

Political Criticism in Turgay Nar's Play Titled *Gizler Çarşısı (Market of Secrets)*

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Abstract—Ever since Modernist and Capitalist systems started to steer human life, critical approaches towards these two phenomenons have treated as subjects in literary works. In such literary works, which question humanbeing's perception of ethics, the relationship between power and person brings along the options of being included in the system and rejecting it. Standing against the "inevitable ending" which turns humanbeing into an automat defined as "a bureaucratic steel cage" by Weber, Marx has relatively more optimistic attitude about the possibility of human to escape from the system.

In his theatre play titled *Gizler Çarşısı*, Turgay Nar narrates how human is corrupted through violence and control methods of power within the scope of hierarchical relations in the world. Messages that the author aims to give to readers/audience may differ in almost every stage; yet the main theme can be read as tragedy of humanbeing which keeps to be objectified in front of the power. The strength behind money and power ensures a control over crowds via violence, memory impairment and amnesia. The author ironically narrates how humanbeing comes into power and then systematically puts pressure on the same species in order to disidentify them and include them into the system. Accordingly, civilization does not prevent humanbeing's insanity; the one who feeds this wild order and sacrifices oneself to it is nothing else than humanbeing. In the work, it is also emphasized that humanbeing is going to face "blinding and corruption" as soon as the questioning about the world comes to an end.

In his work titled *Gizler Çarşısı*, Turgay Nar ironically narrates how *Beşikçi (Cradle Manufacturer)*, an ordinary citizen, is systematically desensitized by the power and turned into a beast that does not hesitate to kill even his own child, through symbolical characters.

Keywords—*Modern Theatre, Turkish Literature, Turgay Nar, Gizler Çarşısı, Political Criticism.*

I. INTRODUCTION

MODERNISM deals with setting up a political system and along with it, a community that is integrated with the system. This system tries different branches which have political, psychological, economical and sociological extensions to integrate its moral values. Every kind of way is rightful for the ruler, who is also the executive of the system. The ruling party focuses on the outcomes and presents two kinds of ethical understanding for the public: One of them is "morality of responsibility" (Rational morality) and the second one is "absolute value morality. According to the first one, actions are the mandatory outcomes of capitalist-burocratic

system. The moment the person does that mandatory action, he becomes automated and a responsible officer of the system. S/he assigns all his/her autorisation to the system and becomes alienated to himself, others and the World. There is no way that absolute morality system can have a place in the system. The system defines every kind of emotional evaluation as irrational because of being vague and unpredictable. As a result, actions mean failure or being carried out of the system. The environment created by this ambivalent situation is explained by Weber as "iron cage." Even though the situation alienates people and automates them, in such environment, the only choice is this: voluntarily or not; getting trapped in the iron cage. However, Marx is full of hopes contrary to Weber. It is possible to get away from this alienating system. (Kılınc, 2008: 220)

Theatre has a major effect on changing the community. Erwin Piscator, accepted as the founder of documentary theatre explains the purpose of the theatre with this sentence: "We ignored the word "art" completely from our programme, our 'plays' have been reflecting our urgent needs and aim to affect contemporary issues as a 'political activity.' Contrarily, his student Bertold Brecht always measures the value of the art work by looking at the effect of its power to change to community. (Kalkan Kocabay, 2004: 104-105). The text of "Market of Secrets" by Turgay Nar generally talks about a crib master who happens to be a murderer in a project that is held by the ruler and eventually gets drained away by losing all his memory. In the play, the author criticizes politically how the ruling power becomes rotten by using constant violence and taking control in the face of people's hierarchical relationships in the world. Although we can see that the message which is supposed to be given changes in every scene, the main theme is always the objectivization of people in front of the ruling power. The fear and the violence policies on top, the ruling power creates a psychological understanding that enables the people and community to behave outside their own will and information. This is names as "mind control." (Dimdik Emeksiz, 2016: 1088).

In this art work, it is hardly unnoticable that Nar tries to establish a perception management with the help of the ruling power in the play named *Dr. F.*, It is highly common to use such perception management in the modern world. It is seen that governments and several effective groups deal with some kind of perception management in order to convince people to accept their policies. "By stimulating the feelings like fear, anger and excitement, deliberately or not, when the brain has been damaged enough, several beliefs can be easily imposed to people. Some of the most common effects of those kind of

situations are the temporary judgement disorder and highly susceptible to being affected. In the groups, it can be understood as the 'mob mentality'; it is in its most magnificent form when there is an epidemic, war or simply, when people are highly susceptible to outer effects and so, they fear a lot." (Keith, 2006: 40-41).

In the art work, this objectivization and blinding is established to the community by the help of the character; Beşikçi (Cradle Manufacturer). The representer of the ruling power, Dr. F. has to find a victim for every theory that he has come up with. However; at the end of the game, Beşikçi (Cradle Manufacturer) leaves his place to Cüce (Dwarf / Pigmy). In this sense, modernism makes the person that they impose to people as a functioning device and encircles them with the objects. This can be explained in this way. Modern life objectifies the people by serving a main transformation in the ecology of human beings. Just as in the example of wolf kid, living with wolves and suddenly turns into a wolf (Baudrillard, 2012:16), people also integrate themselves to the environment that they live in and take the shape of what they are inside.

Interpenetration and fluidity, one of the qualities of the grotesque expression "body/linguistic" category that Turgay Nar used most of his work of arts, it's the combination of what is mythical and what is historical. In this work of art, the deterioration of usual metaphors and metonymys and apposition of categories which it is not usual to see in the daily life, or the grotesque scope which we can get by deteriorate them, reflects to the stage as the life-style of half-bodies who carry the potential of endless interpenetration. First scene of the play is the White Lily's (Meryem) pursuit of his abducted son (İsa) and Emedeni's, whose half-body turns into a rose buds which is about to be rot, pursuit of his hopeless love. The siblings start to a deep conversation with longing. White Lily tells his brother that, a savagery is about to come. After that, siblings turn into a depiction and they watch the stories of speechless merchants who resembles to the East's ancient markets, the washer of the dead bodies, merchants of the children, finders, hapless girls, merchants of the souls and the organs. In this chapter, we can see the Beşikçi's rush to Kör Sahaf (Blind seller of secondhand books) and Dr. F. to make them read the recipe which he took from an old woman*. Cüce (Dwarf / Pigmy) is the only one who knows where is Dr. F. Beşikçi saves Cüce (Dwarf / Pigmy) from crowds lynch, passes labyrinths and finds Dr.F. with Beşikçi's guidance. Dr. F. read the recipe and they gather the materials for the magic. To make the cradle, they need a magical knife, a heart of a description, nails from spine of a snake and bones of two children. They get the heart from Emedeni's description, find the nails and children to strip their skin. One of the children is the son of White Lily's, and the other is the Beşikçi's son himself. After the order is done, the old woman comes to take her cradle, we also learn that the old woman is the mother of Cüce, after the old woman enters to the cradle, she dies. Cüce (Dwarf / Pigmy) confesses that everything is a scientific experiment of Dr.F. Beşikçi, under the effect of what he is going through, goes mad and kills Cüce and he becomes the new watcher and guidance of the time labyrinth. He will make

new cradles in that labyrinth.

II. INNOCENCE WHICH IS MARKETING IN THE MARKET OF SECRETS

Turgay Nar, in the Market of Secrets, creates a chain of savagery, which is not possible to show who is responsible for that savagery, to mirror the human beings loss of innocence and blinding in the sense of hierarchy. This blinding is actually the reference of modern human's destruction of any ethic value to enter to the system. At the beginning, human was innocent, but the ruling power turns it into an object and make them to do every kind of savagery. It is the human beings itself who are the savages and victims. Turgay Nar, uses grotesque factors to make his work's fiction in a strong ground. According to the Bakhtin, modernism tears grotesque from it's folkloric sides. Now, human beings are alone and unguarded in a scary, darkness and strange world. Modern grotesque turns into a representation of "unconsciousness" which is an abstract and uncontrolled concept for human beings (Nas, 2013: 16). Beşikçi (Cradle Manufacturer) finds his existence by making cradles which he can feel responsible conscientiously. Even though Cüce and Dr.F., warned him sometimes, he focuses on that interesting cradle under the effect of losing his consciousness. Violence is the fact that sometimes used by modern theatre, it is also a fact that which is used by ruling power to base it's system and also to reveal the modern grotesque, which is full of with horror and terror, in the literary texts by carrying the loss of bodily surface to it's peak. While telling the violence, the cruelty of people who are earning unfairly, the ruling power's way of use it's power on the individuals, author chooses the narration of modern grotesque by combining the violence of ruling power and problems of life and death. The possibilities of that narration make this play efficient. Author, while fictioning the lynch scene of the Cüce, he uses every kind of problematic type of people who have the capacity to make that action: "*A crowd which is filled with disorder, creepiness, undiscipline: Lepras, Epilepsy, Careless, Beggars, Plague, Expelled, Insane, Poor villagers, a couple of dead people which is chewed, the women with pox...*" This portrayal persuades the audience and makes that action normal. The torture and humiliation made to the Cüce in the Market of Secrets, happen at the atmosphere in the carnival. Text's reference to the civilization, could not stop the human being's insanity. Beşikçi (Cradle Manufacturer) is chosen by the order; he is an experimental guinea pig. It is the order itself which creates the torture and the torturer, and it is the humans who breast-feeds that order. Beşikçi (Cradle Manufacturer), at the end of that savage game, which he attends for money, loses his innocence and becomes a helper for that cruelty (Ünlü Aycıl, 2002: 129).

At the same time, the play criticizes the irony of how the slaughter tries to be shown as something innocent by using innocent images. A torture theorist, Dr. F. has an intellectual look and also deeply admires the music of Wagner. (Relationship of Ruling Power-Music) He also reads Baudrillard. He has the personality of a good father, he works as neat as a scientist. Cüce's father is a master of torture. The author uses symbolical, expressionist and surrealistic features

and makes the play open to new comments. In the play, which is very hard to be put on scene, the author makes the torture scenes as a parody with the help of Cüce. (Ezici, 2009: 28-29). Modern literary texts use parody and irony to turn very serious messages into funny things and by doing this, they aim to decrease the negative interpretations. When we look from this side, irony can be explained as the code which can mean many things. Irony ignores having only one meaning, and parody ignores being the “only text”. Parody plays its role on the texture base while irony makes it on the semantic base. (Linda Hutcheon) (Göksel, 2006: 363).

In Turgay Nar’s works, the characters which are told to be “half-bodies” and sometimes happened to be freaks can also be presented as innocent and naive. The reason behind that is the causation of the characters. And this is also a result of how mastered the author is at creating characters. “By following the way to characterize, a human is drawn to show an artistic feature when s/he presents individual behaviours but at the same time communal and mental behaviours. Creating right characters are based on handling them in complex and intriguing progresses. Character is not typical and responding to other characters in its own individual way. To make it happen, it carries a historical typicality; as long as it is typical, it carries a realistic speech. When it is taken out of its concrete being, it turns to be an abstract personification and becomes a metaphor.” (Çalışlar, 1993: 40). In the play, Cüce (Dwarf / Pigmy), Kör Sahaf (Blind seller of secondhand books), Yabancı Gözlemci (Foreign Observer), Yerel Yetkili (Local Authority), Dr. F. and Beşikçi (Cradle Manufacturer) are the characters that can be said as typical. One of the features that makes the play powerful is the mastery of the author’s using opposite features together. In the text, Cüce gives his job as an identity collector and a guide of the labyrinth. This is a reference to the people’s disidentification. Cüce says that the court has let him free providing he never kills his father again and he is short. He also says that after his father’s death, his mother has grown beard and shaves it everyday.

The author uses the symbols of “well” and “labyrinth” mostly. In one of his interviews, he explains his thoughts like this: “Human is all about a well and a labyrinth. These two always change places. Sometimes the body is the well, the soul is the labyrinth... All of a sudden, the soul becomes the labyrinth, soul becomes the well... The god of this endless power is time. What it says, it happens. Being born and dying are the same things. They happen at the same time. The human will not be able to solve the problems about himself and the universe’s existence. S/he will always find things to keep him busy. A chaotic struggle between his mind and insanity will never leave him. There is nowhere to go or nowhere to hide. S/he thinks that she rules the universe but only has a weight where s/he stands. S/he is surrounded by his stupidity because s/he thinks he is superior thanks to the technology. Is there a different creature that harms the nature and his own species?” (Özlem Günder, 2013:7.).

III. COMMUNITIES THAT ARE DISIDENTIFICATED AND LEFT THEIR RIGHTS IN A SAFETY

Turgay Nar never stops criticizing politically in the way of irony. In his works, political views are presented in a parodical way as symbols. The author, while constructing the plot, does not neglect giving messages to the reader/audience. In an interview with him, he links his intense symbolic language to his taste of Maurice Blanchot. (Nar, 05/10/2007) Turgay Nar indicates the danger of being “blind and rotten” at the very moment that s/he stops questioning about the world he lives in. Turgay Nar, in a different work he wrote, says: “The moment we stop questioning the world, the community, our identity, our life, crime and punishment, the rottenness, the failure and blinding takes place. Blinding starts in our minds first. And then, it hits our eyes and our tongue. We live in the world where it already hit our tongue. No sentence is enough to tell us what happens today. Because the name of the time is death. What is left only is our hearts. Maybe some pieces are still left somewhere. O human beings! If there is still left, give it to the pigeons. Jean Rostand shall not speak for vain: ‘Every piece of hope can be fed by human beings, including the hope for being erased from this world.’” (Nar, 2015: 76-78) In almost every work of his including *Cyclopes*, *Garbage*, and *Market of Secrets*, the main concern is always this. The author uses different narration techniques and puts his talents on art while he is trying to give his messages: “The main action in this play is money, power, ruling power relations and the construction of the play starts with an epic, mythological, mysterious events. In that hierarchical relationship chain, the techniques of controlling, violence and killing (intertextually, identification, the processes of questioning are also included in all the abstract and concrete forms), they are highly stressed as the dominant motives that are not easy to solve. (Ezici, 2009: 28).

In *Market of Secrets*, when Yabancı Gözlemci (Foreign Observer) randomly comes to the place where Cüce (Dwarf / Pigmy) is being lynched, asked why the crowd runs away when they see them. Yerel Yetkili (Local Authority) answers that the community is not used to the strangers and it takes time for them to get settled in democratic way of living. In this way, he also refers to their absent-mindedness and actually to their disidentification:

“In our country, most of the belongings that are forgotten are the identities and gloves. Almost everyone loses their identities in some places once in ten years. And they forget what they eat, for sure. Go ask one of them what he ate the other night, I bet he never answers. Well, actually, that is one good thing.” (Nar, 2010: 50).

Turgay Nar talks about a community which eases the ruling power’s job by forgetting everything, not remembering the negative things that take place and he refers to that situation by talking about the forgotten identities. Yabancı Gözlemci (Foreign Observer) is a kind of criticism which deals with under developed country governors’ seeing the West as a consulting mechanism. The West is known as being democratic and Yabancı Gözlemci intrigues the

“human rights.” The answer coming from Yerel Yetkili’s mouth is a harsh criticism with an ironical style:

“Do those people have any rights?” asks Yabancı Gözlemci (Foreign Observer) and Yerel Yetkili answers: “Rights? Human rights... Well, of course they do have their rights. Ask them if you want... Ah, I forgot to tell you... We give those rights step by step... Well, it is useful to make them to be used to saving... That’s why we set up a bank with foreign fund. We save their rights in this bank’s rent safety boxes.” (s.51)

In *Cyclops*, Turgay Nar tells us ironically the victimization of people due to the mistakes of administrative level just like in every work. In a community, the problem is not the community, the administrators. The fact that the administration is more effective than people in producing solution can be seen as deep reading. (Şengül, 2008: 623-624) When Yabancı Gözlemci (Foreign Observer) brings up the “torture” issue, they postpone it due to time deficiency. When the committee leaves, Yerel Yetkili’s sentences are full of messages: *“We appreciated your attention. We continue to work in our country, but for our investigation, we want samples from their organs like skull, arm, leg. We will take them with us. Do not forget to add reproductive organ. We need this for ecological agriculture.”*

Beşikçi is confused by what he has seen. When he asks to Cüce about them; Cüce:

“Tourism tour operators... They are producing genes for ecological agriculture...” then he continues: “They are strange observers. They walk around in the colonies which they made poor to distribute human rights gum for teeth health to the natives. Their cultural fround is their background. They carry imaginative and pathologic political maps and rulers which is made by human bone in their taint. The man who travels with them, the authorized... He is the diplomatic officer of the colonization. His monthly fee is an American hamburger. Lying is become his instict now. He is so cunning about villagers and he is doing the jobs of political bureaucracy’ doggery... (While the committee is leaving, mad one yells after them): “Give me the rights of my mind! It stays with them!...” (p. 52)

Author in the Market of Secrets, is in an effort to give a different message at the every scene of the play. Besides the political critic towards the ruling power, West’s politics about cultural assimilation, West’s colonial politics on the Middle east countries has shown to the audience in an ironic way. In the play, ruling power limits even people’s natural rights and stange observers affects public’s change as society engineers. “Uncontrolled power of crowd which is filled with horror and terror is purchased by controlled power of money and ruling power. Because of the ruling power’s pressure people lose their identity, ruling power approves being absent minded and loss of mind. Human rights realization is now at the hands of foreign funds. (Ünlü Ayçıl, 2002: 130-131).

Turgay Nar’s success about his texts lays in his creations of complicated and original characters which are opposite to each other: “ For a theatre play, success is the creation of complicated and mysterious characters. So, play overcomes every comment and for the first time it creates the possibility

of new comments. For this reason, while trying to define his characteristics, we need to look author’s intention. Actor’s, director’s, theatre historian’s even the psychologist’s views may help the text’s deep examination (Keskin, 2008: 65). In this play, besides the characters like Cüce, Beşikçi (Cradle Manufacturer) , Yabancı Gözlemci (Foreign Observer) and Yetkili, Dr. F. represents the ruling power and it gives an original quality to the text. In the play, when Beşikçi says that he does not know anything about Dr.F., Cüce introduces him like that;

“He is a scientist. Nobody knows in which university he works in. His proficiency is at the branches of examination and methods of blaming. Also, he is the best in the world at the methods of torturing. He just creates new thoughts on that area, he builds the theory of that job. It means that he is the desk-bound engineer of torture. He is good at calculating. He is not good at practice, but he uses his practice on laboratory works as an amateur with his own style. He knows everything about human psychology and anatomy. He observed the common unconsciousness codes and social reflexes. He tries to understand mass anatomy of emotions, reactions and even the virtue. According to his conclusions he will use new methods of torturing and new datas (p. 61, 87). His last project is, “In torture, is the theory of processing by making the psychological effects on the human abstract.” (p. 72)

One of the features that feeds the modern theatre is the scientific developments. The developments in the field of science and technology also affect the philosophy. Materialist philosophy takes place of idealist philosophy. The synthesis between sciences develops and the artists choose to use science in their works: “Darwin’s theories on origin of species, evolution of people, the laws of heritage, natural selection affected the writers massively. The aimless struggle observed in the community is presented as the major law of the nature. The awareness that humans and animals have the same shape makes this struggle more cruel. Claude Bernard in physiology, Sigmund Freud’s findings in psychology have affected the narration in the same way. The thought “a human destined to the environment” which is the focus of realistic theory is the production of scientific findings.” (Şener, 2012: 167). We see that Turgay Nar uses scientific findings with the help of Dr. F. The author uses medical features for torture and by giving the doctor an intellectual and art-lover, he tries to make him look innocent. “Dr. F. is quite similar to the doctor who uses people as guinea pigs for science in Kafka’s *Castle* and *Faustus*. Dr. F. and labyrinth are the implications of all the institutions’ that collect ruling certainties and the way they teach violence. The play spreads the ruling power and violence in a Kafkaesque way. Castle and Town becomes the Labyrinth and the Market. The market, just like in the Castle, is the ruling area where people can only go with a guide and controlled by Labyrinth. In this area, everything is damaged. Beşikçi is constructively the match of the officer Kafka in Castle. Even though Kafka gets beaten by every ruling power, he still questions them and eventually he chooses the voluntary work and denies the avarice and devotion without hesitation. Cüce (Dwarf / Pigmy) and Beşikçi (Cradle Manufacturer) care at this point coming

together on serving Faust/Mefistofeles (Dr. F.) Despite the emotional effect of the insanity of Beşikçi at the end of the game, it can be said that) his being objectified in front of the ruling power, even though it is appropriate thematically, his design of the character –even as a anti-hero- is ineffective. (Ezici, 2009: 28).

Turgay Nar, prefers the poetic language under the influence of being poet. This tendency, saves his art from being common and makes it a lyrical text. Poem is one of the writings of the word. Authors, by using a poetic language and by making it subtle, they contribute to creation of poetic dream. Poetic dream's examination by phenomenological methods helps the examination of the text from the side of psychoanalysis (Bachelard, 2012: 4). The development and application of stylistic features such as "poetic language" "individuality of the language" "image" "symbol" "epic style" and the other categories all together with the complete stylistic devices included(no matter how they are understood in different ways by other critics), to the one-language and one-style genres, it is completely aimed at in the narrow meaning of the word's poetic genres."

IV. CONCLUSION

Eventually, Turgay Nar, with his narration styles, intertextuality, his concept which belongs to the other cultures, his connections between psychology-criminology and literature makes him important in the Turkish literature. Author, creates a new fictional world in the audience's minds by creating utopic places and unique characters. His references towards to the historical and religious characters and divine texts make him close to the worldwide authors. He tries to leave a permanent mark inside the audience's brain by visualizing his themes. Turgay Nar does what Kafka and Camus want to do in their novels in his genre of theatre. This approach makes his plays hard to be put on the scene, his efforts on carrying fiction to an intellectual base, will make him worldwide artist.

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