

**THE POETICS AND POLITICS OF THE UNCANNY IN SEVIM BURAK'S
WORKS**

by

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**This thesis is submitted to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in partial
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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Keywords: Sevim Burak, the uncanny, unheimlich, the double, return of the dead, buried alive, transgression of the boundaries, home.

There is not much deep and overarching criticism about Sevim Burak though she is a very prominent author in Turkish literature. However, Sevim Burak discusses conflictual and critical subjects in detail with her short stories, plays and an uncompleted novel. Sevim Burak is an interesting author not only due to the controversial subjects she raises, but also with her different and non-traditional writing style which challenges the grammatical structure of the language and with the different constructions of the texts consisting of both written and visual materials.

In this thesis, Sevim burak's works are interpreted through the uncanny. Departing from Freud's definition of the uncanny as "the return of the repressed", the analysis of the works is developed benefiting from the frameworks offered by Lacan, Derrida, Dolar and Royle. The characters and spaces are analyzed through the themes of the double, being buried alive, the transgression of the boundary between life and death, and the return of the dead, which can be considered as the basic themes of the uncanny. In this thesis, based on the basic description of the uncanny as the return of the repressed, it is argued that the uncanny enables the expression of recurrent problems or conflicts of the characters about ethnicity, gender, and religious affiliations that are supposed to be repressed or kept hidden.

TEZ ÖZETİ

SEVİM BURAK'IN ESERLERİNDE TEKİNSİZİN POETİKASI VE SİYASETİ

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Anahtar sözcükler: Sevim Burak, tekinsiz, unheimliche, çift, ölülerin geri dönmesi, diri gömülme, sınırları aşma, ev.

Sevim Burak Türkçe edebiyatın önemli isimlerinden biri olmasına rağmen hakkında bütünlüklü ve derin incelemeler olmayan bir yazar. Oysa ki Sevim Burak yazdığı öyküler, oyunlar ve tamamlayamadığı bir romanıyla pek çok önemli ve tartışmalı konuyu masaya yatırmıştır. Sevim Burak eserlerinde sadece ihtilafı temaları işlemesiyle değil, gelenekselin dışına taşan, kelime ve cümle bütünlüğüne meydan okuyan, görsel ve yazınsal metinleri harmanlayan yazma biçimiyle de dikkat çeken yazarlar arasındadır.

Bu tezde Sevim Burak'ın eserleri tekinsizlik teorisi üzerinden yorumlanmıştır. Tekinsizlik kavramı tanımlanırken Freud'un "bastırılmış olanın geri dönmesi" tanımını temel alınmış, sonrasında Lacan, Derrida, Royle, Dolar gibi teorisyenlerin formüle ettiği kavramlardan faydalanılarak analiz geliştirilmiştir. Eserlerdeki karakterler ve mekanlar çift olma, diri gömülme korkusu, ölümlü yaşam arasındaki sınırın silikleşmesi, ölümlerin geri dönmesi gibi tekinsizlik kavramının temel temalarından faydalanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Bu temalardan yola çıkılarak, karakterlerin toplumsal baskı, siyasal otorite gibi sebeplerle bastırdıkları toplumsal cinsiyet, etnisite ve dini aidiyetlerle ilgili problemlerinin geri dönüşünün tekinsizlikten başka bir çerçevede anlatılmasının mümkün olmadığı iddia edilmiştir.

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I am deeply grateful to my parents who always support me and always encouraged me to walk in the way I desire. I also would like to thank my sister, Gamze; although we are interested in totally different subjects, she kept my excitement alive with her horror books. I am really indebted to my family for their love and patience.

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THE POETICS AND POLITICS OF THE UNCANNY

IN SEVİM BURAK’S WORKS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Sevim Burak attracts the attention of critics, and there has been a considerable amount of published research about her in recent years. Her unclassifiable writing style, which never fits into ordinary patterns, and her impressive narrative technique, which makes the reader frightened, nervous, bewildered, and smile at the same time, are discussed in several books and symposiums or panels organized in her memory. With her eccentric style, it is very difficult to find a proper position for her in the Turkish literary canon. It would be useful to examine how her canonicity is perceived in Turkey and how critics wrote about her during her productive period.

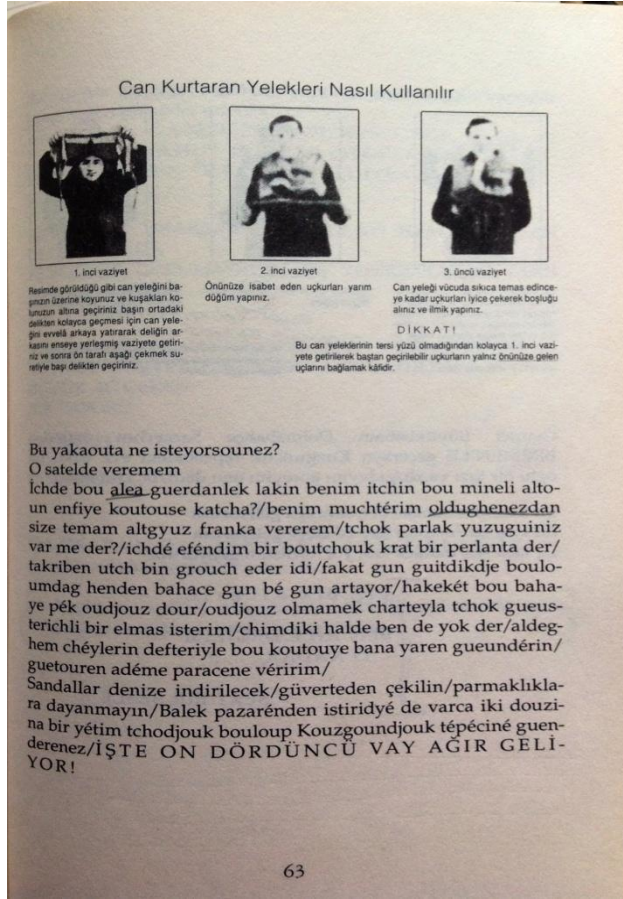
Jale Parla, in an article in which she explains how canonicity is constructed in Turkish literature and defines canons as “ideological formations”, argues that, until recently, critics grouped writers as “friends or foes” according to their usage of the Turkish language in their works. As a result, because writers such as Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar and Oğuz Atay fit the category of “foes,” comprehensive critiques of their works did not exist (Parla, 2008: p. 28-30). Berna Moran’s three volume book, *Türk Edebiyatına Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, constituted an exception as a historical and analytical study in which these writers were recognized. In this case, we may say that literary criticism was influenced and limited both by the nationalist prejudices of the era and the dominant socialist realist outlook in more progressive circles. However, in today's different cultural environment and due to altered conceptions of literature and aesthetic value, recent criticism has been much more receptive to the works of once marginalized authors like Tanpınar, Atay, and Atılın. Azade Seyhan says, for example, that Tanpınar has become popular because his works are strongly relevant to the identity politics that are widely discussed in different academic and political circles (Seyhan, 2008: p.9). This way of thinking can provide a platform for me to consider how Sevim Burak, “foe” of a particular period, became popular -or a “friend”- in recent years, especially in some literary circles.

Sevim Burak was not so popular in the years during which she wrote, and not many detailed criticisms of her work were attempted. Critical readings dating from that period usually analyze Burak's works according to classic story construction techniques. For instance, a very important critic of the period, Asım Bezirci, stated after the publishing of *Yanık Saraylar* that, "Sevim Burak is like her characters, she is pessimistic. Her characters are not insurgent as Leyla Erbil's, not as ironic as Orhan Duru's or not as reflective as Nezihe Meriç's. Maybe Burak does not think that the world will change, she believes in destiny like her characters. If this is the truth, I should declare that this kind of opinion and belief do not fit in such a society that witnesses a revolutionary process and radical shakes." (Bezirci, 1965: p. 252) Sevim Burak was not seen as proper for the ongoing order. Sevim Burak herself, also, perceived that she was not understood when she did not receive the Sait Faik short story prize in 1965. It is true that Burak focuses on individual affairs different from her fellows, yet there is one more point which renders Burak a very eccentric author: she was writing in a very different way from her popular fellow writers. Her writing style and linguistic usage was unfamiliar in literary circles. Sentences were broken, and words were fragmented. She deconstructed and deformed the language. Burak sometimes does not construct sentences, instead she only writes the words in a stream of consciousness and expects the reader to solve the riddle in the text.

Dikiş sepeti/ayna/abajur/elektrik kordonu/bir deste mektup kağıdı/tığ/klozet kapağı örtüsü/yün/şiş/bebek patiği/zamk/tepsi/şişe takılmış ceket/el/örgü/perde/tuvalet masası/küvet/su ibriği/tarak/saç fırçası/sabun/sünger/küçük şişe/kova/oda girişi/şemsiye/şemsiyelik/portmanto/buzdolabı/çamaşır/hizmetçi odası (Burak, 2012: p.27)

Sevim Burak's non-traditional and non-realistic narrating style is not restricted to writing. Some of Burak's works consist of both written and visual texts. The visual texts are not supplemental to the main written texts; the visuals are indispensable components of the works. The visual texts are sometimes drawn intentionally for a specific work, yet ordinary brochures are also used as a part of the story, such as when the guideline for the use of life jacket on ferries is positioned in "On Altıncı Vay". Burak interrupts the fluency of the narrative not only by deforming the sentences and leaving the reader with floating words, but also by distorting the language greatly with

the usage of a phonetic alphabet. Rather than using the words in the way they are spoken, Burak prefers to write them using the French phonetic alphabet. “On Altıncı Vay”, “Osmanlı Bankası”, and “Afrika Dansı” are stories which can be considered as the most interesting examples of phonetic alphabet usage.



(Burak, 2012: p. 63).

Furthermore, issues like power and identity constitute the main axis of her works, and gender and ethnicity are central subjects in the stories and plays. Therefore, it is not reasonable to argue that Burak’s works are not related to the society and its problems, but it is the way Burak approaches these issues that distinguishes her from her fellows. Burak’s style differs from that of the other writers of her time because of the disturbing nature of her writing. Her unusual linguistic usages and writing techniques often have a chilling effect on the reader. She creates this effect both by deforming the language and mostly constructing the spaces or characters in a mysterious and frightening way. She designs the spaces as insecure, dark and foggy, which makes the reader uncomfortable and sometimes frightened. It is possible to see a double of a character or ghosts or hear supernatural voices in a room without any symptom of anxiety in the story, or the character of the story can talk to a ghost as if it were a

normal act. Although these features of her works made them largely inaccessible to the public and the critics of her time, Sevim Burak's works have currently been on the agenda because of the unique ways in which her works deconstruct and deform language to address issues of identity and power, especially with respect to gender and ethnicity. Nilüfer Güngörmüş interprets Burak's works in a psychoanalytical way. She focuses on Sevim Burak's relation to her mother and mother tongue. In a talk that she gave in 2005, YKY "Feminizm Üzerine Konuşmalar Dizisi," Güngörmüş says Burak's father's language became her mother tongue, and this has a very strong influence on her biblical writing and deformation of the language (Güngörmüş, 2005). Güngörmüş also edited Burak's literary biography, *A'dan Z'ye Sevim Burak*. Beliz Güçbilmez is another contemporary scholar who conducts studies on Burak. Her works are concentrated on Burak's plays. In an article called "Theatre of the Uncanny: His Master's Voice /The Uncanny Theatricality and The Representation of the Minor Voice in S.Burak's Text", Güçbilmez analyzes *Sahibinin Sesi* through uncanny theatricality and minor literature and shows how these two are related to each other. She also focuses on repetition, deformation of language, and writing in a language that is strange to her in order to clarify the role of the uncanny and of minor literature in Burak's plays (Güçbilmez, 2004: p. 4-16). Seher Özkök's master's thesis analyzes the relation between the linguistic dimension and the contents of Burak's stories. Özkök argues that Burak's use of language that ignores Turkish linguistic norms is strongly related to the theme of being "other", as a Jew and a woman, which is the main concern of Burak's books. In this case, psychoanalysis is her departure point, and Özkök takes Freud, Lacan, and Kristeva's theories as sources of her analysis (Özkök, 2006). Another detailed study on Sevim Burak's life and works is Bedia Koçakoğlu's book called *Aşkın Şizofrenik Hali Sevim Burak*. Koçakoğlu explains Burak's life in detail, based on both written documents and interviews she did with Burak's family members and friends from the art community. After she elaborates on Burak's sense of art in relation to the authors Burak was influenced by, Koçakoğlu classifies Burak's works as stories, plays, one story that was transformed into a play, and a novel. Then she analyzes her works according to themes, ideas, figures, time, space, literary style, and linguistic usage, etc. (Koçakoğlu, 2009).¹ All these critics analyze Sevim Burak's works from various perspectives and clarify the very critical points in order to understand and interpret

¹ Sevim Burak's works become very popular recently in the performing arts. Her plays and stories have been adapted by several theatre groups and exhibited.

Sevim Burak's literature. Apart from the themes stressed in these analyses, I think that the notion of the uncanny should have a prominent place in the interpretation of Burak's works. Güçbilmez's and Güngörmüş's criticisms of Burak's texts helped me develop my ideas on the relation between the uncanny and Burak's works. In this thesis, different from the former studies, I will mostly focus on the uncanny in Burak's texts. Moreover, I will not only look at particular texts by her, but also analyze all her books except *Ford Mach I*, considering that the uncanny is an indispensable tool for interpreting her literary production. Although it is possible to find some examples from *Ford Mach I* which overlap with the themes of the uncanny, such as blurring the lines or the double, these states of blurring the lines or the double do not create a frightful or dreadful effect. Therefore, I will not include *Ford Mach I* in my analysis. Different from the mentioned critics who addressed Burak's works, I will configure my chapters by elaborating on the various thematic manifestations of the uncanny in Burak's works rather than conduct a story by story analysis. In this thesis, I aim to focus on Sevim Burak's works in a psychoanalytical perspective, and I make use of the uncanny as a psychoanalytical concept developed by Freud in 1919.

As I mentioned above, there is a fair amount of scholarly literature on Burak's works, but few of them touch upon the relation with the uncanny. The reason for this omission can be the relatively new "rediscovery" of Burak or it might be the scarcity of resources on the uncanny in Turkish literature. In this MA thesis, I will focus on the works of Sevim Burak and bring together concepts that are usually treated separately. I think that issues such as identity, gender, and ethnicity should not be considered separately from the debates about the concept of the uncanny. In this thesis, I aim to analyze how the concept of the uncanny is relevant to Sevim Burak's work in relation to characters and the treatment of space, and I will try to answer the question of what it means to analyze Sevim Burak's works through the lens of the uncanny.

The most popular and basic text written on the concept of the uncanny is Freud's essay called "The Uncanny," (*Das Unheimlich*) in which he analyzes Hoffman's short story "Sandman." Analyzing the word *unheimlich* etymologically by stating the definitions present in various dictionaries, Freud explains the notion by classifying the conditions that create an uncanny feeling.

Heimlich, in German, means, “belonging to the house, intimate, friendly, familiar.” However, it also means “something concealed, kept from sight so that others do not get to know of or about it” (Freud, 2007: p.223). Therefore, the meaning of *heimlich* approaches the meaning of its opposite, *unheimlich*, yet we should not disregard one more meaning of the word: “Mystic, unconscious, and withdrawn from knowledge.” Freud emphasizes that these two opposite words, *heimlich* and *unheimlich*, come full circle and their meanings intersect. He also defines the uncanny as the situation of something familiar and established in the mind becoming alienated, unfamiliar, and strange (Freud, 2007: p.241). He asserts that uncanny experiences occur due to two causes: the first one is “when infantile complexes which have been repressed are once more revived by some expression” and the second one is “when primitive beliefs which have been surmounted seem once more to be confirmed” (Freud, 2007: p.249). Therefore, the uncanny is defined as the “recurrence of the repressed.” According to Freud, both of these causes can be used in literature to create an uncanny impression. For Freud, there are several conditions that produce uncanny feelings in relation to the “primitive beliefs” or “repressed infantile complexes”, such as death, dead bodies, the return of the dead, bodies buried alive, dismembered limbs, epilepsy and madness, haunted houses, the theme of the “double”, ghosts, repetition, and the eradication of the distinction between imagination and reality, when the symbol takes the full function of the thing it symbolizes. In this thesis, although I use all of Freud’s definitions and examples about the uncanny as a starting point, I will mostly focus on the double, the return of the dead, the fear of buried alive, and death.

The notion of the double that Freud brings into the discussion while analyzing the uncanny is one of the central pillars of this thesis, which aims at analyzing the way the uncanny is constituted in Sevim Burak’s works. In the first chapter, I analyze Burak’s works through how “the double” can be regarded as a factor that creates the uncanny. Freud mentions the distinction between the soul and the body in order to explicate the double. Referencing Otto Rank, Freud argues that the immortal soul is the first double of the body and after the stage of primary narcissism has passed, the double is seen as the harbinger of death and the object of a desire to kill (Freud, 2007: p.235). Lacan makes additions and revisions to this view through the idea of the mirror stage. Referring to the mirror stage theory, it is obvious that one cannot be both the self and the image. Therefore, he argues that the image we see in the mirror is the double and it

has the “objet petit a” that we desire. In this respect, we always try to kill it in order to get the objet petit a. However, what is forgotten is the fact that if we kill the double, it means that we kill ourselves, Royle argues (Royle, 2003: p.190). Since the double contains the object petit a, if the double is killed that means we obtain the object petit a. However, the object petit a should not be gained, rather it should be lacking because lack of lack is the definite cause of the uncanny (Dolar, 1991: p.13). Bilal Bağana and Muzaffer Seza or Zembul Allahanati and Sümbül in *Sahibinin Sesi*, the narrator and Kent in “Büyük Kuş” can be interpreted through the double theme in order to depict the uncanny in the stories. “Ölüm Saati” and “Pencere” with their double characters can also be examples of how the double works as the creator of the uncanny. The characters who own their doubles usually have problems with their ethnic, religious, or gender identity, and the object petit a symbolizes the identity which is seen as proper by the authorities, such as the state or society. Since the characters desire to own both identities including the object petit a, they certainly create the uncanny. In this first chapter, I aim to analyze these conflicts through the double and show how the double causes the uncanny. Thus, first of all, it is critical to focus on the double that we can detect as uncanny in various works of Burak and ask how the double can be located in Burak’s works as the signifier of the uncanny. Moreover, it is very crucial to detect the effect of the double in the uncanny construction of the characters.

The return of the dead or the fear of being buried alive are the uncanny situations which are exemplified by Freud. In the second chapter, I will analyze these themes by concentrating on the characters. I classified these themes together under the headline of crisis of boundaries. These situations create the uncanny, and this uncanniness occurs because of the eradication of definite boundaries between life and death. The “intellectual uncertainty” defined by Jentsch as the indecision of the animacy or inanimacy can be considered as a factor within the crisis of the boundaries because this uncertainty blurs the certain line between animacy and inanimacy. Sevim Burak’s works can be interpreted through this view regarding the dead, seemingly dead, or inanimate characters in her books. Bilal Bağana’s father in *Sahibinin Sesi*, Ziya Bey’s situation between life and death in *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar*, or the machine and the narrator in “Afrika Dansı” are the characters that go between worlds of the living and the dead. These characters erase the line between life and death and animate and inanimate. These characters are usually the ones who cannot live according to the social

norms determined by the state and society because of her/his problems about gender, religious belief, or ethnic identity. Since these norms do not allow them a space to continue their lives or die in a peaceful way and belong to the dead people's world, they create a new space between the two poles, life and death or animacy or inanimacy. Therefore, how does the situation of standing between the borders create an effect of uncanniness? How is the uncanny used in order to express the problematic relations between the characters and each other and the social norms? How is the uncanny located or defined within the social relations of the characters?

In the last chapter, I will focus on the space rather than the characters as I do in the first two chapters. Departing from the etymological analysis of *unheimlich* in "The Uncanny", I aim to show how the houses or spaces that can be considered as houses provide a basis for the uncanny, and I will focus on the houses in the texts and analyze how they create or contribute to the uncanniness in Burak's works. Freud's discussion on the description of the *heimlich* and *unheimlich* can be useful while analyzing the uncanny spaces in Burak's works. Freud focuses on the intersection of the meanings of *heimlich* and *unheimlich*. Although *heimlich* is defined as "belonging to the house, intimate, friendly", Freud comes across another description of the word as "concealed, kept from sight, secret" (Freud, 2007: p.222-225). In light of these descriptions, it is possible to regard the houses as spaces that cause the uncanny. As Anthony Vidler says, "The house provided an especially favored site for uncanny disturbances: its apparent domesticity, its residue of family history and nostalgia, its role as the last and most intimate shelter of private comfort sharpened by contrast the terror of invasion by alien spirits." (Vidler, 1992: p.17). The houses in Burak's works definitely correspond with Vidler's argument because of the family histories or apparent domesticity, the houses turn into uncanny spaces despite the idea of home as safe and familiar. "Sedef Kakmalı Ev" is a very good example of how the house turns into somewhere uncanny despite its domestic features. Although the house is very familiar to the main character Nurperi Hanım, the house becomes an uncanny space because of the old remnants of the dead brothers of Ziya Bey and their ghosts' visiting her,. Other than the family remnants or ghosts, the buildings can seem uncanny due to their architectural construction. The hospital, which can be considered as home for the narrator in "Afrika Dansı", with its sunken and dark construction, provides a basis for the arising of the uncanny. Not only literal houses, but also spaces regarded as houses can be analyzed through the same

perspective suggested above. The neighborhood in *Sahibinin Sesi* can be a good example of how the neighborhood as house causes the uncanny. Due to the changes in the neighborhood because of the establishment of the Turkish Republic, the uncanny haunts Bilal Bağana's life through the neighborhood. Then, how does this "domestic and familiar" space transform into such an uncanny place? How does space affect and help the construction of the uncanny nature of the characters?

To conclude, the uncanny is a very crucial tool in analyzing Sevim Burak's works. The uncanny has a serious influence on the construction of the texts. The characters and spaces are shaped within the theory of the uncanny, in fact. Although it is obvious that Sevim Burak does not use the uncanny intentionally, it can be conveniently stated that the characters have no other way to express themselves other than through the uncanny. Since they always try to hide their problems or conflicts about gender, ethnicity, or religion, these conflicts come to light though they should be kept secret, which is very similar to the definition of the uncanny. The religion, ethnicity or gender identity are the essences which we usually keep secret and hide for ourselves if these affiliations are not acceptable to the authorities or social norms. Burak's characters are usually women who do not want to obey the rules of society or men who do not fit the masculinity conception of the society or the state, or Jewish people whose religion is not considered as a legitimate belief by the society and state authorities. Therefore, the uncanny, which is defined as the "recurrence of the repressed", is the only way for these characters to express their repressed identities. Thus, it could be argued that the uncanny stands in the center of Burak's texts.

CHAPTER II

THE DOUBLE: RETURN OF THE REPRESSED

2.1 Introduction

The uncanny is defined as being related to fear and dreadful emotions. Then, if the double is analyzed under the title of the uncanny, it is supposed to be a frightening effect that creates the uncanny. Certainly, it is not usually frightening to see two similar things together. We are accustomed to seeing similar things in supermarkets, advertisements, or the media. It is also very familiar to see twins; it does not bother us to come across two similar persons. What is strange is to see your own double. The border between familiarity and unfamiliarity gets blurred when one sees one's own double. The feeling that haunts one's thoughts is not basically fear. It can mostly be explained with the uncanny. Sevim Burak's works produce a very appropriate basis to comprehend the relation of the uncanny and the double. In this chapter, I will first explain how the double works as the producer of the uncanny. Then, I aim to explain how the characters and plot of the works create an uncanny effect through the relation of the uncanny and the double.

Otto Rank defines the double as mirrors, shadows, and guardian spirits in his inspiring book called *Der Doppelgänger*, which is known as the first comprehensive study on the double (Freud, 1919: p.9-10). The book, written in 1914, became a source of inspiration for Freud in order to develop the notion of uncanny. The name *Doppelgänger* as a word hides nearly all details about the question of what is the double. *Doppelgänger* translates into English as "a ghostly counterpart of a living person, double, a person who has the same name as another."² The literal meaning of *Doppelgänger* is "double goer", *doppel* as double and *gänger* as goer.³

Thinking on the word *Doppelgänger* can be helpful to understand the concept of the double. The first part of the word, "doppel" stands for the "double." The double can be a reflection in the mirror or an image that is similar to the person. The double is a

²Merriam Webster Dictionary, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/doppelg%C3%A4nger>, accessed on 12.03.2013.

³*Encyclopedia Britannica*

"Doppelgänger" <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/169319/doppelganger>, accessed on 13.03.2013.

replica; there should be significant and meaningful similarities between the double and the person. The double can be the exact image of the person such as a mirror reflection. It can also be different from the person's own image; it is enough to detect important and valid similarities. A bird or a tree can be seen as the double if they have strong resemblances, for example the person may be described as possessing wings or branches like a tree. Then, the first part of the word, "doppel" as double can be seen as the indicator of the significant similarities, the visual sameness.

The double is "goer" as indicated in the second part of the word *doppelgänger*. The image or counterpart leaves the person after it appears. It is no longer one part of the person; the double has its own life. Besides, this abandonment is not unidirectional. While leaving the person, the double knits invisible bonds between itself and the person. There are inexplicable connections through these bonds which cannot be clarified within rational thinking. Although the double leaves the person, it still follows, traces, catches, walks with the person. It appears at untimely moments, such as when the person reaches happiness, *jouissance* or when one prevents oneself from doing something forbidden. The double creates fascination and affection, but, at the same time, fear, uneasiness, and discomfort. The double comes back when the person becomes sure that it left. It is a goer in two ways, the word *doppel* as double gains its second meaning in this point. The act of going has a double meaning, when the person sees the double, s/he witnesses the first act of going. The double leaves the person, but, on the other hand, the double persists in going together with the person. Then, it is an exact "double goer" which is a counterpart that neither leaves nor stays, but goes in two/double ways. It goes in order to leave the person and goes together with the person. The double is the similar image, reflection, or replica of the person which creates ambivalent emotions because of the irrational and inexplicable bonds between the double and the person. It is an outsider which is always and already within (Lydenberg, 1997: p.1080).

This bidirectional nature of the goer in the word *Doppelgänger* connotes the most popular definition of the uncanny. The uncanny is defined by Freud as "something repressed which recurs" (Freud, 1919: p.12). Similar to the act of going which includes an abandonment and an act of going together, the uncanny is a feeling caused by the return of the repressed. The uncanny is the anxiety which occurs when the disavowed

comes back, when one realizes that the thing which is supposed to be over, dead or left is only repressed and now turns back. Thus, what comes back is not strange to the person. Since it was already disavowed, it is known. It is familiar, "...uncanny is in reality nothing new or foreign, but something familiar and old-that has been estranged only by the process of repression"(Freud, 1919: p.12-13).The double, because of the significant similarities between itself and the person, is not unfamiliar to the person. These similarities have their source in a very old partnership, constructed against death, between the body and the soul. As Otto Rank states, the double was an "insurance against destruction"(Freud, 1919: p.9). The double was a denial of death, and "probably the 'immortal' soul was the first 'double' of the body"(Freud, 1919: p. 9). Freud argues that the multiplication of oneself against death arises from the idea of primary narcissism. However, when the primary narcissism stage is left behind, the double becomes the "ghastly harbinger of death" (Freud, 1919: p. 9). Since primary narcissism is left behind in the later ages, the return of the double is uncanny. "The 'double' has become a vision of terror, just as after the fall of their religion the gods took on daemonic shapes" (Freud, 1919: p. 10).

The double constitutes the main conflict in some of the works of Sevim Burak. The stories "Pencere", "Ölüm Saati", and "Büyük Kuş" or the play *Sahibinin Sesi* are the works in which one can see the important and dominant influence of the double. The characters come across their doubles in their houses or in the city where they live. The double is sometimes seen as a strange guest, but, after a while, the characters perceive that the double is not strange; on the contrary, it is very familiar. It is familiar because the double contains the disavowed desires of the characters. The stories can be interpreted through analyzing the desires of the characters. So, the double has a significant place in this interpretation due to its role as the container of hidden desires.

2.2The double as the container of hidden desires

"Pencere" is the story of a woman who comes across her double at the opposite window. The woman wants her double to kill herself, and the woman imagines death scenes for her double. The woman sometimes watches her double or hides herself from the double behind a curtain. The tension between the woman and her double and their fight for life and death are narrated throughout the story. The woman, as a narrator,

dreams of the death of the woman, namely her double, at the opposite window. Every time she stares out of the window, she sees this woman at the terrace while jumping or dangerously walking on the side of the terrace. Although the narrator seems to desire the death of the woman at the opposite window, she herself actually wants to die. After the narrator describes various scenes for the death of the double, she focuses on herself and explains her dream of dying. First she explains her fantasy about the death of her double. When the double falls out of the window onto “tramway street”, the double breaks into pieces. Then, the narrator looks at the tramway street, observes the buses without any passengers and dreams of pushing people in front of the empty buses. The people have the heads of goats, foxes or sheep instead of their own human heads. At the end, the narrator’s own feet come into the scene, in front of the bus.

Tramvay caddesinden bomboş geip giden otobüslere başka bir gözle bakıyorum, bomboş geip gidiyorlar, boşken dolaşmalarının bir nedeni olmalı diye kurmaya başlıyorum. Onların önüne tanıdıklarımı çıkarıp koyuyorum bir bir – hiç tanımadığım bir adamı itiyorum otobüsün önüne- ayak bileklerine kadar inen siyah paltosuyla bir sağa, bir sola bakıyor – boyu uzayıp kısalıyor – sonra berberden yeni çıkmış koyun başlı bir kadını- keçi, inek, tilki başlı bir sürü insanı itiyorum otobüslerin önüne – hepsi de şaşırıyorlar, yapmacıklaşıyorlar; düşünmemişler böyle bir son kendilerine besbelli... Binlerce ayak olup kaçıyorlar. Kedi ayakları - tavşan ayakları - horoz ayakları - kendi ayaklarım... (Burak, 2009: 18-19).

Mladen Dolar attributes three features to the double. The problem is that the double stands for these three roles simultaneously. The first role it stands for is to be a part of the ego. The double generates an important piece of the ego. Secondly, the double exists to represent the suppressed desires raised by the id. Lastly, the double also prevents the subject from fulfilling desires. Therefore, the double quietly comprises the superego (Dolar, 1991, p.12). The conflict between the id and superego, together within the double, constitutes the main accents of “Pencere.” The narrator behaves as if she desires the death of her double. However, throughout the story she sometimes confesses her wish to die. The double is the manifestation of the narrator’s disavowed desire to die. Royle says, referring to Otto Rank, one cannot hate his/her double, and one feels both animosity and affection for it because the double stands for either id or superego at

the same time (Royle, 2003, p. 190). So the narrator in “Pencere” feels pity when the double cries in kitchens, rooms, but she also feels anger because of the double’s possibility of staying alive. The double both exists as the representative of desires and as an avoider, and thus it causes two opposite feelings, affection and animosity. In “Pencere” the double is there to dare to walk towards death while the narrator does not take the risk of killing herself. Otto Rank argues that the double does the things which the subject cannot venture to do when s/he is conscious. The double is the emergence of the deeply hidden and suppressed desires of the subject. “In the end, the relation gets so unbearable that the subject, in a final showdown, kills his double, unaware that his only substance and his very being were concentrated in his double. So in killing him he kills himself” (Dolar, 1991: p.11). So, every time the narrator kills her double in her dreams, she kills herself.

The suicide has deep roots in her mind and is linked to emancipation. Moving one step further from this analysis brings us to the birth of the double in “Pencere.” Although we are not allowed to observe the episodes while the narrator does not see her double, what the double experiences when she first attempts to kill herself might be a clue to the life of the narrator before the double comes.

“Haydi atla!” dedim.

Elimle de işaret yaptım.

Durduğu yerde sallandı. Ağır vücudu duvarın ince çizgisinde ikiye bölündü.

Bu sırada alt katlardan bir pencere açıldı. “Hermine!” diye haykırdı başka birisi.

Aralıklı tepinmeler oldu.

Yukarı doğru çıkan ağlamalar.

Yalvarmalar işitildi.

Sesler terasa doldu.

İlk kez gördüm kadını.

Yalancısız,

Perdesiz.

İple oynatılan bir kukla gibi pencerenin önüne.

Ağzı çarpılmış anlaşılmaz kelimeler söylüyor, benden yardım istiyordu. İki şişman kadın kollarına asılmışlardı silkinip atamıyordu onları.

Yenik ve zayıftı.

Kadını silkeliyor, konuşsun diye tokatlıyorlardı.
O hep bana bakıyordu.
Ne istiyordu benden?
Onu öylece alıp götürdüler.
Yemek odalarında,
Mutfaklarda,
Sandık odalarında
Gene bağırıracaklardı.
Yarın terasa çıkıp çamaşır asacaktı,
Görecektim yüzünü gene,
Çilli kollarını,
Çamaşırılarını,
İplerini.
Pencereme bakıp “artık akıllandım” diyecekti.
Günlerdir aklımı kurcalayan yüzlerce ölüm arasından en güzellerini
anımsıyordum onun için. (Burak, 2009: p.19-20.)

At first, the narrator asks the double to jump, but the double cannot arrange it. The people around the double rescue her. However, this rescue does not comprise recovery. She is tortured in rooms and in the kitchen and is transformed into a puppet that performs the most proper roles in society, like hanging out the laundry. The narrator sees her double without a curtain between them, transparently for the first time. She sees her own reflection and its suppression. She sees how desperate she is when she wants to break the routines of being a proper housewife. She sees how she is tortured when she wants to go out of the house. The relation between the narrator and the double becomes unbearable at this point. The only solution is to kill the double. Before the double attempts to die, the narrator is afraid that the double may abandon the idea of suicide. She says, “Ya cayarsa diyorum atlamaktan? Ya düş ise diyorum, kurduğum bunca şeyler, düzenliğim bozular yıkılırım.” (Burak: 2009: p. 19). So, she has to die. Her dreams of killing her double should be realized in order to maintain her order.

In the end, the memory book of the narrator comes up. She makes up memories and draws them. The narrator declares that the woman at the opposite window hanged herself. The ghastly harbinger of death is closer than it is supposed, now. Although the

double is saved in the former scene by some people around her, now we read that she is successful in her attempt to emancipate herself. “When the double appears, the time is up” (Dolar: 1991: p. 15). So, it is not difficult to guess what happens when the double dies. The narrator walks to her death. She sees a man with a green hat walking in the street, and he calls to the woman. The woman accepts his suggestion and jumps over the window. The narrator is so free that she does not sit at home and fulfill her duties as a proper woman anymore, yet she is no longer alive. Actually, we can say that she followed her double in order to reach freedom, breaking the rules of being a proper woman.

Sahibinin Sesi is a play in which one can see the double as the container of repressed desires. Muzaffer Seza, the double of Bilal Bağana, stands for the hidden desires of Bilal Bağana. *Sahibinin Sesi* is a play that presents a part of Bilal Bağana’s life around his Jewish partner Zembul Allahanati, non-Muslim neighbors, and his father. It is the play form of “Ah Yarap Yehova” in *Yanık Saraylar*. The play starts with Bilal Bağana’s daily report in which he explains what he did during the day. Throughout the play, we listen to Bilal Bağana’s daily report. Besides this, we read the tension between Bilal Bağana and Zembul Allahanati, non-Muslim neighbors.

The play takes place in 1931. The Turkish Republic has been established very recently. Bilal Bağana is the son of a former Ottoman soldier. Before the establishment of the Turkish Republic, Bilal Bağana had a respectable status in the society due to his father's job. However, that prestige decreased with the establishment of the republic. The new republic created its own prestigious positions in society. The recently-established state redefines status, and Bilal Bağana gets nothing but the duty of doing military service from this re-defining process. Being the son of a former Ottoman soldier or having an education abroad does not make him a privileged citizen. As an ordinary citizen of the Turkish Republic, Bilal Bağana has to do his military service, which he wants to avoid. Nevertheless, he would like to be a proper and respected citizen of the republic. Then, he takes the identity card of a war pilot, Muzaffer Seza, who died during the Independence War. With the identity card of Muzaffer Seza, Bilal Bağana becomes a respected citizen and avoids military service. Yet, the ghost of Muzaffer Seza does not leave him throughout the story.

After a while Bilal Bađana starts to introduce himself as Muzaffer Seza. Zembul cries to Bilal, “Hayır, siz Bilal deđiliniz řu anda bařka bir insansınız... Hasta bir insansınız.” Bilal responds to Zembul by declaring that he is not Bilal, actually, “Hımm... řu mesele... Bilal deđilim, kaç kere söyledim size, benim adım Muzaffer Seza.” (Burak, 2008: p.61). Muzaffer Seza is introduced as a heroic character that died in the Independence War. After Bilal Bađana begins to use Muzaffer’s identity card, Muzaffer and Bilal come across each other at unexpected times. Muzaffer firstly comes and asks for his identity card. Bilal asks Muzaffer -being very scared of him- whether he will kill Bilal or not. Muzaffer answers him politely by saying no, “Hayır, hayır siz beni yařattıđınıza gre ben sizi ldrmem.” (Burak, 2008: p. 31). While Bilal is asking Muzaffer whether he has come to kill him or not, he actually questions his double’s function: Is he insurance against destruction, or is he the ghastly harbinger of death? As Freud says, the double is an “assurance of immortality.” (Freud, 1919: p. 9-10). Mladen Dolar argues that the double exists in order to avoid castration; it is insurance against destruction. The subject multiplies herself/himself in order to prevent destruction (Dolar, 1991: p. 12, 13). Bilal Bađana is not face to face with a literal castration threat or destruction. However, it is obvious that Bilal’s identity, of which he is very proud, is destroyed with the establishment of the republic, and Bilal Bađana is under the threat of losing his respectable identity. Bilal Bađana sees the other people, who –for example- live in the neighborhood, as “common people.” After Bilal takes the identity card of Muzaffer Seza, he dreams of policemen coming and asking for Bilal Bađana in order to conscript him. Bilal responds to the policemen that Bilal Bey is such an elite person that he could not live in that home and around that neighborhood, so he moved to Paris (Burak, 2008: p.29). Or, when Bilal sees Zembul’s relatives moving to his neighborhood, he thinks that common people are starting to dominate the houses around him. He says, “...Hepsi de Zembul’un akrabaları, hısımları. Hımm. Avam tabaka evlere hâkim oldu.”(Burak, 2008: p.49). Bilal Bađana still considers himself as a privileged person because of his ancestors and education. Bilal Bađana is a French teacher in a school, and he usually repeats French poems at home. Although Bilal Bađana keeps on thinking himself as different from the “common people”, he is aware of the premises of the recently established republic; thus, he knows he has lost his prestigious position. Muzaffer Seza, as a dead war pilot, is one of the people who are seen as nameless heroes in society. Bilal Bađana acquires this heroic past with Muzaffer Seza’s identity card, and he also does not give up his past and keeps both personal histories together.

As Dolar says, the double, Muzaffer Seza, dares to do the things that the subject, Bilal Bağana, cannot do yet desires. Muzaffer does his military service and even dies; he obtains a prestigious status in the society as being a martyr for the country. Bilal Bağana does not do his military services since he does not have the courage to do it. Yet, he acquires the respectable position that he desired through his double's achievements. Herein, the double can be seen as insurance against destruction because Muzaffer's name provides Bilal with a respectable status.

Mladen Dolar argues that the double stands for the hidden and repressed desires. Although Bilal Bağana lives with a Jewish woman, he hates the non-Muslim community. He does not want the relatives of Zembul in his house, and he is not married to Zembul despite her insistence and their new-born baby. He observes certain movements in the neighborhood, and believes that non-Muslims are enclosing his house by moving their houses next to his house. Bilal Bağana does not want to live in a neighborhood full of non-Muslims and "common people," yet he cannot do anything about it. His double, Muzaffer Seza, provides succor to Bilal Bağana by holding the repressed desires of Bilal. Muzaffer Seza stands for the disavowed thoughts and tainted desires. Muzaffer Seza appears with the idea of massacring the non-Muslims. There is a way to save the neighborhood from the "common people." There is a way to get rid of the relatives of Zembul Allahanati, whose family starts to move to Bilal Bağana's neighborhood: it is to burn the neighborhood with gas. As the partner of Zembul and prospective relative of Zembul's relatives, Bilal Bağana is annoyed because of the migration of Jewish people to his neighborhood. He wants them neither in his house nor around the vicinity. Yet, he does not have the courage to make a plan. Therefore, his double Muzaffer Seza appears as the container of Bilal Bağana's hidden desires. Bilal Bağana's forbidden wishes come to light with the emergence of Muzaffer Seza. Bilal Bağana still does not have enough courage to announce his desires and rejects the idea of burning the house while he is talking to his old friend who is a state agent, Osman Sabri. Bilal Bağana explains his anxieties about the uncanniness of his house. He complains about the sounds of breaking windows although his windows are not broken. During their conversation, Bilal Bağana explains the plan of burning the neighborhood as if it is not his idea. "Hayır... Eminim ki bir tek adam bunları hazırlayan... O yanık yüzlü... Dikkat et, tatbik edecek olan da başka... O ayrı... O, sana ismini vermediğim kişi." (Burak, 2008: p. 56). He declares that the one who plans and the one who

executes are different people. Muzaffer Seza has a sear on his face. Then, the person he described who has a burned face is Muzaffer Seza. Bilal's affection for Muzaffer Seza transforms into an animosity in this scene because of the status of Muzaffer Seza. Bilal Bağana says, "Sana şu kadarını söyleyebilirim ki, biri avamla beraber... Biri de avama karşı mücadele ediyor... Kim kazanacak belli değil." (Burak, 2008: p.57) Since Muzaffer Seza is one of the "common people," Bilal Bağana hates him. At the same time, he also likes him because Muzaffer Seza is the only one who dares to do the things he can never do and bestows him with a respectable name.

Every gas can Bilal Bağana buys from the grocery imprisons him within this duality. He tries to consider Muzaffer Seza as someone apart from him. However, every time he hears a sound in the house, or observes somebody moving to the neighborhood, or tries to get over the policemen because of his undone military service, he comes across Muzaffer Seza and so his disavowed and hidden desires. It is a "disturbing discovery," that is, "an outsider who is always, already within." It is an "uncanny stranger or intruder," it is exactly the self (Lydenberg, 1997: p.1080). Muzaffer Seza is apart from Bilal Bağana in order to give him a new name but he is very close, indeed, within Bilal Bağana because of hiding Bilal's desires. Muzaffer Seza as Bilal Bağana's double is the key to reaching the prestigious position in the recently-established republic with his martyr's status. Muzaffer Seza is a tool that digs out Bilal Bağana's hidden desires and puts them into practice. Bilal Bağana does not lose his own elite status, and he achieves a proper and heroic position in the new state; he also has a chance to reveal his repressed desires about destroying the "common people" and non-Muslims owing to Muzaffer Seza.

Both the woman in "Pencere" and Bilal Bağana in *Sahibinin Sesi* do not have enough courage to pursue their wishes. The woman in "Pencere" cannot go out because of the roles attributed to her by society; she should be a proper woman who sits at home and prepares nice dinners for the family. On the other hand, Bilal Bağana's desires cannot be fulfilled because those two desires contradict each other. He cannot become a respectable citizen of the republic without doing his military service. The doubles which they create exist to fulfill their impossible desires. The woman on the opposite window and Muzaffer Seza are not the representatives of the desires, but they are exactly the desires themselves because the double is there to do what one cannot dare.

2.3The Familiarity of the Double

Repressed desires are not strangers to the subject. On the contrary, they are very familiar. However, since these desires are disavowed, they might be forgotten or hidden in the very deep parts of the mind. Therefore, the double that reveals these suppressed desires is not unfamiliar but familiar just like an old friend whose face is about to be forgotten.

The woman who is in trouble with her double in “Pencere” sometimes looks at her double at the opposite window, and she says that looking at her double is like beginning to write a new memory book. The double at the opposite window reminds the woman of a new memory book. As she starts to narrate her thoughts, she sees her double, and she says, “Yeni bir anı defterine başlarmışcasına ara sıra başımı kaldırıp kadına bakıyorum.” (Burak, 2009: p. 17). Looking at the double makes her to feel as if she is beginning to write a new memory book. The act of looking is preferred to writing. Therefore, the double has the function of the memory book. The double records the past and the memories. The double pervades the past. When the woman looks at the double, she remembers. The woman recognizes her double because they have the same memories. The double is not an unfamiliar image; it is familiar, it has the same memories, and it reminds the woman of the past. The double seems unfamiliar by standing at the opposite window, apart from the woman. As Freud says, although it seems unfamiliar, since it has been left behind long time ago, it is, indeed, familiar (Freud, 1919: p.10). The double at the opposite window as the representative of the memories is familiar in this sense.

The bird and the woman in “Büyük Kuş” have known each other since their childhood. “Büyük Kuş” is the story of a woman’s unending search for a loss that is symbolized with a man in the story. The woman thinks that she killed him. However, the loss appears in the form of a hawk or as a shadow with black wings. Throughout the story, we read the dialogues between Kent, who is supposed to be a man, and the woman, as she explains her pains and loss. She continually asks whether she is his killer or not. The woman is not sure about her feelings. On the one hand she desperately looks for the loss, the man:

Dışarı çıktı
İçeri girdi
Masaların altından
Gardrobun gözlerinden geçti
Aradığı neydi
Yeniden sokaklara çıktı
Çekmeceleri açtı
İçindekileri yere döktü
...

Her yana bakarak “Onu bulmalı” “Onu bulmalı” (Burak, 2009: p.42).

On the other hand, she hates him. She says that, “... ‘Ondan nefret ediyordum’ ‘Ondan tiksiniyordum’ ‘Tam bir iğrenme’...” (Burak, 2009: p.54). The woman feels both affection and hate together because of her desire to find him and detest him. The woman wants to escape from him, yet she also wants to find him and stay with him. It can be said that memories do not permit the person only to have animosity toward the double. The past and remembrances in “Büyük Kuş” make the woman feel affectionate, feel a strong and unavoidable desire to find him. The woman explains her past with the man to Kent; the dialogues she mentioned are all about dying. They talk about who will die first, and the woman argues that he will die before her. The man shouted at the woman, “KİM ÖNCE ÖLECEK!” The woman gets out of the bed and rolls on the ground as if she sang “SEN BENDEN ÖNCE ÖLECEKSİN.” (Burak, 2009: p.52). The woman believes that the man knows her fate, her death, by saying, “NE GARİP BENİM SONUMU DA BİLİR O.” (Burak, 2009: p. 51). The man comes as the harbinger of death. He asks for a time to die, he is expected to know her end. The man is not a stranger. The images that substitute for him after his loss are a hawk and a shadow with black wings. The woman walked with a hawk when she was a child.

...-Kapının önünde çocuk duaları mırıldanırken başına saldıran bir Atmacayla göğü kararan- O günden bu yana KADERİNİ o Atmacayla paylaşan- Onu görünce herkesin kaçıştığı – Sokaklarda başında Atmacayla dolaşan O kız çocuğu (ki şimdi o Atmaca başından uçmuştu yalnız kalmıştı) – Göklere bakarak ağır ağır dönüyordu – Ve göklerde siyah kanatlı bir gölgeyi arıyordu- Ah O’nu nerede bulursun? O’nu nerede bulursun? O’nu nerede?(Burak, 2009: p.43).

The hawk stands for the man who is lost or killed by the woman. The letters “A” and “O” are written with capital letters because they actually symbolize the lost or killed man, namely the double. It is not coincidence that the man is symbolized by a hawk, a predatory bird. As the dialogue about the death time indicates, he comes to be a harbinger of death. Moreover, after his loss, he is represented by a wild bird, a hawk. The man or the hawk is not a stranger for the woman. She has been together with the hawk since her childhood. She has the sign of sin on her forehead (Burak, 2009: p.47), so she has been waiting for the judgment, the death, for a long time. She certainly knows the hawk and pretending to be hawk.

...Başımdan aşağı bir kanat sallanıyor... Sarkıyorum, uzuyorum, kesiliyorum.
Alçalıyorum
Dönüyorum (Burak, 2009: p.47).

The double is neither unfamiliar nor a stranger for her. Although the narrator says that her sky gets darker when the hawk attacks the woman, the hawk also can be seen as a protector because the hawk and the woman share the same destiny (Burak, 2009, p.43). All people run away from her because of the hawk and this eschewal might be the reason for delaying the judgment for the sign of sin. So, insurance of the destruction becomes the harbinger of death. The hawk, the man, and even Kent are the transformed images of the woman's double. Kent, at the end of the story, asks the woman, “BİL BAKALIM BEN KİMİM?” (Burak, 2009: p.56) and sings a song to make her remember his voice. “ANLADIN MI ŞİMDİ?” “ANLADIN MI BEN KİMİM?” “TANIDIN MI BU SESİ?” (Burak, 2009: p.56). Then Kent kills the woman with a scarf that she gave him as a present. The woman is killed with a scarf that is not a strange object for her. Thus, the scarf might be seen as a sign of the similarity between the woman and Kent for the reason that they are double. Or, the scarf can be seen as the symbol of being killed by such a familiar image. The familiarity with the double in “Büyük Kuş” is multi-layered. It starts from infancy with the hawk and its shadow, continues with the man who wonders about the order of their deaths, and lastly comes to an end with Kent. The very familiar image of the hawk at the beginning of the woman's life becomes such a daemonic image and transforms into harbinger of the death.

The inappropriate and impossible desires are disavowed deep inside the mind. The narrator in “Büyük Kuş” actually walks to her death while she is looking for her double. She is partly aware of this, but she cannot stop herself from following her hidden desire for death. The desire to die has been situated in her mind for a long time, indeed since she was a child; it was symbolized by a black hawk. The woman in “Pencere” remembers her desire when she stares at the woman on the opposite window. Her double on the opposite window reminds her of the old days and especially the old desires she suppressed. Since the double is the sum of the hidden desires, it is always and already a part of the subject. It is not a stranger that appears immediately. The double is familiar because it includes the disavowed desires of the subject.

What makes the encounter uncanny is the fact that something familiar seems very unfamiliar due to the suppressed nature of the desires. One of the ways in which familiarity manifests itself and becomes underscored is the use of names. A name belongs to one person, yet this belonging does not eliminate the possibility of the existence of namesakes. Nicholas Royle argues that the name is an uncanny harbinger; the name both belongs to you and is a stranger to you because you can always come across somebody with the same name (Royle, 2003: p.191). In “Ölüm Saati” the uncanny shows itself via the name. “Ölüm Saati” starts with a long conversation on time and date. The narrator asks a man what the time is, what the date is, whether it is early or late... However, we never get a full, satisfactory answer. Then she narrates her memories or daily actions in a very complex way. One cannot understand whether the narrator or her double talks. She starts to narrate with the first-person singular yet continues with the third-person singular.

...Sonra yatmışım – Doktor Zıpçıyan gelmiş O’nu muayene etmiş – Öbür çocuklar oynarken O çocuk pencerenin önünde kalmış – Az değil – Tam dört ay kaldım yatakta –Pencerenin önüne karyolayı çektiler – Ne yattım yatakta – Ne yattım – Ne yattım – O sene Muhacırlar gelmiş – Bakmak istemiş Muhacırlara – Yara tamamıyla geçmemiş – Bir ağrı başlamış O’nda – Hem de ne ağrı – Artık o ağrıya dayanamadım – Hep bağırdım... (Burak, 2009, p.88)

Bugün çok üzgün – Hep yatıyor – Hep yatıyor – Hiç kalkmaz o yerinden bir daha da – Çok üzgünüm bugün – Bu akşam burda çok gizli bir sefalet – Birçok kara bulut – Ve çok sıkıntılı bir hava var...(Burak, 2009: p.89).

Because of the complicated narration, it is nearly impossible to identify the narrator with certainty. There is not one character that has a double; rather there are characters who we cannot decide whether one is the character or the double. Nicholas Royle argues that there is a connection between the signature and the name. According to Derrida, it is not possible to have a “pure and proper signature.”(Royle, 2003: p.194). It should be both repeatable (iterability) and original in order to be a signature. The repeatability principle nullifies the originality. Therefore, “We could say that the signature functions according to the model of a ‘duplicity without original’, so long as this is understood to mean that there is no pure and proper double in the first place.”(Royle, 2003: p.194). Two narrators speaking throughout the story as being each other's doubles depict the situation of duplicity without an original. It is not possible to identify the original narrator and identify the other one as the double. The two narrators are constantly doubling each other in the story. “So, as a double? doubling his double, the devil overflows his double at the moment when he is nothing but his double, the double of his double that produces the ‘*unheimlich*’ effect.” (Derrida, 1987: p.270).

The name intensifies this doubling of doubling. It is uncanny because one cannot signify herself/himself or the other person as the original one. In “Ölüm Saati”, the name of the writer is usually repeated. “...Orda oturuyorsun – Biliyorum – Vaziyetinden de belli – Sensin – Sevim’sin – Karanlıktasın...” (Burak, 2009: p.87) or “Saati yaklaşıyor – Saati gelmiş – Ortalıkta yok – Kendi kendini çağırıyor – Sevim – Sevim – Sevim...”(Burak, 2009: p.88). In another part of the story, they decided on to move separately, “...Gezmeye bundan sonra ayrı ayrı gideriz – Ben bu evden bir kere giderim – Sonra siz Sevim’le çıkarsınız – Biri burda ama öteki nerde...”(Burak, 2009: p.89). There is always someone mentioned as the other; however, it is not possible to find who the other is. Since the names are the same, it is impossible to find out the original between the borders of familiarity and unfamiliarity. At the end of the story, a third-person singular narrator stays alone with her/his own voice. “...Saati yaklaşıyor – Ortalarda yok – Hem üzüntülü hem de Abus biri – Saati yaklaşıyor – Ortalarda yok – Biri burda – Öteki nerde? İkisi de yok.” (Burak, 2009: p.90). If we cannot find one of

them, it is impossible to find the other. The double as a namesake stands as the harbinger of death at the end of the story. Moreover, a distinction between the person and the double cannot be made. The uncanny is hidden in this condition of “duplicity without original.” Since the border between the familiar and the unfamiliar is blurred, the original gets lost, and the uncanny is revealed in this ambiguity.

2.4 The double as the container of *object a*

While Freud defines the uncanny mostly based on past experiences and the return of repressed desires, Mladen Dolar describes the uncanny as “gaining too much” referring to Lacan. Dolar starts with the mirror stage theory of Lacan. When the infant sees herself in the mirror, she feels the power of completeness at first sight. She looks at the mirror, sees her image as a whole and feels the jubilation that results from wholeness. However, when she stares at herself, she notices that she is deprived of the completeness that appeared in the mirror. This is the moment of the crossing from the imaginary realm, where she feels complete, to the symbolic realm, where she feels that something is lacking after losing her jubilation because of her awareness of this incompleteness (Dolar, 1991: p. 12). Mladen Dolar argues that, “When I recognize myself in the mirror, it is too late.” (Dolar, 1991: p.12). Since it is not possible “to be one with myself and also recognize myself at the same time,” there is always a split (Dolar, 1991: p.12). The split is the cost of seeing the image in the mirror. When the image is seen, the doubling occurs and it implies castration. That doubling prevents one from achieving completeness. The double steals the most important part of the person; it takes away the self-being *jouissance* because one loses uniqueness. One is already multiplied, so there is no way to reach the One. What Lacan calls the *objet petit a* corresponds to the self-being *jouissance* that results from uniqueness (Dolar, 1991: p. 12, 13). *Objet petit a* is the *jouissance* we want to experience but we lose while recognizing our image in the mirror. It is the lack we feel, the lost part of our self-being. The double that stands in front of us is the one that includes the lost part, the *objet petit a*. Individuals take a step from the imaginary realm to the symbolic realm through this absence. Nevertheless, the pursuit of completing the lack, the desire to reach the *objet petit a* never ends. The double, the image we come across in the mirror, includes the lost part. The uncanny catches us where *object a* exists. Dolar says that the double is the replica one plus the *object a*. The double might reveal its possession of *object a* through

a gesture, like a gaze. Then, it creates an anxiety because the person is not supposed to have the lost part or gain the object *a* in the symbolic realm. So, the Lacanian view of this anxiety is different from those that are created because of the loss of something. Conversely, “It is the anxiety of gaining too much. ... What one loses with anxiety is precisely the loss—the loss that made it possible to deal with coherent reality. ‘Anxiety is the lack of the support of lack,’ says Lacan; the lack lacks, and this brings about the uncanny” (Dolar, 1991: p.13).

The curtain between the woman in “Pencere” and her double functions as a blocker, and it also calls upon the subject to carry out her desire to see the other side of the curtain. It is very similar to the analysis of Parrhasius’ painting by Lacan. Zeuxis and Parrhasius are contemporary painters who lived in 5th century BC. Both Zeuxis and Parrhasius are known as great painters of their period. They had a contest to decide who was the better artist. Zeuxis painted grapes, and they seemed so real that some birds pecked at them. Parrhasius painted a curtain on the wall of his studio. When Zeuxis came to see his painting, he asked Parrhasius to unveil the curtain and show him the painting. Parrhasius’ painting was so real that fooled Zeuxis. It seemed to be a real curtain that hid a painting (Žižek, 2007: p. 114-115). It is indisputable that both paintings were very successful. However, it is crucial to ask what kind of an effect they had on their audiences. According to Pliny, a Roman author and philosopher, Zeuxis’ grapes deceived only the birds, yet Parrhasius’ curtain deceived Zeuxis. Therefore, what made Zeuxis move and try to draw the curtain? What made him believe in the existence of a painting behind the curtain? Parrhasius, by painting the curtain, not only created an illusion but also produced a fantasy. While trying to unveil the imagined painting, Zeuxis, indeed, ran after his fantasy of seeing the masterpiece of Parrhasius. When we see some illusions very similar to what Parrhasius painted, although we are convinced that it is an illusion, we always think that there must be something hidden behind the veil. If Zeuxis had seen the “real” painting behind curtain, he would have satisfied his desire and so he would have reached the completion. However, completion is the fantasy itself. It is an endless situation which does not permit one to reach what s/he desires, the object *petit a*. It is the fantasy of completion. one will never attain the completeness: it is a fantasy. This incompleteness, this lack helps us to enter the symbolic realm. If you become successful in completing your lack, you “gain too much.”

What does the curtain between the sofa and the window in “Pencere” hide? The woman puts the curtain behind the sofa stubbornly in order to keep the curtain open. However, the curtain does not stay behind the sofa and closes the view of the opposite window in which the narrator watches her double. She says that:

Perdenin ucunu tutup sıkıştırıyordum koltuğun arkasına. Kurtulup kapanıyordum günlerce... Onu yeniden koltuğun arkasına sıkıştırıp düşmesini bekliyordum.ALIŞMIŞTIM BUNA.BELKİ DE HER ŞEYİN ANLAMINI BUDUR diyordum.İlk kez hayal kırıklığına – yenilgiye uğrayacağımdan korkuyordum.Sonra bundan kaçmak için bir NEDEN olmadığını gördüm. NASIL OLSA OLACAKTI... Yaklaştım perdenin ucuna.(Burak, 2009: p.21).

The woman has an unbearable wish to die. She is bored with the life that she lives in that home. Seher Özkök argues that since she cannot find anything worth living for in that home, she draws her dreams in the memory book. She constructs a different life where there is a street, a house, a cloud, and a man with green hat (Özkök, 2006: p.81).

Anı defterine

BİR EV

BİR CADDE

BİR BULUT

BİR YEŞİL ŞAPKALI ADAM ÇİZİYORUM (Burak, 2009: p. 21).

The life suggested to her in that home does not offer any happiness. The double she created at the opposite window is her hidden death wish against the life she has. Throughout the story, she fantasizes about her. She writes different death scenarios for her double, and she says that, “Günlerdir aklımı kurcalayan yüzlerce ölüm arasından en güzellerini anımsıyordum onun için.”(Burak, 2009: p. 20).The woman is very sure that the double should die. She even knows the exact time and date:

Ölmesi gerekiyordu oysa.

Yerini ve zamanını ondan daha iyi biliyordum.(Burak, 2009: p. 20).

The woman wants to complete herself with death and be free of the life she has. The double at the opposite window is her objet petit a, which is the disavowed desire of death, in this case. Her lost part, her lack stands at the opposite window, behind the curtain. Although the woman herself cannot dare to die, the double has courage to this. Mladen Dolar argues that the double stands for the hidden desires (Dolar, 1991: p.12). They are suppressed wishes and sometimes endless completion fantasies which are supposed to be substituted. Yet, what if they are not substituted, but followed and become true?

Lacan has a very practical formula to explain the desire. If the need is extracted from the demand, what is left is desire: Demand - Need = Desire. When an infant cries, what she is looking for is not only feeding, but also attention. Thus, the child demands feeding yet desires attention and love. In "Pencere", the curtain can be explained by depending on this formula. The curtain in "Pencere" hides the object a, namely the double, just like Parrhasius' painting. However, while Parrhasius' painting promises a fantasy, the curtain in "Pencere" seems to prevent the woman from reaching the objet petit a, namely her fantasy of dying. Actually, it reveals the lack and presents a way to reach it. The curtain can be seen as the concealer of the desire. The woman's demand is the death of her double, the woman's need is to leave that home and have a different life, and when the need is extracted from the demand, we are alone with the curtain as the concealer of desire. The curtain conceals the desire because it promises a different view from that which the narrator has. It gives a chance to the woman to fantasize about what is behind the curtain. The curtain belongs to the symbolic realm because it helps to cover the double and maintains the order. However, the curtain also symbolizes something related to the imaginary realm where the completion is possible. The woman has completion fantasies in the name of her suppressed desire of death as an object a. The woman transfers her death drive to the double and locates it behind the curtain. According to the contest between Zeuxis and Parrhasius, the woman is expected to reach her desire by trying to draw the curtain, and she is also supposed to realize the impossibility of getting the object a.

The uncanny haunts the nature of the story in the borderline between the curtain and the window. Nothing expected above becomes real because the curtain which is

supposed to hide the object a reveals it: the curtain has a hole. The curtain connotes the possibility of completion because of the hole that reveals a view of the double. At first, the narrator is aware of the fact that the double knows that it is observed. “ ‘Benim kendisini pencereden gözetlediğimi bildiği için bu oyuna mahsus kalktı,’ diye geçiriyorum içimden.”(Burak, 2009: p.17). After she closes the curtain, she makes a hole in the curtain in order to observe her without being seen. “...beni görmemesi için perdemin ortasına küçük bir delik açıp O’nu gözetliyorum.” (Burak, 2009: p. 18). Although she sees behind the curtain and observes her double, we can say that the curtain still provides her a basis to follow her desires and permits the woman to fantasize about the double and the double’s ideas. While the woman thinks of different ways of killing her double and dying, she comes across the gaze of the double. “In order for the mirror image to contain the object a, a wink or a nod is enough.” (Dolar, 1991: p.13). Lacan says that the gaze is the best presentation of the lack (Dolar, 1991, p.13). When one sees her image in the mirror, one can only come across the eyes, not the gaze. It creates anxiety because the object a is hidden in the gaze. The jubilation one wants to experience is embedded in the gaze of the image in the mirror. However, in order to stay in the symbolic realm, we are expected not to have it. But the woman in “Pencere” sees her gaze at the opposite window and loses her lack.

Sol gözünü görüyorum.

Tam perdedeki deliğin yuvarlağı kadar “Bu işi sen yapsan nasıl olur,” diyor. Düşmancasına bakıyor. “Ya cayarsa diyorum atlamaktan? Ya düş ise diyorum, kurduğum bunca şeyler, düzenliğim bozulur yıkılırım.”

Kadın gururla pencereye bakıp, “Ben varım,” diyor.(Burak, 2009: p. 19).

The curtain, which is expected to hide the object a, reveals it. The narrator and the double come across each other. Otto Rank says that, “There is nothing more uncanny than seeing one’s face accidentally in a mirror by moonlight.” The woman in “Pencere” not only comes across herself, but also sees the double’s gaze. She first sees the eye then recognizes the gaze that is full of animosity and pride. What she fantasized behind the curtain rises to the surface and stands in front of her. The woman becomes nervous. What if the double refrains from jumping out of the window? The double should die because when one sees, time is up. If the double does not die, the woman’s “order” is broken. It is not possible to go on living after seeing the double, especially

after seeing the gaze of the double because the woman actually reaches the object a. She loses her lack. She accomplishes her fantasy of completion. The double's prideful declaration, "I am here," can be seen as the manifestation of the lack of the support of the lack. The double actually announces that the object a is here, it is already revealed. And without the support of the lack, it is not possible to be in symbolic realm. After the death of her double, she dies.

The analysis on the support of the lack can be helpful in order to analyze social problems. It would be insufficient to analyze *Sahibinin Sesi* disregarding the importance of the establishment of the Turkish Republic. The readers of the play are the witnesses of a transition period from an "eastern" empire to a "western and modern" republic. The characters and plot are not constructed upon the facts of this period, but the transition period and problems arising from it take an important place. The double and its uncanny nature can be discussed in relation with the recently-established Turkish Republic, the transition period, and its expectations from the characters. The characters in *Sahibinin Sesi* provide a basis for this analysis because of their double identities. The characters who do not feel secure in the newly-established Turkish Republic have two identities. Bilal Bağana wants to have a respectable status in the Turkish Republic as he had in the Ottoman Empire as the son of a soldier. That prestigious status he wants to have in the recently-established republic is the object a that he can never reach. He usually fantasizes having a respectable status; he despises the other residents of the neighborhood, describing them as "common people." While he is nervous because of the policemen who came to his home questioning him about military service, Bilal Bağana talks to a policeman in his dream. He responds to the police's question of, "Is Bilal Bağana here?" by saying that, "Paşazadedir. Bu mahallede kimseyle konuşmaz, seviyesi buna müsait değil." (Burak, 2009: p. 29). He reports nearly everything he does in a day to the readers. Although he is a French teacher in a school, he never mentions his work. He goes to work to receive his salary. He explains that "Bu sabah çok erken kalktım... Üstümde bir ağırlık, 8.50 vapuru ile Mektebe gittim. Kânuni maaşım olan 49 lira 56 kuruşu aldım. ... Böylece bir hayli vakit kaybedildikten sonra..." (Burak, 2009: p. 37). It is obvious that going to work and dealing with work is seen as wasting time. He usually goes to the city and spends his time in bars or cafes because working is the routine of "common people." He is addicted to going to cafes.

ZEMBUL (*alaylı*): Gene kalktınız, nereye, gene kim bekliyor?

BİLAL (*ayakta, arkası Zembul'e dönük*): O benim bileceğim şey.

ZEMBUL: Gene hangi tendansana?

BİLAL (*aynı durumda*): Mulen Ruj'a ya da Garden Bar'a.

ZEMBUL: Siz başka bir şey bilmez misiniz? (Burak, 2009: p.22)

While he is talking to Zembul, he does not even look at her face. Bilal Bağana thinks that he is surrounded by the lowlifes who are not proper for the reputation stemming from his noble family (Burak, 2009: p. 39). He wants to maintain his old prestigious status in the new state. His desire of being a respectable citizen is hidden in Muzaffer Seza's identity. In order to reach the object a, Bilal Bağana becomes Muzaffer Seza, but he loses the support of the lack at this point. There is no possibility of becoming Muzaffer Seza for Bilal Bağana while he is alive. Muzaffer Seza is a dead man who lost his life in a gas explosion. It is not a coincidence that Bilal Bağana dies when he burns the neighborhood with gas. Bilal Bağana should die to reach object a. The lack of the support of the lack leads him to destruction. The multiple identities he created in order to protect himself from destruction kill him because the unattainable desire becomes available only by destruction. Bilal Bağana's double, in the end, becomes the uncanny harbinger of death while presenting him object a.

The non-Muslim characters in the play change their names to become acceptable citizens of the recently-established republic. The play takes place in 1931. The rising wave of anti-Semitism in Europe in the 1930s influenced Turkey. Some discriminative practices against non-Muslims have their basis in one of the founder premises of the Turkish Republic, nationalism. For example, non-Muslim citizens cannot be officers in state offices and they are not allowed to work in some businesses, sectors such as the jewelry trade. In the 1920s, although the bureaucrats of the state gave some positive declarations about Jewish citizens, *Tasvir-i Efkar* and *İleri*, which were very important newspapers of the time, published anti-Semitic articles. In 1927, a Jewish woman named Elza Niyego was killed by Osman Ragıp, a member of a very well-known family. Since Osman Ragıp was arrested and released in a very short time, the funeral turned into a protest where Jewish people rebelled against the discriminatory practices of state. After these events, the free movement rights of the Jewish people were

restricted. In 1928, the state initiated a campaign to force minorities to speak Turkish called “Vatandaş Türkçe Konuş.” Although the bureaucrats insisted that the state treated all its citizens equally, these events paved the way for the pogrom called “Trakya Olayları” in 1934. *Sahibinin Sesi* is a play that reflects such an atmosphere. Therefore, in order to protect themselves in such a violent atmosphere, Zembul and her relatives have to change their names to hide their Jewish identity. As Mladen Dolar says, the double can be used as a mechanism of insurance against destruction (Dolar, 1991: p. 12, 13). The characters create their own doubles, they multiply their identities to avoid destruction. Zembul becomes Sümbül, İda becomes Eda, Madam Furtuni turns into Madam Fırtına, Mösyö Verdu starts to be called Ziya Bey, and Lilika changes her name to Leyla. While Bilal Bağana and Zembul had a discussion because of Bilal’s double identity, Bilal Bağana argues that duplicity helps to gain.

BİLAL (*alaylı*): Hımmm... Şu mesele... Bilal değilim, kaç kere söyledim size, benim adım Muzaffer Seza... (*kalkar*)

ZEMBUL: Evet söylediniz, fakat bundan ne menfaatiniz olabilir?

BİLAL (*alaylı*): Çooook... Bir kere bu iş kazanç getirir... Niye öyle şaştınız? Ya da şaşar gibi yaptınız Sümbül Hanım? Biliyorsunuz ki sizin de iki adınız var... Zembul... Sümbül... Birinci adınız kayıp getirir, ikinci adınız kazanç getirir. Matmazel Zembul Allahanati, siz niye döndünüz?.. Niye Sümbül Hanım, Sümbül Hanımefendi oldunuz?..(Burak, 2009, p. 61)

Zembul becomes Sümbül. She multiplies herself against destruction. However, as Freud declares, the insurance against death turns into the uncanny harbinger of death in the end. It is right that Zembul cannot survive without the existence of Sümbül, yet at the same time Sümbül’s existence kills Zembul. Zembul can(not) become herself with her double. The new republic produces a completion fantasy, and the characters fall into the clutches of the completion fantasies of the new republic. The demands of this new order’s fantasy were different from the previous order’s fantasy. They fill in their deficient parts by creating doubles with Turkish names in order to be acceptable to the new order. The recently-established Turkish Republic, in this case, can be seen as the symbolic order where all the citizens should obey the rules of the father, namely the state. Therefore, the state does not only demand the completion of deficiencies, but also wants its citizens to have some lacks. As Lacan says it is impossible to enter the

symbolic realm without having a lost part (Dolar, 1991: p.12). The new republic demands only one identity that absolutely must be Turkish. Since it is impossible for Zembul, İda, and Mösyö Verdu to have only one Turkish identity, they try to enter this symbolic era with their doubles. At the time they think that they saved themselves from destruction with their doubles, they unwittingly invite the uncanny harbinger of death. The new republic wants them to leave their non-Muslim identities, the state wants to see the non-Muslim or Ottoman attachments (as happened in Bilal Bağana's situation) in the section of lacks. Zembul, Bilal, Lilika, and Furtuni are only acceptable to this new order with their lacks consisting of their first identities. As Bilal Bağana tells Zembul, the first identity makes you lose but the second helps you to gain. The problem starts when they begin to gain too much. Neither Bilal nor Zembul leaves their first identities. Along with their doubles, namely with their too-much gains and lacklessness, they become unable to enter the symbolic realm. Additionally, they cannot leave their acceptable identities and yearn for the old order by embracing their first and rejected identities. They stand in the borderline with their doubles inviting the uncanny harbinger of death.

“Büyük Kuş” is another story where one can analyze the double as the container of object a. The woman in “Büyük Kuş” looks for the object a. She looks for her double; she thinks that she killed it. The double is seen as a hawk, a shadow with black wings, and a man throughout the story. In the beginning, she searches everywhere in the house and cannot find it. “Aradığı şeyin o olmadığını anlayarak, bir aradığından başka bir aradığına geçerek ‘O nerde?’”(Burak, 2009: p. 43). She can never find out even what she is looking for. The desire and fantasies constructed for completion and object a are endless and unattainable. She looks for her double throughout the story because the object a is hidden in her double (Dolar, 1991: p.13). She saw her double in her old days, and she is aware of the fact that time is up for her. When one sees her double, time is up (Dolar, 1991: p.14). Therefore, when she searches for her double and asks herself whether she is a killer or not, she, indeed, questions whether the time to die has come or not. At the end of the story, she realizes that Kent is her double and what she is looking for. From the beginning to the end of the story, the woman never stops following Kent. Although she does not know it, she actually goes after the object a. Lacan says that the object a is hidden in a nod or a wink of the double (Dolar, 1991: p.13). The woman gives her scarf as a present to Kent. At the end of the story, object a can be detected in

the form of the scarf. When the woman realizes that the Kent has the thing she is looking for and that he is the double, she also understands that time is up. Kent chokes the woman with the scarf. She gains the object a when she finds the double. However, the double immediately turns into the harbinger of death because she gains too much with the object a she has.

2.5 Conclusion

The uncanny can be basically defined as the “return of the repressed.” The double is one of the most important things among what is repressed and has returned. The double is the return of the suppressed in the view of the subject. The uncanny can be detected in Sevim Burak’s works through the appearance of the double of the characters. The double is the disavowed desires of the characters which they cannot explicitly say or even think of. The double stands as the object a which the characters can never attain, and the double is there to complete the Lacanian lack. The double is not a stranger for the characters because it is the sum of the forbidden desires that the characters have kept inside for years. One can analyze these features of the double in Burak’s works through the story of the characters; additionally, Burak’s works indicate the uncanny dilemma and crisis which is created because of certain roles that the society attributes to the characters. The gender roles attributed to the woman in “Pencere” or the citizenship patterns imposed on Jewish people in *Sahibinin Sesi* are presented within a picture surrounded by the uncanny. These roles created by the society are uncanny because these roles always demand the suppression of the old or desired roles or wishes. Yet, the desired or old ones do not stay in the past. They hide in the depths of the characters and come back as their doubles. The double is the coping strategy of the characters that want to oppose the system yet cannot dare to do so. Therefore, until the characters accept the roles attributed to them by the system, they are obliged to live in an uncanny world with their doubles. Burak’s characters reject the acceptance of the system and resign themselves to the uncanny arms of the double and destroy themselves.

CHAPTER III

CRISIS OF BOUNDARIES: TRANSGRESSION OF THE LINES BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH OR ANIMACY AND INANIMACY

3.1 Introduction

The uncanny causes frightening and dreadful feelings, yet this is not enough to define it as Freud also confirms. This “incomprehensible” feeling surrounds us in very ordinary situations, and it transforms these ordinary and proper conditions into improper states. Since the uncanny is the recurrence of something repressed, it is very normal that the repressed is familiar. This working of the uncanny as something repressed that recurs is related, for Freud, to familiarity. Another important point that he strongly emphasizes is that the uncanny occurs at the moment when something that is usually familiar becomes unfamiliar, or vice versa, that is when something quite unfamiliar becomes all of a sudden very familiar. (Freud, 2007, p. 241, 219). This characteristic of the uncanny underlined by Freud leads Nicholas Royle, one of the most important scholars who studied the concept of the uncanny, to define it as “strange, ghostly, mysterious, supernatural” in order to create an impression about the uncanny in readers’ minds (Royle, 2003: p. 1).

Some situations are used as examples of these “strange, ghostly, mysterious, supernatural” conditions by Freud such as dead bodies, the return of the dead, and the the fear of being buried alive. Although these states are classified as uncanny by Freud in “The Uncanny”, he does not make any explanations as to why these cause the uncanny except by relating the fear of being buried alive to the intra-uterine fantasy.

Up to this point, it is clear that Freud indicates that death and life should have clear-cut borders, otherwise the uncanny arises as the conclusion of a crisis emanating from the blurring of the lines. Being buried alive or the return of the dead, indeed, cause crises because they erase a very certain line between living and dead creatures. These dreadful situations distort the proper order of life. It is unusual to come face to face with someone already dead, and it is not normal for us to see someone buried alive. Therefore, it is normal to recognize someone as either dead or alive in the proper order of the life. However, once the line between death and life is eradicated, it is impossible to decide whether one is dead or alive. So, the uncanny, by juxtaposing the familiar and

the unfamiliar, by revealing that the supposed extraordinary is beneath the ordinary, becomes itself a crisis. It is this very nature and working of the uncanny that drive Royle to define the uncanny as “a crisis of the proper” (Royle, 2003: p.1). For Royle, the frightening, the ghostly, and the haunted are critical features in order to understand what the uncanny is and how it operates. Yet, they are not enough; the uncanny always and constantly refers to a crisis, or as Royle puts it, a crisis of the proper, a crisis of the natural (Royle, 2003: p.1).

Sevim Burak’s characters in *Sahibinin Sesi*, “Afrika Dansı”, and *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* can be analyzed through this eradication of the lines between life and death. Whereas the characters cannot be classified as dead or alive in *Sahibinin Sesi* and *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar*, the narrator turns herself into a creature between life and death in “Afrika Dansı.” Therefore, it is possible to declare that these characters cause the uncanny due to their existence between life and death.

“Afrika Dansı” includes a speaking machine as a character and carries the transgression one step further. The story brings the difference between animacy and inanimacy into question with the speaking and feeling machine. Although this is reminiscent of Jentsch’s theory called “intellectual uncertainty”, this situation can also be regarded as the transgression of the boundaries as well. Jentsch argues that if something does not position itself in one definite position as animate or inanimate, it causes intellectual uncertainty and so produces the uncanny (Jentsch, 1906: p.8-9). It is reasonable yet insufficient to conclude this analysis with intellectual uncertainty. The machine displays both animate and inanimate features, and it does more than create the uncertainty. It distorts the proper order where the animate and inanimate is determined definitely by displaying features belonging to both living and inanimate creatures. All these belongings cause “lack of the support of the lack” in Lacanian terms, and the uncanny occurs due to “gaining too much” (Dolar, 199: p. 12).

In this chapter, I will focus on how these crossed lines function in the books and create an uncanny atmosphere throughout her stories and plays. Moreover, I will follow the outlines of two themes in order to depict the uncanny violation of the lines between the proper and improper, between the animate and the inanimate, and between life and death.

3.2 Is it human or a machine?

In light of the interpretation of the writing style of Sevim Burak, the situations and existence of the characters in “Afrika Dansı” are very critical. “Afrika Dansı” is a story narrated by a woman who stays in Saint Nicholas Hospital in Lagos, Nigeria. The woman mostly deals with a machine which tries to treat her. She is in contact with some tribes and churches present in Lagos. She is sick because of an act of negligence in her childhood; there is a problem with her heart due to a wet swimsuit she did not take off when she was a child. The swimsuit usually appears in the story as the sign of old, repressed memories.⁴

The very first lines of “Afrika Dansı” disclose a bewilderment regarding the machine-human duality. The narrator wants to describe, it yet she cannot because she cannot be sure whether she is faced with a machine or a human.

İTHAL MALI

BİR MAKİNE

HEM DE DEĞİL

ÇÜNKÜ

KONUŞUYOR (Burak, 2012: p. 7)

Mdalen Dolar’s analysis of von Kempelen’s speaking machine about the paradox of human and machine stands on a very critical point in order to interpret the machine and human uncertainty in “Afrika Dansı.” Mladen Dolar explains that a very similar story from nearly 200 years ago referring to Benjamin’s very famous text called “Thesis on the Philosophy of History.” Benjamin focuses on a chess automaton which is constructed by Wolfgang von Kempelen in order to elaborate his ideas. Mdalen Dolar draws attention to this chess automaton and its constructor, von Kempelen. Wolfgang von Kempelen is a man famous for his passion for constructing automatons, and there is more than the chess automaton Benjamin makes use of. As Mdalen Dolar states, his biggest passion is to construct “a speaking machine which can imitate human speech” (Dolar: 2006, p.7). The Royal Academy of Sciences in St.Petersburg runs a contest for

⁴Some autobiographical information helps us to interpret the story. Sevim Burak’s wet swimsuit is a very famous story which is also seen as the source of her heart problem. In addition, Sevim Burak stayed in Lagos in Saint Nicholas Hospital, and the story can be interpreted as Burak’s lifestory. So the wet swimsuit stands as the symbol of the childhood memories which affect current problems and situations.

constructing a speaking machine in 1780. Von Kempelen is one of the inventors who attend the competition. “The machine was composed of a wooden box which was connected on one side to bellows (rather like bagpipes) which served as ‘lungs,’ and on the other to a rubber funnel which served as ‘mouth,’ and had to be modified by hand while speaking.” (Dolar: 2006 p.7). Moreover, although von Kempelen rejects revealing the secret of the chess automaton, he describes the directives of the theoretical and the practical premises of the speaking machine in detail (Dolar, 2006: p.7). Therefore, unlike the chess automaton, there is nothing hidden about the construction and operation of the speaking machine.

The uncanny haunts the speaking machine not because it “reveals something that ought to be hidden” as Schelling says, but rather the uncanny captures the machine because of its lack of lacks. Someone who saw the speaking machine expresses his feelings saying

You cannot believe my dear friend, how we were all seized by a magic feeling when we first heard the human voice and human speech which apparently didn’t come from a human mouth. We looked at each other in silence and consternation and we all had goose-flesh produced by horror in the first moments (Dolar, 2006: p. 7).

The machine is magical; they felt horror and had goose-flesh. These words directly connote Freud’s definition of the uncanny. “It is undoubtedly related to what is *frightening*-to what arouses *dread* and *horror* [...]” (Freud, 1919: p. 219). So, how do these feelings of horror cause the uncanny? Is it because something hidden or repressed has recurred as Freud argues is the source of the uncanny? Or is it because of the intellectual uncertainty people experienced about whether the “speaking machine” is animate or inanimate as Jentsch suggests? The machine can imitate human speech through mechanical means. The guidelines for starting the machine were not hidden. Therefore, nothing repressed or hidden recurred and created the uncanny. Since the guidelines were available for everyone and since everybody could see how the machine works, it is verifiable that the speaking machine is a machine. It is not animate. So, it is not reasonable to argue that this is an intellectual uncertainty. Mladen Dolar argues that the uncanny is created because of the “lack of the lack.” “[...] the speaking machine was as mechanical as possible: it did not try to hide its mechanical nature; on the

contrary, it exhibited it conspicuously” (Dolar, 2006: p. 9). The speaking machine as a non-human mechanism claims that it can produce a human effect. The machine maintains its claim of producing a human effect without leaving its mechanical nature. Although something is supposed to be either animate (human) or inanimate (machine), the speaking machine retains both its mechanical and human natures. The lack belongs to neither side since the machine still works mechanically but creates a human effect. If something is expected to be a machine, it should lack the animate part and a human effect. On the contrary, the human should not behave in a mechanical way; otherwise s/he loses her cogency of human effect. The speaking machine does not cease any of these functions; it mechanically creates a human effect. The uncanny is operative from the moment the speaking machine lacks the lack. It should lack a human effect because no machine is supposed to create a human effect. Moreover, it produces the human effect through mechanical means.

Dolar’s analysis of von Kempelen’s speaking machine provides a basis for interpreting the relation between the narrator and the machine in “Afrika Dansı.” Since the machine in the story is classified exactly neither as a machine nor as a human, one can analyze the machine in “Afrika Dansı” through the same perspective Dolar developed. So, what does the machine in “Afrika Dansı” lack?

Dolar’s comments about von Kempelen’s speaking machine can provide an opening for analyzing the machine in “Afrika Dansı” because the machine comprises both animate and inanimate features, especially due to its speaking capacity. The narrator in “Afrika Dansı” cannot be sure whether the thing she sees is a machine or not because it speaks. She says “[...] BİR MAKİNE HEM DE DEĞİL ÇÜNKÜ KONUŞUYOR [...].” (Burak, 2012: p.7). However, the machine confuses the one who is faced with it, and its speech is uninterrupted. It is impossible to stop it because “this is a scientific fact.” The machine has created its own voice; it does not need any help from the outside to form its voice. It speaks from exactly 7.30 am until 5.00 pm, corresponding to the ordinary working hours of common people. The sentences constructed by the machine are not consistent; it orders people to fulfill two opposite actions. In addition, it is not easy to catch the points the machine talks about while it is speaking. The machine does not know the exact meanings of its words. It says:

NEFES ALMAYIN

NEFES ALMAYIN (Nefes almayın dedikten sonra)

SOLUK ALMAYIN (Aynı şey oysa/ yanlış/ haysiyet kırıcı) (Burak, 2012: p.8).

The machine cannot figure out that both “nefes almayın” and “soluk almayın” mean “do not breathe.” Then it is “insulting” for a person to listen to and obey its orders because it is obvious that it speaks in a very automatic and mechanic way without thinking, yet people who have the capacity to think are expected to obey its orders. Up to this point, the machine looks like a mechanical object, yet it has some features which are mostly associated with human beings. Since it commands the “wellbeing of the narrator” and asks some specific questions about the narrator’s life in order to find the cause of the illness she has, the machine crosses its mechanical borders about speaking. As mentioned above, the machine does not have a grasp of the words’ meaning. However, interestingly, the machine asks questions about the wet swimsuit the narrator wore when she was a child and wonders who the first person was to give her a cigarette. The machine, supposedly a mechanical device because it does not know the meanings of the words, suddenly asks questions about the life story of the woman as if it knows all her biographical details, like her first cigarette and the wet swimsuit. Therefore, the narrator hesitates about whether it is alive or not. She is also not sure whether the machine works for her wellbeing or not because the machine usually mistreats all the people in the hospital. As quoted above, it commands in a very harsh way and actually asks for her not to breath. The narrator says:

BİR ÖLDÜRÜCÜ MÜ

BİR KORUYUCU MU

BİR BAŞKALDIRICI MI

DURMADAN KONUŞUYOR

MAKİNELİĞİNİ Mİ BELİRLİYOR BİZE

YOKSA RUHU VAR MI

BİR RUHU OLABİLECEĞİNİN İŞARETİ Mİ BU

SÖZLER (Burak, 2012: p.8).

The narrator cannot be sure that the words it speaks are the signs of its animate nature or the evidence of its mechanical structure. It speaks like a machine, repeats

words or their synonyms, speaks only between certain time periods, and cannot be silenced. It is like some ordinary automaton which ordinary people come across in everyday life. The difference lies in its manners. It has some animate features like a human. It visits the narrator, asks her about her life, and gives some advice. Moreover, they get closer. The machine behaves as if it has some emotions.

.../sanki aramızda ölümlü fısıltılar arasında yaklaşıyor bana/

NEFES ALMAYIN

YERİNE

NEFES ALIN

KIPIRDAMAYIN

YERİNE

KIPIRDAYIN

KOŞUN

ZIPLAYIN

ARKASINDA DERİN BİR BOŞLUK

BANA YAKLAŞIYOR

KENDİNİZİ BIRAKIN

RAHAT EDİN

ELBİSENİZİ ÇIKARIN

İSTERSENİZ ÇIKARMAYIN (Ben size ille de çıplak olun demedim ki)

SİZE SOYUNUN DEMEDİM

SARGILARINIZI ÇIKARMAMALISINIZ

ÇIKARMAYIN DAHA

SARGILARINIZI

...

MAKİNE ACELE YÜRÜYOR YATAĞIMIN

KENARINA İLİŞİYOR

HER DAKİKA KALKACAKMIŞ GİBİ

HEYECANLANIYORUM

...

KORKMAYIN
GÖZLERİNİZİ KAPAYIN
KALBİNİZİ VERİN BANA
ŞİMDİ OLMAZSA BİR DAHA OLMAZ
MAKİNE KENDİNİ BANA BIRAKIYOR
BELKİ DE OLMAZ

“O’nu kucaklayayım/seveyim diye/öptürüyor kendini tepeden
tırnağa/HIŞIRDIYOR diyor/korkuyorum/biraz sonra gene:
(Burak, 2012: p.14, 15, 16).

The narrator falls in love with the machine, especially due to the machine’s human and protective nature. The machine, as quoted above, pays attention to the narrator’s illness. The machine tries to convince the narrator to quit some of her habits. The narrator hides some pieces of paper under her bed or attaches the pieces of paper to the curtain with needles. The machine is anxious for her and asks the narrator whether the needles on the paper which she puts around her bed hurt her. Then, the narrator thinks that the machine behaves like a genuine lover, “Yatağımızın altındaki kağıtları çıkarınız lütfen diye çarşafı üstünden atıp yataktan inerek (benim yüzümden hayal kırıklığına uğramış bir âşıkmiş sanki gerçekmiş gibi karyolanın altında çoraplarını arıyor) [...]” (Burak, 2012: p. 17-18). After that the machine comes and sits near the narrator in the bed. The machine lets the narrator kiss it and suggests that she lend her heart to it. The machine does not only function for the wellbeing of the narrator but also considers the narrator’s health situation. It says that, “...görüyorsunuz ki diye konuşuyor/size kurtarmaya çalışıyorum/ sizinle ilgileniyorum/ size mutlu etmeye ve yardım etmeye çalışıyorum/ ama siz bunu engelliyorsunuz/benim elimden gelen bu...” (Burak, 2012: p.18). Rather than performing its functions as a machine in a hospital, the machine tries to help the narrator; it makes an effort to please the woman. The machine tries to rescue the narrator from a problematic and improper situation. The words used by the machine have a critical importance. It *endeavors* to help, *pays attention* to the woman, *helps* her, and *pleases* her. Moreover, it reproaches the woman because of her resistance to the treatment. The machine does not function in a mechanical way; it behaves like a human who wants to make a future for the one whom it loves.

Although it is normally expected that the machine should function mechanically, the machine in “Afrika Dansı” is much too life-like to be a machine. It feels, it expresses its emotions, it is affectionate, and the narrator sometimes feels love for it. One other feature of the machine is that it is a superior in the hospital. It usually orders the patients to fulfill their duties. For this, the narrator mostly feels fear and hate for the machine because of its harsh attitudes. Therefore, the machine is so animate that the narrator can feel both love and hate together depending on its variable mood. Thus, the machine seems to have varying moods. Although it is supposed to be vice versa, the machine is too life-like, and the people in the hospital are too obedient. The machine tells the patients what to do in order to treat them, yet its attitude is not only too human, but also too imperious.

GELİN
GELİN
GELİN
İLERLEYİN
TEK
TEK
İLERLEYİN
GELİN
HA ŞÖYLE
BAZEN DE
HEPİNİZ TOPLANIN
TOP OLUN
TOP OLUN
BEN YUT DİYİNCE YUTUN (Burak, 2012: p.9)

The machine asks the patients to come to a room to investigate their illnesses. During the treatment, it goes on ordering them in a very severe tone.

BEN BAĞIRINCA YUTUN
YAVAŞ
YAVAŞ
YUTUN

HIZLI HIZLI YUTMAYIN DEDİM SİZE
YUTKUNMAYIN
ŞİMDİ YUTUN
YUTUN DİYORUM SİZE
BEN BAĞIRINCA YUTUN
BOYUNA EMREDİYOR
DURUN
KIPIRDAMAYIN DEDİM SİZE
MAKİNE DEN GELEN SES BU
KİME SÖYLÜYOR
BÜTÜN UMUTSUZ İNSANLARA
ONLARIN KADERLERİNİ BİLİYOR (Niçin sabahtan akşama kadar/sözde
onların iyiliği için/bakalım iyiliği için mi/bakalım öyle mi) (Burak, 2012: p.8).

The machine is animated and dominant enough to command people; on the contrary, the people in the hospital are too inert to be alive. The patients follow the instructions from the machine and never disobey its orders. The narrator sometimes feels like acting against the machine, yet she still continues to do what it says. For example, although she does not want to give up hanging pieces of paper from the curtain in her room, when the machine comes to visit her, she hides the papers under her bed. Thus, the narrator can sometimes be seen to be like the obedient patients. Nevertheless, it is critical to note how the machine behaves in a very lively way despite its mechanical property. Haraway's very famous article "Cyborg Manifest" can be very helpful in order to understand this duality. Haraway states that machines were not considered self-motivating, self-designing, and autonomous mechanisms before the late twentieth century. However, the line between artificial and natural is blurred; the distinctions between a human and machine are mostly erased (Haraway, 199: p.152). The way the machine itself and its relations with humans are depicted in "Afrika Dansı" is very similar to Haraway's argument. The machine is not only a mechanical object; it can move, it is autonomous, it speaks, and it manages people. Moreover, the other side of the blurred line shows us that although people are expected to be more self-motivated, autonomous, and more reliant on their minds than their bodies, in "Afrika Dansı" patients obey the rules of the machine by only using their bodies. Furthermore, the machine seems to be using its mind when it comments on illnesses, commands the

patients as to treatment, or makes an effort to cure the narrator. Therefore, as Haraway says, “Our machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves frighteningly inert.”(Haraway, 1991: p.152). The disturbingly lively machine and frighteningly inert people cause an uncanny situation because they exceed the ordinary and proper boundaries drawn and allowed for machines and people.

The machine blurs the line between the animate and inanimate because not only is it “disturbingly lively”, but also the features it displays as a machine or as a human being are unclassifiable. It does not position itself in one certain situation. The machine sometimes behaves as if it is an animate creature, but it also sometimes functions as if it is totally a machine. Since it is impossible to decide whether it is animate or not, the “intellectual uncertainty” creates an uncanny effect as Jentsch argues. In the beginning of the story, the narrator cannot be sure that the machine is animate or not because while it performs certain lively gestures, it also displays mechanical properties. The narrator asserts that she cannot decide whether it is a machine or not because of its speaking abilities.

İTHAL MALI

BİR MAKİNE

HEM DE DEĞİL

ÇÜNKÜ

KONUŞUYOR

FAKAT KENDİ SÖYLEDİĞİ KELİMELERİ KENDİSİNİN DE BİLDİĞİ

YOK (Burak, 2012: p. 7)

The machine usually speaks in the imperative mood. This might be because it does not know any other mood in the language. As a machine, it might be sufficient to have certain moods in order to fulfill its duty like von Kempelen’s machine. Von Kempelen’s speaking machine only speaks three languages and can only speak to praise the king and declare its love. (Dolar, 2006: p.8). This machine in “Afrika Dansı” mostly speaks to comment on illnesses and to command the patients apart from its dialogue with the narrator. The narrator says that:

Maddi varlığından dışına ancak önceden hesaplanmış kelimeleri söyleyerek taşıyabiliyor / çıkabiliyor/bu kelimelere çıkmak denilebilirse eğer/çıkarsa da onu yakalamak imkânsız /çünkü sözlerinin hepsi aynı değil/birbirini tutan bir tarafı yok/cümleleri düz değil/eğri büğrü bir yontu gibi (Burak, 2012: p.7).

Secondly, the machine can only speak between certain hours.

SABAH SAAT 7.30'DA BAŞLIYOR KONUŞMAYA

17.00'YE KADAR (Burak, 2012: p.7)

Since the machine speaks within working hours, it might be described as automatic rather than autonomous. There is no hope to quiet it between this certain time period because this is a scientific fact, “Susturun şunu denemez/kimse susturamaz onu genelde bilimsel bir kural bu çünkü/EZBERCİ” (Burak, 2012: p.7). The machine is the addressee of the scientific comments about the illness of the narrator. When the narrator is in love with Beckett and talks to him, the machine repeats its scientific inferences continually because it is impossible to silence it between certain intervals. Furthermore, the machine does not perceive emotions and goes on speaking while the narrator tries to express her love to Beckett.

TROMBO FİLİBİT

AL VE OLEV ÖDEM

KALBİN OKSÜLTASYONU

MEZO KARDİAK BÖLGE (Burak, 2012: p.22)

AORT ODAĞINDA 1 / 4 EJEKSİYON ÜFÜRÜMÜ

AZ.P.Z. DEN SERT 1'İNCİ SES ÇİFTLEŞMESİ (Burak, 2012: p.23).

The machine's reaction to death and dead people in the hospital is a very important sign in interpreting the animate and inanimate properties of the machine. The machine can be seen as an immortal creature because of its endless life that is supposed to continue in the hospital. However, it is impossible to decide whether it has a life or not. When the machine and the narrator discuss the pieces of paper hanging on the curtain, the machine says that:

BEN HÜRÜM

BENİ KAĞIDA İĞNELEYEMEZSİNİZ (Burak, 2012: p.18).

Before this statement, the machine invites the narrator to an ordinary and –maybe mechanical- life it has. Its only condition is to leave the papers she hangs on the curtains and the needles. When the narrator disagrees with the machine, it claims that it is free because the narrator cannot hang it to the curtains with needles. Then narrator states that the machine is not free because it will stay in the hospital forever and keep repeating the same words while she is supposed to leave the hospital in two or three months. “[...] şu hastaneden kurtulmak için/ anlıyorsunuz ya/iki üç ay sizinle ilişkimiz/ biliyorsunuz ben üç ay sonra kurtuluyorum/ama siz hastanede kalacaksınız ömrünüz boyunca hür değilsiniz [...]” (Burak, 2012: p.18). The immortal machine’s destiny is to stay in the hospital by repeating the same words while picking up the dead bodies. The narrator is not sure whether the machine feels anything for the dead. “[...] her gün yarın ölecek hastaların suratına bakıp sevineceksiniz/ kim bilir/ belki de ilk önce siz üzülürsünüz [...]” (Burak, 2012: p.18). When the machine collects the dead bodies in the hospital, it does not feel anything. The machine asks the caretaker in the hospital in a very calm and insensitive mood, “Are there more corpses?” This is a routine chore for the machine.

Makine soracak hademeye

Daha ceset var mı

Evet

O da torbaya (Kimse görmesin üzülür) diye bir torbaya koyacak/ o da torbaya girecek onların ayakkabıları plastikten/ onu da ayrı torbaya koyacak/ cesetle aynı torbaya koymayacak

Radyoloji iskeletine sorun kimse var mı

Evet (Torbaya koyun)

(Kimse görmesin üzülür)

Röntgen odasına bakın

Evet (Torbaya koyun) O da torbaya girecek/ayakkabılarını da ayrı torbaya koyacak/ cesetle aynı torbaya koyulmayacak/ kimse görmesin üzülür (Burak, 2012: p. 26).

The machine cannot perceive death; it only fulfills its duty by collecting the dead bodies. In fact, death causes so many complicated feelings for the living ones. The only emotion the machine can see is sorrow. Maybe this is because death is mostly associated with grief, sadness, etc. However, the narrator says that death is a way out, it is a salvation. “[...] bir kiři öldü mü bir sevinç/ bir kiři öldü mü bir ferahlama duyduğunuz olmuştur değil mi/ kötüye yorumlamayın beni sakın/bilirsiniz hastaneleri/bir kiři öldü mü bir kurtuluş/ iki kiři öldü mü iki kurtuluş [...]” (Burak, 2012: p. 18). The machine, due to its mechanical nature, cannot feel this complicated tension between salvation, pleasure, and death, so it hides the corpses very fast without showing them to the other patients in order not to make them sad. The machine cannot see these complex emotions because it is immortal. Only the ones who have the possibility of dying can perceive how death can be a way out.

The machine creates the uncanny effect because neither the narrator nor the reader can be sure whether it is alive or not. As Ernst Jentsch puts it, this intellectual uncertainty causes the uncanny (Jentsch, 1906: p.8-9). It is crucial to see the causes of this intellectual uncertainty in order to understand the causes of the uncanny effect. It is very difficult to locate the machine in either the animate or inanimate world. Since the rules of order teach us that the borders should be clear-cut, the machine’s position between the lines of animate or inanimate is obviously a challenge to the order. As Mladen Dolar states referring to Lacanian lack, it lacks the support of the lack (Dolar, 2006: p.11). With the emotions it expresses while talking to the narrator and the human quality of its speaking, the machine has too much to be a machine. The machine is much too animated to be a machine but also much too mechanical to be a living creature with its limited conjugations, words, and orders. So with its anomalies for proper orders, it stays between the animate and inanimate world, blurs the sharp border between them, and causes the uncanny.

3.3 Between life and death

Life and death are concepts that should be distinguished clearly. The eradication of the line between life and death can cause the uncanny. Only death, dead people, and the return of the dead are marked as the sources of the uncanny in “The Uncanny” by Freud. He states that, “Many people experience the feeling in the highest degree in

relation to death and dead bodies, to the return of the dead, and to spirits and ghosts” (Freud, 2007: p.241). For Freud, issues about death are uncanny because of the “strength of our original emotional reaction to death” or “the insufficiency of our scientific knowledge about it” (Freud, 2007: p.242). He argues that although one overcomes her original emotional reactions by obtaining scientific knowledge about death, one can still be frightened because of the repressed nature of these original emotions. When the repressed is returned, the uncanny immediately shows itself.

Death, dead people and the return of the dead are all connoted with fear, mystery, and dread. Yet, as Freud declares, there is something more dreadful than death: being buried alive. “To some people the idea of being buried alive by mistake is the most uncanny thing of all.” (Freud, 2007: p. 244). Freud makes an analogy between the womb and the tomb and sees the roots of the fear of being buried alive in another fantasy, that is, intrauterine existence. Although the female genitalia are very *heimlich* due to birth and life before birth, it becomes *unheimlich* after birth. Thus, Freud argues that since the female genitalia which used to be once familiar become all of a sudden unfamiliar after the delivery, the female genitalia is uncanny. (Freud, 2007: p.245). Although Freud presents arguments stated above on the uncanniness of dead people, death, the return of the dead, and being buried alive, Nicholas Royle argues that Freud does not provide a sufficient explanation for the uncanniness of these situations. Royle suggests that Freud’s argument on the causes of the uncanniness of death, the return of the dead, dead people, and being buried alive is not satisfactory (Royle, 2006: p.143).

Drawing attention to the insufficiency of Freud’s explanations, Nicholas Royle invites us to read Freud’s own initial sentence about the fear of being buried alive and stresses a very critical issue. He argues that the English translation of the sentence has missing parts. Royle states that James Strachey’s translation, which is “To some people the idea of being buried alive by mistake is the most uncanny thing of all.” mostly focuses on the words “by mistake.” This translation leads the reader to think that being buried alive is uncanny because it happened “by mistake.” The alternative translation proposed by Royle for the same sentence is as follows: “Some people would regard as the crowning instance of uncanniness the idea of being buried because ostensibly dead” (Royle, 2006: p. 143). Rather than Strachey’s focus on “by mistake” in his translation, Royle emphasizes the significance of the state of “ostensibly dead”. According to Royle, the uncanniness emerges from “not because you are dead but because you

appear to be dead. It is a matter of ostensibly or being seemingly dead [*scheintot*], as if in suspended animation” (Royle, 2006: p. 143).

Sahibinin Sesi provides a very good basis in order to discuss Royle’s emphasis on the “ostensibly dead” position about the fear of being buried alive. Bilal Bağana, the main protagonist, has a sick father, Faik Paşa, who instructs that he does not want to be buried till three days pass after his death because the most fearful thing for Bağana’s father is to arise from the dead after he is buried. When Bilal Bağana is informed that his father is seriously ill, he arrives at his father’s home. After the death of his father, Bilal Bağana immediately wants to call a doctor. However, Azize, the servant, reminds Bilal Bağana of the anxiety his father had.

BİLAL (*Azize’ye emir biçiminde devam eder*): Şimdi de doktoru çağır ama çabuk olsun... Hemen Belediye Doktoru’na git.

AZİZE (*ağlayarak yalvarır*): Jak Barbut’a gideyim efendim, babanız daima Jak barbut’u isterdi... Bu gün de Jak Barbut’u istediğine eminim.

BİLAL: Senin aklın ermez, Belediye Doktoru’nu çağır o kadar... Bir dakika, dur... Defin ruhsatını da hazırlasın... Dur gitme, defin ruhsatını da yanında getirsin, burada tamamlar... Söylediğimi unutma...

AZİZE (*hayretle*): Defin ruhsatını mı? Acelesi ne? Dilim varmaz bunu söylemeye, nasıl söylerim ben? (*Hıçkırır*)

BİLAL: İşin kanuni kısmı bitsin, sonra düşünürüz haydi durma.

AZİZE (*ağlayarak diretir*): Babanız üç gün beni yatağında bırakın, üç gün sonra kaldırım derlerdi.

BİLAL (*öfkeyle*): Gene mi o lakırdı?

AZİZE (*ayaklarına kapanır*): Verin elinizi ayağınızı öpeyim, verin öpeyim ama bırakın üç gün evde kalsın, babanızın dediği olsun, en korktuğu ölmeden gömülmekti... Üç gün beni evimde, yatağında bırakın, diye bana vasiyet etmişti.

BİLAL: Bu lakırdıyı kes.

AZİZE: Babanızın hiç mi hatırı yok? (*Tekrar ayaklarına kapanır.*) Babanız toprağa gömüldükten sonra dirilmekten korkardı. (Burak, 2008: p.40-41).

Up to this point, Bilal Bađana does not take his father's anxiety of being buried alive as serious. Azize might be considered as the only person who believes in Faik Pařa's anxiety yet Azize, actually, behaves as someone who is respectful to the last words of the dead person. Later on, after the Belediye Doktoru certifies that the father is dead, Bilal Bađana starts observing the dead body of his father. Suddenly, Bilal Bađana notices that his father is breathing.

BİLAL: Azizeeee! (*Azize el pençe girer.*)

AZİZE: Buyrunuz efendim.

BİLAL: Őuraya bak, nefes alıyor.

AZİZE (*bakmadan ađlar*): Ben size söylemedim mi Bilal Beyefendi, üç gün evde kalsın demedim mi?.. Ahh, ahh işte Beyefendi'nin dediđi çıktı... Ne kadar haklıymış... Ne kadar haklıymış...

BİLAL (*korku ile, yavaş sesle*): Susss... Bađırma, kimse duymasın... Bak, bak babamın ađzının kenarındaki tükürüğü oynuyor mu oynamıyor mu?... Eđil, eđil Őimdi bak... Sabun köpüğüne benzeyen Őeyi görüyor musun? Kımıldıyor.

AZİZE: Görüyorum, görüyorum Beyefendi hazretleri sađ, çok Őükür ölmemiş...
(Burak, 2008: p. 41-42).

Bilal Bađana's father, Faik Pařa, whose death is confirmed by the Belediye doktoru and who has been lying on a bed seemingly dead, breathes. Faik Pařa's anxiety of being buried alive is becoming true. Faik Pařa's situation fits very well in Royle's remark on the state of being ostensibly dead. Although the Belediye Doktoru confirms that Faik Pařa is dead, Bilal Bađana and Azize believe that he is ostensibly dead because of the movement of the saliva near his mouth due to breathing. Afterwards, Bilal Bađana calls Jak Barbut who is the old and reliable doctor of the family. The very interesting part begins after the arrival of Jak Barbut. Jak Barbut examines Faik Pařa, and he also affirms that Bađana's father is dead. When Bilal Bađana asks him the reason for the breathing, Jak Barbut answers that one should not begrudge breathing to dead people.

BİLAL (*merakla*): Demek babam sizlere ömür?

Dr. JAK: Ona Őüpheniz olmasın. Öleli iki saat olmuş.

BİLAL: Nefes alıyor, nasıl olur?

Dr. JAK (*sempatik ve şakacı bir adam tavrıyla*): Tabii alacak, ölüler de nefes alabilirler... Onlara bu nefesi çok görmeyelim... (*Nara atar gibi*) Hay koca Faik... Hay koca Plevne kahramanı, seni de kaybettik. (*Bilal'in omzuna babacanca vurur, sonra bir profesör edasıyla konuşur.*) Niye ölüler nefes almasın dedik, işte o da nefes alıp veriyor... Ama bizim gibi değil. Çünkü yaşamıyor. Birazdan nefes alması azalacak, sönecek... Bakın, ağzının kenarındaki tükürüğü oynatan şey onun nefesidir. Bu nefes karında kalan gazın hareketinden ileri gelmektedir. Ama bu nefes de bitecek. Çok çok on dakika daha... (Burak, 2008: p. 42-43).

Faik Paşa's death is confirmed with the arrival and treatment of Jak Barbut. Jak Barbut makes a very interesting explanation about the breathing of dead Faik Paşa. He argues that dead people can breathe. However, he immediately adds that they do not breathe as living people do. However, breathing still can be seen as a sign of living because the act of breathing is the first condition of living. Thus, in *Sahibinin Sesi*, since it is confirmed by two doctors that Faik Paşa is dead and despite the earlier objections of Azize and Bilal Bağana, it is not reasonable to classify Faik Paşa as someone "ostensibly dead" at the end of the treatment. So, it can be argued that before the arrival of Jak Barbut, the uncanny results from an ostensibly dead man. However, after the explanations and the departure of Jak Barbut, the uncanny originates from an ostensibly alive man. Although Faik Paşa is dead as verified by two doctors, he still breathes and displays life signs. A breathing dead body can be a source of the uncanny not because of old, insurmountable religious beliefs but because it disregards the borders between the life and death. A dead man, Faik Paşa, borrows some hours from life by breathing, and he crosses the lines between life and death by trying to be alive. In the end of the scene, Faik Paşa is buried and everyone is sure that he is dead; however, it can be stated that the ghost of the possibility of not being dead always remains.

Another play called *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* can be analyzed in light of the arguments of "ostensibly dead" and "buried alive." Ziya Bey, who lies in a bed covered with a white sheet, is in a state very similar to that of the ostensibly dead. Melek, Nıvart, and Ziya Bey stay in the same room, and Melek and Nıvart wait for the death of Ziya Bey. Actually, both Melek and Nıvart are not sure whether Ziya Bey is dead or not. While they are discussing the issue of whether Ziya Bey is dead or not, they eat meals continually, remember the old days they had together, and let their

subconscious speak. During this waiting, they have (imaginary) guests whom they already know from their old days like Mezar Taşçı or Fotoğrafçı.

The play takes place in one room, and Ziya Bey is always described as being on a bed in that room. He always sleeps without any movement, yet his voice is sometimes heard by the women in the room. In the description of the first scene, Ziya Bey is portrayed as someone who lies in the bed with a white sheet covering his whole body like a shroud. “Odanın dibinde bir yatakta, ağır hasta, ama *ölü görünümünde*, beyaz çarşaf boğazına kadar çekilmiş bir adam kımıldamadan yatmaktadır” (Burak, 2012: p.43). It is explicitly stated that Ziya Bey is ostensibly dead in the description of the first scene. In the beginning of the play, it can be understood that Melek and Nivart are also not completely sure about whether Ziya Bey is dead or alive. Melek presumes Ziya Bey is a guest and says that his funeral will be tomorrow. However, Nivart is not sure whether the funeral will take place because she is not sure of Ziya Bey’s death.

NIVART (*çenesiyle yatani işaret eder*): Ziya Bey bu akşam burada mı?

MELEK: Evet, bu akşam burada misafir... Bu akşam ben bu koltukta, o orada.

NIVART: Ne zaman kalkıyor?

MELEK: Yarın öğleye kalkıyor.

NIVART: Buna emin misin?

MELEK: Karar... kalkacak... (Burak, 2012: p. 43).

Melek and Nivart both feel the uneasiness in the room when they want to talk about the old days and events which include Ziya Bey and his mistreatment towards them. They cannot be sure whether he is alive or not and force each other to decide the issue of death.

NIVART: O zaman Ziya Bey vardı. (*Yatağa bakar.*)

MELEK: Şimdi Ziya Bey yok, yani bunu demek istiyorsun, değil mi?

NIVART (*ciddi*): Bu senin düşüncen, unutma...

MELEK: Şimdi Ziya Bey öldü mü demek istiyorsun? Öyle mi?

NIVART: Buna sen karar ver.

MELEK (*sinirli*): Karar verdim. Ziya Bey yok tabii. (*Derin bir soluk alır, rahatlar.*)Artık seninle açıkça konuşabiliriz, kavga da etmeyiz değil mi? (*Yalvarır gibi.*) (Burak, 2012: p. 69)

Although Melek seems very sure of Ziya Bey's death, Ziya Bey groans when they start to chat. Nıvart is afraid of Ziya Bey's voice and goes on talking. Ziya Bey's voice is occasionally heard in the room. Ziya Bey's bodily existence and his voice transform the room as the scene where all the incidents are happening: the ambiguity regarding whether Ziya Bey is alive or dead also causes uncertainty about the very position of the room, as it seems to be situated in a vague position between life and death. The room is described as full of guests who are supposed to be the neighbors in the beginning of the play, and these guests are supposed to be in that room to condole Melek for the death of Ziya Bey. As the play proceeds, the ambiguity of Ziya Bey's death transforms the room's atmosphere into something uncanny. Thus, the profile of the guests who come to the room changes as time passes. For example, in the last act, Mezar Taşçı, the man who constructs gravestones, comes to the house. He asks when Ziya Bey will die and complains that he has been waiting for Ziya Bey's death for ten years. Melek states that he is not yet dead. Moreover, she says, there might be some living dead persons.

MEZAR TAŞÇI: Sizin iş... sizin iş için konuşuyorum... çok uzun sürdü dedim...

MELEK (*yalvararak ikna etmeye çalışır gibi*): Asla... göreceksiniz... akşama sabaha... belki de birkaç saat...

MEZAR TAŞÇI: Bana öyle gelmiyor, bu iş daha surer... Ona iyi baktınız mı?

MELEK: Baktım... Sağ taraf hissini kaybetmiş... Sağ taraf ölü...

MEZAR TAŞÇI: Ne zaman baktınız, yalan söylüyorsunuz...

MELEK: Dün baktım...

MEZAR TAŞÇI: Dün bakmış... Hıh... Dün belki öyle idi... Dün başka, bugün değişmiştir... Nereden biliyorsunuz?..

MELEK: Biliyorum... Bugün de baktım, sağ tutmuyor... Sağ taraf tamamen ölü...

MEZAR TAŞÇI: Sağ taraf ölü imiş... Hah... Hah... Hah... Sol taraf da diri... Sol taraf yaşıyor... Sağ taraf ölü... (*Ciddileşerek:*) İğne batırdınız mı?

MELEK: Ona ne şüphe her gün batırıyorum!.. İsterseniz siz de deneyin, bakın...
(*Masanın üstünü arar, çuvaldız gibi bir iğne uzatır. Mezar Taşçı yüzünü buruşturur, almaz iğneyi.*)

MEZAR TAŞÇI: İstemez, istemez, bakmaya gerek yok, bana göre vakit geçmiş, ama çoktaaan... Ziya Bey çürümüş...çürümüş... fakat sol taraf yaşıyor, sağ taraf diri, bu iş bir tuhaf, acayip, çok acayip, iş hayatımda ilk defa başıma geliyor!..

MELEK: Tecrübeniz az, tecrübesizsiniz, ben ne yapayım?..

MEZAR TAŞÇI: Tam on yıl oldu... (*Bağırarak:*) On yıldır bu gün git yarın gel... On yıldır komada...sağ taraf, sol taraf, sol taraf, sağ taraf...

MELEK (*yumuşar, ikna edici bir sesle*): Tıp tarihinde böyle olabiliyor... Bilhassa ihtiyarlarda bazen kalbin atışı hiç belli olmuyor, çok yavaş atabiliyor... Hiç belli olmuyor, bu tarafta umut kalmayan çok ihtiyar biri yaşayabiliyor da, öbür tarafta gencecik biri gidiyor... Bu iş hiç belli değil... Bazen, bakıyorsunuz, nefes alıyor, tabii bu da belli olmuyor... Ölü olduğu halde yaşayanlara çok rastlanıyor. (Burak, 2012: p.86-87).

It is still explicit that Melek cannot be precise about Ziya Bey's death, and besides this Ziya Bey has been in the same condition for almost ten years according to Mezar Taşçı. This uncertainty, the anticipation of death, and Ziya Bey's ostensibly dead situation determine the atmosphere of the house. Melek and Nivart live in a room with an ostensibly dead man although nobody knows for sure whether he is dead or alive. Ziya Bey, with his ostensibly dead position, turns the house into a place situated between life and death. The entire play takes part in the same room; neither the two women nor the ostensibly dead Ziya Bey can get out of the room. They are stuck in the room as they are stuck between life and death. None of them can decide where they belong, whether to the underworld or to the world. Melek and Nivart struggle to be in the world of living persons. Eating, for them, is a sign of being alive. Anytime they mention death, they feel hungry.

NIVART: Bir zamanlar Fıstıkağacı'nda bir Zihçıyan vardı... Zamanın doktorlarından... O ne derse onu yapardık, meşhur Zihçıyan... (*Durur.*) Hani... o ne oldu?

MELEK (*ağlamaklı uzatır*): Gittiii...

NIVART: İnsan neredeyse karşısındakinden şüpheleniyor... (*Durur.*) Bugün sen, yarın ben... (*Durur.*) Ekmekçi Canik Ağa'ya ne oldu? (*Durur.*) Hani nerede o?

MELEK: Gitti... o da gittiii...(Durur.) Bu adeta bir salgın... bizim bütün akrabalar da aynı dertten... babam desen babam... halam desen... hani neredeler?.. Sonra bir sürü çocuk... (*Durur.*) Ne oldular, neredeler?... Ahhh, çok açım, çok açım, Nivart, bana yemek ver...

NIVART (*yüksek sesle ağlayarak*): Ne oldular, neredeler... Bu evi yapan kalfa Mishak Ağa nerede? Yok oldu... Silindiler (*Melek'in ağlaması Nivart'inkine karıştır.*)

MELEK (*ağlayarak, hıçkırarak*): Düşün bir kere bu odalarda oturanları, bu pencerelerden karşıki tepelere bakanları, ağaçlar duruyor, deniz duruyor, ama onlara bakanların hiçbiri yok... Ahhh... ahhh...

NIVART (*çığlık atar*): Ahh... çok açım, açlıktan ölüyorum...

MELEK: Üzülme, veriyorum, bak pizola, şimdi getiriyorum. (*Gider, döner, her seferinden daha hızlı.*) Al... al...

NIVART: Ah açım... açım... (*Ağlar.*) (Burak, 2012: p.50-51).

At that moment, they hear the footsteps of Mezar Taşçı who looks like a statue. “Mezar Taşçı bir an kapının önünde durur, beyaz bir görüntüdür. Ceketinin cebinden keskinin ucu görünür... Her tarafı beyaz mermer tozuna bulanmıştır, heykele benzer.” (Burak, 2012: p. 79). The description indicates that Mezar Taşçı is not from the world of the living persons. With his white and ghostly appearance and certainly because he is a gravestone constructor, he is more likely close to dead people, and he might be seen as ostensibly dead because of his statue-like immobility and white face. When Melek hears his footsteps, she says she does not want to die and states that she is hungry. “Hayır, ölmek istemiyorum... Sanki midem kazınıyor... dizlerim titriyor... gözlerim kararıyor... açım... yemek istiyorum... yaşamak istiyorum...” (Burak, 2012: p.52). Then, Melek and Nivart eat Mezar Taşçı. They break Mezar Taşçı into parts by saying “işte baş, işte gövde, işte kanatlar” and cook him with tomato, salt, pepper (Burak, 2012: p.53). They eat because they want to go on living. They eat Mezar Taşçı because he comes for death and dead people, so he is associated with death, and they do not want to see, remember, or hear about death. Nivart and Melek, the ones who are struggling to live, eat Mezar Taşçı because Mezar Taşçı reminds them of death because

of his occupation and appearance. Therefore, they eat to forget about death, “[...] yemek yemek bana ölümü unutturuyor” (Burak, 2012: p. 53).

Ziya Bey’s ostensibly dead state impresses the eating performance, too. Actually, Melek and Nivart do not eat literally, they pretend to eat. Although they cry because they are very hungry, they do not eat but behave as if they eat delicious meals.

YEMEK SAHNESİ karşıda, büfe gibi, çatal tabak olan bir yere gidip, yemek alıp dönmelerle, su getirip götürmelerle, oturup kalkmalarla oynanır. Gerçekte yemek yoktur. Melek tabaklara bir şey koyuyormuş gibi yapar, sonra da ikisi yemek yiyormuş gibi yaparlar (Burak, 2012: p.45).

Eating is equivalent of living for them. Melek and Nivart prove that they are alive by eating. However, it is problematic that they do not eat, but pretend to eat. They cannot eat because one cannot with certainty declare that they are present in a place where life goes on without interruption. Melek and Nivart are in a room where an ostensibly dead man lies in a bed. In a place where life and death exist together, it is not possible to perform something completely implying life or maybe death, too. Since Ziya Bey’s state of being ostensibly dead transforms the room into an uncanny place between life and death, the liveliest action that Melek and Nivart can perform is to pretend to eat. The uncanny existence of Ziya Bey does not allow them to live or die. Melek and Nivart wander on the border of life and avoid death by pretending to eat. Furthermore, Ziya Bey has a habit of ordering Melek to clean the table when one starts eating. When Melek and Ziya Bey invite people their home for dinner, Ziya Bey immediately orders Melek to clean the table when anyone begins eating. While Ziya Bey lies in the bed, he does not stay silent. As soon as Melek and Nivart start to pretend to eat, Ziya Bey’s voice pervades the room.

MELEK: [...] ama misafir her kimse, o gün Ziya Bey’in gözü ondadır, artık Haydar Bey mi olur, Tayyar Bey mi olur, tam elini böreğe atacakken, Ziya Bey, “Sofrayı kaldır!” diye öyle bir canhıraş bağırır ki, elin ayağın titrer, üstelik utancından yer yarılr yerin dibine girersin... Ben utanırım kardeşlerinden, kendi kardeşim olsa utanmam... Ziya Bey, yiyen kardeşi bile olsa gözü kalır...

Kendinden başka kimse yemesin ister... (*Durur.*) Yemeğe devam ediyor muyuz?

NIVART: Ediyoruz.

ZİYA BEY'İN SESİ (*bağırarak*): Sofrayı kaldır... (Burak, 2012: p.54).

Ziya Bey is jealous of the life that other living beings have. What he envies in the passage above is not food, actually. He wants the life that is the share of his guests. Therefore, when he hears that Melek and Nivart are eating, his voice immediately orders Melek to clean the table. After all, Melek and Nivart cannot eat, literally. They pretend to eat because of the jealousy of Ziya Bey. Ziya Bey is ostensibly dead, and he turns the room into an uncanny place where neither life nor death exists completely. Ziya Bey creates a crisis of boundaries between the worlds of the dead and the living because he is too lively for death but too inanimate for life. Melek and Nivart participate in the crisis by pretending to eat. While they behave as if they are eating, they, indeed, behave as if they are living. The only way they can maintain their existence in that uncanny room is by being part of the crisis of proper order created by Ziya Bey. So, they do not live and they do not die, but they pretend to live and stand on the border of life and death.

The narrator's transformation into an inanimate creature and her relation to the members of the Seraphim Church in Nigeria in "Afrika Dansı" can be analyzed through the uncanniness that the eradication of the line between life and death creates. The narrator does not want to resign herself to the machine. However, there is no way other than accepting the rules of the machine in the hospital. Thus, as a way out, she transforms herself into a kind of inanimate creature by using African masks and putting on make-up. Another important detail that can be analyzed in the light of the arguments on life and death is the narrator's memories of the Seraphim Church's rituals. She starts to narrate her stories about the rituals when the machine gets angry and begins the treatment. The rituals of the Seraphim Church, which is a church dependent on the Catholic Church in Nigeria, can be seen as the exact depiction of the situation being between life and death. She explains the ritual in Barbeach when the machine becomes angry to her objections to the treatment:

“LAGOS’ta TINUBU SQUARE/CANKARA Market’teki kalabalığı yara yara ilerliyorum/ BARBEACH’in kızgın beyaz kumları üstünden beyaz sargılara sarılmış olarak yürüyorum/SARAFİN’lerle yan yana/kefenler giymiş gibi plaj şeridinde/ BARBEACH’te sıralanıyoruz/ gözlerimizi kapıyoruz/ bir dalga ile Hazreti İSA’nın Atlas Okyanusu’ndan geri dönmesini bekliyoruz/

[...]

BİR DALGA İLE YERE KAPAKLANIYORUZ

KUMUN İÇİNE GÖMÜLÜYORUZ

YARI BELİMİZE KADAR

SARAFİN’LER AYAĞA KALKIYOR

ELLERİNDE BEYAZA BOYANMIŞ BÜYÜK HAÇLARLA YÜRÜYEN BİR MEZARLIK GİBİ (Burak, 2012: p. 20-21)

This narration can be seen as the literal statement of the crisis of the boundaries. People exactly violate the lines and cross from one side to the other. They believe that the waves will bring Jesus back, so the waves are signs coming from the underworld. Then, Jesus is somewhere where the waves come from. So, the sea symbolizes the underworld. The line between the beach and the sea is the symbol of the border between living and dead ones. These people from the Seraphim Church and the narrator have white bandages on their bodies, which look like shrouds and stay on the beach buried in the sand up to their waists. They look like dead people with their bandages and half buried bodies, so they are ostensibly dead. Since they are standing on the side of the beach, which belongs to the world of the living, they are improper for the world. When they start to walk towards the sea by transgressing the line between the beach and the sea with their crosses, they cross the line and reach the dead people’s world, the sea. They do not fit the world of the dead people either because they are not actually dead. Since they were first buried in the sand up to their waists and then walked towards the sea with their white bandages and crosses in order to call Jesus, these people violate the border between life and death. They intervene in the living people’s order with their shrouds and half-buried bodies. Moreover, they intervene in the dead people’s side with their living bodies. The narrator finds what she is looking for in this uncanny scene because she is also not sure about the treatment process, and she does not know whether she will be alive or not when the cure is finished in the hospital.

When the woman gives up rejecting the treatment, she is still willing to protect her own living space consisting of and also symbolized by the pieces of papers. In order not to leave her pieces while receiving the machine's treatment, she turns herself into an inanimate creature by using African masks. The woman narrates her story about these African masks and Africa after she had a quarrel with the machine about her objection to the treatment. The machine wants the narrator to throw away the paper pieces which she hangs on the curtains and hides under the bed in order to start the treatment; the machine thinks that those papers are obstacles to enter the proper order of life. Although the narrator sometimes seems to be convinced by the machine about the treatment, she rejects throwing the papers away. This refusal to come to terms with the instructions of the machine indicates that the woman declines machine's invitation to the proper order of life which is confirmed by society and authorities. The machine wants the woman have a normal and ordinary life like other people without any piece of papers, cigarettes, and wet swimwear. The machine objects to the way these objects have a particular place in her life. However, the narrator prefers to protect her own life with papers on the curtain, wet swimwear, and cigarettes. Then, the machine gets angry and begins to shout at the woman. In the end, it can be seen that the narrator agrees to have surgery but never admits leaving her life style. At that specific moment the narrator begins her "long Africa tale." The woman says that she wears African clothes in the hospital and puts some African masks on her face.

Yüzüme BALWALWA maskesi takmıştım/LAGOS'ta SAINT NICHOLAS HOSPITAL'ın kadınlar koğuşunun kapısının önünde duruyordum/ o kavgacı gaga burunla/gelen geçen YORUBA'lara/ İBO'lara/ doktorlara/ Rahiplere renkli basma elbiseler giymiş satıcı kadınlara/ hastalara meydan okur gibiydim/ (Burak, 2012: p.24)

The narrator says she challenges the other patients, but she also challenges the machine and the treatments which force her to leave her papers on the curtains. She protects her life and her own world from the interventions with the Balwalwa masks. Furthermore, before the surgery she paints her face with red madder and draws old age facial lines (Burak, 2012: p.31). Actually, she has a problem with her heart, and the surgery is necessary for her survival. However, she transforms her appearance into an inanimate existence. She creates a sphere between life and death with all those

Balwalwa masks and madders and thinks that it is only possible to protect her own life order with these masks and paintings.

The masks which this tribe produces have a critical importance because of their interesting shapes. The tribe which the narrator mentions as Balwalwa is the Lwalwa tribe who live in the southwest area of Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola. They are famous for their masks and the rituals which they perform with the masks:

Lwalwa masks are stylized using simple geometric forms to represent the features of the face. The eyes of the mask are rectangular holes and the nose is a long flat triangle that often stretches to the top of the head. The ears are reduced to small bumps and a stylized mouth projects from above a pointed chin.

Lwalwa masks are carved from a wood called 'mulela' and colored with a dye from the fruit of the 'mukula' tree, also called the 'bloodwood' or 'sealing wax' tree.⁵

The mask is portrayed especially with its sharp lines like eyes as rectangular holes, and nose as a flat triangle shape. The narrator as a human wears this mask in order to protect her life and challenge the machine and patients. She puts on the mask before the surgery; she also applies make-up with madder before the surgery. Make-up with the madder and putting masks on her face are done as rituals in the tribes. It can be argued that the narrator prepares herself for her own funeral. She looks like an inanimate creature when she puts the mask on her face because the mask has geometrical and sharp lines. These sharp lines have a more inanimate look rather than a lively one. The eyes on the mask cannot exhibit an emotion; the mouth cannot smile or cry. It is deprived of all animate features. The narrator wears the mask and transforms herself into a semi-animate or semi-inanimate creature. She challenges not only the patients and the machine, but also the established proper life order. The narrator locates herself somewhere between the life and death with the mask she wears -maybe for her funeral. The narrator turns herself into a creature between life and death in order to protect her own order with the papers, wet swimwear, and cigarettes. The proper order in the hospital represented by the machine does not suggest to her any way other than

⁵“African Masks-Lwalwa”, <http://www.artyfactory.com/africanmasks/masks/lwalwa.htm>, accessed 15.11.2013.

dying or living in accordance with its own rules. So, the woman has to create her own way of living, as she does not want to be limited to the two options imposed by the machine. With the Balwalwa masks, she positions herself somewhere between life and death.

The return of the dead can be considered as a cause which creates a crisis of the proper. Freud asserts that many people have the similar uncanny feeling about the return of the dead (Freud, 2007: p.238). Although the dead are not expected to be in the world of the living, they cross the line between the underworld and the living people's world and become a source of crisis. The characters can be understood as persons who own their lives until the story or play ends. However, it is possible to confront the same characters in different stories or plays by Burak without any explanations as to whether they are still the same characters or have some differences. Nicholas Royle refers to Harold Bloom's theory of apophrades and says "[...] poetry as an encounter with the dead, with the ghostliness of ancestral voices and intertextual hauntings" (Royle, 2006: p. 147). The return of the characters in Burak's works can be considered as "intertextual hauntings."

Harold Bloom understands poetry as the return of the dead and uses the word "apophrades" to explain his ideas. The *apophrades* is defined as the return of the dead people to inhabit their former houses, and the day they come is seen as dismal and unlucky (Bloom, 1997: p. 141). The transition of the characters from one story to another can easily be noticed in Burak's stories. Some of them can exactly be considered as apophrades. For example, it is obvious that the characters in "Sedef Kakmalı Ev" and *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* are the same, yet there are some meaningful name alterations. Or, some characters in "Sedef Kakmalı Ev" are present in *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* and *Sahibinin Sesi*.

"Sedef Kakmalı Ev" and *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* share nearly the same theme. "Sedef Kakmalı Ev" explains Nurperi Hanım's life after the death of Ziya Bey. Nurperi Hanım and Ziya Bey live in a house together. Ziya Bey is a very old man who is already dead in the beginning of the story. It is not clear whether Nurperi Hanım and Ziya Bey are married. However, after Ziya Bey dies, Nurperi Hanım feels anxious about the ownership of the house in which they live. Although there are some different

characters and events in *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar*, the main theme is about the ownership of the house and the struggle to continue to live. In this play, Ziya Bey, Melek and Nıvart are the main characters. In “Sedef Kakmalı Ev,” it is obvious that Ziya Bey is dead. However, the play *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* is based on Ziya Bey’s ambiguous position. Since the house is important in these two works, it can be argued that Ziya Bey turned back to the play *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* in order not to leave the house, Nurperi Hanım, or his own children, who came at the end of the story “Sedef Kakmalı Ev” to claim the house. Furthermore, though the names are different, Nurperi Hanım and Melek can be the same characters. Both Nurperi and Melek live with Ziya Bey and want to own the house. Additionally, both of them are from the Balkans: Nurperi is from Yanya (İonia), and Melek is from Menlik. Besides, Melek and Nurperi have the same life story. They were brought to İstanbul as children to serve men who own the house, and they expect to be the owners of the house after these men die. It is critical to follow the way the names are changed. In the end of “Sedef Kakmalı Ev”, when Ziya Bey dies, his children come and take the house. Nurperi Hanım, since she does not have anywhere to go, disappears. She shrinks and sticks on the bottom of a saucepan. However, Nurperi Hanım returns to take back the house in *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* as Melek. She cannot come back as Nurperi, so she has to transform herself into an “angel” because she returns to the world after death and becomes Melek. So, Ziya Bey and Nurperi Hanım can be seen as the “apophrades” that Bloom describes. Both of them return after their deaths to the house in order to take it back. The dead characters of the story “Sedef Kakmalı Ev” come and occupy the play *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar*.

Melek and Ziya Bey show up in *Sahibinin Sesi* as the mysterious neighbors of Bilal Bağana. One can see that this couple is the same one which takes part also in *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* or “Sedef Kakmalı Ev.” However, there is not any obvious connection between these stories and plays. What makes Ziya Bey’s and Melek/Nurperi Hanım’s existence uncanny is first of all their positions in the former work. It is obvious that both Ziya Bey and Nurperi Hanım are dead or vanished. In *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar*, they return to repossess the house and struggle to live, maybe in order to put their second chance to live to good use. The second chance itself creates an uncanny atmosphere. In the former case, the characters return from the underworld for revenge because they want one more confrontation with issue of the house. The house is the

reason they come back to the world. In *Sahibinin Sesi*, there is no clear reason why Ziya Bey and Melek are present in that play. They are just some of the mysterious neighbors Bilal Bağana has. Yet, as very familiar dead characters from “Sedef Kakmalı Ev”, they seem too familiar in *Sahibinin Sesi*. However, Ziya Bey and Melek Hanım arise in *Sahibinin Sesi* as if they are not the characters of “Sedef Kakmalı Ev.” Something which is supposed to be unfamiliar turns into something very familiar and creates the uncanny (Royle, 2006: p.8).

The characters’ lives can be seen as limited to the end of the story, play, or novel unless the narrator argues that s/he will go on explaining the continuation of the narrative or characters’ lives. However, without any explanation, the characters from one story can appear in another play with their all life stories. Ziya Bey and Melek/Nurperi merely walk from “Sedef Kakmalı Ev” to first *Sahibinin Sesi* and then to *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar*. Although their existence can be explicable and proper only in the first work, their presence with the same roles in *Sahibinin Sesi* and *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* causes a crisis. Their existence should come to an end in the first story called “Sedef Kakmalı Ev” yet they go on emerging in other works. Since if someone dies, we do not expect to see her again, it is disturbing to see the moving of some characters from one work to other. It is a crisis to see a dead person in the world because she does not belong to the world, so it is uncanny to see those characters in some other works because they actually belong to their own stories. Since they do not stay in their proper places, meaning within their stories’ boundaries, and move to other two plays, the uncanny effect emerges due to this transgression of the borders.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I focused on the question of how the crisis of boundaries causes the uncanny effects in Sevim Burak’s works. The uncanny is the dreadful and frightening because it blurs, violates, or demolishes the borders between the clearly distinguished spheres. “Afrika Dansı”, *Sahibinin Sesi*, and *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* are works by Burak in which one can detect the crisis of boundaries under the themes of “between inanimate and animate” and “between life and death.”

Things that stand inbetween the animate and inanimate are usually frightening because of the distressful atmosphere they create. It is disturbing when something cannot be classified as animate or inanimate. The machine in “Afrika Dansı” is exactly something one cannot easily and certainly classify as an “inanimate machine.” It speaks, feels, and orders so it is too lively for a machine. However, it cannot think and does not have reason, and, therefore, it is too mechanical to be an animate existence. This positioning on the border and the inability to be classified as animate or inanimate cause the uncanny effect.

The bodies between life and death create a crisis of the proper due to their unclassifiable features. Someone who seems ostensibly dead or ostensibly alive creates an uncanny effect. One should belong to the underworld or to the world of the living in order to take her/his part in one certain side. The characters like Ziya Bey, Faik Paşa and the narrator of “Afrika Dansı” violate the line between life and death. Ziya Bey’s voice never leaves the house although he seems dead. The narrator in “Afrika Dansı” is alive yet before the surgeon the woman turns herself into a dead person or even an inanimate creature. Faik Paşa, though he is dead, seems to breathe. These people lack their lacks, have excesses. It is impossible for them to exist in the living or dead people’s world, certainly. The crisis occurs in this very specific moment of blurring and causes the uncanny.

CHAPTER IV

UNHOMELY SPACES

4.1 Introduction

The German word for “uncanny”, the original version, reveals so much about the term. Although the word *unheimlich* is translated into English as “uncanny”, the literal translation of the word is, indeed, “unhomely.” So, it can be argued that the word itself encourages us to think about spaces such as home. Freud, very aware of this reference, devotes a very long part of his article “The Uncanny” to the etymological analysis of the word. Freud looks up for *heimlich* in Daniel Sander’s dictionary in order to show the connection between his own definition of the uncanny and its original meaning. There are many definitions for the word focusing on its secretive feature. More importantly, the meaning of the word, which is about domestic features, is emphasized in the definitions.

Heimlich, adj., subst. *Heimlichkeit* (pl. *Heimlichkeiten*): I. Also *heimlich*, *heimlig*, belonging to the house, not strange, familiar, tame, intimate, friendly, etc.

(a) (Obsolete) belonging to the house or the family, or regarded as so belonging (cf. Latin *familiaris*, familiar)

[...]

(c) Intimate, friendly comfortable; the enjoyment of quite content, etc., arousing a sense of agreeable restfulness and security as in one within the four walls of his house. (Freud, 2007: p.222).

As it can be noticed above, *heimlich* evokes something related to home. It is about familiar and intimate belongings, about security, and about being “within the four walls of a house.” Therefore, home is defined as a place where it is comfortable and secure to be situated because home is friendly and full of restfulness.

Other than these meanings such as familiar, domestic, and secure, *heimlich* has another meaning which is completely dissimilar to the former definition. *Heimlich* is described as “concealed, kept from sight, so that others do not get to know of or about it”, “as though there was something to conceal” by Sanders (Freud, 2007: p. 223). There

is another definition stated by Grimm: “*from the idea of ‘homelike’, ‘belonging to the house’, the further idea is developed of something withdrawn from the eyes of strangers, something concealed, secret; and this idea is expanded in many ways...*” (Freud, 2007: p.225). Thus, *heimlich* and *unheimlich* are not opposite to each other. Their meanings do not constitute a contrariness, but rather their meanings merge into each other on a circle because “[...] the word ‘*heimlich*’ exhibits one which is identical with its opposite, ‘*unheimlich*’” (Freud, 2007: p.224). Although *heimlich* is supposed to express something familiar and domestic, it is also used to describe concealed and the secret things, as Grimm proposed. Thus, there is something secret and concealed within the *heimlich*. This equivocality tells us a lot due to the root of the word *unheimlich*. “Heim” meaning “home” can be both the source and the effected subject of this ambiguity in the meaning of the word *heimlich*. Home is the place where people find peace and security, so home is supposed to be a place where the habitants are familiar with the objects and the space, meaning *heimlich*. Thus, it is not a coincidence that there is an idiom in English “be at home” meaning being safe. Besides, home is the place where we conceal something; the secrets and the mysteries are always kept in the houses because of its very secure feature mentioned above. The secrets, like the inhabitants of the house, are expected to be in safety at home. However, it is not possible to have something both concealed and secured all at once. Therefore, home is the exact place that fits the equivocal description of the word *heimlich*, not only safe, domestic, and peaceful, but also mysterious.

The houses used as a space in Sevim Burak’s works provide very important and abundant grounds to analyze the dual position of the home as explained above. The houses in Burak’s works are usually seen as shelters at first, and then as places to be obtained by the characters. Afterwards, it is understood that the house itself is the source of the crisis in the story; the house actually creates the uncanny. When the home is supposed to be the protector in one specific moment, it comes to light that the house is a very crucial factor in the arousal of the uncanny. Moreover, it helps us to make deeper interpretations to consider some places like a neighborhood, a city, and a country as “home”. It is better not to define home as a place with four walls because *heimlich* is described with terms like familiarity, security, domesticity, etc. Thus, the neighborhood, city, or country can be the places where we feel secure and familiar, as well. The words like homeland and hometown do not coincidentally include the word “home” because

these spaces can be regarded as safe, domestic, and familiar, like home. Therefore, in this last chapter, I will focus first on the literal houses in Burak's works and analyze the effects of the house in the creation of the uncanny. Then, second, I will look at the spaces that can be considered as home and show their roles in the uncanny picture of Burak's literature.

4.2 Houses cause the uncanny

The house as an architectural space can be seen as the most suitable place for the occurrence of the uncanny. Anthony Vidler, a prominent academician working on architecture, emphasizes the existing domesticity and familiarity in the house and states that: "The house provided an especially favored site for uncanny disturbances: its apparent domesticity, its residue of family history and nostalgia, its role as the last and most intimate shelter of private comfort sharpened by contrast the terror of invasion by alien spirits." (Vidler, 1992: p.17). The houses in Sevim Burak's works with their descriptions and their residents as characters are very crucial features in the arousal of the uncanny.

The house in "Sedef Kakmalı Ev" is exactly the example of the invasion of the domestic and a familiar house by spirits, as Vidler declares. All the domesticity and familiarity Nurperi Hanım feels take their source from the years she spent in the same house, but they turn into a tool to create the uncanny. Nurperi Hanım lives in the same house with Ziya Bey and his three brothers-who are commanders- for a very long time. After the death of those three brothers, she continues to live with Ziya Bey. "Nurperi Hanım bu eve geldiğinde hepsi sağdılar. On beş yaşında saçları kol iriliğinde bir kızdı. Yanya diliyle karışık Türkçe konuşurdu" (Burak, 2009: p.12). When Ziya Bey dies, Nurperi Hanım stands alone in the house that she knows very well. However, the house, once very familiar and homey for Nurperi Hanım, "turns gradually into a site of horror" (Vidler, 1992: p.32). After the death of the three brothers, although Nurperi Hanım is not very happy, she is still familiar with the house and considers the home as a domestic place. However, after Ziya Bey's death, the house turns into an unfamiliar and insecure space, the objects in the house look at her as if she were an enemy. "Durduğu yer sallandı birden. Çevresindeki eşyalar ona düşmanca bakıyordu sanki" (Burak, 2009: p.13). The hostile gazes of the objects turn to Nurperi Hanım -maybe- due to a past

betrayal. Before the death of Ziya Bey, Nurperi Hanım takes the old objects of Ziya, Affan, Tayyar, and Haydar Bey from the attic and brings them to Üsküdar Çarşısı.

Bir gece kalktı Nurperi Hanım, elektriği yakmadan tavanarasına çıktı. Ziya Bey'in bonjurunu, ayakkabılarını, saat kordonlarını, rahmetlilerin kılıçlarını, kalpaklarını, pelerinlerini toplayıp evden çıktı (Burak, 2009: p.13).

Nurperi Hanım does not want the jacket, shoes, or swords at home and takes them to Üsküdar Çarşısı. These objects in the attic can be considered as buried alive. Vidler interprets the uncanny condition of “buried alive” through an architectural perspective. He refers to Chateaubriand’s comparison of Pompeii and Rome which regards Rome as a “vast museum” while seeing Pompeii as “a living antiquity.” Since archeologists still find some dwellings under the volcanoes or they find skeletons and furniture under the ashes, Gérard de Nerval states that history is suspended in these homely surroundings since the remnants are concealed under the homely constructed city (Vidler, 1992: p. 47). These objects which belong to Haydar, Tayyar, and Affan Bey are very similarly concealed in the attic. Thus, it can be said that the objects are buried alive because they stand for Nurperi Hanım’s memories of old and happy days with those three brothers and a love affair with Ziya Bey. However, they are hidden in the attic before they complete their missions for the members of the house. Nurperi Hanım dreams of the old days she had with Ziya Bey wearing his “bonjur”, and Ziya Bey whispers to Nurperi Hanım “Bonjurumu tavanarasına kaldır” (Burak, 2009: p. 11). However, it is not sufficient to conceal the objects in the attic in order to forget the memories, especially if the objects still remind people of the old days and call up the dead people. After Nurperi Hanım takes the objects to Üsküdar Çarşısı, the dead brothers – Affan, Haydar and Tayyar Bey- appear in the living room and call for the “missing” objects in the attic.

[...] Nurperi Hanım birkaç adım attı. Sedef kakmalı sehpa üzerine üzerine geliyordu. Duvarda çerçevelerin içinden üç kumandan fırlamış Nurperi Hanım’a yaklaşıyorlardı. Affan, Haydar, Tayyar beyefendiler. Odanın içi Ziya Bey'in kardeşleriyle dolmuştu. Onları ayakta karşılamak istedi. Tayyar Bey kırmızı bıyıklarını titreterek ona tıpkı eskisi gibi bakıyordu. Tayyar Bey'e sofrayı hazırlamak için davrandı, Tayyar Bey burnunun dibine kadar gelip sesini kalınlaştırdı “Nurperi, saat kordonum nerde?” diye sordu. Nurperi kızardı.

Haydar ve Affan beylerin duymayacağı incecik bir sesle “ÜSKÜDAR ÇARŞISI’nda sattım,” diye cevap verdi.

“Peki, Haydar Ağabeyi’min kılıcı, pelerinlerim, çizmelerim, gümüş nişanlarım?” Nurperi “ÜSKÜDAR ÇARŞISI!” diye ağladı... (Burak, 2009: p.13-14)

The unburied dead Haydar, Tayyar, and Affan Bey come back to ask for their buried alive objects or memories. The only remnant “sedef kakmalı sehpa” moves towards Nurperi Hanım when three dead brothers approach her. The table’s movements can be interpreted as the expression of an “insistence on the rights of the unburied dead” (Vidler, 1992: p. 47). The buried-alive objects ask for the rights of the unburied dead. After this encounter, very immediately, the house is taken from Nurperi Hanım.

[...]

GELDİLER...

[...]

Gelenler çok kızgındılar,
Göğüsleri körük gibi inip çıkıyordu,
Sekiz on kişi kadardılar.

[...]

Kötü bir önsezi kafasından yol yol geçti.

O’nun yangın duvarlı, rüzgâr fırıldaklı, şimşek çekenli EVİNİ almaya gelmişlerdi

(Burak, 2009: p.14).

The unburied dead brothers take Ziya Bey along and leave Nurperi Hanım alone, and then they deprive Nurperi Hanım of the house as revenge for the disposal of their belongings in the attic. The house which Nurperi Hanım expects to own after the death of Ziya Bey and thinks of as a homely place to live has always been an uncanny shelter for Nurperi Hanım because of the buried-alive objects in the attic. While those objects are a part of Nurperi Hanım’s memories, they also determine the owner of the house. The objects transform the house into a space of the uncanny for Nurperi Hanım by calling their dead owners. The objects and the brothers take revenge for the disposal by breaking the house into pieces. “Birden Nurperi Hanım’ın penceresi çatırdadı, evin odaları, merdiven altları birbirinden ayrıldı” (Burak, 2009: p. 14).

“Afrika Dansı” can be analyzed through the effect created by the hospital as a space because it creates an uncanny effect through the description of the hospital. The Saint Nicholas Hospital in Lagos can be seen as a home for the narrator because she lives in a hospital room; she eats there; she smokes secretly in the opposite room; she writes in that room; and she hides her papers and needles under her bed in that room. She wanders in the corridors of the hospital to take a walk. Thus, the hospital can be regarded as the house of the narrator. Although the hospital is not portrayed in detail, there are some details that help the reader to imagine the hospital. The first clue about the hospital building is revealed when the machine calls the patients.

TOPLANIN (Koğuşlarda)

KIMILDAMAYIN

KİMSE KIMILDAMIYOR (Koğuşlarda)

HERKES DÜŞÜNÜYOR

TOPLANIN

ZEMİN KATTA

HERKES BU ÇAĞRIYA UYUYOR (Burak, 2012: p.11)

“Koğuşlarda/zemin katta/ koridorlarda toplansalar onu dinleseler bile/ sessizce birbirlerine sokularak/ AH! MAKİNEİN ELİNDEN BİR KAÇIP KURTULSAK MI ACABA diye düşünüyorlar (Burak, 2012: p.11)

The words like basement, corridors, and dorms provide a basis to describe the hospital. Those are the places that the narrator mostly mentioned in the whole story. The machine and the narrator emphasize the places close to the ground like the basement and the door in the basement.

YOKSA

BU MAKİNE BENİM DE Mİ HESABIMI GÖRECEK ALT

KAPIDAN

GİZLİCE ÇIKARILAN

BİR CESET Mİ OLACAĞIM (Burak, 2012: p.12)

The uncanny feeling that these places create, being located in the basement or at the bottom of the hospital, can be analyzed with the help of Boullée’s concept called “buried architecture.” Boullée states that:

One must, as I have tried to do in funerary monuments, present the skeleton of architecture by means of an absolutely naked wall, presenting the image of buried architecture by employing only low and compressed proportions, sinking into the earth, forming, finally, by means of materials absorbent to the light, the black picture of an architecture of shadows depicted by the effect of even blacker shadows (Vidler, 1992: p.170).

Although the hospital building in “Afrika Dansı” is never described, the locations we read throughout the story are usually the basements or the bottom levels. Although the buried architecture is defined by Boullée as literally buried, sunken, and compressed, the hospital narrated in the story depicts similar features with the narrator’s emphasis on the basement and ground floor.

The other places in the hospital are described mostly referring to some illnesses or deaths. The machine and the caretaker wander in the hospital in order to collect the corpses, and they look at several rooms like those on the first floor, the radiology room, and the endoscopy room. In each room, they find corpses, and they collect and put the the corpses into black nylon bags. They even find corpses in the garden of the hospital where belvederes and hammocks are placed. Although the garden is a place where life rather than death has its effect, the corpses are everywhere in the garden. The corridors are also full of ill people; the narrator tells that they have liver disease. The liver illness has symptoms very close to death like vomiting, weakness, weight loss, and jaundice (a yellow discoloration of the skin).⁶ Therefore, the places in the hospital are full of dead or dead-looking people. The hospital building including the garden is covered with corpses and dead-looking people. Boullée’s argument about the skeleton architecture can provide a basis for commenting on the hospital building. The traditional idea of architecture suggests imitating the perfection of the human body and takes the “Vitruvian Man” as the model. Boullée “inverts the theory in order to make an architecture based on the ‘death form’ of the body” (Vidler, 1992: p.171). The hospital, perhaps not because of its architectural construction, but exactly because the corridors and the garden covered with corpses and dead-looking people create an uncanny atmosphere. The hospital’s walls and grounds are depicted as if they were constructed

⁶“Liver Disease”,
http://www.medicinenet.com/liver_disease/page4.htm#what_are_the_symptoms_of_liver_disease,
accessed on 20 December 2013

from these dead and dead-looking people. Therefore, the architectural construction is described through the idea of the dead; “shadow of the living dead” is always on the grounds and on the walls of the hospital (Vidler, 1992: p.171).

As the literal meaning of the word *unheimlich* indicates, the houses can be considered as the source of the uncanny. Since the houses are expected to be homey, familiar, and domestic while yet concealing secrets and transforming themselves into unfamiliar and unhomey places, they are the places where the uncanny can immediately appear. The house in “Sedef Kakmalı Ev” and the hospital in “Afrika Dansı” provide very proper examples due to their descriptions as familiar but dreadful places. Although Nurperi Hanım is very accustomed to living in the house because of the long years she has spent there, the ghosts of the three brothers and their belongings in the attic turn the house into an unfamiliar and frightening place. Since the narrator in “Afrika Dansı” spends most of her time in the hospital and lives there, the hospital can be considered as home. With its description as sunken and covered with dead or dead-looking people, the hospital causes the rise of the uncanny.

4.3 Neighborhoods as home

Unheimlich with its *heim* in the middle of the word obviously refers to “home”. As mentioned and exemplified above, the house can be regarded one of the sources of the uncanny. In this second part, I aim to stretch the perception of the house. Following the definition of the word *heimlich* as familiar, domestic, and feeling at home, it is possible to interpret the *heim* as the spaces we (are supposed to) feel at home. Therefore, not only the houses or buildings but also the neighborhoods, cities, and countries can also be comprehended within the perception of *heim/home*. The neighborhood in the play called *Sahibinin Sesi* can be analyzed in light of this widened perception.

Sahibinin Sesi provides a very proper basis to approach the “home” through the perspective explained above. The play takes place in a neighborhood where various people from different ethnic groups live. Bilal Bağana and Zembul Allahanati’s house located in that neighborhood can be considered as an important component in the play. For instance, Bilal Bağana leaves that house in order to wander in İstanbul while Zembul Allahanati never goes out and gives birth to her children in that house. Other guests such as Şahende Hanım, Ziya Bey, and Melek Hanım visit Bilal and Zembul in

that house, and Bilal Bağana's double, Muzaffer Seza, primarily and continually appears in that house.

The house is depicted as a frightening and mysterious space. In the first act, Bilal Bağana covers the vantages of the living room's windows with clothes. This scene can be considered as the depiction of the protection of the house by Bilal Bağana. He wants to keep the house familiar for himself so he struggles to protect his house from external factors and closes the vantages in order not to permit the entrance of external factors like the wind. "[...] Bugün bir yere çıkılmamış, havaların soğuması üzerine evde kalınarak, evin pencerelerinden rüzgârın girdiği yerlere, kapılarına kâğıt tıkanmış, rüzgârın önüne geçilmiş [...]" (Burak, 2008: p.16). Although Bilal Bağana regards the wind as an external factor that contaminates the familiarity of the house and strives to protect his house even from the wind, very soon after this scene, Melek Hanım appears in the house as a wizard. The scene is narrated as if it is Bilal Bağana's dream. He sees Melek Hanım while he has a nap, yet he is not sure whether Melek Hanım really enters the house or not. Melek Hanım puts two spoons under the carpet which symbolizes marriage in Jewish culture. According to Jewish traditions, after the marriage ceremony but before the groom and bride enter their rooms, they jump over two spoons.⁷ If Bilal Bağana and Zembul Allahanati jump over that carpet, it might be interpreted as indicating they are married to each other because this is a ritual that is done after the marriage ceremony. Therefore, Bilal Bağana, who does not want to marry to Zembul Allahanati, becomes nervous because of the secret entrance of Melek Hanım and her magician manners. Bilal Bağana's house, very familiar to him, appears to be dreadful with its mysterious spoons and Melek Hanım's existence. Very soon after the arrival of Melek Hanım, Ebe Anastasya comes home, but it is ambiguous whether she enters from the door or prefers other ways which Bilal Bağana suggests:

[...] Ne zamandan beri buradasınız, ne zaman kapıyı çaldınız? Ben hiç duymadım. Evet, hiç duymuyorsunuz, hiç haberiniz yok, bir de bakıyorsunuz ki sevgili komşumuz Ebe Madam Anastasyaaa. Pardon... Eski Rusya'dan Anastasya Filipovniya... (*Göz kırpar alayla.*) Koca Anastasya Filipovniya bize geliyor. Hem de nasıl?.. Kuş gibi hafif, o usta ayakları ile... Hoop... Bahçe

⁷<http://www.jewish-history.com/minhag.htm>, accessed on 22 December 2013.

duvarından... Hoop... Bahçe kapısından... Hoop pencereden... Bakıyorsunuz içeride (Burak, 2008: p.18).

As it can be seen, Bilal Bağana does not succeed in protecting the house or keeping the house as familiar as he desires. Although Bilal Bağana plugs up the windows' vantages, he can avoid neither Melek Hanım's nor Ebe Anastasya's entering without permission. Bilal Bağana does not only desire to protect and keep his house familiar and domestic, but also has similar wishes about the neighborhood in which he lives. He desires to conserve the familiar atmosphere of the neighborhood. Before the second act, Bilal Bağana is not comfortable in the neighborhood; the house where he lives mostly disturbs him. However, with the second act, the neighborhood takes considerable attraction. The second act opens with a summary of the previous act, and then an anonymous voice is heard. This voice appeals to Bilal Bağana and invites him to go out and wander around the neighborhood, and, at this specific moment, the neighborhood becomes the main emphasis of the play.

BİR SES: Heyt... tül perdenin arkasından çık, saklanma. Oradasın görüyorum... Asker kaçağı... Sana ihtar ediyorum... Ortaya çık...

(Bilal tül perdenin arkasından elinde tabancasıyla ortaya çıkar.)

BİR SES: Paşa evladı... Paşazade. Asker kaçağı sana söylüyorum. Tül perdenin arkasından değil evden de çık... Mahalleye de çık... İnsanların arasına çık... (Burak: 2008, p. 47,48)

The voice insists that he leave home, see the neighborhood, and wander around. Rather than leave home, Bilal Bağana prefers to observe the neighborhood from his window with binoculars. He watches a migration. His old neighbors move from the vicinity. However, there are newcomers, and these newcomers are relatives of the old neighbors and Zembul Allahanati.

BİLAL'İN SESİ: Mahallede hissedilir ölçüde bir hareket başlamış, ilk olarak karşımızdaki taş basamaklı evde oturan, "makineci" cinsinden Filip Efendi'nin çıktığı eve tam bir saat sonra şüpheli bir şahıs taşınmış ve bizim evi gözetlemeye başlamıştır. Bizim evin perdeleri indirilmiş ve birkaç gün evden çıkılmamıştır. Mahallede göç durmamış, taş basamaklı evin yanındaki evde oturan "kasap" cinsinden Nahum Efendi, karısı ve çocukları meçhul bir istikamete doğru göç etmişlerdir. Aynı eve, ferdası gün, Kasap Nahum'un yeğeni ve çocukları

taşınmış, mahallenin aşağı kısımlarında da, taşınmalar olmuş, taşınmaların yerime gelenlerin, gidenlerin akrabaları olduğu tespit edilmiş, hepsinin isimleri öğrenilerek defterimize yazılıp kaydedilmiştir.

(Sahne aydınlanır, Bilal gene dürbünle görülür.)

BİLAL *(elinde dürbünüyle bakmaya devam ederek)*: İki kişi gidiyor, üç kişi geliyor... İki kişinin yerine üç kişi... Terakkiyat var terakkiyat... Bana kalırsa bugün birşeyler hazırlanıyor. Hepsi de Zembul'un akrabaları, hısımları. Hımm. *(Durur)* Avam tabaka evlere hâkim oldu. Hımmm demek böyle. Olsun... Daha iyi... *(Durur)* Bunlar avam tabakaları mı? benim hesabım onlardan kuvvetli, benim planım onlardan önce... Fakat onlar da hazırlıklı görünüyor... Tertip var... Bu işin içinde müthiş bir tertip seziliyor... Onu öğrenmeliyim... *(Durur)* Başka tertipler de hazırlanıyor... Tabii bütün tertiplerin arkasında bir kişi var... [...]. (Burak, 2008: p.48, 49).

Bilal Bağana observes the neighborhood and migration day after day and takes some notes on kinship relations. It is very crucial to note that the play takes place in 1931. As mentioned in the first chapter, Bilal Bağana, as the son of an old Ottoman soldier, has a double, Muzaffer Seza, a martyr killed in the Independence War, in order to locate himself in the new order, the recently-established republic. There is a tension between these two characters as double, and this tension has a very considerable share in the uncanniness of the neighborhood. Bilal Bağana is doubtful about the organization of a conspiracy. Although Bilal Bağana implies Muzaffer Seza is responsible for the conspiracy while arguing that “there is only one person” responsible for the conspiracy, actually the only person mentioned is Bilal Bağana himself. Bilal Bağana is disturbed and feels uncanny because of the migration of the poor and common Jewish people to the neighborhood; the familiar soul of the neighborhood is vanishing for Bilal Bağana. The Jewish people who move to the neighborhood turn the space into a place unfamiliar to Bilal Bağana. Nevertheless, he still wants to pursue his noble status as the son of an Ottoman soldier, and he has the opportunity to have that life until these new residents come. These poor and common people who are the relatives of Zembul Allahanati perturb the ideal and *heimlich* neighborhood Bilal Bağana has. On the other hand, as mentioned in the first chapter, Bilal Bağana desires to become a proper man for the recently-established republic and since he is a deserter and he does not want to do his military service, he appropriates the identity of Muzaffer Seza, a martyr killed in a plane

crash in the Independence War. Bilal Bađana becomes the man he yearns for by assuming Muzaffer Seza's identity, thus beoming a proper citizen of the recently-established republic. He is a nationalist and against the so-called traitors. Therefore, Bilal Bađana, as the proper and loyal citizen of the new republic, is annoyed by the so called traitors of the republic, like leftists and non-Muslims. Since the neighborhood is settled by the relatives of Zembul Allahanati and some communist writers, he feels uneasy and calls his friend Osman Sabri who is a state spy. They talk about Nazım Hikmet.

BİLAL: Evet azizim... Artık birtakım evhamlarımın hiç de boşuna olmadığını görüyorsun. Sana anlattıklarımın hepsi doğru.

OSMAN SABRİ: Bu işin ciddiyetinden şüphe duymuyorum, telefonunu alınca, öbür acil ihbarları bırakarak hemen sana koştum. Bilsen, ne ihbarlar. Bizim Nâzım'dan Üsküdar Vapur İskelesi'ndeki Şekerci Hacı Efendi'ye kadar... (Burak, 2008: p.52)

Then Bilal Bađana claims that someone is following him in the neighborhood. In order to arouse the nationalistic emotions of Osman Sabri, Bilal Bađana argues that the one who follows him is a Bolshevik.

BİLAL: Aynı adam azizim. Bir kere akşamları her zaman son vapurdan çıkıyor. İcadiye Caddesi'nden bizim mahalleye bakıyor... Ve yokuştan yukarı çıkıyor. Dürbünle tetkik edince tam bir Bolşevik... Bazen de evden çıkıp, sokaktaki ağaçları siper alarak arkasından yürüyorum... Her zaman taş basamaklı evin orada duruyor, ondan sonra kayboluyor.

OSMAN SABRİ: Çok mühim bir nokta bu, şimdi sorduğuma dikkat et. Bu bizim paşazade Bolşeviklere mi, yoksa beynelmilel Bolşeviklere mi benziyor?

BİLAL: Bizimkilere azizim... Bizimkilere benziyor. Sarımsı, Tatar sarımsı... Bizim Nâzım'ın yakışıklısı, daha uzun boylusu, yüzünde yanık izi var... (Burak, 2008: p. 54)

The mentioned man with a scar is actually Muzaffer Seza. Since Muzaffer Seza is a martyr and hero who has died in the Independence War, Bilal Bađana needs something dishonorable to ascribe to Muzaffer Seza in order to create animosity

towards Muzaffer Seza in Osman Sabri's mind. This dishonorable imputation is being a communist. Bilal Bařana uses the danger attributed to communists in those years in order to explain the insecurity of the neighborhood. The neighborhood is no longer safe and secure for Bilal Bařana as a proper and loyal citizen of the republic; it is unsafe and impossible to live with non-Muslims and Bolsheviks. As long as he stays in that neighborhood, he can never fulfill his dual identities. He can neither become a noble man as the son of an Ottoman soldier nor be a loyal citizen of the republic with Muzaffer Seza's identity card. He should firstly get rid of the unfamiliar, dangerous, and threatening neighborhood. Although it is known that some Bolsheviks, like Nâzım, are not in the vicinity, their memories still remain.

OSMAN SABRİ: [...] Neyse onu geçelim, eski meseleler kapanmıştır. Bugün artık Pařazade Nâzım bu mahallede değildir. Bütün akrabalarının Kuzguncuk'ta Nakkař Baba Yokuřu'ndaki hısımları Nâzım'a kapılarını kapatmışlardır. M. Seza'ya gelince herhalde řehitlikte kemikleri bile kalmamıştır.

BİLAL: Tam tersi azizim. Mesele kapanmamıştır. Nâzım Hikmet kolhozlarda, Moskova Üniversitesi'nde ama iş bitmemiştir. M. Seza ölmüş diyorsun ama burada başka adamlar dolařıyor. Nifakın kökü burada. Yakında Büyük bir nifak patlayacak... Bu mahallenin kaderi böyle. Bir Nâzım gider, öbür Nâzım gelir. Bir M. Seza ölür, ikinci M. Seza çıkar (Burak, 2008: p.55).

Bilal Bařana believes that the dissension does not disappear despite the departure of Nâzım and Muzaffer Seza because the dissension is hidden in the neighborhood. It is virtually buried under the houses. While Bilal Bařana and Osman Sabri discuss the neighborhood and its residents, Osman Sabri emphasizes that the houses are the sources of the malice and he says that, "Her evin altında bir fesat yatıyor" (Burak, 2008: p. 53). The houses in the neighborhood comprise the definition of the *heimlich* as "concealed, kept from sight, so that others do not get to know of or about it" (Freud, 2007: p.223). It is the malice that is concealed and kept from sight, and this secret malice renders the neighborhood uncanny. The word "fesat" deserves much attention in order to interpret the position of the space. "Fesat" is defined as mischief-making, chaos, and disorder by Turkish Language Association.⁸ So, it is crucial to find

⁸http://www.tdk.gov.tr/index.php?option=com_bts&arama=kelime&guid=TDK.GTS.52bc8382edf4f4.24178153, accessed on 25.12.2013.

out the implied producer of the malice. Bilal Bađana behaves like a genealogist in order to reveal the concealed malice and its producers. He keeps records of those who move to the neighborhood and finds out that they are all relatives of Zembul. He measures the distance between his house and the other houses in the neighborhood.

BİLAL (*adımlarını sayarak yürür*): 1...2...3...4... 5... (*Durur*) 6... 7...8...9... (*Durur*) 10... 11... 12... 13... 14... 15... (*Durur*) Tam 15 adım... Geriye kadar tam 15 adım... Nahum Efendi'nin kapısı bizim evin kapısından tam 15 adım...

(*Durur. Hesaplar.*) Bir teneke gaz daha lazım.

(*Bilal sahneden çıkar.*)

(*Bilal sahneye girer.*)

BİLAL: Mahalledeki bütün evlerin bizim eve olan uzaklıkları adımlarım sayılarak, yürümek suretiyle, ölçülmeye başlanmış; ölçtüğüm evlerin, yani düşmanlarımın bizim eve olan uzaklıkları bir deftere yazılıp tespit edilmiştir [...] (Burak, 2008: p. 57).

The malice arises from those who have moved to the neighborhood recently. Zembul Allahanati's relatives, obviously Jewish people, are revealed as the people who cause malice, and they are denounced as enemies. So, the concealed malice is revealed by Bilal Bađana, but it should be hidden in order to have a *heimlich* neighborhood. Since it is revealed, there is only one way to turn this uncanny neighborhood to a familiar, domestic *heimlich* space. The neighborhood, i.e., the enemies, should be destroyed. It is impossible to carry out both Bilal Bađana's and Muzaffer Seza's desires because while Bilal Bađana wishes to live in a neighborhood which is proper for his old status as the son of an Ottoman soldier, Muzaffer Seza wants to have a neighborhood that fits well with the recently-established republic. These irreconcilable desires can only be realized through the destruction of this uncanny neighborhood with its hidden yet revealed malice. By the end of the play, while Bilal Bađana is planning to burn the neighborhood, the needle, which keeps going in Bilal Bađana's body during the play, reaches his heart and he dies. The neighborhood which can be considered as Bilal Bađana's home becomes an uncanny space, and Bilal Bađana cannot live there.

4.4 Conclusion

The house is a place that attracts attention because of the etymological analysis of the word *unheimlich*. The *heim* within the word *unheimlich* necessarily indicates home as a source of the uncanny effect. Since the uncanny emerges because something that should be concealed comes to light or when something familiar becomes unfamiliar, or vice versa, the house can be considered as the best place where the uncanny can appear as Vidler argues. He states that because of its domesticity, its being the intimate shelter, its comfort and the family histories that it contains, the house is the favorite space for uncanny interventions (Vidler, 1992: p.17).

The house in “Sedef Kakmalı Ev” turns into some place so uncanny during the story that Nurperi Hanım cannot continue to live there anymore. The house, full of old commanders’ belongings, does not permit Nurperi Hanım to live there, especially after the death of Ziya Bey, the owner of the house. The house is uncanny because of the belongings of the old commanders, and these objects can be regarded as buried alive. They immediately come up like dead people rise from the grave. These belongings are still alive because the real owners of the house Affan, Haydar, Tayyar, and Ziya Bey do not want to leave the house, and they reject yielding the house to Nurperi Hanım. In the end, Nurperi Hanım, as a poor migrant from Yanya, cannot have the house despite all the hard work she does for the commanders. The rich and reputable commanders do not leave the house even though they are dead. The house becomes uncanny for Nurperi Hanım with those buried-alive belongings.

The house can also be regarded as uncanny because of its architectural features. “Afrika Dansı” sets an example for this argument with the hospital in the story. Since the narrator stays there for a long time and spends nearly all her day in the hospital, the building can be considered as the house of the narrator. She has a room there, she eats there, she talks to the machine there, and she sleeps there, so it is much more like a home. Although the hospital is not directly described, it is clear that the places in the hospital are either in the basement or on the ground floor. This narration has considerable similarities to Boullée’s “buried architecture” argument. Although Boullée mentions literally buried buildings or constructions, the narrators’ space can be regarded as buried through the descriptions. Moreover, the dead-looking people standing in the

corridors and rooms seem to constitute the skeleton of the hospital building. Therefore, with its buried narration and dead skeleton, the hospital turns into somewhere uncanny.

Lastly, although it is not possible to make an analysis of the uncanniness of the house in *Sahibinin Sesi*, the neighborhood where the house is located provides a basis to consider the way that the uncanny is produced. Previously, the very familiar neighborhood became too unfamiliar, lost its domesticity, and turned into somewhere insecure. This transformation is mostly brought about by the migration of the Jewish relatives of Zembul Allahanati. Bilal Bağana and Muzaffer Seza, who are the doubles of each other, have different desires about becoming citizens of the new Republic or being a noble member of the old Ottoman circle. However, both Bilal Bağana and Muzaffer Seza consider these Jewish relatives as enemies because of their nationalistic tendencies. Vidler's argument about the space and its determinative feature is very crucial in order to interpret this condition in *Sahibinin Sesi*. He states that:

Its [space] contours, boundaries, and geographies are called upon to stand in for all the contested realms of identity, from the national to the ethnic; its hollows and voids are occupied by bodies that replicate internally the external conditions of political and social struggle, and are likewise assumed to stand for, and identify, the sites of such struggle. Techniques of spatial occupation, of territorial mapping, of invasion and surveillance are seen as instruments of social and individual control (Vidler, 1992: p. 167).

The Jewish people who become the new residents of the neighborhood are not welcomed by Bilal Bağana because the ethnic difference is unacceptable in terms of Bilal Bağana's desires. As the son of an Ottoman soldier, he is very arrogant and does not want to live together with those so-called common Jewish people. Furthermore, as a loyal citizen of the recently-established republic and due to the rising nationalist and anti-Semitic ideas in the 1930s, Jewish people are considered as enemies and the cause of malice in the neighborhood. When this hidden malice comes to light, the uncanny captures the neighborhood.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have tried to develop a new perspective to interpret Sevim Burak's works by analyzing the texts through the concept of the uncanny.

I aimed to show how the uncanny works, how it pervades and in the end captures all the construction of the texts from the characters to the narrative style and the spaces. I tried to find answers for the questions about how the uncanny affects the character construction and about what kinds of effects the uncanny have in the structure of the spaces. I tried to make analyses and interpretations in three themes by firstly following Freud's theory of the uncanny and then using Lacan's supplements to the concept. I also made use of the further studies of Nicholas Royle, Mladen Dolar, and Anthony Vidler in order to make a deeper analysis.

In the first chapter of the thesis, the concept of the double constituted the base of the analysis. The double emerges as the concealed and hidden parts of the characters and can be regarded as the object petit a because the double may contain the hidden desires of the characters. These hidden desires are mostly about the social norms which render the characters unsuitable because of their ethnicity, gender, or social status. Bilal Bağana and Muzaffer Seza as double characters in *Sahibinin Sesi* suffer from not being proper citizens of the recently-established Turkish Republic. Bilal Bağana both desires to protect his nobility that derives from his old Ottoman soldier-father and be a loyal citizen of the Turkish Republic as someone does his military service. Since he did not participate in the Independence War, he has to do his military service in order to be a loyal citizen of the state, so he takes identity card of Muzaffer Seza, who is a dead soldier. Very similarly, Zembul Allahanati changes her name into Sümbül because she does not want to be recognized as non-Muslim in this new state. These characters change their identities to hide themselves. Neither Bilal Bağana nor Zembul Allahanati wishes to be known by their former names, but they also do not want to lose their original names. Then, they repress their original names. The uncanny comes out in that very specific repression moment. The narrator of the short story "Pencere" can be considered with a similar view. The narrator observes her double, which symbolizes her hidden desires. Although it is not possible for her to go out of the room where she stands, her double walks in the terrace and looks out of the window. Thus, the double in

“Pencere” displays how the woman as narrator is stuck in the home and how the public sphere is not proper for her. The double, as the concealer of object petit a, reveals the tension between the social norms and characters’ impropriety within the order.

The second chapter is about the very deterministic feature of the uncanny: blurring the lines and causing a crisis of boundaries. Some of the characters in “Afrika Dansı”, *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar*, and *Sahibinin Sesi* create a living space for themselves by erasing the borders between life and death. Ziya Bey, for example, stays in a position between life and death so he can still make Nıvart and Melek Hanım feel his existence as the owner of the house and their lives. Or, the narrator in “Afrika Dansı” turns herself into a creature, or stands near the ocean buried up to her waist waiting for Jesus in order to create a way out for herself between the surgical operation and death. She can neither have an operation due to her fear nor die since she is healthy enough to live for a period. These characters eradicate the line between life and death to continue to exist. Ziya Bey does not want to leave the house to Melek and Nıvart, and the narrator in “Afrika Dansı” tries to find a way to live within the order which is constituted by the needles and paper pieces. The uncanny is the only path they can walk in order to pursue their desires. Especially, the narrator in “Afrika Dansı” resists obeying the rules of society, and she forms a life of her own by standing between life and death.

In the last chapter, departing from the etymological analysis of *unheimlich*, I aimed to analyze the spaces which cause uncanniness. The *heim* within the word *unheimlich* caused me to focus on the houses or the neighborhood which can be considered as home in Burak’s works. The house in “Sedef Kakmalı Ev” becomes an uncanny house because of the ghosts of the house owners and especially due to the old objects hidden in the attic. Since the ghosts of the owners of the house do not leave the house through the hidden objects, Nurperi Hanım cannot continue to live in the house. Although she has to leave the house because of the objects and ghosts, she still does not have a life outside of the house, and she disintegrates into pieces. As a woman from Yanya who does not have any social security other than Ziya Bey, she cannot continue to live. Bilal Bağana in *Sahibinin Sesi* can be considered as a character that is in a similar position with Nurperi Hanım. Bilal Bağana, with his double Muzaffer Seza, wants to burn the neighborhood because he thinks that the neighbors are Jewish and rich, but also that they are poor and common. Because of Bilal Bağana’s unattainable

desires to be both loyal and a proper citizen of Turkish Republic and to preserve his noble status as the son of an Ottoman soldier, he cannot bear both “Jewish and common” people. Bilal Bağana makes a plan to burn the neighborhood because the very familiar vicinity becomes unfamiliar for him due to his double Muzaffer Seza, the Jewish relatives of Zembul Allahnati, and some “foreign powers.” Different from these two situations, the hospital building in “Afrika Dansı” creates the uncanny because of its architectural description. Its sunken and dark construction and walls described as covered with dead and dead-looking people cause the uncanny feeling. This construction of the hospital makes it easier to understand the cause of the transformation of the narrator from a lively organism to an inanimate creature.

This study has three major limitations. First of all, although the language Sevim Burak uses in her texts is so unique that it is certainly worth analyzing, the study does not analyze how she creates a new language within the existing one. Nilüfer Güngörmüş’s study on the mother tongue and Sevim Burak’s literature indicates that Burak creates an artistic language out of her mother’s broken language (Erdem: 2005). Since Sevim Burak was ashamed of her mother when she was a child, this repressed respect and affection towards her come up through her texts. Secondly, Sevim Burak’s texts are not only written texts since visual texts are included within the works. These visual texts should not be thought of as supportive elements of the works since they usually stand in very critical positions as the constructor of the narrative. However, visual texts are not taken account of in this thesis. Lastly, although being Jewish is discussed throughout the thesis, the discussion is always restricted by ethnic identity and nationalism issues. Biblical connotations, frequently used by Sevim Burak in various texts, are not extensively covered.

Taking these limitations and the general discussion throughout the thesis into consideration, further questions can be asked about the language usage, visual analysis of the texts, and biblical references. First of all, how can the mother tongue issue be analyzed through the theory of the uncanny? How is the mother tongue repressed and then revealed uncannily in Sevim Burak’s texts? What kind of effects does it have on the ethnicity and gender discussions of the characters? Secondly, visual analysis can be considered as another aspect of a further study. Sevim Burak’s works can be interpreted completely if the visuals are included to the analysis because the visuals are not supplementary but fundamental and indispensable parts of the works. Especially, the

drawings in *Everest My Lord* or “On Altıncı Vay” can be regarded as the recurring of the repressed and analyzed as the uncanny elements. Lastly, the biblical references can constitute an important part of the interpretation process. Sevim Burak, as an author who attaches so much importance to the Old Testament, refers to the Old Testament, and some legends take place in the various parts of her works. Since there are several theories linking the *unheimlich* with Jewish history and Old Testament stories, some questions can be posed about the effects of the uncanny on the characters and their religious affiliations. Due to the repressed Jewish identities of some characters, it is very crucial to study the creation of the uncanny atmosphere because of the Old Testament stories.

The thesis shows that how the uncanny functions in Sevim Burak’s works through the analysis of the characters and space. Although there is not any evidence which indicates that the uncanny is used as a method intentionally by Sevim Burak, the thesis argues that the existence of the uncanny in the texts reveals a concealed political and social awareness. Despite the critics’ stating that Burak is not sensitive about ongoing problems, I tried to argue that Sevim Burak is quite sensitive even to the problems that are mentioned frequently nowadays in Turkey, like ethnicity, gender identity, or religious beliefs. It is possible to consider Burak’s recent popularity as uncanny because her works reveal something that should be hidden like problems about identity, ethnicity or gender. Her works uncannily disclose the “should be hidden” issues or conflicts.

Therefore, it is very critical to declare the importance of the uncanny in analyzing Sevim Burak’s works. As mentioned above, the characters create their doubles, blur the lines between life and death or animacy or inanimacy, and live in very frightening and dangerous places. Bilal Bağana tries to be one of the republican elite without leaving his old identity, the narrator in “Afrika Dansı” turns herself into a corpse in order to survive, Melek still lives in a house with an ostensibly dead man in order to own the house and not to be a homeless. All these characters, indeed, are not welcomed in the order that is constructed by the authorities. They strive to be proper members of the society, but because of integral parts of their identities which should remain hidden, they cannot exist in the society as proper individuals. Therefore, these characters create their doubles, blur the lines, or live in dreadful spaces in order to survive. The characters always hide or repress their gender identities, ethnic identities,

or religious affairs in order to be individuals accepted by society and the state. Certainly, these repressed properties come out, meaning that something concealed comes to light. Therefore, the uncanny defined very basically as the “recurrence of the repressed” can be regarded as the best way to analyze Burak’s works. Since the characters do not have any other way to express them, they uncannily appear in the narrative or spaces turn into uncanny places. The uncanny becomes the only way out for the characters in Burak’s works.

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