, sönmüş sigaralar) bıraktıkları o uğursuz bekleme odalarına, görenlerin hiç yoktan hüznü olduğu o ıssız istasyonlara dönmüştü."

C. What Kind of Language do the Protagonists Use While Narrating?

a) Speechlessness

In this part, I will explain the reasons behind the silence of the protagonists of these novels. Before going into the details of silence, I will argue that there are basically three interconnected reasons of such a silence. First, their memories and ideals are converted into an object of spectacle. Second, the meanings and value of words are totally changed by the “new order”. Finally, I will discuss the relationship between torture and silence and will show how torture produces absolute silence.

The rules of the new world, in which the protagonists find themselves, do not let them speak about their experiences in their own way. What I am trying to say is that their memories or speeches about their experiences become meaningful if and only if they become part of the market. At this point it is worth mentioning Avelar’s question in terms of Latin American dictatorships: “If the dictatorships’ *raison d’être* was the physical and symbolic elimination of all resistance to the implementation of market logic, how has the triumph of such a project informed Latin America’s cultural and literary memory?” (1). He adds another question to the former one:

If the neoliberalism implemented in the aftermath of the dictatorships is founded upon the passive forgetting of its barbaric origin, how can one, to use Walter Benjamin’s expression, seize hold of a reminiscence as it flashes up in a moment of danger, such danger being represented today by commodification of material and cultural life that seems to preclude the very existence of memory? (2)

Avelar basically elaborates on the relationship between commodification and memory. Parallel to Avelar’s point Nurdan Gürbilek argues that most important feature of 80’s is a new language which excludes all kinds of testimony. She gives the following example:

In the dominant discourse of the 80s not only did concepts like ‘labour’ and ‘exploitation’ fall out of favor, but they also became nothing but connotations, associations, and ideological encumbrances; they turned into symbols of a left that was sought to be exterminated or forgotten as soon as possible, of a naivety or power identified with that left. This process was gone through so fast that concepts which describe privation and poverty, in a short period of time, took on totally different meanings from the ones they once had and the circumstances they once referred to; they turned into symbols of primitiveness, outdatedness, a will to power which is considered to be backward, an experience which is sought to be forgotten immediately, and of pre-1980 as something negative.⁴⁷ (25-26)

Not surprisingly, the language of revolutionaries become meaningless when compared to the “new language” which is based on advertisement. At the very end of *Imitating Bird Language*, one of the journalists wants to make a series of interviews with the ones who were in prison during 1980’s and she finds Gülay. They meet in Taksim and Gülay feels very uncomfortable because of the woman’s insistence. The journalist says:

You are silent. Yet you need to speak. You must be pitied for what you have gone through, you must be shown compassion... Believe me you need this more than anything else. Now I will give this to you. Once they read they will take pity on you but they will not understand. They will not understand at all... Because they cannot understand...⁴⁸ (210)

This language makes Gülay more silent and the journalist continues her insistence on making Gülay the object of the conscience of readers and society. The language which the journalist uses is one of the strongest tools to make Gülay more invisible and silent. With reference to Gürbilek, one can argue that here past is popularized or a testimony is

⁴⁷ “80’lerin egemen söyleminde ‘emek’ ve ‘sömürü’ gibi kavramlar gözden düşmekle kalmadı, tümüyle bir yan anlamdan, bir çağrışımdan, bir ideolojik yükten ibaret kaldı; yok edilmek ya da bir an önce unutulmak istenen bir solculuğu, onunla özdeşleştirilen bir bölünüşü ya da iktidarı simgeler oldu. Bu süreç o kadar büyük bir hızla yaşandı ki, kısa bir süre içinde yokluğu, yoksulluğu dile getiren kavramlar bir zamanlar hatırlattıkları durumlardan tümüyle farklı anlamlar kazanabildi; ilkelliği, demodeliğin ya da çağdışı olduğu var sayılan iktidar talebinin, hemen unutulmak istenen bir deneyimin, bir olumsuzluk olarak 80 öncesinin kodlarından ibaret kaldı”

⁴⁸ “Susuyorsun. Halbuki konuşmaya ihtiyacın var. Başına gelenler yüzünden sana acınmalı, merhamet duyulmalı... İnan bana her şeyden çok buna ihtiyacın var. İşte ben sana şimdi bunu vereceğim; okuyunca bol bol acıyacaklar sana; ama anlamayacaklar. Hiç anlamayacaklar... Çünkü anlayamazlar...”

made ready for being consumed. In this case, it is possible to talk about a provocation rather than repression. Like Gülay, Oğuz is also subjected to such a discursive violence. When the military coup is made, Oğuz's friends suddenly disappear and many of them die. Then, he goes into depression. He begins not to speak and eat. Therefore, his wife Canan sends his letters to a journal titled "Clean Page" in order to heal him and make him feel himself valuable again but Oğuz gets angry with her. He says that the poems he wrote cannot be published since they were not intended for "today": But those poems cannot be published. They were not written for today"⁴⁹ (94). The name of the journal, "Clean Page" is also very significant for understanding how alien the protagonists feel themselves while talking about their memories. As Avelar argues, the market tries to construct a perpetual present where past must be turned into a *tabula rasa* to be replaced with the arrival of new commodities (4). In contrast to the perpetual present of the market, both Gülay and Oğuz want to carry the very specificity of their experience.

I would like to give one more example. While Nusret Bey, Gülay's boss, is talking about politics with his guests in his office, Gülay enters the room to serve tea. At that moment, Nusret Bey wants Gülay to talk about what she experienced in the prison. Gülay almost faints and her boss lets her out of the room:

She wanted to make Gülay tell what she had gone through in prison. Now she would do this herself. [...] Gülay became the evidence in hand all of a sudden. If she could have, she would have displayed her in public. In fact, she had already done that... Was this something different from the attacks she had suffered in prison? [...] 'Poor girl'.⁵⁰

It is obvious that Gülay's memory is only valuable when is open to public spectacle. Both Nusret Bey and the journalist use Gülay's feelings to make an exhibition of

⁴⁹ "Ama o şiirler yayımlanamaz. Onlar bugün için yazılmadı"

⁵⁰ "Gülay'a hapisanede olanları anlattırmak istemişti. Şimdi bunu kendisi yapacaktı. [...] Gülay el altındaki kanıt olup çıkıvermişti. Elinden gelse tutup sergileyecekti. Sergilemişti de... Bunun hapisanede uğradığı saldırılardan farkı var mıydı? [...] 'Zavallı kızcağız' "

revolutionaries. Exposed to this symbolic violence, Gülay becomes more silent and speechless.

Secondly, the meanings of the words totally change after the coup d'état. It is possible to argue that one of the reasons of the silence and speechlessness which can be observed in these novels can be this drastic change in the meanings of the words. For example, Gülay mentions the meaning of "peace" as follows:

Yet everything was apparently in peace... Peace... This word illuminated somewhere as distant as shepherds' fires in the mountains. Peace... Maybe everything was sacrificed for peace... The windows were shut, the curtains were drawn. The ones in the streets returned to their homes, the songs silenced. All for the sake of peace... Gülay had had been torture, raped, suffered all for the sake of it Yavuz would die for the sake of it... For the sake of peace... [...] Peace was this indescribable silence, this merciless void, which swallowed up wails, made anguish unseen, people indifferent, speechless, and blind.⁵¹ (67)

As it can be seen from the quotation, the meaning of peace changed completely after the military coup. Although revolutionaries were fighting for a peaceful and fair world, the meaning of "peace" itself changed drastically. It is now equated with silence and obedience. It becomes the suppression of the violence and screams. That is to say, Gülay's notion of "peace" becomes meaningless within the borders of this new language.

The third reason behind the speechlessness of the protagonists is closely related to the specificity of 12 September military coup. Although the military coup was an

⁵¹ "Görünüşte her şey huzur içindeydi oysa... Huzur... Bu kelime, dağda yakılan çoban ateşleri gibi çok uzak, çok karanlık bir yerleri aydınlattı. Huzur... Belki de herşey huzur için feda edilmişti... Pencereşer kapanmış, perdeler çekilmişti. Sokaktakiler eve dönmüş, şarkılar susmuştu. Hep huzur için... Gülay bunun için işkence görmüş, tecavüze uğramış, eziyet çekmişti. Yavuz bunun için ölecekti... Huzur için... [...] Huzur, feryatları yutan, acıları görünmez, insanları birbirine aldırılmaz; dilsiz ve kör kılan bu amansız boşluk, bu anlatılmaz suskunluktu."

ideological war against revolutionaries, it was also a vulgar violence. In *Tol*, while Oğuz is narrating the coup d'état, the letters of the words are falling down

11.09.1980. And they come crushing the morning. With their canons, rifles, bayonets, and rancours they come. They are all hulking, all very khaki. Clothes of green and yellow on their heads, camouflage paint in their face, their boots are heavy, cartridge belts almost as wide as ten inches, *medls blod red, rngs, blod-crldng laughter... Thy'r drawng a wld quadrlaterl... Commnd rom, tortre oom, rap roo, drinkng room... Tey're shotng the yong thy ctch... They'r dragng Esmr, Sle, Brc and the othrs towrd the squar... rippng... barin... on by ne... agan an gain... beatng for hour... blod frm betwen thei leg... brests in tattrs... Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa...⁵² (191)*

As it can be seen from the quotation, the words split in half and become meaningless, and in the end they turn into a scream. The nature of their catastrophic torture experience does not allow itself for representation in an understandable language. After Şadi and Adnan's violent death, who are close friends of Oğuz, he does not speak a word for days and he does not smile either. Canan, his wife, sees him murmuring something like a prayer: "She caught him swinging gently and murmuring something like a prayer"⁵³ (92). "There are words walking like shadows in Oğuz's heart. He can no longer take hold of any of them. His tongue has got tied, he has lost his tongue"⁵⁴ (91). He thinks that words leave him; he cannot remember the word 'revolution' (93). It is possible to say that neither Oğuz nor Gülay can realize themselves within language anymore. Gülay describes their speechlessness as follows:

No one looked as limpedly as before. The wounds were so deep that they could not be shared; they were too much for words, they could not be

⁵² "Ve sabahı ezip geliyorlar. Toplarıyla, tüfekleriyle, kasaturalarıyla, hınçlarıyla geliyorlar. Hepsi çok iri hepsi çok haki. Başlarına yeşilli sarılı bezler sarılı, yüzlerine siyah yağlar sürülü, postalları kocaman, bir karış eninde palaskaları, *kn kırmızı madlonları, yüzkleri, kn dondran gülşleri... Vhşi bir dötrgn çiziyorlr... Komutahne, şkenchan, myhne, tecavzha... Yakladkları gnçlri kurşn diz.. Esmr'i, Sle'i, Kmam'yi, Brc'yu ve dğrlern mydna sürk... parç.. soyy..sryla..dflrc..dövrk satlerc.. backlrnn arsndan kn... gğslr lm lme... Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa...."*

⁵³ "hafif hafif sallanıp duaya benzer birşeyler mırıldanırken yakalıyor."

⁵⁴ "Oğuz'un kalbinde gölge gibi gezinen kelimeler var, hiçbirini çekip çıkaramıyor artık. Dili tutuldu, dilini yuttu."

told. The ordeals were running away from words and hiding in quiet corners that nobody could find. Words had vanished, had left them. Scraps of things came out of their mouths though. Meaningful, meaningless syllables; bits of words that seem to be of use; small sounds... Only those which popped out of the mouth; nothing came out of the heart... [...] They were speechless.⁵⁵ (p.43)

“Silence”, “silent”, “speechless”, and their derivatives are among the most frequently used words throughout the novel. Gülay and Yavuz are devoid of the words to represent themselves. The other important point is the relationship between speechlessness and torture. According to Avelar, the object of torture is to produce “an effect within the tortured subject: one of self-loathing, self-hatred, and shame” (47). In fact, because of the process, the torturer makes the subject speak so she will hate speaking forever. Torture produces speech in order to produce silence. The dilemma of the tortured subject begins with her attempt at the representation of the torture. This dilemma is one of the basic characteristics of both *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language*. After Oğuz is tortured, he walks with Ada. He remembers that a car drove towards them but he cannot remember what happened next: “Do you know, whenever I am about to remember something my brain itches and a crowd marches on the left side of it”⁵⁶ (178). Here the narration is interrupted. Torture appears as an experience which would transcend the borders of language, an experience so incomprehensible and secret that it cannot be revealed to readers; but at the same time an experience that should be narrated. Afterwards, Ada and Oğuz escape to another district and hide in a house:

⁵⁵ “Hiç kimsenin bakışı eskisi kadar duru değildi. Paylaşılacak kadar derindi yaralar, hiç bir söze sığmıyordu, bir türlü anlatılamıyordu. Yaşananlar, bütün kelimelreden kaçıp kimsenin bulamayacağı kuytulara saklanıyordu. Kelimeler yok olup gitmişti, onları terk etmişti. Ağızların bölük pörçük birşeyler dökülüyordu gerçi. Anlamli anlamzsız heceler, işe yararımış gibi görünen sözcük parçaları, küçük sesler... [...] Dilsizdiler.”

⁵⁶ “Biliyor musunuz, ben bir şey hatırlayacak gibi olduğumda beynim kaşınıyor, beynimin sol yanında bir kalabalık yürüyor.”

I wanted to say something but could by no means find the necessary words; incomprehensible sounds came out of my mouth. An old man with a long beard and a handlebar mustache said to his companions that my tongue was tied. I could not, of course, say that it was not the case, that my tongue was not tied, and that I only could not remember the proper shape of words. I growled and sat down.⁵⁷ (179)

The meaningless croaks of Oğuz have to do with the fact that he has gone beyond that which is representable with language. Due to the torture he has undergone, meaningless sounds come out of his mouth and eventually the sound itself disappears. The wound inflicted by torture is not only on Oğuz's body but also on his soul. Caruth, with reference to Freud, argues that wound of mind is totally different from wound of body and it is obvious that torture wounds the mind more than the body. According to Caruth, wound of mind is experienced "too soon, too unexpectedly [...] and it is not available to consciousness" (4). Therefore, it cannot be easily explained on a linguistic level. Oğuz says that whenever he tries to remember something he is faced with a deep hole and is scared to fall into that hole. He hears nonsensical and irritating voices so he cannot depict what he sees in the hole. Then, he cannot stand feeling this hole and pushes it away from himself (182). This unbearable hole is the burden which Oğuz carries with him every single moment.

Nightmares haunted him in his sleep. He did not sleep; it was as if he was diving into the pitch dark, into a cave where chaotic winds roared. [...] ... Each sound was poking something inside him; he was striving to pull himself together and piece together the story, yet whenever he came within an inch of the end the story would remain unfinished. [...] Each time he shouldered the gate of his mind, each time he half-opened it, each time he reached out to the pile of stories behind the gate he would be racked with an unbearable pain, a malignant tumor would grow

⁵⁷ "Ben birşeyler demek istedim, ama bir türlü gerekli kelimeleri bulamadım, ağızımdan anlaşılmaz sesler döküldü. Uzun sakalı, kocaman pala bıyığı olan yaşlı bir adam yanındakilere, dili tutulmuş bunun, dedi. Öyle olmadığını, dilimin tutulmadığını, sadece kelimelerin doğru biçimlerini hatırlayamadığımı, yine söyleyemedim elbet. Hırıldayarak oturdum yerimde."

and spread in his neck, and would turn into handcuff which left him breathless.⁵⁸ (233)

It is obvious that Oğuz cannot cope with the torture scenes in his mind. Although he represses his memory, it returns in fragments and he cannot unify it. He is haunted by his incomprehensible experience. That is to say, he cannot understand even himself.

Like Oğuz, Gülay is also tortured in prison. Gülay's experience differs from Oğuz's because of her gender. Her silence doubled itself as a raped woman and a tortured revolutionary. She cannot feel herself beautiful enough, female enough, and valuable enough. She feels that the wounds opened by rape on her body and mind will never heal. While she is sleeping with Yavuz she feels alienated. She cannot feel herself worthy of a man's love:

Gülay listened to the words Yavuz, hugging and petting her passionately, uttered all through out the night, as if they were not addressed to her, better still, she listened to them without paying any attention, as if they were not uttered in this room, in this time. Were all these beautiful words addressed to her, to this woman with deep wrinkles in her face? [...] Whoever touched her, she would always remember...⁵⁹ (60)

Her neighbors and friends from the office make Gülay feel she is not normal because she was raped and is not a virgin. This symbolic violence reaches its peak when Gülay and her mother go to a wedding. Everyone ostracize Gülay and she feels that she is not

⁵⁸ “Kabuslar peşini bırakmıyordu uykusunda. Uyumuyor, sanki kopkoyu bir karanlığın içine, karmakarışık seslerle uğuldayan bir mağaraya dalıyordu. [...] Her ses içinde bir şeyi dürtüklüyor, derlenip toparlanarak bir hikayeyi bütünlemeye çalışıyor, ama yakalamasına ramak kalan hiçbir hikaye nihayete ermiyordu. [...] Aklının kapısını her omuzladığında, omuzları çürüyene dek zorladığı o kapıyı birazcık araladığında, elini kapının ardında duran hikaye yığınınına her uzattığında dayanılmaz bir ağrıya tutuluyor, boynunda bir ur kabarıyor, yayılıyor ve onu soluksuz bırakan bir kelepçeye dönüşüyordu.”

⁵⁹ “Gülay, Yavuz'un gece boyunca çılgın gibi sarılıp okşayarak sarf ettiği sözcükleri kendine söylenmiyormuş, hatta bu odada, bu zamanda söylenmiyormuş gibi aldırmandan, dalgın dinliyordu. Bütün bu güzel sözler kendisine, yüzü gözü çizgiler içindeki kadına mı söyleniyordu? [...] Ona her kim dokunursa dokunsun, hep hatırlayacaktı...”

like other and “normal” girls who have weddings, families, and children. She is not innocent like the other girls. In addition to her being raped in prison, she is subjected to sexual harassment by the brother in law of her friend. Remzi, a doctor and a leftist activist before 12 September military coup, locks Gülay in a room to examine her. She is shocked and remembers how she felt while she was being raped:

Even if she wanted to say something she would not have a voice. She could not speak. She knew one would first lose words. She could not know the time either. How long had she been lying down like this... Time, just like words and sounds, had disappeared. How long had all this lasted, then?⁶⁰(141)

Gülay knows that one first loses words when raped. Her body and mind are broken into pieces. Throughout the novel Gülay remembers –on the bus, at work, in the market, and various other places- having been raped. She thinks that everybody is looking at her knowing this. Her making love with Yavuz is nothing but the remembrance of her being raped. She thinks that her vagina is a trashcan. With reference to Caruth, it is possible to argue that rape as a trauma is not located in the original event. On the contrary, it has an extremely unassimilated nature which returns to haunt the one who experienced the trauma later on. Thus, Gülay cannot get rid of her trauma and the repressed feelings return in different moments.

Up to the now, I have mentioned three main reasons why speechlessness is one of the dominant themes in both *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language*. At this point it is important to mention that the silence of the texts is broken by narratives of myth and imagination. Protagonists turn into story tellers and they thus find their voice. This will be explained in the following part.

⁶⁰ “Bir şeyler söylemek istese de sesi çıkmazdı. Konuşamazdı. Biliyordu, önce kelimeleri kaybediyordu insan. Zamanı da kestiremiyordu. Ne kadar zamandır öyle yatıyordu... Kelimeler ve sesler gibi zaman da kaybolmuştu. Bütün bunlar ne kadar sürmüştü peki?”

b) Mythical Narratives Against Speechlessness

In this part of the chapter, I will try to discuss how silences of the text are interrupted by the protagonists. What kind of a language do they use to narrate their story? When do they give references to meta-narratives or fairytales? To answer these questions it would be beneficial to remember the theoretical framework given in the introduction to this thesis. There, with reference to Eagleton, Macherey, and Jameson, a way of interpreting silences, absences, and gaps in a text had been presented.

Both *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language* use fairytale like narratives throughout the plot and this narrative technique is employed when the protagonist cannot define her despair. To illustrate, in *Imitating Bird Language*, Gülay hears a special bird which is inherited from her grandmother. She thinks that her only wealth is hearing that bird; *let's go to Üsküdar bird*⁶¹ (20). When silence hides everything she hears the bird which carries hope to her.

Now her thoughts were hanging around among cloudy images which first gathered and then dispersed, among remembrances which came closer and went away out of the blue, among sounds far from hidden corners [...]. A shadow had fallen over her soul. [...] Maybe this bird, the one about which she kept asking 'do you know, do you hear?' told her everything.⁶² (126)

Gülay is the only one who can understand the bird's language. This epic bird is the carrier of Gülay's story and fights against the meaningless silence. The bird's being symbolizes resistance against the death and disappearance of her friends (115). The language of this bird can be read as the lost language of the ones who disappeared or the survivors who cannot express themselves within the borders of language.

⁶¹ Üsküdar'a gidelim kuşu.

⁶² "Şimdi, düşünceleri açılıp kapanan, dağılıp sonra toplanan bulutsu görüntülerin, belli belirsiz hayallerin, ansızın yakınlaşıp ansızın uzaklaşiveren anıların, kuytuların dibinden [...] uzak seslerin [...] arasında başıboş geziniyordu. [...] Ruhuna gölge düşmüştü. [...] Belki de kuş, şu 'biliyor musun, duyuyor musun?' diye tutturduğu kuş söylüyordu Gülay'a her şeyi."

Apart from this epic bird, both *Imitating Bird Language* and *Tol* give references to fairytales, stories, and legends. Although these novels cannot be categorized as magical realist ones, it is possible to argue that they at least have these magical realist features. Time and place in magical realist texts are not definite. These texts make use of myths, folk stories, epics, and fairy tales (Turgut 12-27), and doing so, aims at a deeper understanding of reality (paraphrased in Turgut, 14). Whereas the pessimistic realism of the post-coup conjuncture represents revolutionaries as losers and terrorists, magical realist use of language shakes this hegemonic language and, referring to mythical figures or heroes of fairy tales, serves to prove that, let alone being terrorists, these revolutionaries are heroes who have ideals and dream of a more just world. According to Lean, magical realism can be considered as an attitude toward a reality which is expressed in cultural forms (121). Thus, it can be put forward that making use of fairytales, stories, and legends is a tactic to overcome the monopolistic reality (Zamora and Faris 6).

To make myself clearer I will give examples from both *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language*. Although the coup d'état labeled the revolutionaries as terrorists, Gülay says that the revolutionaries are like the heroes of her mother's stories, namely Pir Sultan and Şeyh Bedrettin.

Yet all was in vain now. Like Bedrettin said: 'Now that we have been defeated, whatever we do, it is in vain.' They had been defeated... The military junta, in 4-5 years, had managed to lock them up in the murderous image of the word 'terrorist.' Like Bedrettin's barefoot disciples in white dresses, they had decreased from thousands to zero, they had vanished...⁶³ (201).

⁶³ Ne var ki, şimdi ne yapsalar, ne etseler boşunaydı. Bedrettin'in dediği gibi; 'Mağdem ki mağlubuz... Netsek neylesek zait.' Yenilmişlerdi... Cuntacılar, dört-beş yıl içinde, onları terörist sözcüğünün kanlı imgesine hapsedmeyi başarmıştı. Bedrettin'in ak libaslı, çıplak ayaklı müritleri gibi, binlerceyken, yok olup gitmişlerdi işte...

Even though they are like the heroes of folkloric stories, they suddenly disappear like citizens of Pompei. Pompei was an ancient Roman city which was burned down in a few hours. The volcano Vusuvius had been dormant for a hundred years and it was almost forgotten. It suddenly erupted again and lavas destroyed all the houses and fields (Hall 14). Like people of Pompei, the revolutionaries are frozen under the lavas of the military coup (103). In addition to Şeyh Bedrettin and Pompei, Yavuz also gives reference to the Legend of Seven Sleepers. Like the other socialists, both Gülay and Yavuz feel that “time” works against them, their values, and their ideas. The dominant tendencies and mode of thinking and the carriers of those ideologies –workers, students, and peasants- disappeared in five years as if they never existed. The continuation of time suddenly ceased. The narrator of the novel explains that dramatic change with reference to the Legend of the Seven Sleepers:

Yavuz had been cut off from the time in which he was living due to a misfortune, a catastrophe, a coincidence, something unexpected. People of the Cave... *Ashâb-ı Kehf*... The Seven Sleepers... This was a legend his grandmother had told... Seven young people running away from the persecution of society took refuge in a cave and fell asleep. They saw that everything had changed while they were asleep. When they opened their eyes, they found themselves in a world where they could live without being persecuted... Yet Yavuz was not that fortunate. The legends had turned upside down; the most astonishing fairy tales, the most unimagined stories had been stranded. Once he woke up, Yavuz was merely weird, pathetic, and ludicrous. Things which were once right, good, and beautiful were now incomprehensible, wrong, and ugly. The heroic revolutionaries, once courageous and armed, had turned into ordinary murderers. The Seven Sleepers... The legend had turned upside down; time, which compassionately stroking their heads had flown over the young without letting them grow older, this time flew towards terra incognita like a river which had abandoned its bed...⁶⁴ (66).

⁶⁴ “Yavuz yaşadığı zamanda bir aksilik, bir facia, bir tesadüf, hiç beklenmedik bir şey yüzünden kopmuştu. Mağara Yârânı... *Ashâb-ı Kehf*... Yedi Uyuyanlar... Annaannesinin anlattığı bir efsaneydi bu... Yedi genç toplumun zulmünden kurtulmak için bir mağaraya saklanmış, uyuyuyup kalmışlardı; uyandıklarında herşeyin değiştiğini görmüşlerdi. Gözlerini açtıklarında, yaşayabilecekleri, eziyet görmeyecekleri bir dünya bulmuşlardı... Yavuz’ sa onlar kadar talihli değildi. Efsaneler tersine dönmüş; en şaşırtıcı peri masalları, en beklenmedik öyküler yaya kalmıştı. Uyandığında, sadece, tuhaf, acıklı ve gülünçtü Yavuz. Onun zamanında haklı, doğru ve güzel olan şeyler, anlaşılmaz,

While giving references to legends, the protagonists try to explain their situation with reference to historical meta-narratives. If we read the latent meaning of these references, it is possible to argue that it is a reaction against the inaudibility of their voices. As long as they lose their speech and ideals, they hang onto legends. In *Tol*, Oğuz labels himself as a prophet:

Blind drunk, in each other's arms we climbed up slopes; they waited for me, did not leave me behind... I am a prophet, miracles are close to me. [...] Now I am coming close to cracked lands. I will walk around in a valley, reach sacred cities. This is courage, a bet; there is me between the heavens and the earth; I have sworn to be the greatest fairytale teller in the universe.⁶⁵ (103).

Oğuz, as a prophet, labels himself a carrier of miracles. He believes that, like the other prophets, his legend will be transferred from generation to generation. That is to say, although nobody understands him in his life time, in the future people will appreciate him. Like Oğuz, Yusuf of *Imitating Bird Language* feels himself like one of the followers of Jesus when he was surrounded by the soldiers of the coup. While he is thinking about suicide, he remembers Jesus: “*Agnus dei...* The sheep of God... Crucified Christs...”⁶⁶ At this point one can argue that the protagonists, referring to prophets, they break their silence which stems from the fact that they are devaluated and nullified by the world. Here one can argue that, through timeless narratives such as fairy tales, they say that their ideals and causes which at the moment are silenced and

yanlış ve çirkindi. Kahraman devrimciler, eli silahlı yiğitler sıradan katillere dönüşmüştü. Yedi Uyuyanlar... Efsane tersine dönmüştü, yedi genci yaşlandırmadan, başlarını şevkatle okşayıp, üzerlerinden sessizce akan zaman bu kez mecrasını terk eden bir nehir gibi bilinmeyen yerlere akmıştı...”

⁶⁵ “Yokuşlar çıktık biz, sarhoş sarhoş, kucak kucağa, beni beklediler, koymadılar geride... Ben bir peygamberim, mucizeler bana yakın. [...] Ben çatlak topraklara yaklaşıyorum şimdi. Bir vadide dolaşacağım, kutsal şehirlere varacağım. Bu bir cesaret, bu bir iddia, göktekiyle yerdeki arasında ben varım, kainatın en büyük masal anlatıcısı olmaya ant içtim.”

⁶⁶ “*Agnus dei...* Tanrının kuzusu ya da kuzuları... Çarmıha gerilmiş İsalalar...”

repressed will be left to the future. Words and language return to them only through fairy tales. In *Tol*, when Oğuz leaves his home to take revenge, he goes to Diyarbakır. He sees a dream that he hasn't seen for a long time. He sees a country which is totally different from this one:

What an eternal happiness; stories, games, whispers infusing in the light, cool breeze. That is another country. A country full of billions of words, in which words walk up and down in the streets. A country in which words do not leave people helpless, on the contrary, in which letters fall down before people like diamonds, golds, and rubies. I have come as a prophet to such a country.⁶⁷ (108)

The speechlessness of Oğuz is broken in a different world. Things that he cannot say, words which escape from him, memories which haunt him in his daily life are not chains for him anymore in such a country. This is the country where the impossibility of representation becomes possible. This is a country where everybody understands the words of *let's go to Üsküdar bird*.

The ideals for which the protagonists die will be remembered through stories. In other words, their experiences become a story. This is the only way out of this repression implemented by 12 September military coup.

What would be left of them into the future? Who would remember them? [...] What was left behind? What would be left? Naïve, fairytale-like narratives? Would reality through which they had gone with their flesh and bones turn into a fairytale? Just like Gülay said, belief and miracle... Yes, maybe everything would begin thus. Like it has done for thousands of years... Whatever legends had reminded humans who walked barefoot out of the eternal darkness of time. Thus would things be yet again. Fairy tales would remind people who forgot how to believe belief and miracle. Miracle... Humans who set off in order to reconstruct themselves and the

⁶⁷ “Nasıl sonsuz bir mutluluk, hafif, serin bir rüzgarla demlenen hikayeler, oyunlar, fısıltılar. Başka bir ülke orası. Milyonlarca kelimeyle dolu, kelimelerin şokaklarda gezindiği bir ülke. Kelimelerin insanı çaresiz bırakmadığı, tam tersine, harflerin insanın önünde elmaslar, altınlar, yakutlar gibi döküldüğü bir ülke. Ben böyle bir ülkeye peygamber geldim.”

world... *Prometheus* who bore grudge against gods... A worn-out example but why not! Why not!!⁶⁸ (200)

As it can be seen from the quotation, Gülay believes that if they have a power to make people remember, it would only be through stories which are timeless. Although people can be tortured or killed in prisons, stories they tell are immortal like prophets or other mythological heroes. Prometheus is the mythological character who steals fire from Zeus to give it to mortals (Woodard 89). Prometheus, as the thief and confiscator of fire, let mortals use and benefit from it. He aroused Zeus's anger because of his insistent protection of humanity (Roman 420-21). He is a heroic figure who disobeys Gods for the benefits of common people. Yavuz, like Gülay, believes in the power of stories. In fact, this is the power of stains, spots, scars since no power can efface them completely:

Was there anyone who remembered Yavuz? Or the others? They were erased... They were erased as if they had never existed. [...] Only memories would be left behind. Today, while erasing the past, would leave little traces, stains, spots... Perhaps this was the only thing she was looking for since the very beginning... [...] Time... Understanding time, thought Gülay, understanding this alien, cruel time is maybe the only way of coping with fate.⁶⁹ (218)

As a result, all protagonists believe that the stories they wrote before the coup d'état will be discovered in the future. When people want to remember stories in order to fight

⁶⁸ “Kendilerinden geleceğe ne kalacaktı. Onları kim hatırlayacaktı? [...] Geriye ne kalmıştı? Ne kalacaktı? Naif, masalsı anlatılar mı? Etleriyle, kanlarıyla yaşadıkları gerçek masala mı dönüşecekti? Gülay'ın söylediği gibi inanç ve mucize... Evet belki de herşey böyle başlayacaktı. Bin yıllardır olduğu gibi... Efsaneler, zamanın başsız sonsuz karanlığından yalınayak çıkıp gelmiş insana, neyi hatırlatmışlarsa... Yine öyle olacaktı. Masallar, inanmayı unutmuş insanlara, inancı ve mucizeyi hatırlatacaktı. Mucize... Kendini ve dünyayı yeniden yaratmak için yola çıkan insan... Tanrılara kin duyan *Prometheus*... Çok hırpalanmış bir örnek ama neden olmasın! Neden olmasın!!”

⁶⁹ “Yavuz'u hatırlayan kimse var mıydı? Diğerlerini? Silinmişlerdi... Sanki hiç olmamışlar gibi silinmişlerdi. [...] Ancak anılar kalırdı. Bugün, geçmişi silerken, küçük izler bırakırdı, lekeler, benekler... Belki de taa en başından beri, aradığı da yalnızca bu izdi... [...] Zaman... Zamanı anlamak diye düşündü Gülay, bu yabancı bu zalim zamanı anlamak; kaderle baş edebilmenin tek yolu belki.”

against repressive reality, the ideals of dead or tortured revolutionaries will be rediscovered.

Chapter III

Analysis of Three Novels on 12 September Military Coup Written by Nationalist Authors

In the first chapter of my thesis, referring to Terry Eagleton, I tried to analyze the representation of a “historical real”, namely 12 September 1980 coup d’état, through *Imitating Bird Language* and *Tol*, two novels written on the coup by leftist authors and published after 2000. Basically, in these novels, I searched for the specific ways of representing revolutionaries, society, state, and the authors themselves. While doing this, I did not only pay attention to the content of the novels but also to their form. In short, looking at the silences and at the points where they seemed to be speaking loudly, I tried to read the “political unconscious” of these novels with reference to Fredric Jameson. In this chapter, I will examine the representation of the same historical real and try to understand its specificity; but this time in the novels of nationalist authors who were activists before the 1980 coup. The novels in question are *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life* (2002) by Naci Bostancı, *My Name is Green* (2005) by Remzi Çayır, *The Storm Hit Us* (2009) by Ahmet Haldun Terzioğlu. Just like the novels taken up in the first chapter, these novels were published after the year 2000.

I will first focus on the structure of these novels and underline their basic difference, in terms of form, from those analyzed in the first chapter. That is, I will emphasize their realist structure and will try to answer why this form of representation might have been adopted by these authors. Moreover, I will try to explore the relationship between this form of representation and the eclectic content of the novels which will be analyzed in the second and third parts of this chapter.

In the second part of this chapter I will try to understand the “representation of self” in these novels and compare it with the “representation of self” in the novels taken up in the first chapter. I will describe how the nationalist discourse constructed itself, what its premises were, and how it represented the left before the 1980 military coup.

In the third and the last part of this chapter I will once again deal with the representation of self, the revolutionaries, and the state; but this time after the 1980 coup d'état. Here I will ask the following question: What kind of a rupture was 12 September coup for the nationalists in terms of their understanding of themselves, the leftist activists, and the state?

A. Realist Structure of *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life*, *The Storm Hit*

Us and My Name is Green

Unlike the post-coup novels written by leftist authors, the novels written by rightist authors do not have an allegorical form. As I mentioned 2nd chapter I use the term “allegorical structure” with reference to Avelar and Benjamin’s thesis on history. At this point, it would be beneficial to remember the basic characteristics of the allegorical form which are imprinted the novels written by leftist authors. In both *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language*, it is not possible to follow a linear time flow. Past tense penetrates into the present tense especially in *Imitating Bird Language*. On the other hand, in terms of *Tol*, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, it is not possible to separate one character from the other. That is to say, all main characters melt into each other. One could argue that both of these novels try to find the right way of representing themselves and force both form and content to narrate their story. Breaks and discontinuity in form is closely related with the “historical and social raw material” of the leftist authors. In fact, as I

discussed in detail, the political unconscious of *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language* are reflected in their forms.

Bearing in mind the emphasis on form in the novels by leftist authors, it is important to discuss the formal structure of *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life*, *The Storm Hit Us* and *My Name is Green* in order to understand the political unconscious of rightist authors. In comparison with *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language*, it is possible to claim that in the novels written by rightist authors realism is used as a tool of representation. Although the aim of this chapter is not a detailed discussion of what realism is, I will first describe the basic characteristics of realism and then try to understand the latent meaning of realist structure in these novels. At this point Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel – Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* is a beneficial source to understand the basic features of realist mode of representation and the realist structure of the novels in question. According to Watt, realism concentrates on individual experiences in a certain place and time. Characters are situated in a well-defined sociological and physical environment. Identities of characters are determined by their past experience so their memories gain importance. Characters are represented through their pasts and the cause-effect chain is unbroken. That is, the readers can easily understand the behaviors and reactions of characters thanks to the knowledge of their past experiences. Furthermore, authors choose to adopt a simple and pure language to create realist effect on their readers. That is to say, the only aim of language in these novels is to describe 'things' as they are (9-34). According to Rincé ve Lecherbonnier, the other important feature of realism is the attempt to create the effect of objectivity. That is to say, the aim of the realist novel is to narrate the objective story of people and their relationship to the world (423).

Interestingly enough, although the word “novel” appears on the front cover of these books, it is very difficult to label Remzi Çayır’s *My Name is Green* and Ahmet Haldun Terzioğlu’s *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life* as novels or fictions. I will, however, in accordance with the authors’ decision, refer to them as novels. It is not possible to talk about a plot, a re-arranging of events in these novels. It is as if we were reading the life stories or memoirs of the authors. Indeed, the aim of these novels is to show the reader the reality that she is supposed to be unaware of. Terzioğlu, in the introduction to his novel, warns us that what we will read soon is real and wants us to read, to try to understand, and to know that it is real.

Maybe you have only read things written from the other side. You have been moved. You have thought that what you have been told is true. But these are true as well. [...] Just read and know them. ... Try to understand them. These were all experienced... [...] The outcome of this storm was blood and death; it was fear, hatred, vendetta; it was young bodies falling down on the ground; and afterwards, it was young bodies being hanged⁷⁰ (Terzioğlu 6)

As it can be seen from the quotation, Terzioğlu’s purpose is to narrate the 12 September military coup experience of the rightists. According to him, the rightists' side of the coup d’état has not been revealed to readers until now. Although Terzioğlu calls it a novel, *The Storm Hit Us* is more like an autobiography than a fiction. He writes his novel like a diary and the novel can be considered an autobiography of an activist nationalist before the coup d’état. The novel is full of monologues and rhetorical questions. Before looking at the structure of the novel more closely, it would be helpful to describe briefly the story. Terzioğlu belongs to a poor family. Although he does not

⁷⁰ “Hep diğer taraftan yazılanları okudunuz belki. Etkilendiniz. Doğru buldunuz anlatılanları. Ama bunlar da doğru.[...] Sadece okuyun ve bilin... Anlamaya çalışın. Bunlar yaşandı... [...] Kandı, candı bu fırtınanın ürünü. Korkuydu, nefretti, kan davasıydı. Yere düşen genç vücutlardı. Sonrası aynı ipe çekilen genç vücutlar...”

mention his mother, he describes his father as a graduate of a Village Institute⁷¹, a leftist, and a supporter of the Republican People's Party. Not surprisingly, his father does not approve of the narrator's political stand. He goes to high school in Small City where nationalists dominate the social atmosphere. Then, he goes to university in Cold City to study in the faculty of agriculture. Terzioğlu, on his personal website, says that he is a graduate of the Faculty of Agriculture in Erzurum Atatürk University.⁷² He describes himself as "a devoted nationalist throughout his high school years". The narrator also provides information about the Nationalist Front and Bülent Ecevit governments. He explicitly says that the nationalists felt more relaxed under the rule of the Nationalist Front government. On the other hand, he underlines that they were subjected to repression under Bülent Ecevit's government. It is known that NAP became active in politics especially after the establishment of the first Nationalist Front government on 1 April 1975. They had three parliamentary seats and two ministries in the Justice Party coalition cabinet. And in the second Nationalist Front government which was established on 22 July 1977, NAP had five ministries. Moreover, Justice Party obviously supported NAP as a tool against massive socialist movement (Ağaoğulları 200). The novel ends with 12 September military coup. In short, it is possible to argue that the narrator of the novel informs its readers about the political conjuncture of the period from the perspective of activist nationalists. Additionally, he uses common everyday language throughout his novel. He tries to make his readers understand the reasons behind his nationalist standpoint. In sum, Terzioğlu tries to create an effect that would make the readers of the novel believe that they are faced with an objective historical document.

⁷¹ Köy Enstitüsü.

⁷² <http://ahmethaldunterzioglu.com/>

Just like Terziođlu, Remzi ayır’s novel *My Name is Green* can be considered as an autobiographical document. Similar to *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life*, *My Name is Green* is written like a diary. Although it is labeled as a novel, it is much more like the direct testimony of a nationalist activist before the 12 September Military coup. The novel is based on ayır’s prison experience. Throughout the novel he is in a depressive mood and tries to understand himself. That is to say, like Terziođlu’s, ayır’s novel is composed of memoirs, monologues and rhetorical questions. In fact, rather than a novel, it is a document on why ayır became an ‘lkc’. ayır was in prison for thirteen years.⁷³ In *My Name is Green*, he writes that he stayed in four different prisons: Ulucanlar, Mamak, Antep and anakkale. He is subjected to torture in Ulucanlar and Mamak prisons. In prison he has time to question and criticize the nationalist movement he was involved in. Here one can argue that this novel is the product of his prison experience. He cannot cope with the memories that haunt him. He is faced with real difficulties in continuing his life and he oscillates between madness and suicide. Interestingly enough, there are basically two mysterious figures that appear when he feels himself alone and alienated. The first one is Hiristo, a Greek cleric. Yet Hiristo believes in the same God as the narrator. Whenever he wants to have a heart-to-heart talk with someone who does not judge him, he finds Hiristo in Laleli. The other ghostly figure is his grandmother Hatice. The narrator talks with her at nights when he cannot fall asleep, or in the yards of mosques. She is the second person who listens to him without labeling or judging. They usually talk about the narrator’s lost love Glbister. In fact, he does not give us information on her character or appearance except that she is crippled and innocent. He defines Glbister as a “dream heroine” who does not belong to this dirty world. At the very end of the novel, he goes out of prison. One of the

⁷³ <http://www.remzicayir.com/>

leading figures of the nationalist organization, *Reis*,⁷⁴ calls him once he is out. He tells the narrator that he wants to bring together a group of people who know Arabic and Kurdish, and that he wants he him to be part of it. *Reis* says that this group is intended to be sent to northern Iraq but the narrator does not accept his proposal. After this refusal, while wandering in the streets, he sees people crowding under a bridge. He realizes that someone is dead. Gülbister might be the dead one but he is not so sure. The novel ends with this ambiguity.

Remzi Çayır is still very active in nationalist politics and the vice-president of Great Unity Party.⁷⁵ He has written seven novels and most of them focus on his prison experience. In *My Name is Green*, Çayır uses real names throughout the novel. He gives all the names of *reises* and his *ülküdaşes* in both Ankara and İstanbul. In other words, he describes the organizational aspect of the Nationalist Action Party. For instance he quotes from Esat Bütün, one of the former chiefs of Ankara Ülkü Ocakları Foundation: “To guard and to take care of this homeland is our primary duty. It is our task to keep the state alive forever and ever. If needed, we would sacrifice our lives for the sake of it, but not an inch of the homeland”⁷⁶ (43). Esat Bütün is one of the founders of Great Unity Party and he was also the pioneering figure of the nationalist movement before the coup d’état. Like Terzioğlu, he mentions the implications of Ecevit government on *ülküciüs*.⁷⁷ “Ecevid kept saying nothing but bloodthirsty fascists”⁷⁸ (41). Additionally, he refers to the mass demonstration of the Nationalist Action Party on 15 April 1978.

⁷⁴ In the organizational hierarchy of the nationalist movement the senior ones are called *reis*.

⁷⁵ Büyük Birlik Partisi.

⁷⁶ “Bu vatanı korumak ve kollamak bizim birinci vazifemizdir. Devleti ebed müddet yaşatmak ödevimizdir. Bu uğurda gerekirse canımızı verir, vatanın bir karışını vermeyiz...”

⁷⁷ Although I have used *ülküciü*, “nationalist”, and “rightist” interchangeably, the *ülküciü* movement, as Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can argues, has distinctive features and

The old and famous Tandoğan meeting is reappearing in my mind. It was the fifteenth of April. *Ülkücüs* from other cities flooded Ankara. People came from villages, towns, and cities. The Tandoğan Square was chock-a-block and one end of the cortege was in Cebeci. I could see the square from the highest point. I was on duty and armed. [...] Yaşar Okuyan, in his usual manners, is coming to the rostrum and calling the *Başbuğ*, Alparslan Türkeş, over there.⁷⁹ (51-52)

It is obvious that the 1978 Tandoğan demonstration was a legend in the memories of the supporters of the Nationalist Action Party. As it can be seen from the quotation, Çayır describes that day in detail. He gives the names of the two most important figures of the nationalist movement, namely Alparslan Türkeş and Yaşar Okuyan. Çayır imitates reality throughout his novel by giving exact times and names. Moreover he frequently quotes organizational correspondence and communication.

The third novel which will be analyzed in this thesis is Naci Bostancı's *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life*. This is the most fictionalized novel among the three. Although Bostancı uses imaginary characters and the plot is unfolds through the experiences of these various characters, at the end of the novel Bostancı himself emerges as the author. He informs the reader on the reality of the novel. He says that Rauf, one of the main characters of the novel, told him this story, but he himself imagined and constructed what the other characters thought and did as the story unfolded. "This is the outline of the story. Besides, even if they had not acted in such a way, somewhere in the jigsaw of life, these or things like these somehow happened for

differences when compared with other fascist movements around the world (36). That is why I preferred to use it without translating.

⁷⁸ "Ecevit eli kanlı faşistler diyordu da başka bir şey demiyordu."

⁷⁹ "Tarihi Tandoğan Mitingi canlanıyor hafızamda. Nisan ayının on beşiydi. Ankara'ya bütün şehirlerden ülkücüler akın etmişti. Köylerden, kasabalardan, şehirlerden kopup gelmişti insanlar. Tandoğan Meydanı hıncahınç dolu iken, yürüyüş kolunun ucu Cebeci'deydi. Ankara teslim alınmıştı adeta. Meydanı en üst noktadan görüyordum. Görevliydim, silahlıydım [...] Yaşar Okuyan, o bildik edasıyla kürsüye çıkıyor, Alparslan Türkeş'i, Başbuğ'u kürsüye çağırıyordu."

sure”⁸⁰ (341). As it can be seen from this quotation, the author feels the urge to intervene in the plot and verify the reality of the story at the end of the novel.

The subject of the novel is the relationship of three *ülküçü* friends with the world before the 1980 coup. These three activist nationalists –Rauf, Süleyman and Hayri- once stayed in the same dorm and are intimate friends. Rauf, a poet, feels himself alien to his country and its people. Süleyman, a counselor in the ministry, is married to a rich woman and was able to climb the steps of bureaucracy thanks to his father-in-law. Hayri, on the other hand, is involved in criminal enterprises. After a long time since their days in the dorm, he visits Süleyman and threatens him using a secret between the two. We learn that these three friends robbed a bank in the past and Hayri was caught. It seems that they robbed the bank in revenge for the death of Süleyman’s brother, himself an *ülküçü* as well. We also learn that they were planning to buy arms with the money they stole and that Hayri did not give Süleyman and Rauf away as his accomplices. Now he is asking them to pay him back for his loyalty and take part in a robbery once again. None of these characters can cling on to life. They cannot cope with the necessities of daily life either. Therefore Hayri’s proposal to rob a hotel owner and drug dealer in Antalya and steal the money he received from his last sale appeals to them. Three friends hit the road and drive a long way to Antalya for the robbery. Rauf, thinking that he might be useful, invites a former revolutionary, Cavit, whom he does not know well and to whom he trusted instantaneously, to join them. Cavit stayed in prison for three years. In fact, this long drive turns into an inner journey to the pasts of the characters. After the robbery Rauf, with a bag full of money in hand, waits for the others at a bus terminal. Meanwhile someone in the terminal asks for trouble and Rauf

⁸⁰ “Hikayenin iskeleti böyle, hem onlar tam olarak böyle davranmamış olsalar bile hayatın yap-bozu içinde bir yerlerde, bir şekilde bunlar ya da benzerleri yaşadığı mutlaka.”

is engaged in a fight. During the fight the money in the bag is scattered all over. The others, on the other hand, are dead in a car crash while coming to pick up Rauf in a taxi. Rauf is sentenced to 6 years. The story we are reading is told by him to a political prisoner (he is a scholar) in prison. Thus, the author, identifying with Rauf, fictionalizes this story and makes a novel of it.

As I mentioned above, although *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life* is a fictionalized narrative, at the end of the novel Naci Bostancı, as the author, needs to make his voice louder and says that there is much reality lying under each of his sentences. In other words, these lives are really experienced and are not alien to this world. In the last chapter, Bostancı says that he met Rauf in prison. He also mentions in the same part that he was in prison because of his views. When Bostancı's autobiography is investigated, it can be seen that he was in Mamak prison because of an article he published in one of the nationalist journals of the time. He was arrested on 18 March 1980 and stayed in prison for one year. Mehmet Baki claims that he was one of the nationalist victims of 12 September military coup.⁸¹ Bostancı wrote two novels on the 1980 coup d'état and he is a professor of political science at Gazi University.

As I tried to explain and show in the previous paragraphs, *The Storm Hit Us*, *My Name is Green* and *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life* claim to be narrating and revealing the reality behind the nationalist movement. There is a general tendency in the nationalist movement to argue that the literature of the 12 September military coup is written by revolutionaries. These authors' aim is to make people see the other side of the coin and understand that *ülküçüs* are neither criminals nor killers. In contrast, they are innocent people who have good reasons to be *ülküçüs*.

⁸¹ <http://www.milliyetcigenlik.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=293>

At this point, one should note that understanding the meaning of these novels' realist structure is crucial in order to see the *ülküci* movement's political unconscious. According to Jameson, the political unconscious is not only imprinted on the content of the text but also on its form. Form is the medium where content finds its shape and expression. That is to say, the realist structure of these novels can be the product of the nationalist political unconscious. Realist "novelists write the neutral prose of the dispassionate reporter so that reality, or their image of reality, may seem more purely itself" (*The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 199). Therefore, the novel seeks to become a mirror to the real world. Indeed, these nationalist authors claim to be bringing light to the unrepresented reality of the past and to be reflecting it like a mirror. It would be fair enough to say that these novels have documentary value rather than a literary one. According to Harry Levin, the realist novel is based on an implicit intimacy between the author and the reader (24). The novels which I am analyzing in this chapter attempt to create such an intimacy, and say explicitly that they need to be listened to.

As I have tried to show in this part, the novels analyzed here adopt the realist form of representation in the classical sense. That is, they aim to mirror the world around them. So in all three novels one can observe almost a linear time flow, causal relations, and solid personalities which can easily be distinguished from one another and associated with a specific time and place in the universe. Therefore, in the following parts of this chapter, I will try to understand the latent meaning behind the realist structure of these novels. I will ask the following question: Is it possible that this structural coherence and unity conceal the eclectic content lying beneath? In other words, what is the relationship between form and content in these novels? In order to be able to answer this question, I will make use of the following questions: How do the *ülküci*s construct themselves before and after 12 September military coup? What kinds

of fragmentations and ruptures did they experience after the coup d'état? At which points do they intersect with the leftist authors' novels?

B. Representation of Self

Like Gülay of *Imitating Bird Language* and Yusuf of *Tol*, the characters of the novels by rightist authors feel alien to the society after the 12 September military coup. They try to understand what happened to them and to locate themselves in this new world after the coup d'état. For instance, in Remzi Çayır's *My Name is Green*, the protagonist, just like Gülay of *Imitating Bird Language*, is alienated to the time he is living in and feels as if he is watching a movie: "It was as if a movie was being shot. Things were topsy-turvy all around... The arms had stopped. Yet it was like a movie scene which was planned and designed beforehand. A stage set for a war movie"⁸² (21); "The basis of life is like a film set. Are we all acting together in a movie with a well-written script? [...] Who is the author? Who is the director? Who are the stage electricians, the cameramen, the stagehands and so on? Where are they?"⁸³ (70). As is seen in the quotations, the protagonist cannot help feeling that he and his *ülküçü* friends are part of a plot, a kind of scenario written before, a world that is designed by people they do not know. Likewise, Rauf of *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life* feels that he is not living in today and that this alienation gives him an unbearable anxiety:

⁸² "Sanki film çevriliyordu. Tarumardı sağımız solumuz... Silahlar susmuştu susmasına da , çevremiz önceden planlanmış, dizayn edilmiş bir film sahnesi gibiydi. Savaşlı film platosu."

⁸³ "Film platosu gibi hayatın zemini. Senaryosu yazılmış bir filmde mi oynuyoruz hep birlikte? [...] Senarist kim, yönetmen kim, ışıkçılar, kameramanlar, taşıyıcılar, yükleniciler falan filan... Hani nerede?"

How strange! It is as if I am not only living in the present time; I am constantly together with the past; what I have been through is shadowing my present existence. [...] Sometimes, when talking to friends, I see that this does not apply only to me. In fact, we are all living in the present, the past, and in our dreams of tomorrow at once. Maybe for this reason our lives are so disorderly; living in multiple times we lose sense of reality and are living in a state of restlessness which could never be overcome.⁸⁴ (174)

As can be seen from these quotations, the protagonists and/or the narrators of the novels by the rightist authors, just like their counterparts in *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language*, feel alien to the time and environment they are living in. However, in the novels of the leftist authors, the main reason for this alienation was the drastic change of values in society and the sudden disappearance of socialist ideals with the coup. Yet, in the novels analyzed in this chapter, this is not the main reason for alienation since the main values of the nationalist movement and the main components of its discourse are still valid and untouched after 1980. This can be best seen in the National Action Party's⁸⁵ (NAP) slogan after the coup d'état: "ideas in power, self in prison". Indeed, in the long run, many nationalist activists were put in prison and subjected to torture. In fact, NAP defines itself as the guardian of the divine state and the helper of Turkish military forces against both inner and outer threats. Interestingly enough, at one point they find themselves as the enemies of the Turkish society and state. Therefore the main reason for the alienation felt by the representatives of the nationalist movement is the unexpected blow they receive from the state which they had been fetishizing.

⁸⁴ "Ne tuhaf sadece bugünün içinde yaşamıyorum, sürekli geçmişle beraberim, yaşadıklarım bir gölge gibi bugünkü varlığımı takip ediyor. [...] Bazen arkadaşlarla konuştuğumda anlıyorum ki, bu sadece bende olan birşey değil; aslında hepimiz bugünü, dünü ve yarına ait hayallerimizi bir arada yaşıyoruz. Belki bu yüzden hayatlarımız böylesine karışıyor, çoğullaşan zamanda gerçeklik hissini kaybediyor ve asla giderilemeyecek bir tedirginlik içinde yaşıyoruz."

⁸⁵ Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi.

In this part of the thesis, I will try to understand their contradictory attitude for and against the state. To make myself clear, it would be beneficial to look at NAP's fundamental thoughts and principles before the 12 September military coup.

According to Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can, one of the most obvious features of the *ülkücü* movement is its hostility towards the socialist movement (36). Unlike other nationalist movements, the *ülkücü* movement does not have any theories on social structure. That is to say, it does not have a comprehensive political and social theory to mobilize and integrate people. The most dominant characteristic of the nationalist movement is its “organic” reactionary and protectionist position against foreign movements and threats. Prof. Necmettin Hacıeminoğlu, one of the important founding fathers of the *ülkücü* movement, explains *ülküçülük* in the following words: “*Ülküçülük* is the return to the essence [...] *Ülküçülük* is an organic reaction to a microbe that has entered the organism” (qtd in Can 664). Here Can argues that “return to the essence” means two separate things which are closely interconnected. The first one is ethnic essence, namely “being a Turk” or “Turkishness”. That is to say, nationalists construct a Turkish identity and exclude foreign elements. They consider socialist and communist ideals foreign to this Turkish identity and the holy Turkish state. At this point, it would be beneficial to look at Remzi Çayır's *My Name is Green*:

For us, they were Russian spawns and were welcome to go to Moscow. They were enemies. They were not from us. They were traitors to the country; to the unity, peace, and future of the Turkish nation. They were like harmful insects. That was the way I perceived it...⁸⁶ (23)

As it can be seen from the quotation, revolutionaries are labeled as “foreign” and “other” because their ideology comes from Moscow. That is to say, they neither belong

⁸⁶ “Onlar bizim için Rus dölleriydi ve isterlerse Moskova'ya gidebilirlerdi. Düşmandılar. Bizden değildiler. Ülkenin, Türk Milleti'nin birliğine, dirliğine, istikbaline kastediyorlardı. Zararlı böcek gibiydiler. Böyle idrak ediyordum...”

to nor respect the Turkish state and identity. They are seen as poisonous insects threatening the healthy Turkish organism. NAP glorifies the violence committed by its young militants against the “threat of communism”. To illustrate, on June 1977, in a radio propaganda before the election, “the chairman of the NAP Youth Branches stated that idealist youths had lost 110 lives in their struggle against communists, qualifying his party as that of ‘men, not cowards’ ” (Ağaoğulları 203). Another example is Türkeş’s declaration on television on how they feel against communism: “[It] ‘reached, even exceeded the bursting point’ and threatened to ‘crush the heads of the traitors and of those who provoke them’ ” (203).

The other components of nationalists’ “return to the essence” discourse are conservatism and religion. That is to say, Islam is one of the major parts of their discourse to create enemies. The *ülküci* movement frequently emphasizes the “religion in danger” theme. For them, Islam is an inseparable part of Turkish identity (Can 674). “Turk as much as Tanrı Mountain, Muslim as much as Hira Mountain” clearly expresses the inextricable link they establish between Turkishness and Islam. Here, it is important to note that all of the novels I am analyzing in this chapter consider Islam as one of the most important values of Turkish society. They do not question it at all and use it as a pre-given component of every Turk. Moreover, they blame revolutionaries for being atheists and represent leftists as the enemies of Muslims. Remzi Çayır describes the revolutionaries’ attitude towards Islam before 12 September military coup as follows:

I knew that the communists did not believe in God, hated religion, intended to place the homeland under Russian rule, and that, with the desire for a boundless and classless society, dreamt of removing borders. That they aimed to change the existing order by armed force was already obvious.⁸⁷ (23)

⁸⁷ “Komünistlerin Allah’a inanmadıklarını, dinden nefret ettiklerini; vatani, Rusya’ya bağlama niyeti taşıdıklarını... Sınırsız, sınıfsız bir toplum arzusuyla, sınırları kaldırma

According to Can, NAP uses Islam as the main reference to gain the consent of masses. One of the most popular combinations of Turkish and Muslim identity is expressed by Seyit Ahmet Arsavi (676). According to Arsavi, “the Turkish nation’s ideal of dominating the world is in full harmony with Islam’s cause of divine order”. (qtd inl Can 677). Arsavin’s teaching of “Turkish-Muslim *ülküci*”, especially in the second half of 1970s, suits the social and economic characteristics of the *ülküci* youth. If we remember that province is the basis of NAP, we could understand why “Turkish-Muslim *ülküci*” teaching was so appealing. For example, in *The Storm Hit Us*, the narrator writes about his first meeting with revolutionaries. When he enters the class on his first day of high school, three revolutionaries walk up to him. They take the narrator to a dorm to help him get settled. They are not only revolutionaries but also Alevis and they try to integrate him into the socialist movement. The narrator has to spend time with them for a while but he cannot feel himself as part of these groups:

There were 40-50 of them in the lodging house and their biggest complaint was the fascists who were less in number. Fascist... It was the first time I heard this word. [...] That I was a fascist was against the nature of things. Since I was so much attached to my religion and I would not let anyone say anything bad about Islam, God, and his Sublime Prophet. But the *alevis* were making fun of all these sacred values in my presence.⁸⁸ (124)

As can be seen here, the narrator of *The Storm Hit Us* represents revolutionaries as being not respectful to Islam. Their atheism is reflected as teasing Islam and Muslims. That is to say, there is an overt and major conflict between a revolutionary and a Muslim. It is the same for the narrator of *My Name is Green*. While the narrator is

rüyasına yattıklarını bilebiliyorum. Mevcut düzeni, silah zoruyla değiştirme amacıyla oldukları da aşıkardı zaten.”

⁸⁸ “40-50 kişi kadardılar pansiyonda ve en büyük şikayetleri sayıları onlardan az olan faşistlerdi. Faşist... Bu kelimeyi ilk kez duyuyordum. [...] Eşyanın tabiatına aykırı bir durumdu bu aidiyetim. Çünkü ben İslam’a, Allah’a ve onun Yüce Peygamber’ine söz söyletmeyecek kadar bağlıydım dinime . Halbuki aleviler bu kutsal değerlerin hemen hepsiyle alay ediyorlardı yanımda.”

staying at the dormitory of *ülküçüs*, his *reis* gives him a gun to protect the dorm against revolutionary attacks. He legitimizes himself as follows: “Our opponents had evil intentions. They would invade our homeland. Even our religion would lose its value and existence. They would overthrow the Republic and establish a communist regime instead”⁸⁹ (33-34). As can be seen in the narrator’s inner voice, according to the *ülküçüs*, the revolutionaries would invade Turkey and abolish Islam by force. This paranoia is also supported by the Turkish social structure and state. At this point it is important to underline once again that one of the basic motives of the nationalist discourse in Turkey is its anti-communism. They see communists as the product of a cultural alienation from Turkish identity. Here one can ask this question: From which social and cultural class do *ülküçüs* who claim to be representing Turkish culture come from?

Although an in-depth analysis of the social background of the *ülküçü* movement is outside the scope of this thesis, it would be useful to give some information on the movement in order to understand *The Storm Hit Us*, *My Name is Green* and *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life*. According to Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can, the members of the traditional middle class who, in the second half of the 1970s, are worried that there will be no place for them in this capitalist transformation and who see the cultural change coming with this transformation as a threat to themselves, constitute one of the basic components of this movement. One other component is the youth in the provinces. These social classes and clusters choose NAP as a medium of expressing their reaction (52). This social background described by Bora and Can is apparent in the novels. In *The Storm Hit Us*, from the very beginning of the novel, the narrator talks about his

⁸⁹ “Kötü emelleri vardı karşımızdakilerin. İşgal edeceklerdi vatanımızı. Dinimizin dahi bir kıymeti, varlığı kalmayacaktı. Cumhuriyeti yıkıp yerine komünist bir rejim getireceklerdi.”

poverty and struggle to survive. For instance, while he is in secondary school, he does not even have anything proper to wear for the Cumhuriyet Bayramı. While in high school, he still wears the boots he got when he was in secondary school. Throughout the novel, he survives thanks to grants and scholarships and does not receive a penny from his parents. This is the same in the other novels. The stories of *ülküçüs*, are stories of lower classes and their ways of socialization. To illustrate, in *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life*, Rauf, Süleyman and Hayri all belong to poor families and try to adapt to the university in Ankara. They find each other in a dormitory room, and share their poverty and friendship. Another example can be given from *The Storm Hit Us* where the narrator feels that he belongs to a big family once he becomes an *ülküçü*: “We *ülküçüs* were a big and strong family. Family members would protect and take care of each other. It was both hard to be member of a family and to leave one”⁹⁰ (43). According to Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can the *ülküçüs* gained their identity under the security of being a community in the “jungle” of the big city. With the power they obtained thanks to this identity, and through their name which would disseminate fear, they got rid of their lack of confidence and insecurity. In addition, that they became an *ülküçü* instead of a leftist is either by pure chance or determined by their surroundings. Yet anti-communism is a feature they adopt from the former generations (55). To illustrate, as Mehmet Ali Ağaoğulları mentions in his article, the annual report of the *ülküçü* movement in 1977 states that the movement is the remedy for loneliness:

Individuals who feel lonely in society and seek a circle for support, as well as those who are despised and scorned, may desire to take place within an organization and partake its solidarity and strength... Leaders must be sensitive to this, and know how to channel such individuals, whether within organization or not, in the direction of our interests. (204)

⁹⁰ “Biz *ülküçüler* büyük ve güçlü bir aileydik. Aile fertleri de birbirini korur, kollardı. Bir aileye ait olmak da zordu, ayrılmak da...”

That is to say, this belonging makes young *ülkücü* activists feel that they will win, in the end, like the Turkish nation which was once the “leader and master” of history and which “will once again dominate the entire world” (197). At this point, it is possible to argue that NAP hailed the ones who were suppressed because of the rapid change in the social conditions during the 1960s. As Ağaoğulları describes, “they felt prey to insecurity and feeling of isolation as they witnessed the changing values of society. These factors helped the formation of antiestablishment groups open and indeed predisposed to ultranationalist ideology” (192). Although none of the protagonists of the novels I am analyzing here regret their *ülkücü* ideals, they have many contradictions in themselves. I will try to understand the latent meaning of these contradictions in the last chapter of this chapter.

In addition to the previous components of discourse (Turkish identity, religion and anti-communism), one other aspect of the *ülkücü* movement is their support for the state. Militant *ülküçüs*, in the 1970s, were educated and led to the mission to “protect the country, the nation, the state, and the flag [against communism] in case the state lost power and was unable to do it” (Bora and Can 87). As Kemal Can states, one of the popular slogans of the *ülkücü* movement was the following: “Down with the order, up with the state!” The *ülkücü* ideology imagines the “Turkish State” as an organic being which has a historical personality and continuity. It is argued that Turkish states, in fact, are but a continuity expressing the “eternal and everlasting “Turkish State”. In this context, the *ülkücü* movement, either through Turkish pre-history or the drive of nationalist and conservative sources, is passionately devoted to the state myth (Can 682-3). Like Can, Ağaoğulları states that in NAP’s program the state and Turkish history are connected as follows: “The Turkish nation had been ‘spiritually and materially strong’ only when it was ruled by a strong state-where the state was defined as ‘the organized

form of the nation, which is indivisible' ”(195). That is to say, NAP’s ideology favors a strong nation: We Turks should have a strong state. Thus, one of their most important missions is being the guardian of the Turkish State. One of the best examples where we can capture the reflection of this mission with regard to the state could be found in the following sentences of *The Storm Hit Us*’s protagonist: “At first, it was the state and the extreme leftists that were clashing. Then somehow, the right, or to put it right the *ülküçüs*, which I am a member of, sided with the state and found themselves on one of the sides”⁹¹ (35). According to the protagonist, it was their belonging to and respect for the Turkish state that put them in conflict with revolutionaries in the first place. The protagonist accepts the state’s legitimate position and is against anyone who is against the state. Like the protagonist of *The Storm Hit Us*, the narrator of *My Name is Green* claims that they are saviors of the Turkish State:

I had read many things by Enver Paşa... He was walking straight ahead. He had not retreated when faced with difficulties. He had immediately implemented what he had known to be right. [...] I identified with him. There was a homeland awaiting to be saved; and on its soil, a nation hoping for its independence...⁹² (42)

He makes an analogy between Enver Paşa and the *ülküçü* movement who are both brave enough to rescue the fatherland. Both the Turkish State and society are waiting for them in order to be protected and defended. It is obvious that Kemal Can’s point about the *ülküçü* discourse on “devlet-i ebed müddet” is one of the basic motivations behind the movement. They see the revolutionaries as enemies of the Turkish State’s perpetuity

⁹¹ “Çatışanlar başlangıçta devletin güvenlik güçleri ile aşırı solculardı. Sonra nasıl olmuşa sağ, asıl ismi ile benim mensubu bulunduğum ülkücüler devletten yana tavır koyunca kendilerini çatışmanın tarafı olarak buluvermişlerdi.”

⁹² “Enver Paşa’yı çok okumuştum... Dosdoğru yürüyordu. Zorluklar karşısında hiç gerilememiş. Doğru bildiğini hemen hayata geçirmişti.[...] Kendimi onun yerine koyuyordum. Kurtarılmayı bekleyen bir vatan vardı. Ve topraklar üzerinde istiklaline kavuşmayı umut eden bir millet...”

and present themselves as the soldiers of the country. This propaganda makes the state an unquestionable entity. Their basic desire is a strong state:

We wanted an independent homeland. [...] [A] Strong State... This was a hope. Mountains and rivers would be crossed, roads would be hit for the sake of it. All harmful elements would be destroyed one by one and we would be absolutely fearless on the way to the sacred goal. [...] We would die but the state would live.⁹³ (59)

According to the protagonist, the *ülküçüs* would sacrifice themselves for the sake of a strong Turkish State. They would eliminate all the harmful elements and remove all the obstacles on their way. In the latent meaning, this discourse legitimizes both being killed and killing anyone seen as an enemy. In fact, at one point in all three novels, the narrators begin to learn how to use a gun and make a bomb. They prepare themselves for a violent fight with the enemies of the state, namely the revolutionaries. Here one should also emphasize that the *ülküçüs* see themselves as the continuation of the Ottoman Empire:

What had the Ottomans done? One should understand the sultans, who, in order to prevent authority from weakening at some point, [in order to] rule out the possibility of a clash between brothers in the future, would get their own brothers strangled. For the sake of the state... For the sake of the state's perpetuity... An enormous sacrifice; this was what we had learned, what we had believed. What were we for? If one had to die, this would have been for the sake of the state's perpetuity, the nation's future.⁹⁴ (153)

⁹³ “İstiklaline kavuşmuş bir vatan istiyorduk [...] Güçlü Devlet... Umuttu bu. Bu uğurda yollar, dağlar, nehirler aşılacaktı. Ne kadar zararlı unsur varsa, bir bir yok edilecek, kutsal hedefe varmada gözümüzü daldan budaktan esirgemeyecektik. [...] Biz ölecektik ama devlet yaşayacaktı.”

⁹⁴ “Osmanlı ne yapmıştı? Yarın birgün otorite zaafa uğramasın, yarınlarda kardeş kavgası olmasın diye özevladını boğduran padişahları anlamak gerekiyor. Devlet için... Devletin bekası için... Fedakarlığın boyutu ölçülemezdi, böyle öğrenmiş, böyle inanmıştık. Ne için vardık biz? Ölmek gerekirse bu elbet devletin bekası, milletin istikbali yolunda olacaktı.” (153)

The protagonist of *My Name is Green* makes reference to the sultans of the Ottoman Empire who were killed for the sake of the perpetuation of the state and doing so he legitimizes their position as sacrifice before 12 September military coup. As it can be seen in the previous quotation from the novels, the Nationalist Action Party's discourse relies on the continuation of the divine Turkish State.

In all three novels, the representation of state and the *ülkücüs'* devotion to it become questionable only after 12 September military coup. In other words, it is possible to say that 12 September coup d'état is the breaking point in the relationship between the *ülkücüs* and the Turkish State. The coup, contrary to the expectation of the *ülkücüs*, took NAP and its leader Türkeş under control just like any other party or leader, and thus showed that it did not see NAP's self-appointed role a legitimate one. The *ülkücüs* were not exempt from the absolute terror of police and prison (Bora and Can 87). At the very beginning of the coup d'état, they think that this is a rightist coup and the state is showing its power to its "enemies". Muharrem Şimşek, the then general chief of Ülkü Ocakları Derneği, says the following just one year after the coup: "12 September is essentially a movement of public security and order. [...] Grandeur of and esteem for state, which has a prominent place in Turkish tradition, has come back"⁹⁵ (qtd in Bora and Can 91). Moreover, in 4 October 1982, the lawyers of Türkeş defended him with these sentences: "The requests outlined in the MNP electoral manifesto have been realized... The attitudes and actions of Alparslan Türkeş and his party are today actually under implementation" (qtd in Ağaoğulları 206). Although, NAP identified itself with the state, the Turkish state and army did not accept this identification. In 4 September 1981 Kenan Evren says that "they are forming gangs with the pretext of protecting the state and the nation" (qtd in Bora and Can 98). As it can be seen from

⁹⁵ "12 Eylül esasında bir emniyet ve asayiş hareketidir. [...] Türk geleneğinde mühim yeri olan devlet heybet ve itibarı avdet etmiştir."

Evren's words, NAP is not seen by the state as a legitimate power to protect it. At this point it would be significant to mention the representation of the state after 12 September military coup throughout the novels analyzed here.

The protagonist of *The Storm Hit Us* says that *ülküciüs* made a big mistake and unlike communists, they did not oppose the state and the police. Since it was serving the state, even the police was seen as *mehmetcik* and untouchable (313). Moreover, he criticizes the movement's taboo on the state:

The ones who wrote could not write precisely. The ones who talked could not talk precisely. We had too many postulates. We had taboos and untouchables. These did not set us free. [...] We could neither think nor talk precisely. We had a *sine qua none*: our state. Even if it crushed, tortured, or even killed us, we did not or could not resist it. Maybe we were not pleased with it but we could not do without it either. If it pissed us off too much, if we felt that it was getting away from us or that it was not from us, in the heat of anger we would say : 'May it be destroyed so that we can establish a new one'... Then we would silently ask for God's forgiveness.⁹⁶ (318)

As the protagonist explicitly says, the *ülküciüs* cannot question the state's legitimacy. In other words, they cannot give up believing in the divinity of the Turkish State even if they were subjected to torture or killed by it. The protagonist says that they cannot be without state. It is obvious that the *ülküciü* discourse becomes silent when faced with certain critical questions about the state.

It is possible to argue that the *ülküciüs* repress their critique of and questions about the state. After 12 September military coup, their repressed feelings return in the form of eclectic approaches towards the state. On the one hand they still believe and are

⁹⁶ "Yazanlar tam yazamıyordu. Söyleyenler tam söyleyemiyordu. Çok fazla postulatımız vardı. Tabularımız, dokunulmazlıklarımız vardı. Bunlar özgür bırakmıyordu bizi. [...] Tam düşünemiyor, tam konuşamıyorduk. Olmazsa olmaz devletimiz vardı. Bizi ezse de, işkence etse de, hatta öldürse de karşı koymuyor, koyamıyorduk ona. Bizimdi. Memnun değildik belki durumundan ama devletsiz yapamazdık. Çok kafamızı bozarsa devlet, bizden uzaklaştığını, bizden olmadığını hissettiğimizde kızgınlıkla şöyle derdik 'Yıkılsın da yeniden kuralım'... Sonra da derin bir 'Tövbe' çekerdik içimizden."

respectful of the State. On the other, they feel themselves as victims and not understood. The *ülküci* movement which, for a long time, has reproduced itself through the mission of “standing by the state” is now suffering a deep crisis of legitimacy. Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu, who was then in Mamak prison, defines the execution of 9 *ülküci*s as “the Turk’s being enchained together with its enemies” (Bora and Can 95).

Interestingly enough, Remzi Çayır in *My Name is Green* defines the title of his book with reference to their victimhood. He uses the term “yeşillenmiş vatandaşlar”, citizens who have turned green, and gives the definition of “green”: “The common name of people on whom the state has stepped in order to maintain its existence more powerfully is green”⁹⁷ (243). As it can be seen in the following quotation, the members of the *ülküci* movement feel themselves as “greens” that were repressed by the state and lost all their willpower.

If the owners of the homeland were known, who were we then? Had they painted us green? All this struggle, all this effort... What was it for? Why were we here and captive? My head was about to explode... [...] The owners of the country... The saviors of the homeland... How could they insult us and say that we were traitors? In a moment, they had pushed us to the side of the greens. It was better to die.⁹⁸ (295)

The title of the book, *My Name is Green*, is closely related with the breaking up of the link between the movement and the state in the eyes of the *ülküci*s. As I mentioned above, Kenan Evren and the Turkish Military Forces labeled them as terrorists and enemies of the state. Although they seek consolation in Agah Güler’s slogan “ideas in

⁹⁷ “Devletin daha bir güçlenmek ve varlığını daha bir güçlü devam ettirmek için üzerine bastığı insanların ortak adı yeşildir.”

⁹⁸ “Vatanın sahipleri belli olduğuna göre, biz ne oluyorduk acaba? Bizi yeşile mi boyamışlardı yoksa. Bu kadar mücadele, bu kadar çaba... Nedendi? Niçin buradaydık ve esirdik? Kafam çatlayacaktı... [...] Ülkenin sahipleri... Vatanın kurtarıcıları... Nasıl olurdu da bize küfredirdi, hainsiniz derdi? Yeşillerin safına itmişlerdi bir anda bizi. Ölmek daha iyiydi.”

power, self in prison”⁹⁹, they cannot grasp why exactly they are in prison and excluded from politics. It is possible to say that on the one hand they say that the finger cut off by the state would not hurt and cling on to the idea of the sacred state, on the other they are outraged (Bora and Can 119). Here it could be argued that their representation of self is shattered. Moreover, one of their crucial reference points, self sacrifice for the state, is also shattered. According to Naci Bostancı, “12 September caused a trauma in NAP since the state which was idealized by them and of which they saw themselves as servants began to beat its own children”¹⁰⁰ This trauma leads them to a questioning of the *ülküci* movement’s fundamental political components; but not very openly. It should be noted that although they feel as victims of state violence, their critique of the state is not an elaborate one. They always overlook certain questions and their eclectic ideology becomes more eclectic. For instance, according to Mümtazer Türköne, “the main reason why the *ülküci*s could not talk about the tortures they were subjected to was their ‘respect for the state’. The *ülküci*s chose to remain silent in order not to belittle the state”.¹⁰¹ It is possible to argue that the political ideology of the *ülküci* movement then experienced real ontological problems. Although they feel as victims of the state, they avoid asking certain questions to it, as well as themselves. At this point if we refer to Terry Eagleton, “every text is the answer to its own question, proposing to itself only such problems as it can resolve, or leave unresolved without radically interrogating the terms of its problematic” (88). With reference to Pierre Macherey, Eagleton tries to delineate the ways in which literary criticism examines unanswered questions and answers given in the text, in order to analyze its ideological map.

⁹⁹ “ideas in power, self in prison.”

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.milliyetcigenclik.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=293>

¹⁰¹ <http://www.milliyetcigenclik.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=293>

To understand the ideological map of the rightist authors, in the following section I will try to show the contradictions in the representation of their political stand against the revolutionaries. Like their conceptualization of the state, their representation of the revolutionaries changes drastically and becomes contradictory after 12 September military coup. Therefore it would be revealing to do a comparative reading of these rightist authors' novels with *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language*.

C. Representation of “Other Side”

After the 12 September military coup, the revolutionaries who were once seen as microbes in the body, traitors to the country, enemies of religion, begin to be called “the children of this country”. The rightists' rage at the state and confusion about placing it somewhere, in a different form, manifests itself in their attitude towards and confusion about the revolutionaries. One could argue that there are significant changes in the *ülküçüs'* view of the revolutionaries after the coup. On the other hand, in *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language*, the protagonists never make peace with the *ülküçüs*. They carry their anger with them throughout the novel.

First, I will discuss the representation of revolutionaries in the novels written by rightist authors. In all three novels we see that the leftists and rightists are equated in two respects. First, the authors, looking at the poor classes that the leftists and they come from, claim that they are the children of the same social environment. It is obvious that the coup is a cornerstone in this respect. In *The Storm Hit Us*, the protagonist emphasizes the difference between before and after 12 September military coup in terms of their perception of the revolutionaries: “‘Communist’ was an insult for us. Later I would learn that communists were honorable, honest, at least consistent men.

[...] At least, communists were not hypocrites”¹⁰² (157). In the quotation, the protagonist makes an uncertain reference while saying “after a while”. It is possible to argue that the breaking point where the protagonist comes to understand how honest and coherent revolutionaries are, is the 1980 coup d’état. The other important and interesting example is the analogy he makes between the marches of the rightists and the leftists:

One of the first and foremost duties of an *ülkücü* was to learn the marches. Although we would make some changes in the lines once in a while, they were generally well-known melodies about the past. I was surprised at one thing: The communists would sing some of these marches, but they would change the words. The melodies were the same. We shared the melodies. In fact, the essence of a march was its melody, not its words and we, children of the same soil, even if we fought against each other, shared the melodies. This showed that we had similar feelings.¹⁰³ (182)

As it can be seen in the quotation, the protagonist equates the *ülküçüs* to the revolutionaries through their marches. Although they kill each other, they share their feelings and are of the same fabric since they belong to the same fatherland. That is to say, according to him, the melody is the same even if the lyrics are not. It is obvious that the protagonist does not care about ideological differences anymore “after a while” because they come from the same roots. He is not alone in his feelings. Even Alparslan Türkeş agrees that the *ülküçüs* and the revolutionaries come from the same origin:

¹⁰² “‘Komünist’ bizde hakaret tabiriydi. Daha sonra komünistlerin şerefli, namuslu, en azından tutarlı olan adamlar olduğunu öğrenecektim. [...] Komünistler en azından iki yüzlü değildi.”

¹⁰³ “Bir ülkücünün en önemli, ilk görevlerinden biriydi marşları öğrenmek. Zaman zaman mısralarda değişiklik yapsak da genelde geçmişe dair bilinen ezgilerdi. Bir şey şaşıtmıştı beni: Komünistlerde bu marşların bazılarını ama sözlerini değiştirerek söylüyorlardı. Ezgiler aynıydı. Ezgileri paylaşıyorduk. Aslında marşı marş yapan sözler değil ezgilerdi ve aynı toprağın çocukları olan bizler ölesiye, öldüresiye kavga etsek de ezgileri paylaşmaktan geri durmuyorduk. Bu da duygularımızın benzer olduğunun göstergesiydi.”

At first, ‘down with communists!’ and ‘communists to Moscow’ were the most popular ones but the *Başbuğ* had forbidden them. So, after a while, he had realized that the communists were children of this soil as well. He neither wanted them to grieve nor to go to Moscow.¹⁰⁴ (182)

It is important to understand when exactly the “traitors” turned into the “children of this world”. When do the *ülküçüs* realize that they are killing or dismissing their brothers? Why does Türkeş forbid slogans such as “down with the communists” and “communists to Moscow”? Here one could make a speculation and argue that the nationalists find “enemies” other than the leftists to legitimize their ideology. The assumption underlying the shift can be the idea that there is some other force which has made enemies of them. However, no one knows who or what this “other force” is. In the following quotation, the protagonist of *The Storm Hit Us* equates the nationalists and the revolutionaries on a class basis. While he is thinking about 1 May 1977, one of the bloodiest days of the attacks against the socialist movement, he states:

The ones who marched and died, whatever their thoughts were, were people of this country. Most of them were workers with low income. They belonged to the same social class with our families. We, who did not then believe in class-consciousness, would see these people as enemies. Whenever one of them died, we would rejoice to see that the opponent group’s number decreased by one.¹⁰⁵ (201)

As it can be seen in the quotation, the protagonist acknowledges that the rightists and the leftists belong to the same social class. They are children of poor families. This feeling is very dominant throughout the novel. Another example is his discussion about control over the universities. As is well known, before the 12 September military coup,

¹⁰⁴ “Başlangıçta ‘kahrolsun komünistler’ ve ‘komünistler Moskova’ya’ en çok tutanlarıydı ama Başbuğ yasaklamıştı bunları. Demek ki bir süre sonra farkına varmıştı komünistlerin de bu toprağın çocuğu olduklarının. Ne kahrolmalarını ne de Moskova’ya gitmelerini istemişti.”

¹⁰⁵ “Yürüyenler ve ölenler fikirleri ne olursa olsun bu ülkenin insanlarıydı. Çoğu dar gelirli işçilerdi. Bizim ailelerimizle aynı toplumsal sınıfın üyeleriydiler. O zamanlar sınıf bilincine inanmayan bizler düşman gibi görüyorduk bu insanları. Öldüklerinde, karşı gruptan biri eksildi diye seviniyorduk.” (201)

both the revolutionaries and the *ülküçüs* are dominant in different universities and they do not allow others in. When he remembers these days, he questions their politics in Cold City:

What was it that we succeeded in? Obstructing the education of young people who were like us, who lived like us, who struggled to study with the limited means of their families... The rich would somehow find a way. The ones who really bore the weight of the society, worked, and did their military service; they were the ones who suffered.¹⁰⁶ (211)

According to the protagonist of *The Storm Hit Us*, the *ülküçüs* are doing harm to people who are like themselves, namely the revolutionaries. Like *The Storm Hit Us*, the protagonist of *My Name is Green* also problematizes the same issue. He questions the reason for the bloody dispute between the revolutionaries and the *ülküçüs* and cannot find an answer.

Why had we pronounced each other enemies? We often had conversations while we were in the same cells. Unfortunately we could not reach an agreement. [...] One day, looking at the visitors' side, I saw how much alike were our mothers, fathers and siblings, and I felt sorry. We were all children of oppressed and poor people.¹⁰⁷ (184)

This quotation belongs to the vice president of Great Unity Party and the author of *My Name is Green*, Remzi Çayır. He is still one of the leading figures of the nationalist movement in Turkey and is devoted to the movement. At this point it is important to ask these questions: Doesn't their fear of communism exist anymore? How do they equate the *ülküçüs* and the revolutionaries? Doesn't nationalism ground itself upon anti-communism anymore?

¹⁰⁶ "Neydi başardığımız? Bizim gibi olan, bizim gibi yaşayan, ailelerinin dar geliri ile okumaya çalışan gençleri okutmamak... Zengin olan nasılsa bir kolayını bulacaktı. Olan bu toplumun asıl yükünü çeken, çalışan, askerlik yapan insanlara oluyordu."

¹⁰⁷ "Birbirimizi neden hasım ilan etmiştik? Aynı hücreleri paylaştığımızda çokça konuşmuştuk. Bir noktaya ne yazık ki varamamıştık. [...] Bir gün, dönüp de ziyaretçi tarafına baktığımda, analarımızın, babalarımızın, kardeşlerimizin birbirine ne kadar da çok benzediklerini görmüştüm de hayıflanmıştım. Hep ezgin ve fakir insanların çocuklarıydık..."

The same feeling is also dominant in *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life*. As I mentioned in the previous paragraphs while giving the plot, the story is based on a robbery which is to be committed in Antalya. Cavit was a revolutionary and was in prison for three years. Like the *ülküciüs* in the novel, he cannot adapt to the society after the coup d'état. Rauf defines him as “a sensitive boy. I also have the impression that he is stuck. A kind of being fed up with this life, his surroundings, and what he has gone through...”¹⁰⁸ (161) and tries to convince his friends to include him in their plan. He thinks that this adventure of robbery is a chance to get to know “the other” because they did not have this chance during the 1970s. Therefore, the long trip from Ankara to Antalya becomes an inner journey. The three *ülküciüs* put their lives in danger together with a revolutionary whom they did not have the chance to know and talk to before, and try to become comrades. The novel is constructed upon the possibility of clinging on to life together by two groups which, before 1980, could not succeed in doing this because of their identities and political activities. Cavit, just like Rauf, went to a boarding school that would graduate teachers. When he visits Cavit they drink beer and Rauf says the following:

Only eight years ago such a meeting was inconceivable. Two people with antagonistic politics, two people who had been hostile to each other with a passion beyond any rational cause sharing certain feelings; could this be possible?¹⁰⁹ (187)

According to Rauf, their political engagement was like a religious dogma but now they are in the domain of reason, which enables them to discuss their antagonism and friendship. Here they can realize their common political and humane sensitivities.

¹⁰⁸ “Duyarlı birisi, aynı zamanda sıkışmış gibi geldi bana, bu hayattan, çevresinden, yaşadıklarından bir tür bıkkınlık...”

¹⁰⁹ “Daha yedi sekiz sene önce asla böyle bir karşılaşma düşünülemezdi. Hasım politikalarda saf tutmuş iki insan, akli gerekçelerin ötesinde bir vecd haliyle düşmanlıklarını ve dostluklarını yaşayan iki insan, bir takım ortak duyarlılıklar paylaşacak, öyle mi?”

During their conversation, Rauf gives the following example to prove that their roots are the same:

Kids, for instance, come from, let's say Yusufeli; one becomes a rightist, the other a leftist. Who can say that they are totally different in their lifestyles, relationships, their understanding of the world? The name is this or that, what difference does it make? At the end of the day, they grew up with the water and soil of the same world.¹¹⁰ (65)

Rauf argues that the names “right” and “left” do not have any importance if we think about their social origins. In fact they share the same culture and way of life so their ideologies are not important once we consider their origins. The other important and interesting point is the following: The *ülküçüs* have become *ülküçüs* for exactly the same reason why the revolutionaries have become revolutionaries. During the journey, the rightist characters talk about politics with Cavit:

‘We were obliged to become revolutionaries,’ says Cavit. ‘We could be nothing else. Wherever we looked, we would see things that would provoke us into revolution; poverty, a despicable and shameless exploitation, masses that needed to be represented...’. ‘Hey, Cavit,’ says Rauf, ‘What you say applies to us as well. We were obliged to become *ülküçüs* for the same reasons.’¹¹¹ (227)

Interestingly enough, Rauf equates the intentions behind different political engagements. One becomes a socialist or an *ülküçü* with the same reasons such as poverty, exploitation and the ones who are in need of being represented. Like Rauf, the protagonist of *My Name is Green* argues that it does not matter whether one is a leftist or a rightist. When he is talking with his dead *ülküdaş* he says the following:

¹¹⁰ “Çocuklar, mesela, Yusufeli’nden geliyor diyelim, biri sağcı oluyor, diğeri solcu, kim diyebilir bunlar hayat tarzı, insanlık ilişkileri, dünyayı anlamlandırma bakımından birbirlerinden çok farklılar diye? Adı şu olmuş bu olmuş ne fark eder; sonunda aynı dünyanın suyunda, toprağında büyümüş bunlar.”

¹¹¹ “ ‘Biz devrimci olmaya mecburduk’ diye devam ediyor Cavit. ‘Başka bir şey olamazdık, bu ülkede nereye baksak bizi devrimciliğe kıskırtan görüntülere rastlıyorduk; yoksulluk, alçakça, utanmazca bir sömürü, temsil edilmesi gereken yığınlar...’. ‘Hey Cavit’ diyor Rauf, ‘Söylediklerin bizim için de geçerli. Aynı nedenlerden dolayı biz de ülkücü olmaya mecburduk.’ ”

Right or wrong... More or less... In the past there were causes; in the right, in the left, in the middle... But now? [...] The homeland, the country, the oppressed, the poor... Religion, God... Beyond all, the desire for a boundless, a classless society... All this was commitment. It does not matter, Ramazan, that the committed one is leftist or rightist, this or that.¹¹² (199)

As it can be seen in the quotation there is a real indeterminacy here. The protagonist claims that the important thing is belief itself which is derived from the unfortunate conditions of the society, the poor and the dominated people. He feels alien because he cannot find anybody who believes in a more just world. It is obvious that this feeling is the damage inflicted by 12 September military coup on the *ülküçüs*. How does the dispute between the rightists and the leftists become a minor detail? What does he mean while saying “Din, Allah... Ötesinde sınırsız sınıfsız bir toplum isteği...”? Is it possible to equate religious belief to belief in a classless society?

Secondly, the equation of the leftists to the rightists in the novels by the rightist authors could also be read under the light of the concept “victimhood”. Especially with respect to tortures and executions, the discourse that both parties were innocent and suffered injustice is dominant. According to them, both the leftists and the rightists are victims of something but they do not specify what makes them victims. Is it the state? Is it the Turkish Army? Is it Russian imperialism? Is it communism? Who or what makes them victims? These are questions which are not answered in these novels.

Ahmet Haldun Terzioğlu dedicates his book *The Storm Hit Us* to the ones killed because of their belief whether they belong to the *ülküçü* or the communist movement. He thinks that they were subjected to the same execution and were innocent:

¹¹² “Doğru yanlış... Eksik fazla, dün ‘davalar’ vardı, sağda, solda ortada... Ya şimdi? [...] Ülke, vatan, ezilenler, yoksullar... Din, Allah... Ötesinde sınırsız sınıfsız bir toplum isteği... Bütün bunlar inanmışlığın resmiydi. İnananların sağcı, solcu şucu bucu olması fark etmiyor Ramazan.”

The storm had hit us! We could not see the real storm, the one which was coming. The storm of 12 September would blow. [...] We, the youth, would be hanged together with the same rope. We would, only after years, talk to each other and agree, and realize that we were victims. [...] Let it be dedicated to those with the same committed souls, to those, be it on the right or on the left, who were hit by storms.¹¹³ (418)

As I mentioned above, the protagonist obviously says that they are victims who are hung with the same rope. He sees victims as a homogeneous entity. The revolutionaries and the nationalists are isolated from their history and equated at a zero point where their victimhood equates them to each other. Like Ahmet Haldun Tezioğlu, Remzi Çayır adopts the same victimhood discourse:

When I was in prison I had friends who were sent to death. Bekir Bağ, who died under torture, Fikri Arıkan, who did not stumble while walking to the gallows and managed to smile... [...] From the leftists, Erdal Eren, with his baby face. I always saw him smiling in the death cells. He was a kid but was executed. Kenan Evren had his age changed on paper.¹¹⁴ (135)

The protagonist of *My Name is Green* gives the names of both the members of the *ülküçü* movement and the revolutionaries who were executed by the Turkish Military Forces. He does not feel the urge to inform his readers on their social, cultural, political or religious identity. He establishes this equation on their executed bodies. That is to say, he appeals to the conscience of the readers and makes the *ülküçüs* innocent, brave and romantic boys. The same discourse is also adopted by Naci Bostancı in his novel *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life*. One of the *ülküçü* characters of the novel,

¹¹³ “Fırtına vurmuştu bizi! Asıl fırtınayı gelen fırtınayı göremedik. 12 Eylül fırtınası esecekti. [...] Bütün gençler hep birlikte aynı ipte sallanacaktık. Yıllar sonra ancak konuşup ancak anlayacak, kurban olduğumuzu ancak anlayacaktık. [...] Aynı inanmış ruha, sağda solda aynı fırtınalara vurulanlara ithaf olsun.”

¹¹⁴ “İçerde idama gönderilen arkadaşlarım oldu. İşkence altın ölen Bekir Bağ... İdam sehbasına yürürken sendelemeyen, gülümsemeyi başaran Fikri Arıkan... [...] Solculardan çocuk yüzlü Erdal Eren. On altı yaşındaydı. Ölüm hücrelerinde hep gülerken görmüştüm onu. Çocuktü, o da idam edildi. Kenan Evren zorla yaşını büyüttü.”

Süleyman, while driving to Antalya, looks in Cavit's face through the mirror and thinks the following:

Revolutionary Cavit; so he did time just like us; he left himself to interrupted sleep in wards where lights never go off; so during the times when the heaters made out of trash cans that generally create an illusion of warmth in their bodies made the place even cooler , the times when sleep turned into the only heat in the night's desolation, he clung to his blanket more tightly.¹¹⁵ (224)

Süleyman thinks that the prison conditions were same for both of them. That is to say, according to Süleyman, their prison experience removes their ideological differences. At this point it is important to mention Sibel Irzik's article titled "The constructions of victimhood in Turkish Coup d'état novels: is victimhood without innocence possible?" In her article Irzik argues that the Turkish coup d'état novels, which are mostly written by leftist authors, construct a victimhood discourse. This victimhood discourse makes political identity, which is based on choices and active participation, invisible by concentrating on the passivity of being a victim. As she argues, "victim" connotes people who are not responsible for their suffering by definition. According to Irzik, "the actual victims constituted a heterogeneous group in terms of class, ethnicity, political goals, religious affiliations, and communal identifications. In this heterogeneity, they were very difficult to place unequivocally into a general category of victim [...]" That is to say, this victimhood discourse is reductive and destroys all heterogeneity. Although the novels which are concentrated upon till now, *The Storm Hit Us*, *My Name is Green* and *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life*, are written by rightist authors, it is possible to claim that they share the same victimhood discourse.

¹¹⁵ "Devrimci Cavit, demek o da bizim gibi hapis yatmış, geceleri lambaların sönmediği koşullarda, yarım uykularda bırakmış kendisini; çöp varilinden bozma gövdelerinde bir ısınma yanılması yaratan sobaların daha bir soğuttuğu, uykunun gecenin ıssızlığına düşen bir sıcaklığa dönüştüğü vakitlerde, battaniyesine daha bir sıkı sarılmış."

At this point it would be useful to make a comparative reading in order to understand how revolutionaries construct their discourse on nationalists. Firstly, it is possible to argue that the revolutionaries were subjected to torture and execution more than the rightists.¹¹⁶ Although in *Imitating Bird Language* and *Tol* victimization of the leftists is an issue, it is not their main problematic. That is to say, as I mentioned in the first chapter of my thesis, they mostly narrate their socialist ideals and their alienation after the 12 September military coup. In other words, they seek to represent themselves and try to find the true language and the way to do it. Unlike the coup d'état novels which are written by the rightist authors, neither *Imitating Bird Language* nor *Tol* equates the revolutionaries with the *ülküçüs*. They make it clear that rightists and leftists belong to totally different ideologies which cannot make peace at any single time in history.

Here it would be beneficial to look at *Tol*. The story of two brothers who belong to totally different ideologies deconstructs the discourse of the rightist authors on the brotherhood of the leftists and themselves. İsmail is the elder brother of Oğuz, but he is a rightist and works for the state unlike his revolutionary brother Oğuz. İsmail leads a double life: a civil servant in the mornings and a member of the mafia in the evenings. One night he kills two people and disappears for four years. After being educated in the USA he becomes the chief of the “local intelligence organization” (38). At one point, İsmail brings his revolutionary brother Oğuz to his office by using force in order to protect him from the consequences of being involved in the revolutionary movement. İsmail, to justify himself, tells his story thus: “It was insane... I could not do time, I

¹¹⁶ “It is true that the military government paid attention to give the impression that it was executing activists both from the left and the right. Yet, if one looks at the figures of execution one cannot easily understand how this can be called a “balance”. Between 1980 and 1985, 9 of the executions were from the *ülküçüs* who were called ‘the right’ and 18 were from the revolutionaries who were called ‘the left’ ” (Bora and Can 123).

could not waste my youth... They put me before very powerful men, told me that I was a very valuable boy; [they said] you did wrong, come serve your homeland and right your wrong; wouldn't you have agreed?"¹¹⁷ (63). He justifies himself and tells the story of his reaching such an important and dark position in the Turkish State. Then, he offers him a job, an apartment and a more secure life in order to persuade him to leave the socialist movement, but Oğuz does not accept his offer. He says that his brother İsmail is the state itself and is his enemy. When he works in a hotel, İsmail and his important friends come over to hold a meeting. Oğuz stabs İsmail to death. It is obvious that according to Oğuz, two brothers can kill each other as a result of ideological disputes. Oğuz, as a revolutionary, does not accept the legitimacy of either his nationalist brother or the Turkish State.

Like Oğuz of *Tol*, Yavuz of *Imitating Bird Language* does not accept any kind of reduction in terms of differences between nationalist and communist ideologies. To illustrate, in the novel, there is a discussion on political engagement of poor people. While Yavuz is staying in the apartment of one of his revolutionary friends, a young boy comes as a guest. This young boy's brother is a revolutionary and stayed in prison for two years: "My elder brother went back to town after he got out of prison," the boy had said. 'He happened to come across one of the unruly fascists of our town, a high school friend of his. They looked at each other in the face for a long time, and guess what, they hugged and kissed each other'¹¹⁸ (182). Then, others in the apartment approve what the young boy's brother and his high school friend had done. They say that the ones who are fighting against each other are all children of the poor, of the same

¹¹⁷ "Bir delilikti işte... İçeriye giremezdim, gençliğimi çürütemezdim... Çok güçlü adamların karşısına çıkardılar beni, dediler sen çok değerli bir gençsin, bir hata yaptın, gel vatanına hizmet edip düzelt hatanı, sen olsan kabul etmez miydin?"

¹¹⁸ "Ağbim hapisten çıkınca kasabaya döndü,' diye anlatmıştı oğlan... 'Bir de bakmış karşıdan bizim oranın azılı faşistlerinden biri geliyor. Liseden de arkadaşı. Birbizlerine uzun uzun bakmışlar, sonra ne yapmışlar biliyor musun? Sarılıp öpüşmüşler...'"

village, and that they were tempted by others and became enemies of each other. Yet Yavuz's interior voice interrupts and says all this is nonsense:

To lump revolutionaries and fascists together! How come... Fascism, clearly, was a movement against what human beings have created at the cost of lives through thousands of years. Not laboured over, unprocessed, raw... Something [moving with the wild instincts of a flock, hostile to anything from without. A mob that would derive its life energy solely from this hostility, from the instinct to protect itself from the outsider; worshipping not freedom but authority and suppression, not equality but hierarchy... The call of socialism was for goodness, beauty, freedom, equality; for all these ancient values of humanity. [...] The places they were called to and called from were totally opposite to each other.¹¹⁹ (182-83)

As it can be seen from the quotation, Yavuz totally rejects the discourse based on the equation between the *ülküçü* and socialist movements. He informs his readers on the ideological differences between the two and on how it is impossible to equate them.

As a result, the representation of *ülküçüs* in *Tol* and *Imitating Bird Language* is totally different from the representation of revolutionaries in *The Storm Hit Us*, *My Name is Green* and *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life*. In the former, revolutionaries never make peace with the nationalists and they declare explicitly how they belong to totally different ideologies. They criticize the Turkish State and the violence it inflicted on them. As a result of their ideology, they do not see the Turkish State as a legitimate institution and they criticize it without any exceptions. On the other hand, the representation of *ülküçüs* in the novels written by nationalist authors have very immanent contradictions after 12 September military coup d'état. They lose two very

¹¹⁹ “Devrimcilerle faşistleri aynı kefeye koymak!!! Nasıl olurdu bu... Faşizm, düpedüz insanın binyıllardır canı pahasına var ettiği değerlere karşı bir yöneliştir. Emek verilmemiş, işlenmemiş, ham... Bir hayvan sürüsünün yaban itkileriyle hareket eden, kendinden olmayana düşman. Yaşama enerjisini, yalnızca bu düşmanlıktan, kendini yabancıya karşı koruma iç güdüsünden alan bir grup; özgürlüğe değil, otoriteye ve baskıya, eşitliğe değil, hiyerarşiye tapan... Sosyalizmin çağrısı iyiliğe, güzelliğe, özgürlüğe, eşitliğe, bu kadim insanlık değerlerineydi. [...] Çağrıldıkları ve çağırdıkları yer birbirine tümüyle zıttı.” (182-3)

crucial and fundamental reference points, namely “being guardians of the Turkish State” and “being anticommunist”. Therefore, the novels cannot ask certain questions to themselves and cannot answer certain questions: Why do they need to make peace with communists? Why aren’t communists enemies who threaten the unity of the Turkish State anymore? Why did the state torture them and put them in prisons? Why do “guardians of state” turned into “enemies” of it that have to be imprisoned? These are the questions which cannot be answered in the novels. In short, they adopt a very contradictory and eclectic discourse.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

In this thesis I have tried to answer the following questions: How and to what extent has literature remembered 1980 coup d'état? At what points has it remained silent or spoken loudly? How does the representation of 12 September 1980 coup d'état differ in the novels written by leftist authors and the ones written by nationalist authors? What can we derive from these similarities and differences? What kind of a rupture does 12 September coup d'état represent in these novels? What kind of changes in discourse can be observed in the novels after the coup d'état?

The thesis concentrates on five novels written after 2000's, two of which are written by leftist authors and three by nationalist others. I analyzed *Tol* (2002) by Murat Uyurkulak and *Imitating Bird Language* (2003) by Ayşegül Devocioğlu from the leftists. *The One Falling on the Fringe of Life* (2002) by Naci Bostancı, *My Name is Green* (2005) by Remzi Çayır, *The Storm Hit Us* (2009) by Ahmet Haldun Terzioğlu, are the novels I have taken up from the nationalist side.

In the introduction chapter, with reference to Terry Eagleton and Fredric Jameson, I have explained why I chose literature as a tool to understand 12 September military coup. In other words, I have mentioned the complicated relationship among history, literature, and ideology. Moreover, by presenting a brief historical overview I aimed to emphasize the very specificity of 12 September 1980 in comparison to 12 March 1971. I argued that the basic difference between the two military takeovers is the disintegration of public sphere. Additionally, I underlined the coup d'état's approach towards intellectuals and how it labeled them as terrorists.

In the 2nd chapter I analyzed *Tol* and *Kuş Diline Öykü* in terms of form and content. In fact, my aim was to capture the representation of the coup d'état in these

novels. In the 3rd chapter I analyzed three novels written by nationalist authors, namely *Bir Fıtına Vurdu Bizi*, *Adım Yeşil*, and *Hayatın Kısına Düşen*. Like in the second chapter, I attempted to read the latent meanings of both the form and the content of the novels. In addition to this, I searched for breaking points in the nationalist discourse, which possibly took place due to 12 September coup d'état.

It could be observed that in both groups of novels the “need to tell” is the main motivation. For instance, Ayşegül Devecioğlu and Murat Uyrkulak, who were revolutionaries and who lost their beloveds because of the coup (Devecioğlu’s husband died under torture and Uyrkulak’s family suffered a major trauma), felt the need to tell their stories. They are both striving to prove that what once they went through was real and this is why they write novels. As I mentioned in the third chapter, Devecioğlu says that she writes novels in order to “regain lost time”. On the other hand, the rightists make the following call: This time listen to us! For example, Remzi Çayır pleads thus in his novel: “Birilerini bulmalıyım. Birileri beni kınamamalı... Dinlemeli. Yaralı yanıma sözle, elle vurmamalı. Piskiyatr olmalı ya da bir papaz... Günah çıkarır gibi anlatmalıyım yaşadıklarımı... Ölümlerimi, diri diri yanmalarımı, sancılarımı, acılarımı...” (25). It should be emphasized, however, that the need to tell felt by the leftist and rightist authors are quite different. The rightist authors are, more or less, trying to prove that 12 September crushed them as well.

One of the major differences between the two groups of novels taken up in this thesis is their literary value. Although “literary value” is a highly controversial concept, it is not hard at all to see that the leftist authors pay special attention to language and plot. Therefore it is possible to argue that their novels, when compared to the ones written by the rightist authors, are more complex and developed both stylistically and structurally. Although they assert themselves as “novels”, the texts by the rightist

authors are more like memoirs. In this case, it is possible to claim that the revolutionaries are more successful than the rightists when it comes to facing with 12 September coup d'état. This claim can be supported with Ayşegül Devecioğlu and Murat Uyrkulak's way of posing their questions even when they are not able to face up to the coup. It is not hard to see the process of thinking behind their questions. Yet Ahmet Haldun Terzioğlu, Naci Bostancı and Remzi Çayır seem rather to be unburdening themselves and saying that they were not "bad kids" either. In other words, theirs, rather than a real facing up to the coup, is like a justification. This is reflected in the novels both formally and thematically.

One of the most apparent differences between the two groups of novels is their formalistic features. As I mentioned in the second chapter, *Tol* and *Kuş Diline Öykü* has a fragmented structure. There are no linear time sequences (especially in *Kuş Diline Öykü*, past tense penetrates into present tense) and no clear cut distinctions between characters (especially in *Tol*). Moreover, both novels use "child" as an allegorical symbol of "revolution". Unlike these novels, the ones written by nationalist authors have a realist structure. They are not like novels but historical documents from the history of the *ülküçü*s movement. They try to convince their readers of the reality of their experience. At this point, with reference to Fredric Jameson whom I mentioned in the introduction part, it is possible to argue that the latent meaning of this form is closely connected with the eclectic discourse of the *ülküçü* movement. It could be claimed that these authors, using a uniform and linear realist structure, are trying to make unseen the contradictions of their ideology mentioned in the 3rd chapter. On the other hand, the novels written by the leftist authors do not attempt to cover any contradictions since there is no great change or rupture in their perspective of the state. Yet, after a close look at their novels, it could be claimed that the leftist authors have a

problem in understanding society. This is where the drastic change or the rupture takes place for revolutionaries. In both *Tol* and *Kuş Diline Öykü* the protagonists oscillate between speechlessness and fairytale like narratives. This might mean that when they cannot speak they give references to meta-narratives and borrow a language from them. Here one can make the following speculation: Although they lose after 12 September military coup, the leftists believe that they will win in the end, just like in the stories of heroes who deliver justice.

One other major difference between the novels of the leftist authors and the rightist one's is the way of representing the "other". In the novels written by the nationalist authors the representation of revolutionaries is totally different when compared to the discourse of the nationalist ideology before 12 September coup d'état. Although the nationalist discourse constructs itself upon anti-communism, they make peace with the leftists after the coup d'état. Interestingly, the protagonists of the three novels frequently say that they really regret having killed or fought against their "brothers" who share the same patriotism with them. According to them, both revolutionaries and *ülküçüs* belong to the same culture and ideological differences cannot separate the children of Turkish culture. Taking one step further, harming revolutionaries means harming themselves. Additionally, as I mentioned in detail in the 3rd chapter, the *ülküçüs* equate themselves with the revolutionaries on a class basis. That is, both *ülküçüs* and revolutionaries are children of poor families and belong to the subordinated class. Moreover, from the perspective of the nationalist authors and protagonists, the other point of equation is torture. The protagonists claim that both sides, although they are innocent children of the Turkish state, were heavily tortured by it; children of the same state, beaten by the same father state. In the novels of Ahmet Haldun Terzioğlu, Naci Bostancı, and Remzi Çayır, it is claimed that the only fault of

both leftists and rightists was to ask for the good of Turkey and Turks. Yet they were treated in a way they did not deserve and persecuted brutally. In *Tol* and *Kuş Diline Öykü*, however, this is by no means the case. The *ülküçüs* in these novels are portrayed as dark people, mostly part of criminal activities, and even murderers. As I argued in the 3rd chapter, there is no possibility of making peace with *ülküçüs*.

At this point, one could argue that the *ülküçü* discourse is trying to incorporate some of the concepts used by the left, such as class, anti-imperialism, exploitation. In other words, it is looking for intersections with the leftist discourse and tradition. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis and is only a speculation at the moment, bearing in mind the novels I have dealt with, it could be put forward that the *ülküçü* discourse changed color after 12 September. Nowadays, *Turkish Left*,¹²⁰ an overtly fascist newspaper, defines itself as an “atatürkist, nationalist, leftist newspaper”. Likewise, Soner Yalçın, one of the leading and popular figures of the nationalist movement, in his articles in the newspaper *Hürriyet*, is referring to Marx and praising Behice Boran’s long revolutionary walk on the one hand,¹²¹ and eulogizing the poem “Bayrak” by Arif Nihat Asya on the other.¹²² One other striking example is the discourse of National Party.¹²³ Gökçe Fırat, the president of the party, in his article titled “Letter to an *Ülkücü*: It is time to Wake up *Bozkurt*”,¹²⁴ calls the *bozkurts* for a fight against imperialism and separatism:

¹²⁰ Türk Solu.

¹²¹ <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/14592981.asp>

¹²² <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=14944225&yazarid=218>

¹²³ Ulusal Parti.

¹²⁴ “Ülkücü’ye Mektup: Uyanmanın Vaktidir Bozkurt.”

Take a look at the cause you have devoted yourself, o *ülkücü*! They pointed the leftists as enemies to you before 12 September and poured you into the streets. You shed the blood of your brother. Yet the real enemy of our country was imperialism. Now you realize that the leftists you were fighting against in the streets yesterday are defending their country. And you say to yourself ‘We have done wrong’.¹²⁵

As can be seen in the three striking examples I have given above, the nationalist discourse, after 12 September, transforming and articulating, in its own way, some arguments and concepts of the leftist tradition, has become quite ambiguous and eclectic. The aim of this thesis is not an analysis of this discourse. Yet it is quite obvious that this transformation is worthy of an in-depth analysis on its own.

¹²⁵ “Hayatını adadığın davaya bir bak ülkücü. 12 Eylül’den önce sana düşman diye solcuları gösterdiler ve sokağa döktüler. Kardeşinin kanına girdin. Oysa ülkemizin asıl düşmanı emperyalizmdi. Şimdi dün sokakta kavga ettiğin solcular görüyorsun ki vatanını savunuyor. Aslında solcuların da milliyetçi olduğunu yeni yeni görüyorsun. Ve yanlış yapmışız diyorsun.” (<http://www.turksolu.org/290/firat290.htm>)

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