

# Identity Problem Through the “Sea” Theme in the Works of Cevat Şakir

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## Abstract

“Identity Problem Through the ‘Sea’ Theme in the Works of Cevat Şakir”

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for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, 2019

Professor Asım Karaömerlioğlu, Thesis Advisor

In this thesis the identity problem in literary works of Cevat Şakir (known as “Balıkçı”) will be studied, in terms of his approach to the “sea”. In his works, a systematic discussion of a genesis thesis cannot be seen. Instead, identities found in his literary production do not create a homogenous whole and it is difficult to find a clear answer to solve the identity problem of Turkish Republic in his works. His works are not academic and do not propose strict explanations. He tries to construct a Mediterranean identity through the “sea” element. However, he does not prepare an agenda to explain his theories clearly. Instead, one may not separate his fictional books from his essay books. His so-called historical approach becomes popular because it goes hand in hand with the official cultural policy of regime. His national narratives could be explained with Homi K. Bhabha’s concept of “ambivalence” and Partha Chatterjee’s “thematic-problematic” dichotomy. Intriguingly, his so-called historical approach gets popular because he puts forward the view that Turkish history is secular therewith, he defends the idea that Turkish identity was corrupted during Ottomans’ dynasty. In parallel, his approach had a remarkable place in official culture policy of Republican Regime. As it will be demonstrated in this research, Cevat Şakir is a popular author who created a new national narrative in Turkish literature with the identity problem through the “sea” element therefore he has still a place in literary canon today as well.

32.000 words

## Özet

“Cevat Şakir’in Eserlerinde ‘Deniz’ Temasına Bağlı Olarak Kimlik Sorunsalı”

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Bu tezde, Cevat Şakir’in (Balıkçı) edebi eserlerindeki kimlik sorunu deniz teması üzerinden incelenecektir. Bu çalışma Balıkçı’nın tarihçi yahut teorisyen olmadığını fakat edebiyatta deniz temasına bağlı olarak Türk kimliğini milli bir anlatı olarak inşa ettiğini göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Eserlerinde sistemli bir yaratılış tezi görülmez. Bu bağlamda, eserlerinde yer alan kimlikler Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nin kimlik krizini çözme noktasında homojen bir bütün teşkil etmez. Eserleri akademik olmamakla birlikte anlaşılır çözümler ihtiva etmez. Balıkçı, deniz unsurundan hareketle bir Akdeniz kimliği oluşturmaya çalışır. Ancak, teorilerini açık bir şekilde ortaya koyan bir plan hazırlamaz. Bununla beraber, edebi eserleriyle denemeleri üslup bakımından birbirinden ayrılmaz. Yine de sözde tarihsel yaklaşımı popüler olur çünkü resmi kültür politikasına oldukça uygun düşer. Onun yarattığı milli anlatılar Homi K. Bhabha’nın “belirsizlik” kavramıyla ve Partha Chatterjee’nin “tematik-problematik” ikilemiyle açıklanabilir. Buna paralel olarak Balıkçı’nın tarihsel yaklaşımı Cumhuriyet rejiminin resmi kültür politikasında dikkat çekici bir yer kazanır. Bu çalışmada gösterileceği üzere Balıkçı, Türk edebiyatında deniz temasına bağlı olarak yeni bir milli anlatı yaratmıştır ve günümüzde dahi edebiyat kanonunun içerisinde yerini korumaktadır.

32.000 kelime



This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father, Ali Süreyya Yetkin.





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## Introduction

In this thesis the identity problem in literary works of Cevat Şakir, known as “The Fisher of Halicarnassus”, will be studied. This work intends to demonstrate that Balıkçı succeeded creating a popular national narrative in Turkish literature through the “sea” element. In his works, a systematic discussion of the identity problem cannot be seen. Instead, identities found in his literary production do not create a homogenous whole and it is difficult to find a clear solution to solve the identity problem in his works. In other words, his approach to the identity problem is ambivalent and there lays a dichotomy between his historical approach and the historical possibilities. In this respect, the methodology of this thesis is based on Partha Chatterjee’s distinction “the thematic-the problematic” and Homi K. Bhabha’s concept of “ambivalence” for national narratives. Chatterjee (1993, 38) defines the “thematic” as the system “which provides a framework of elements and rules for establishing relations between elements” and the “problematic” is the consistence of “concrete statements about possibilities justified by reference to thematic”. Furthermore, he explains that “the contradictoriness” caused by the thematic is adopted by nationalist thought “at the level of discourse”. (Ibid, 40) In parallel, Homi K. Bhabha underlines the role of narration during the nation-building process. In similar to Chatterjee, Bhabha emphasizes the liminality and the ambivalence of the nation as a narration:

the ambivalent antagonistic perspective of nation as narration will establish the cultural boundaries of the nation so that they may be acknowledged as ‘containing’ thresholds of meaning that must be crossed, erased, and translated in the process of cultural production. (Bhabha 2000, 4)

In this sense, by adapting Chatterjee’s “the thematic-the problematic” distinction it is intended to show that Balıkcı’s works are the examples of national narrative based on a dichotomy between his historical approach and the historical possibilities. Moreover, it is intended to demonstrate the ambivalence of his literary works as national narratives by adapting Bhabha’s concept.

During the Tanzimat era writing novels by using old tradition of storytelling was popular because the aim of Tanzimat authors was to educate people and, in this regard, they did not hide their personalities and their perceptions of morality in their literary works. However, by the beginning of the Servet-i Fünun movement, Turkish authors adapted professional writing technics from European literature. The difference of Servet-i Fünun authors that they were well-educated and they learned foreign languages. Consequently, they were open to the influence of European literature. Engrossingly, as a well-educated person speaking English and French, Balıkcı did not try to improve the quality of his literary style but he chose returning to naïf writing technics of the Tanzimat authors.

On the other hand, Balıkcı was one of the most influential figures of Turkish intelligentsia during the 1930s and especially during the 1940s. He was joined by respected intellectuals of his period such as Azra Erhat, Vedat Günyol, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu. It must be noted that Balıkcı did not write any specific work about “Blue Anatolianism” but Azra Erhat published a book entitled “Mavi Anadolu” (“Blue Anatolia”) in 1957 and thereafter she published another book entitled “Mavi Yolculuk” (“Blue Travel”) in 1962. In “Mavi Yolculuk” she writes that Balıkcı is the founder of the “blue travel” and Sabahattin Eyüboğlu is the name father. (Erhat 1979, 18) Moreover, she offers “blue travel” as the remedy to the alienation of urban people. She regards urban people as individuals who “lost their connection with the nature” and who “live under artificial conditions”. (Ibid, 29) Here, one may clearly observe that Azra Erhat comes up with a concept of “Blue Anatolianism” in daily life, making a critic

of modernity. Intriguingly, Balıkçı was accepted as the founder of the movement even by Azra Erhat, although she was the one who founded the term “Blue Anatolia”.

Furthermore, Balıkçı published two historical novels, “Uluç Reis” in 1962 and “Turgut Reis” in 1966. Actually, he did not follow “Blue Anatolianist” themes when Azra Erhat aimed to construct an agenda in the same years to strengthen the movement. In contrast to Erhat, Balıkçı followed popular writing style by giving a place to nationalist, xenophobic and even racist themes in his historical novels. Intriguingly, the influence of Balıkçı was never challenged even after years. For instance, in the preface of “Blue Anatolia”’s third edition published in 1978, Azra Erhat complains that the development of Bodrum did not take place as Balıkçı wished. (Erhat 1978, 5) In 1969, Balıkçı published “Deniz Gurbetçileri” (“Exiles of the Sea”) and he welcomed “Blue Anatolianist” elements again to his novel.

It must be noted that in the 1960s “Blue Anatolianists” had a conflict with the government for the first time. In 1964, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu was on trial because of a book of Gracchus Babeuf entitled “Devrim Yazıları” (“Essays of Revolution”) translated by him and by Vedat Günyol into Turkish. In 1971, Vedat Günyol, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu and Azra Erhat were on trial, they were accused of “founding an illegal organization” and they were sent to prison for four months. (Yıldırım 2012, 296) Despite the conflict of “Blue Anatolianists” with the government, the “movement” kept its popularity in intellectual circles, until the 1990s with the efforts of the second generation Blue Anatolianists such as Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, İsmet Zeki Eyüboğlu and Melih Cevdet Anday. Moreover, the eighth president of the Turkish republic, Turgut Özal published a book entitled “Turkey in Europe and Europe in Turkey” in 1991 which clearly reflected a “Blue Anatolianist” point of view. One might easily see that the book suggested the cultural synthesis of Blue Anatolianists in the 1990s. In this respect, it will be fruitful to talk about what “Blue Anatolianism” is and what the “Blue Anatolianist” elements are.

In the 1930s, it must be noted that the aim of the government was to prove that Turkish people were not from “yellow race” but from “white race” by anthropological data. The anthropological data were used to defend the idea that Turks and Europeans had the same roots. In similar to the regime’s goals,



Balıkçı offered a “Mediterranean identity” which is a synthesis of the Turkish culture and the Western culture by drawing a line from West Anatolian Ancient Civilizations until present day. In other words, he moved the origin of Turks from Central Asia to Asia Minor or Ionia. Indeed, that is what Bhabha names “double-time” and that is where the people become “the object” and “the subject” of “nationalist pedagogy” in a present coming from a mythological past. (Bhabha 2000, 297) Balıkçı’s efforts of melting two different cultures in the same pot form “the thematic” and clearly historical possibilities form “the problematic” as Chatterjee (Chatterjee 1993, 41) points out:

As ‘historical conditions’ change, so are new political possibilities thought out; the problematic undergoes a transformation within the same structure of discourse. With the help of the problematic, then, we seek to establish the political location as well as the historicity of nationalist discourse.

In this point of view, “Blue Anatolianism” was considered as a remedy to the identity problem of the Republican Period of Turkey to construct a new historicity going hand in hand with physical anthropology studies. On the other hand, in the cultural field, one may say that Yahya Kemal was the first intellectual who brings “Mediterranean identity” into question contemplating on “Neo-Hellenism”. However, Yahya Kemal starts with Turkish history, by the victory of Manzikert. In contrast to Yahya Kemal, Balıkçı starts the beginning of Turkish history with the ancient civilizations of Anatolia.

On the other hand, Balıkçı had a populist tendency linked with social realism. He wrote about difficult life conditions of “sea workers” such as sailors, divers, fishermen and about the peasant-landlord conflict. In other words, he shifted his focus from upper or middle-class people to lower class people. For instance, in his historical novels, he did not regard Ottoman sultans as history

makers. Instead, he regarded figures such as Turgut Reis<sup>1</sup> and Uluç Reis<sup>2</sup> from common people who made a career with their intelligence, with their diligence and with their moral qualities as the makers of Turkish history. Indeed, it could be observed that Balıkcı turned his efforts on inventing a national narrative coming from an unknown past as if he is a historian.

In this thesis, Balıkcı's works will be analyzed to see how he created a national narrative through the "sea" theme and how his works make a part of nationalist discourse. Intriguingly, Balıkcı has always been regarded as a theoretician or as a historian and his ideas have been challenged by academics although he was not a scholarly authority but a popular narrator. In this thesis, he is not regarded as an authority of history. Yet, he is regarded as someone who creates a popular national narrative.

There are many books, academic or non-academic articles, master and doctorate thesis about Balıkcı and "Blue Anatolianism". In most cases, the researchers turned their efforts on defining him as an authority of Turco-Ottoman past. Almost without exception he is accepted as one of the prominent theoreticians of the official cultural policy of Republican Period of Turkey. Secondly, on the one hand, he was regarded as humanist, social realist and Third-Worldist, on the other hand, he was regarded as a nationalist, xenophobic and racist. All researchers prove their arguments by giving references to Balıkcı's works but they do not turn their efforts on seeing the big picture, instead they try to find a label for him. Here, I assert that Balıkcı cannot be

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- 1 Turgut Reis (Dragut), was born in Seravalos, in 1487. He became a levend -the term is used for Ottoman marines- at a young age and he had a brilliant carrier. When he died in 1565, he was the governor of Algeria. His was known as "the Sword of Islam" in Ottoman sources. (Bostan, İdris. "Turgut Reis" Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi. Accessed February 11, 2019. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/turgut-reis>)
  - 2 Uluç Reis (Kılıç Ali Pasha) was probably born at the beginning of 16th century. He was captured by Cezayirli Ali Ahmed Reis in 1520 and he got converted into Islam. Thus, he became a levend too at a young age. In 1574 he became the chief admiral of Ottoman navy forces. He was known as "the Great Captain". He died in 1587. (Bostan, İdris. "Kılıç Ali Paşa" Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi. Accessed February 11, 2019. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/kilic-ali-pasa>)

categorized in a particular tendency, instead, the multitude of his thoughts create an ambivalence which is the most important characteristic of a national narrative.

In this thesis, my methodological sources are Partha Chatterjee's book entitled "Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World-A Derivate Discourse" and "Nation and Narration" edited by Homi K. Bhabha. My primary sources are the literary works of Balıkcı to comprehend his national discourse through his texts. In parallel, the arguments found in his literary books are compared with his claims mentioned in his essays. Balıkcı's books entitled "Hey Koca Yurt, Düşün Yazıları, Anadolu Efsaneleri, Anadolu Tanrıları, Altıncı Kıta-Akdeniz, Merhaba Anadolu, Anadolu'nun Sesi" ("Ô Great Homeland, Articles of Thoughts, Anatolian Legends, Anatolian Gods, Second Continent-The Mediterranean, Hello Anatolia, The Voice of Anatolia") are counted as the most prominent collected essays of Balıkcı. On the other hand, selected books of other participants of Blue Anatolianism will be referenced to comprehend the connection between Balıkcı and other Blue Anatolianists. As an example, Azra Erhat's book entitled "Blue Anatolia" will be studied since the movement gets its name from this book. Her book entitled "Blue Travel" is another source. Furthermore, a collection of Balıkcı's letters entitled "Mektuplarıyla Halikarnas Balıkcısı I-II" ("The Fisher of Halicarnassus by His Letters I-II") edited by Azra Erhat is studied as well.

Balıkcı's memories book entitled "Mavi Sürgün" ("Blue Exile") is regarded as a remarkable source to get more detailed information about his life. Memory books, diaries or autobiographies contain a danger for researchers because of their lack of objectivity but the aim of this thesis is to demonstrate that Balıkcı's works must be counted as national narratives. In this case, personal accounts by Balıkcı especially matter since they portray how he tackled with the identity problem in his life.

Moreover, the articles of Zafer Toprak entitled, "Adem ve Havva'dan Homo-Alpinus'a Eugene Pittard, Antropoloji ve Türk Tarih Tezi, Dolikosefalden Brakisefale Türk Irkı: Şevket Aziz Kansu ve Antropolojinin Evrimi, En Büyük Antropolojik Anket" ("From Eve and Adam to Homo-Alpinus, Eugene Pittard, Anthropology and Turkish History Thesis, From Dolichoce-

phalic to Brachycephalic: Şevket Aziz Kansu and the Evolution of Anthropology, The Greatest Anthropological Survey”) will be studied to see the usage of physical anthropology during the Republican period of Turkey to create a myth of “genesis” to prepare an official cultural agenda in the 1930s and the 1940s. On the other hand, it is a must to see reflections of Republican Regime’s cultural policy in social life as well. In this respect, Asım Karaömerlioğlu’s articles “Köy Enstitüleri Üzerine Düşünceler” and “Tek Parti Döneminde Halkevleri ve Halkçılık.” (“Thoughts on The Village Institutes and People’s Houses and Populism During the Single Party Period”) will be studied.

Furthermore, a number of academic works about Balıkçı and Blue Anatolianism will be used. Firstly, Emre Yıldırım’s PhD thesis named “Modern Cumhuriyetin Kimlik Arayışları: Kayıp Kimliğin Peşinde Mavi Anadoluculuk Hareketi” (“Searching for National Identity in Modern Turkey: Blue-Anatolianism Seeking for Lost Identity”) is the most prominent work written on Blue Anatolianism. The research shows that under which historical and social circumstances Blue Anatolianism was founded and Yıldırım (2012) explains the influence of Blue-Anatolianism in detail. It must be noted that there is a remarkable place given to nationalism and the development of identity problem through Turkish intelligentsia up to different historical contexts. In sum, Yıldırım (2012, 343) regards “Blue Anatolianism” as an original approach to the identity problem of the 1930s and the 1940s and he explains the intersections of Blue Anatolianist movement with the official cultural policy of Republican Regime. (Ibid, 363)

Secondly, Nermin Yazıcı’s master thesis entitled “Halikarnas Balıkçısı’nın Eserlerinde Tabiat” (“The Nature in The Works of The Fisherman of Halicarnassus”) is fruitful to see the importance of nature as an element in Balıkçı’s literary works. Yazıcı (1998) points out that Balıkçı regards the Mediterranean Basin as a geographical place which removes the political, cultural, historical and economic differences among people in the abstract of her thesis. Furthermore, she explains that Balıkçı pays great attention to the “sea theme”. (Ibid, 109) However, the large part of thesis is constructed by quotations of Balıkçı and Yazıcı does not make a deep analysis. Instead, she tries to describe how and where the nature finds a place in Balıkçı’s literary works. However, it is

not possible to see the role of natural elements, especially of the “sea” in the process of creating a national narrative in Yazıcı’s thesis.

Thirdly, Ümüt Apaydın’s doctoral thesis entitled “Halikarnas Balıkçısı’nın Kurmaca Yapıtlarında Coğrafyanın Estetiği Olarak Mavi Anadoluculuk” (“Blue Anatolianism As the Aesthetics of Geography in The Fictional Works of The Fisherman of Halicarnassus”) will be studied. In this research, Apaydın (2015, 78) regards Balıkçı as a social realist.

Fourthly, Murat Belge’s article entitled “Mavi Anadolu Tezi ve Halikarnas Balıkçısı” (“Thesis of Blue Anatolia and The Fisherman of Halicarnassus”) published in “Birikim” magazine in 2006 is also considered. Belge analyzes Balıkçı’s historical novels and he comes to say that nationalist, racist and xenophobic tendencies could be found in his literary works. Belge regards Balıkçı as a popular narrator who aims to create a myth of “genesis” but he underlines that Balıkçı could not succeed in creating it since his themes are very repetitive and superficial invoking a popular writing style. (Belge, 2006) It is noteworthy that Belge (2006) makes a new claim about Balıkçı and Blue Anatolianism. However, one may ask Belge how Balıkçı changed the perception of Anatolia from terrestrial Anatolia to nautical Anatolia if he could not succeed in creating a myth of genesis. In other words, Belge does not explain what differentiates Balıkçı from other popular writers. Today, the majority of popular authors from Balıkçı’s era are forgotten and they are not mentioned on “reading list” for students prepared by Turkish Ministry of Education. Engrossingly, Balıkçı has still a place on the list.<sup>3</sup>

This study is constructed on four chapters. The first chapter is entitled “The Identity Problem of the Early Republican Period of Turkey: Historical Approaches”. In this chapter, firstly the role of literature during the nation building era in seek up a solution to the identity problem is explained. In other words, the usage of literature as a tool to create a national narrative is discussed. Secondly, the new history thesis of the Early Republican Period of Turkey parallel with the official cultural policy is also considered. It is remarkable

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3 <https://www.cnnturk.com/ajanda/ortaogretim-ogrencileri-icin-100-temel-eser-listesi>

that in this period, physical anthropology gained a crucial importance in Europe and Turkey. The main goal of anthropological studies in Turkey was to demonstrate that the Turks were not from the “yellow race” and they were from the “white race”.<sup>4</sup> In other words, it was tried to be shown that Turks were brachycephalic although it was argued by Orientalists that they were dolichocephalic. In this respect, the Regime wished to prove that Turks and Europeans have the same roots and they went further, Republican intelligentsia regarded Hittites and other ancient civilizations of Anatolia as the ancestry of Turks and it was claimed that Turks were the founders of Neolithic Era, in other words, Turks were regarded as the founders of European civilization. As a result of anthropological studies, the Republican intelligentsia formed a new historical approach called “Turkish History Thesis”<sup>5</sup> and one may easily observe that reflections of the thesis could be found in all fields. Indeed, linguis-

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- 4 In 1758, Carl Linnaeus, the Swedish scientist and taxonomist published *Systema Naturea*. He proposed a foursome race system. Simply, he divided human race in four; the Americanus (red race), the Europeanus (white race), the Asiaticus (yellow race), the Afer (black race). His successor Johann Friedrich Blumenbach was a German physician, physiologist and allegedly the founder of anthropology. In 1776, he published *De Generis Humani Varietate Native* (On the Natural Variety of Mankind). In similar to Linnaeus, he classified human race in five by adding one more group to the original classification; the Caucasian (white race), the Mongolian (yellow race), the Malayan (brown race), the Ethiopian (black race) and the American (red race). Their successors such as James Cowles Prichard, Thomas Henry Huxley, William Flower, Paul Broca and many others followed Linnaeus and Blumenbach. In sum, in Europe it was thought that Turks were from yellow race during the 18th and the 19th centuries. (Belen, Deniz. “How Cranial Shapes Led to Contemporary Ethnic Classification: A Historical View”, *Türk Neurosurg*, no.28 (2017): 490-494.)
- 5 In 1930, the government published a book entitled “Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları” (“The Main Lines of Turkish History”) by Mustafa Kemal’s demand. The book was written by Afet İnan, Mehmet Tevfik, Samih Rifat, Yusuf Akçura, Reşit Galip, Hasan Cemil, Sadri Maksudi, Şemsettin Bey, Vasıf Bey and Yusuf Ziya Bey. In the preface of the book it is said that Turkish history was belittled by European and Ottoman sources. In this respect, the aim of the book is to “show Turk’s power and characteristics and to demonstrate that Turkish race has ancient roots”. Furthermore, the book is described as “the first step to write a national history”. (1930, 1-2) In sum, the main thesis of the book is that Turks have always constructed “civilizations” since “50-60 centuries”. (Ibid, 605) In other words, Turks are regarded as the founders of civilization in the book. (Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları. İstanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1930.)

tics, history and other social sciences went hand in hand with physical anthropology. Education was one of the most important fields to practice official cultural policy of the regime especially from the late 1930s to the mid-1940s when Hasan Ali Yücel was the minister of education. The village institutes appeared up as the most prominent centers of education in Anatolia. By founding village institutes, it may be said that for the first time the regime and the peasantry had a connection. On the other hand, the most important centers of the official cultural policy in towns and cities were the People's Houses formed by Republican People's Party. Lastly, the efforts were turned on studying other approaches to the identity problem to see the concept of "Blue Anatolianism"'s development. In this regard, Neo-Hellenism, Turkish Renaissance, Anatolianism and other approaches are studied.

The second chapter is entitled "Another Approach to the Identity Problem: Balıkcı and Blue Anatolianism". The chapter starts with a short biography of Balıkcı. Secondly, his literary style is argued. Balıkcı's literary style plays a crucial role in his works because he is an author who does not form a complex story arc. Instead, he is stuck in the old tradition of storytelling with didactic goals. In this case, that would not be wrong to say that he is not a novelist but a storyteller. In his essays and in his articles as well, Balıkcı uses the same writing style and it is difficult for one to differentiate his fictional and non-fictional works because Balıkcı aims to give a message to the audience: Simply, he tries to draw a link from ancient Anatolian civilizations to his day by demonstrating cultural similarities among the people of the same geography as Köroğlu (2009, 78) points out:

national identity narratives claim a natural or organic coherence, legitimizing the nation as the embodiment of an "historical" entity originated from an eternal, unknown past; they interpret every particular event positively, fixing its place in the national genealogy. National narratives imagine the nation as a trans-historical existence, even though it is a modern and thus historical invention. That is the paradoxical ontology of nationalism.

Indeed, Balıkcı tries to construct a continuing history of the Mediterranean by emphasizing the role of Anatolian people for the civilizational development

of humankind. In this respect, Balıkcı regards the Mediterranean as the source of cultural, economic and artistic developments of humanity during the ancient ages. Consequently, he gives a particular attention to Western Anatolia because Ionia was founded there and he suggests that the Greek culture be formed by the influence of Ionians, Cretans and Minoans. In other words, he comes to say that Anatolian civilizations were at the origin of European culture. Indeed, he insists that these ancient civilizations were Turkish because they were born in Anatolia. In other words, Balıkcı associates the Mediterranean Basin as the maker of the civilizational development of humanity. He underlines the originality and the importance of the folk culture; he tries to find the roots of Turkish folklore in ancient periods of Anatolia related to the “religion of Dionysus”<sup>6</sup> to make a bridge from ancient ages to the present. In this case, one may see that Balıkcı’s approach (the thematic) and historical possibilities (the problematic) creates a dichotomy which makes his approach liminal.

The third chapter is entitled “The Role of the ‘Sea’ in Fictional Works of Balıkcı”. In Balıkcı’s literary works, one may clearly see that the “sea” element is always in the foreground. First of all, the sea is usually personified in his literary works, and it is very often connected with abstract themes. In other words, the “sea” element is used as a metaphor such as death, hope, motherhood and others. Furthermore, the sea is idealized to the point that it becomes the determinant element in Anatolian people’s lives. In this regard, other elements related to the sea such as seals and mermaids find a place in his works. Balıkcı accentuates the similarity between seals and people, and he regards seals as a part of folkloric culture. Indeed, the mermaids as well, are used as the metaphors of the Anatolian people’s culture. Additionally, the sea means rebellion against the family and social norms for women characters. The

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6 The religion of Dionysus (or Bakkhos) is the ancient religion of Anatolia according to Balıkcı. Dionysus is the god of wine and joy and Dionysian rituals are based on rhythm and dance. Balıkcı finds the roots of Anatolian dances such as zeibek in this religion. Furthermore, in similar to Sufism, the religion of Dionysus defends the unity of body and soul. Consequently, Balıkcı tries to show that this religion played a crucial role in Anatolian culture. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2012, 171-179)



women characters of Balıkçı are generally encouraged by the sea to break social norms. Lastly, it must be noted that the sea, culture and Blue Anatolianism are strongly connected since the continuity from ancient ages until now is built through the “sea” element.

The fourth chapter is entitled “Identity Questions in Balıkçı’s Fiction”. This chapter, tries to show that in Balıkçı’s literary works one may observe different identities. Firstly, his social realist stance is studied based on his classification of people such as “land people” as opposed to “sea people”. It is remarkable that Balıkçı focuses on social inequality and on social hierarchy. Furthermore, he criticizes land lords and he idealizes bandits who steal from the rich to support the poor. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2010, 23) However, it is noteworthy that even his social classification is based on the “sea” element because he puts sea workers such as divers, fishermen and sailors at the lowest place in the social hierarchy.

Secondly, the chapter argues that in the 1960s Balıkçı changed his usual themes and he turned all his efforts on popular writing by giving more place to nationalist, racist and xenophobic themes in his two historical novels entitled “Uluç Reis” and “Turgut Reis”.

Finally, the role of gender is studied in Balıkçı’s literary works. It must be noted that his perceptions of foreign women and Turkish women are different. In his historical novels, he portrays foreign women as lustful and he underlines that they are obsessed with sexuality. On the other hand, he pictures Turkish women as the greatest supporters of Turkish men and he gives a key role to Turkish women at war. In other words, Turkish men and women are described as comrades: Balıkçı emphasizes “masculine” characteristics of Turkish women such as using a weapon or fighting like “men” and others. The majority of Turkish female characters wish to show their “masculine” skills to their future husbands before they get married. In sum, the abundance of different identities found in Balıkçı’s literary works causes an ambivalence in Bhabha’s term.

## The Identity Problem During the Early Republican Period of Turkey: Historical Approaches

During the nation-building era of belated countries, one of the most important problems is to solve the identity problem since the new regime has to build itself via a new identity through a new historical context under a Western modernization project. In this case, the intelligentsia of the belated country tries to come up with a “national” identity to solve the identity crisis, (Jusdanis 1991, 79) when conservative reactions of the common people, and the modernist reform projects of the regime challenge each other. Moreover, the intelligentsia tries to reach a vernacular language to educate people and build a native literature as the sum of canonical texts is used as a tool to create a new identity through historical narratives. (Jusdanis 1991, 76)

In this regard, firstly, the role of literature during the nation building era will be discussed. During the early republican period of Turkey, numerous approaches to the identity problem were voiced among the literary intelligentsia. Secondly, the identity problem of the regime will be briefly explained. Thirdly, various identities offered by the Turkish intelligentsia will be studied. In the last section, Blue Anatolianism will be studied as another approach to the identity crisis through the ideas of Balıkcı since he was the founder of the movement.

## § 2.1 The Role of Literature During the Nation Building Era Through the Identity Problem

Anthony Smith points out that the first step of creating a nation as an “imagined community” is to have a common ethnicity. He determines six characteristics of ethnicity which are a collective proper name, a myth of common ancestry, shared historical memories, one or more differentiating elements of common culture, an association with a special “homeland”, a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population. If a population has those characteristics completely or the majority of them, they are close to the ideal ethnic community. (Smith, 1991, 21)

However, ethnic groups cannot transform into a nation themselves because the transformation from an ethnic group to a nation is not a natural process. Even for an ideal ethnic group, the transformation process cannot be natural. In this regard, the state needs an ethnic intelligentsia as a catalysator. According to Smith, the main goal of an ethnic intelligentsia is to mobilize the community around the new national historical culture which is “discovered”.

Here then lies the main task of an ethnic intelligentsia: to mobilize a formerly passive community into forming a nation around the new vernacular historical culture that it has rediscovered. Beneath the different responses to westernization lies the imperative of a moral and political revolution, one which requires people to be purified from the accretions of centuries, so that they can be emancipated into a political community of equal citizens. (Ibid, 64)

In the words of Hobsbawm, that is the process of inventing traditions. Furthermore, Hobsbawm points out that all invented traditions use history as a tool to legitimate their actions and to solidify the group cohesion. (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, 12) Moreover, he regards the process of inventing tradition as a process of formalization and ritualization of the characterized past by different repetitive symbols. Those symbols could be a hymn, a flag and many others which could be found easily in the everyday life of the community. Moreover, he emphasizes the paradox of the “nation” through invented traditions:

We should not be misled by a curious, but understandable, paradox: modern nations and all their impedimenta generally claim to be the opposite of novel, namely rooted in the remotest antiquity, and the opposite of constructed, namely human communities so “natural” as to require no definition other than self-assertion. (Ibid,14)

It is noteworthy that the process of nation-building comes with its paradox and its contradictions. That may be seen among the intellectuals of the community because nationalism is strongly linked with the belated modernity and the Third-Worldism. Indeed, the modernization starts with a crisis of identity as Smith (1991, 96) points out, “The identity crisis of the intellectuals springs ultimately from the challenges posed to traditional religion and society by the ‘scientific state’ and the Western ‘revolutions’ that it promotes wherever its influence is felt”.

Thus, the “scientific state”’s agenda based on Western “revolution” is challenged by the traditional society. Chatterjee, names this challenge as “the thematic-the problematic” dichotomy. Chatterjee explains that the nationalism was influenced by the post-Enlightenment rational thought based on a difference between the Western and the Eastern countries. In this case, for Western countries “dooming those countries to poverty and subjection” is a must to assert that the West is superior to the East “by its science, technology and love of progress”. On the one hand, the superiority of the East is the “spiritual greatness” therewith the non-European nations’ modernization lays in “combining the superior material qualities of Western cultures with the spiritual greatness of the East”. (Chatterjee 1993, 50-51)

The task of intelligentsia is to bring Western “material qualities” to melt them in the same pot with “spiritual greatness” of the East therewith they need to create a “myth of genesis” to have historical legitimacy which is named the “myth of common ancestry” by Smith (Smith 1991, 21) and “the greatest antiquity” by Hobsbawm. (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, 78) On the other hand, the language and literature play the key role in the process of creating a myth of genesis where the nation is built as a narration. Indeed, the literature is as “an imaginary mirror” reflecting “the nationness” giving people to experience the membership of a national unity as Jusdanis (1991, 47) explains. In parallel,

Homi K. Bhabha (2000, 1) regards nation as a narration and he underlines the allegoric function of literary language during the nation building process:

Nations, like narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye. Such an image of the nation -or narration- might seem impossibly romantic and excessively metaphorical, but it is from those traditions of political thought and literary language that the nation emerges as a powerful historical idea in the west.

In similar to Bhabha, Armağan emphasizes the importance of the language in nation-building so retires where reaching modernity for the construction of public sphere has priority. Consequently, debates about literature revolve around the language issue which is supposed to serve political purposes. (Ibid, 46) In other words, the language and the literature are strongly connected and both are regarded as useful tools for the service of the nationalism. Firstly, the chosen literary works construct the literary canon which could be useful to create a nationalist narrative in the social psyche. Secondly, it is expected that this story may increase the solidarity. On the other hand, the literary canon represents the national identity and imposes the nationalist values to people for the development of identity as Jusdanis (1991, 49) shows.

Literary canons construct the shape of literature and the nationalist literature gets its power from literary canons because the canons have more than one function. In the first place, they are the narratives of a community's own myth. (Başçı 2008, 63-64) They are based on the past, but they are linked to the present. In other words, the canons reflect a continuous past and they transport nationalist cultural codes from one generation to another and they always exist in public sphere as Jusdanis (1991, 51-52) points out:

As a collection of texts belonging to the national institution of high literature, it contains texts that, because they narrate a community's own tale, are deemed worthy of being saved and transmitted to other generations. These texts serve as objects of criticism, enter school curricula, are included in histories of literature, and are annotated in anthologies. The literary canon is composed of those texts from the past that are made relevant to the present. It is the history of literature made monumental.

Indeed, those texts serve to create a national narrative. However, the multi-functional form of national narratives based on metaphors and allegories causes an ambivalence as Bhabha points out, “the Janus-faced ambivalence of language itself in the construction of the Janus-faced discourse of the nation”.

## § 2.2 The Official Cultural Policy of the Early Turkish Republic

### 2.2.1 *A New History Thesis*

In the first section it was explained that the identity crisis comes from the dichotomy between the secular state and the traditional masses, and the intelligentsia face the task of mobilizing people through a nationalist narrative. In this regard, political processes through cultural and scientific developments of the period will be studied to portray the atmosphere of Early Republican Turkey. Firstly, rise of physical anthropology and the declaration of new theses on identity problem will be tackled. Secondly, the populist cultural policies of the regime constructed through people’s houses and village institutes will be studied.

In 1920s, physical anthropology was one of the rising sciences in Europe. In particular, physical anthropology gained a great success and it rose rapidly in Turkey. The political elites aimed to build a secular history in Turkey based on anthropological data. Mustafa Kemal was deeply interested in Eugene Pittard’s anthropological studies. The argument was to come up with an analysis of the Turkish race scientifically. (Toprak 2011b, 19)

In 1932, “The First Turkish History Congress” was organized and in parallel, Şevket Aziz Kansu a respected anthropologist, became a member of “the Society for the Study of Turkish History”. On the other hand, Kansu became professor at the Ankara University at thirty-one years old. His studies about the skull measurements of Anatolian people gained a remarkable success. Simply, Kansu tried to demonstrate that the Hittites, an ancient people of Anatolia, were brachycephalic. In other words, his aim was to prove that Turks were brachycephalic with anthropological data. (Ibid, 19-20)

In Europe, it was thought that Turks were coming from the “yellow race” as it was explained earlier. In this regard, the works of Kansu were truly important for the regime because his anthropological studies were claiming that the Turks were not coming from “the barbaric race”; instead, they were “the grandchildren of the founders of the civilization” like Europeans. However, Mustafa Kemal’s adopted daughter, Afet İnan, tried to prove this thesis by a scientific survey on a large scale. (Ibid, 20)

The new the efforts of the regime show that Ziya Gökalp’s cultural theories lost their significance. In other words, Durkheimian determinism and solidarism lost their roles and physical anthropology took their place. Simply, sociology lost its importance as a science and physical anthropology became the most significant instrument for the regime. In parallel, prehistorical studies gained more importance as well. (Ibid, 22) As it was explained in the first section, efforts were turned on the search of the remotest antiquity to imagine a myth of common ancestry through a popular narrative.

Furthermore, Kansu tried to find a bridge between old Turkic races and ancient Anatolian civilizations. He tried to demonstrate that the Turks were already coming from the “white race” and the ancestry of Turks, Oghuzs met other tribes from the same race when they immigrated to Anatolia. In other words, Anatolia was regarded as the eternal homeland of Turks as Zafer Toprak (Ibid, 26) points out:

In this regard, Seljuks and Ottoman Turks were from the last representatives of the civilization of Asia Minor which was civilized from a brachycephalic majority from the Neolithic period and especially in Anatolia they were the last representatives of the Middle Asian civilization. Thus, Anatolia was Turkish from the beginning to the eternity.

In other words, Turks were allegedly the founders of the Neolithic period and in parallel, they were seen as the founders of the civilization of mankind. That was the base of the official cultural policy of the Turkish regime and this claim was called “Turkish History Thesis” as Zafer Toprak explains (2011a, 16) “the building stones of Atatürk’s cultural revolution were the alphabet reform, ‘Turkish History Thesis’ and the language reform and in the background of all that process, anthropology played a noteworthy role”.

For the development of anthropology, Afet İnan's role was noteworthy. İnan challenged "ontological historical tradition" which begins with the creation of Adam and Eve. In parallel, at "the First Turkish History Congress" İnan defended the evolutionist point of view. (Ibid, 20) Furthermore, İnan tried to demonstrate that the Turks were not Uralic-Altaic tribes. Instead, İnan asserted that "Turks were coming from a 'civilized' race and that they founded a civilization in their eternal homeland with a high level of culture when the Europeans were still savages". (Ibid, 23-24)

In 1937, "the Second Turkish History Congress" was organized and Eugene Pittard, the advisor of Afet İnan's thesis, made a speech and he claimed that Hittites, as the ancient brachycephals of Anatolia could be the ancestry of Turks. In addition, Zafer Toprak (Ibid, 29) underlines that the view of Eugene Pittard was not ethnic but anthropological. In the same year, Afet İnan made a survey on 64,000 people by the aid of the government for her doctorate thesis. This survey helped her to defend her claims with more data. (Toprak 2011c, 24)

Furthermore, in this period language studies and history studies went hand in hand. However, it must be underlined that history and prehistory studies had the priority. In this case, "Sun-Language Theory" was suggested as a reflection of "Turkish History Thesis" in linguistics. The theory was based on reactions of first human groups through their admiration of the sun. Thus, it was claimed that the sun plays a crucial role during the period of transition from physical communication to oral communication. In other words, the first words of the first human groups were linked with their admiration of the sun which meant "intelligence, God, power" for them. (Demircan 2012, 124-125) In this regard, the theory puts the language in a secular field. (Ibid, 121-122) Moreover, under the influence of physical anthropological works, "the Sun-Language Theory" was constructed to defend the idea that Turks had an "elevated civilization" and an "elevated language". Furthermore, it was claimed that all words come from the Turkish language etymologically. (Ibid, 132) On the other hand, the theory was supported by comparative linguistic studies between Sumerian and Turkish. (Ibid, 129) In addition, Dr. Phil Kvergić's work entitled "The Psychology of Some Elements in Turkish Languages" defended the theory by a psychoanalytic approach. (Demir 2010, 392)



In sum, instead of removing all foreign words in Turkish it was preferred to claim that all languages were already related with Turkish in their origins. In this case, the regime turned its efforts on mobilizing masses through education.

### 2.2.2 *The People's Houses and Village Institutes*

In 1912, "Turkish Hearths" were founded under the power of "Union and Progress Party" to spread Pan Turkist ideology. In 1931, the Kemalist regime forced Pan Turkists to close "Turkish Hearths" and in 1932, "the People's Houses" took their place as Füsün Üstel (2008, 266) points out, "on the one hand, the party-government regime did not tolerate civil-Turkism but, on the other hand, bureaucratic-Turkism found its place in 'Turkish History Thesis' and the idea of national unity could be spread through 'People's Houses' and through the curricula of schools".

Asım Karaömerlioğlu (2001, 167) points out that People's Houses had three goals: "Firstly, they could help the Republican People's Party (RPP) to create a nation. Secondly, intellectuals and elites would gain an active role because it was thought that the Republican intelligentsia was not motivated enough to accomplish Kemalist reforms. In this respect, populism based on peasantism would be spread through People's Houses and the gap between the Republican intelligentsia and the peasantry would be removed". In 1939, "People's Rooms" were founded in support of "People's Houses" and in 1940, "People's Houses" had 154,000 members. People's Rooms were established as minor examples of People's Houses in villages. In parallel, anthropological and folkloric data could be enregistered in villages. However, the gap between the intelligentsia and the peasantry became wider because intellectuals regarded trips to villages as "touristic travels" and intriguingly, villages were regarded as the source of pure Turkish identity. In other words, villages were seen as utopian places and it was thought that the catalyzer of Kemalist reforms would be "pure and intelligent" Turkish peasants. In parallel, it was aimed to "discover" characteristics of the Turkish race which were preserved in villages. (Ibid, 167-175)

In 1936, peasantism was challenged by politicians and by intellectuals and it was seen that the bridge between the intelligentsia and the peasantry was

not constructed. Moreover, it was observed that the Kemalist ideology was not spreading in villages. However, those efforts prioritized the “village institutes” project. (Ibid, 182-183)

Actually, “village institutes” project was already spread between intellectuals since the 1930s. In 1933, Reşit Galip became the minister of education and in 1937, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç became the director of primary schools. Galip and Tonguç were known for their peasantist views. After a testing period of three years, the village institutes were constituted officially in 1940 and Hasan Ali Yücel became the minister of education in the same year. Simply, the role of village institutes was to educate the peasant youth for agricultural development. After graduation, it was mandatory for peasant youth to work in the village institutes as a teacher. In other words, as Karaömerlioğlu states, the goal was not anymore removing the gap between elites and peasants but it was to create new elites from peasants by education. (Karaömerlioğlu 2009, 62-63-68)

On the other hand, the Kemalist regime hoped to have new supporters from educated peasants. In this regard, the village institutes became more ideological in time. For instance, Tonguç wrote a letter to all village institute administrators before the elections of 1946 for them to support the RPP. On the other hand, the village institutes were criticized by conservatives for spreading communist thoughts. (Ibid, 73)

In that period, Nazism and Fascism were rising and single party regimes were losing their power around the world. In addition, there was a more respectful and a freer atmosphere in villages especially with the efforts of Tonguç. Nevertheless, this atmosphere was not appreciated by the regime. In other words, more liberal villages were seen as “a potential danger” against the regime. (Ibid, 78, 79) Indeed, results of the village institutes project and İnönü’s political goals were opposed as Karaömerlioğlu (Ibid, 80) points out:

In this period İnönü wants to create an anti-communist hysteria for two reasons that are foreign and domestic: The first reason is to label the growing opposition as “communists” in order to ostracize left-wing tendencies and to stop their relations with leftists and also by a mudslinging campaign he wants to weaken the opposition. The second reason is to look sympathetic to the alliances for the equilibrium of the foreign policy and by that strategy he

aimed to save the country from its solitude which was because of following Nazi-sided politics from the 1930s to the end of the war.

In 1946, Hasan Ali Yücel and İsmail Hakkı Tonguç lost their positions. On the other hand, village institutes were already labeled as “leftists’ nests”. In 1947, the policy of village institutes was changed; the new minister of education, Reşat Şemsettin Sirer revised the principles of village institutes. In other words, the village institutes ended losing their purpose and in 1954 they were closed by the Democrat Party. (Kaplukan 2012, 188-189)

It is noteworthy that the Minister of Culture and Education, Hasan Ali Yücel was one of the prominent defenders of peasantism and also, he was one of the most influential figures of the “Turkish Renaissance” project. In the next section, main approaches to the identity problem during the republican period of Turkey will be studied and the idea of Turkish Renaissance during the ministry period of Hasan Ali Yücel (1940–1946) will be explained in detail.

### § 2.3 Approaches to the Identity Problem Until Blue Anatolianism

Neither People’s Houses nor Village Institutes succeeded in widely spreading Kemalist ideology to the masses. In the first section, it was explained that the intellectuals had a special role during the nation-building period of a belated country. In this section, the particular role of intellectuals will be studied. In other words, approaches of Turkish intelligentsia to the identity problem will be discussed.

Emre Yıldırım (2012, 5) counts Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Hilmi Ziya Ülken and Hasan Ali Yücel as the processors of Blue Anatolianists. More names could be listed; however, those names are the most prominent figures on identity problem. “Neo-Hellenist” movement founded by Yahya Kemal Beyatlı and Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu.

In 1903, Yahya Kemal went to Paris and he became a student of famous historians such as Albert Sorel and Camille Jullian at Sorbonne University. Consequently, Yahya Kemal got influenced by “territorial nationalism” of

French historians. It must be noted that a quote of Camille Jullian was a watershed for him, “The French territory created the French nation in a thousand years”. In this respect, Yahya Kemal regarded the Anatolian territory as the source of the Turkish identity. In contrast to Ziya Gökalp, he did not offer a racial identity. (Okay, 2018)

Yahya Kemal was influenced by many poets such as Victor Hugo, Rimbaud, Baudelaire, Verlaine and many others but Jose Maria de Heredia was the most influential poet for him. It is remarkable that Yahya Kemal worked on Heredia’s sonnets for months and he regarded Heredia’s poetry as a main source of the art of poetry. Yahya Kemal wanted to save Turkish poetry from the influence of Arabian and Persian poetry. In addition, he aimed to form a poetry style based on Latin and Greek cultures similarly to European poetry. In this regard, he came back to Turkey after having lived nine years in France, founded “Neo-Hellenism”, a movement based on a Mediterranean identity. The movement was supported by Yakup Kadri. (Safi 2015, 48-49)

It is noteworthy that the main goal of the Neo-Hellenist movement was to construct a rich language and to create a high literature by regarding Ancient Greek and Latin literatures as fundamental sources of European civilization as Emre Yıldırım (2013a, 627) states.

Simply, the movement claimed to have two characteristics as Yalçın Armağan (2012, 83) formulates, “the Mediterranean culture” and the “white language”<sup>1</sup> In addition, Armağan states that Yahya Kemal tried to find a solution to regard Greek classics as “ours”. Some of the Ancient Greek classics were written in Anatolia, and it was a geographical advantage for Yahya Kemal. Besides, Yahya Kemal did not regard those works only as good examples, he went further and he regarded them as an essence of the Turkishness. (Ibid, 83-84)

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- 1 Yahya Kemal does not separate Turkish culture from the European culture because West Anatolian civilizations such as Lydians, Minoans etc. played a crucial role during the elevation of Ancient Greek culture. In this respect, he claims that there is a Mediterranean culture coming from the old Anatolian civilizations. He tried to create a “white language” in his poetry. Kemal’s aim was to create a poetry language based on rhythm and harmony by using only Turkish words. In his words, he tried to “think like a Turk” and “feel like a Turk” to create a “white language”. In sum, Kemal tried to vernacularize the poetic language by not reducing the quality of his works. (Çıkla 2008, 79-80) (Armağan 2012, 83)

On the other hand, Yahya Kemal's efforts show the role of intellectuals. Armağan (2012, 84) underlines the duality of Turkish intelligentsia through the example of Yahya Kemal, "The fear of losing essence caused by modernization and the wish of being like a Western force intellectual to give responses on two fronts and to find solutions quickly".

Furthermore, Yahya Kemal divided Turkish history in two periods. The first period is before the Battle of Manzikert (1071) which is called "Turkish History" and the second period is after the Battle of Manzikert which is named "History of Turkey". Moreover, Yahya Kemal regarded nation, Islam and Anatolia as three fundamental elements of the Turkishness as Yıldırım (2012, 629) states.

In addition, Yahya Kemal paid special attention to the language issue. He tried to reach the new identity through the language. It is noteworthy that Tanpınar regards Yahya Kemal's efforts as "wakening up" and Yahya Kemal's thoughts were influential for other identity suggestions such as "Turkish Renaissance" and "Anatolianism". (Ibid, 631-633) In addition, Armağan (2012, 85) underlines the influence of Yahya Kemal over Blue Anatolianism by stating that the Blue Anatolianism and Neo-Hellenism had similar goals and besides, the official cultural policy was shaped by Blue Anatolianism. Consequently, one may clearly see that Yahya Kemal influenced his successors on the identity problem. In contrast to Yahya Kemal's charismatic figure, Yakup Kadri was not very efficient as Armağan (2012, 82) explains:

However, in his book entitled "Memories of Youth and Literature" Yakup Kadri writes that the movement was rather based on the personal ideas of Yahya Kemal and he remarks that he "agreed in principle" with those ideas. Truly, Neo-Hellenism movement was a one man's movement despite the contribution of Yakup Kadri.

Yıldırım points out that Yakup Kadri emphasized the importance of the vernacular language and he tried to reach people through language. (Yıldırım 2013a, 635) As it was explained in the first section, for him as many other intellectuals reaching the vernacular is one of the fundamental steps of facing the identity problem. Moreover, Yakup Kadri tried to find the "true sources" of the Turkish nation. In this regard, he turned his efforts to Turkish folklore. (Ibid, 634) Furthermore, he had a similar opinion with Yahya Kemal on Greek

and Latin classics. On the one hand, Yakup Kadri was influenced by European authors and philosophers, on the other hand, he was inspired by Turkish folk poetry. This influence could be found especially in his prose poems. In addition, mystic and sufist themes could also be found in his prose poems. (Polat, 2018) In this regard, Yakup Kadri wrote “Siyah Saçlı Yabancı ile Berrak Gözlü Genç Kızın Sözleri” (“Words of Black-Haired Foreigner and Clear-Eyed Young Woman”) which was published in 1914 in “Nevsal-i Milli” as an example of a vernacular language, which in Yahya Kemal’s words, was an example of a “white language”. Nevertheless, the book was a reflection of the synthesis of Turkish folklore and Greek-Latin classics. Furthermore, the book is formed by using the ancient Greek dialogue technic based on a conversation between a young Lydian man and a young Lydian woman but the woman comes from 2500 years ago. Moreover, Hasan Ali Yücel regards the book as an early example of the Turkish History Thesis. Indeed, Yakup Kadri agreed with the Turkish History Thesis and he regarded Anatolian people as the heirs of Hittites. (Yıldırım, 2012, 194-195) Similarly, Yahya Kemal wrote three poems as examples of Neo-Hellenism which are entitled “Sicilya Kızları”, “Biblos Kadınları” and “Bergama Heykeltıraşları” (“Girls of Sicily, Women of Byblos and Sculptors of Pergamon”) which were published in the 1910s. However, under the atmosphere of the Balkan Wars (1912–1913) it was difficult for Neo-Hellenism to be approved by Turkish intelligentsia. The movement ended after a while, thereafter Yahya Kemal and Yakup Kadri began to support the National Literature movement. However, it is noteworthy that this short attempt in literary Neo-Hellenism opened a new door for Turkish intelligentsia and the successors of Yahya Kemal and Yakup Kadri constructed what was called a “Turkish Renaissance” project based on the amalgam of Anatolian and Mediterranean identities. (Yıldırım 2013a, 641) Additionally, it is remarkable that Armağan underlines the importance of political conditions for those cultural movements by comparing Neo-Hellenism and Blue-Anatolianism. Armağan points out (2012, 85-86) that Neo-Hellenism could not be approved by the regime, but Blue Anatolianism could influence the official cultural policy albeit both movements had similar identity suggestions because Blue Anatolianism was developed at a later date in the single party regime.

The Neo-Hellenist movement must be regarded as a breaking point because the dominant ideology of the 1910s was Pan Turkism and Neo-Hellenists offered an identity based on the Anatolian territory and its ancient past. In other words, Ziya Gökalp's Pan Turkism started to lose its validity in the mid-1910s. After the Neo-Hellenist movement of the 1910s, the Anatolianist movement was founded in the 1920s. "Dergâh"<sup>2</sup> and "Anadolu" magazines were important intellectual sources for Anatolianists such as Yahya Kemal, Mustafa Şekip Tunç, Hilmi Ziya Ülken, Mükrimin Halil Yinanç, Nurettin Topçu and Mehmet Kaplan to spread their ideas and to construct Anatolianism as an antithesis of Pan Turkism. In contrast to Pan Turkists, Anatolianists did not describe the national unity as having the same racial roots. Instead, they regarded the national unity as sharing "the same homeland, the same culture including the common language, a common history and a common religion and lastly, common moral values" as Bingöl and Pakiş (2016, 4-5) point out. Furthermore, Bingöl and Pakiş (2016, 8) underline that Anatolianists paid attention to ethnicity, but they challenged Pan Turkists' definition of the "nation". For instance, Hilmi Ziya Ülken finds the nation and the homeland are inseparable. Mehmet Kaplan and Nurettin Topçu emphasize the role of the territory. (Ibid,13) Besides, Topçu agrees with the importance of territory but he regards Islam as the essence of the Turkish nation. In sum, he comes to claim that a community has to share the same belief to be a nation. (Ibid, 17) In other words he regards Islam as the glue of a community that is so-called nation. However; the role of ethnicity was not completely removed until Blue Anatolianism as Yıldırım (2012, 242) points out:

As it will be studied later, the tendency maintained by the figures like The Fisher of Halicarnassus, Sabahattin Eyuboğlu and Azra Erhat, by constructing a nationalism without using ethnic references, was characterized by a kind of

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- 2 The magazine "Dergâh" was founded by Yahya Kemal's followers and Yahya Kemal was the lead the writer of the magazine. The positivism and the materialism were strictly criticized by the writers of the magazine and the intuitionism of Bergson was defended. In this regard, the writers of "Dergâh" turned their efforts on finding the real sources of Turkish people through the idea of "continuity" of Bergson. (Uçman, Abdullah. "Dergâh" Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi. Accessed March 17, 2019. <http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/co6/co60032.pdf>.)

cultural nationalism that owns the prominent role of Anatolia for creating common values of humanity and that by giving this heritage to today's "Turkish nation", protects the archeological cultural heritage.

One may observe that Neo-Hellenism and Anatolianism counted the homeland as the fundamental element. In contrast to those movements, Pan Turkism defined the homeland as a utopian territory where includes all Turkic races inhabited albeit Gökalp tried to solve this problem by offering three elements of the nation; the first one is "the Turkishness" which means to be from Turkey geographically, second one is "the unity of Oghuzs" (Turks and Azeris) and the third one is "the great unity of all Turkic races" which is named "turan". (Gökalp 1968, 25) From the beginning, a number of loose and eclectic formulas were offered by the intelligentsia to the identity problem of the Early Republican Period of Turkey seems very eclectic. Intriguingly, Anatolianists began Turkish history with the Battle of Manzikert and they regarded Muslim Oghuzs as the ancestry of Turks. In this respect, one may observe the emphasis on ethnicity in Anatolianism. Simply, Anatolianists did not want to make any connection between other Turkic people. Indeed, they accepted only Muslim Oghuzs as the founders of Turkish culture. (Bingöl and Pakiş 2016, 24)

After the Anatolianist movement, humanism found a place in debating the identity problem through the concept of Turkish Renaissance. It must be noted that Yakup Kadri's article entitled "Hümanizmaya Doğru İlk Adım" ("The First Step to The Humanism") published in "Hakikat" journal in 1940 was one of the early works of the "Turkish Renaissance" project. (Yıldırım 2012, 197) It must be noted that Yıldırım uses the term "Turkish Renaissance" to define all efforts made by Anatolianists and especially by Hasan Ali Yücel in order to construct a Turkish identity such as publishing new magazines, starting to translate Ancient Greek and Roman classics at a greater pace.<sup>3</sup> Con-

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3 Turkish intelligentsia was influenced by Renaissance humanism which was the study of classical antiquity. They regarded that period as an era of revolution. In this case they wanted to translate Ancient classics at a great pace and they wanted to create a Turkish humanism which could be the base of Turkish Renaissance. They hoped to start a new age in Europe by creating a national renaissance. However, they could not get succeeded in that. (Sinanoğlu 1998, 23-29)



sequently, all efforts to solve the identity problem melted in the idea of “Turkish Renaissance” based on humanism. In other words, “Turkish Renaissance” reflect the dominant tendency of Turkish intelligentsia in the 1940s. It could be added that “Turkish Renaissance” gained more supporters during Hasan Ali Yücel’s ministry of education, from 1940 to 1946. It is noteworthy that intellectuals turned their efforts on establishing “an original Turkish humanism” which could be the basis of Turkish identity. The idea was to go “national” sources of Turkish humanism, for this reason the translation of Greco-Latin classics was added on the agenda as an urgent task. On the other hand, through the magazines “Yücel, Adımlar, Hep Bu Toprakta” (“Yücel, Steps, Always from This Land”) humanism was spread and the role of translation was explained by many articles of different intellectuals. (Yıldırım 2013b, 15) In parallel, Hasan Ali Yücel constituted “The Translation Office” in 1940 thereafter the office became the most significant catalyzer of the movement. It is remarkable that Blue Anatolianists such as Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, Azra Erhat and Vedat Günyol worked for the Translation Office. In addition, Ülken and Eyüboğlu founded the magazine “İnsan” (“Human”) in 1938 therewith one may observe the early philosophy of Blue Anatolianism. (Yıldırım 2012, 275-276) Similarly, like Blue Anatolianists, Hilmi Ziya Ülken insisted on the importance of translation. In 1933, Ülken wrote a book entitled “Uyanış Devirlerinde Tercümenin Rolü” (“Role of Translation During Awakening Eras”) where he studied the functions of translation. These were, for him, the protection of continuity and secondly, expressing ideas in mother language. (Ibid, 216-217)

It must be noted that around 500 books were translated by the Translation Office and the majority of translated books were Greek and Latin classics based on humanism. Indeed, that process shows that humanism was accepted by the regime as Betül Özçelebi (2007, 1240) states.

In “Turkish Renaissance” movement Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar could be counted as another important figure. In 1939, he published an article entitled “Tercüme Meselesi” (“Topic of Translation”) in “Cumhuriyet” newspaper. In

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It must be noted that there was not a concrete movement but it was the main influence of Turkish intelligentsia.

the article, he complains that Turkish youth is obliged to read scientific, philosophical and literary works in foreign languages. Furthermore, Tanpınar claims that Turkish language is “poor” because the majority of European books are not translated, therefore the translation problem could be solved through an official program. (Tanpınar 1977, 77-79) Moreover, in 1941 he published another article entitled “Tenkit İhtiyacı” (“The Need of Criticism”) in “Tasvir-i Efkar” newspaper. In the article, Tanpınar underlines that one may find numerous writers in Turkey but a critic of “Western standards” could not be found. (Ibid, 71) It must be noted that Tanpınar (1977, 73) defines characteristics of the critic, “In life, like in everything, there is a power called ‘continuity’. Like physiology, in social life too, this idea is the basic. The critic whose absence I am talking about is the critic who will search that continuity patiently”. (Ibid, 73) Therewith, influences of Bergson’s intuitionism and Yahya Kemal’s idea of “continuity” could be observed on Tanpınar. (Yıldırım 2012, 206) In 1943, Tanpınar published another article entitled “Bizde Tenkit” (“Criticism at Us”) in “Ülkü” and again he turned his efforts on translation issue thereafter he tried to show that a tendency to establish a Western-style criticism could be found in Turkish literature in the 18th century. In the article, Tanpınar studies the preface of Şeyh Galib’s “Hüsn ü Aşk”<sup>4</sup> (“Beauty and Love”) to demonstrate that Şeyh Galib criticized Nabi theoretically. Besides, Tanpınar does not find that early work as an ideal example because Tanpınar regards criticism as a genre which belongs to humanist communities. In this respect, Tanpınar appreciates Şeyh Galib’s efforts on searching the “continuity” but he does not find a humanist tendency. (Ibid, 74) Moreover, Tanpınar compares Namık Kemal and Beşir Fuad to show that Namık Kemal could not be counted as a critic because he does not search the “continuity”. Moreover, Tanpınar asserts that Beşir Fuad tries to analyze the relation between imagination and human. In other words, Beşir Fuad places human in the center of his methodology. (Ibid, 75-76) In addition, Tanpınar regards Yahya Kemal as “the greatest revolutionist” of Turkish literature because Tanpınar claims that Yahya Kemal established a classical literary language in Turkish literature. In this regard, Tanpınar describes Yahya Kemal as a poet “who makes the old

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4 The book was written in 18th century.

language speak like a Western poet”. (Ibid, 324-326) Furthermore, Tanpınar says that Yahya Kemal’s works are Turks’ “true classics”. (Youtube, 2018) Tanpınar was deeply influenced by Yahya Kemal and he aimed to be a part of “the Turkish Renaissance” movement by emphasizing the importance of translation, criticism and the language.

In the late 1940s, the idea of “the Turkish Renaissance” could not continue because Hasan Ali Yücel was no longer the minister of education and the Village Institutes lost their function. In this case, Blue Anatolianism was regarded as a remedy to the identity crisis. In the next chapter, the movement will be studied through Balıkcı’s thoughts.

## Another Approach to The Identity Problem: Balıkçı And Blue Anatolianism

This chapter starts with a short biography of Balıkçı Secondly, Balıkçı's literary style will be studied to show how he creates popular narratives through his literary style. Thirdly, the identity problem elaborated in his historical narratives will be explained.

### § 3.1 A Short Biography of Balıkçı

Balıkçı was born in 1890 in Crete. His mother was Sare İsmet Hanım. His father Mehmet Şakir Pasha was an Ottoman commander and a historian. His uncle had served as the grand vizier. It would be fair to say that Balıkçı's family was close to the Ottoman dynasty. There were many artists in his family such as Fahrünnisa Zeyt, Aliye Berger, Füreyâ Koral, Nejat Devrim and others. Balıkçı lived his childhood in Athens because his father had a governmental mission in Greece and later the family moved to Büyükada where Balıkçı finished primary school. (Orman 2005, 11) He graduated from Robert College. He went to England to finish his studies at Oxford University in Modern History. Although his father spent a lot of money for his education, he could not graduate from the university. Instead, he came back to Turkey with "a pregnant Italian woman". Because of those reasons, his father was angry at Balıkçı. In 1911, they had an argument and Balıkçı killed his father. It must be noted

that it is still blurry if Balıkçı intended to murder his father or if it was an accident. Some historians such as Murat Bardakçı claim that Balıkçı's wife and his father Şakir Pasha had a romantic relationship. Some others claim that Balıkçı's wife was raped by Şakir Pasha. (Bardakçı 2001) Other scholars assert that Balıkçı killed his father accidentally or that his father committed suicide in front of him. Journalist Nebil Özgentürk made an interview with Balıkçı's second wife Hamidiye Hanım and his son Sina Şakir in 1995. Based on the interview, one may say that even Balıkçı's family did not know the truth about Şakir Paşa's death. At that time, Balıkçı was sentenced to 14 years in prison but he was acquitted after 7 years. (Özgentürk 1995) In 1918, Balıkçı came back to İstanbul and he started to work as a journalist, caricaturist and an illustrator for literary magazines such as 'Resimli Ay, Resimli Hafta, İnci' etc. In 1925, Balıkçı wrote a story under a nickname (Hüseyin Kenan) entitled "Hapishane'de İdama Mahkum Olanlar Bile Bile Asılmaya Nasıl Giderler?" ("How the Ones Who Are Sentenced to Execution Go to Get Hanged on Purpose?") in Resimli Hafta. The story was about the last night of some deserters who were sentenced to execution. (Orman 2005, 12-14) However, at that time the law on the maintenance of order was active and the judges of "Courts of Independence" were very strict with leftist intellectuals. In the same days a Kurdish leader, Sheikh Said revolted against the Turkish government. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017d, 59-66-67) In this case, the story written by Balıkçı was regarded a serious misdemeanour thereafter Balıkçı and the owner of the magazine, Zekeriya Sertel got arrested immediately and the prosecutor demanded a sentence of execution for them. Balıkçı was accused of "disinclining people from the military service". Intriguingly, Balıkçı and Zekeriya Sertel got a sentence of confinement in a fortress. Balıkçı's confinement place was Bodrum. (Borak 2002, 67)

In his autobiography book *Mavi Sürgün*, Balıkçı shares his memories and he tells how he got confined in Bodrum in detail. The book starts with the occupation of İstanbul and therewith Balıkçı narrates on the oppression of the English army against Turkish people. He underlines that Turkish people were even beaten up just because they were Turkish and that occupation forces were extremely "rude, cruel and racist". (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017d, 17-19) At this

case, one may see the first signs of identity crisis in his memories: His ontological view could be easily understood from the book. Balıkçı tells that he used to like doing his prayers in different mosques of İstanbul and he used to participate in the rituals of Rufai order until he became a dervish. Balıkçı underlines that the Rufai House was open for everyone and one could have seen Bektashis and Mawlawis among the participants of Rufai rituals. (Ibid, 20-22) He tried to translate the “Masnawi” of Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi into English and into Latin but he could not finish it. (Orman 2005, 94) Balıkçı shares Mawlana’s quotes very often in his letters to Azra Erhat and it is mentioned that Balıkçı gave conferences about Mawlana. (Erhat 1976, 181) During the occupation of İstanbul he was the editor in chief of “Cumhuriyet”. Additionally, he was translating pocket books into Turkish. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017, 31-48-49) When his story about deserters was published, he got arrested and firstly, he was sent to the Cebeci prison. It must be noted that Balıkçı asserts that he wrote that story to analyze the psychology of deserters who were sentenced to death. He accentuates that he did not want to protest the executions. (Ibid, 61) Ultimately, Balıkçı got a sentence of confinement in a fortress. After a trip of months, he arrived in Bodrum with gendarmes but the fortress of Bodrum was almost a wreck and there was only one policeman in Bodrum. Balıkçı rented a house by the permission of the policeman. (Ibid, 155) In many pages, Balıkçı describes “the fantastic beauty” of Bodrum and the Aegean Sea and the people of Bodrum. Balıkçı notes that inhabitants of Bodrum were mostly fishermen and small employers. (Ibid, 167) In a short time, Balıkçı got to know everyone and he turned his attention on observing lives of fishermen and divers. It is remarkable that Balıkçı prefers to use real or realistic characters in his books. (Ibid, 187) One may easily observe that his fictional books and his autobiographical book have several parallel aspects.

Apparently Balıkçı seems to have bought encyclopedias and agricultural books to learn about cultivation and improve the quality of agriculture in Bodrum by educating the local people. He ordered seeds of fruit trees to enrich Bodrum’s landscape. He wanted to stay in Bodrum until the end of his life, but after a year and half the Court of Independence decided that Balıkçı could spend the rest of his confinement in İstanbul. In his words, “that was the real confinement” for him. He spent a year and half in İstanbul and then he

came back to Bodrum. (Ibid, 191-193) After that day, he dedicated himself to Bodrum's development and he chose the Halikarnas Balıkcısı as a nickname. In sum, Balıkcı spent 25 years in Bodrum and then he moved to İzmir in 1947 for his children's education because after the Second World War I he could not see any opportunity to stay in Bodrum to gain his life. In İzmir, Balıkcı worked as a tourist guide and he wrote for "Tan, Cumhuriyet, Demokrat İzmir" newspapers and "Gündüz Hikâyeler Dergisi, Anadolu" journals. (Orman 2005, 22-23) In 1973, he died in İzmir.

### § 3.2 The Literary Style of Balıkcı

As it was explained in the last section, Balıkcı found the meaning of life during his confinement in Bodrum. He wrote that, he found "the purity of human-kind" in Bodrum as well. In this case, lives of fishermen, divers, farmers and other figures of the Mediterranean became the most significant influence for Balıkcı. In his words, he started to write about Bodrum and Bodrum people because he was "grateful to that place". Balıkcı asserts that the Mediterranean people are "magnificent" because they have to protect their "natural ways", their "innocence" and their "purity". Indeed, writing about Bodrum and its people came as "an instinct" for Balıkcı as he explains. (Youtube, 2018)

Şadan Gökovalı points out in the preface of "Çiçeklerin Düğünü" ("Marriage of Flowers") that Balıkcı's definition of story writing could be formulated as "writing at once". (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2013a, 8) In other words, Balıkcı's technique of writing is to finish a story with no break. Indeed, this technique of story writing could be seen in his fictional and non-fictional works. One may not separate Balıkcı's oral language and his written language because he displays his oral language in his written works. It is not surprising that his works seem very close to his audiences and the excitement he found in writing could be observed. Almost all, his works contain autobiographical parts as Şadan Gökovalı explains. Gökovalı claims in the preface of "Deniz Gurbetçileri" ("Exiles of the Sea") that the character named "Latif" is Balıkcı himself. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı, 2015b, 8) In addition, another character named "Hovarda Kaptan" is someone that Balıkcı knew in real life. It is noteworthy that Balıkcı gives a place to the same character in more than one book. It will

be fruitful to compare paragraphs taken from “Mavi Sürgün” and “Deniz Gurbetçileri” about “Hovarda Kaptan” to observe similarities:

One day Hovarda (It was his nickname). He got lost in the sea with his boat after the event that I will tell. Neither a piece of his boat nor his body was found. It was a total disappearance. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı, 2017d: 187)

Hacer Bacı asked a few times by screaming: “Where is Hovarda? Is he coming?” They could not give any response; it was like their tongues were paralyzed. The youngest one wiped his tears off and they tried to say a few words but they swallowed those words. Hacer understood that his man would never come back. She learned that near the coasts of Antalya, at the cape of Caledon his Hovarda Süleyman Kaptan was taken away by waves. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015b, 41)

In this regard, one could clearly see that fiction and reality go hand in hand in Balıkcı’s books. Furthermore, Balıkcı uses same characters repetitively. It must be noted that characters such as Ateşoğlu, Turgutca, Uluç Ali, Haşmet Bey and many others appear in different novels with similar attitudes but in different situations. For instance, “Ateşoğlu” and “Aliş” could be seen in “Deniz Gurbetçileri” and in “Aganta Burina Burinata”, Aliş could be seen also in “Ötelerin Çocukları” (Children of Beyonds). Additionally, Turgut Reis is mentioned in “Çiçeklerin Düğünü” and in “Aganta Burina Burinata”. Besides, the historical figure Turgut Reis is one of the most important characters in “Uluç Reis” (“Captain Uluç”) and he is the main character of a historical novel of Balıkcı entitled by his name, “Turgut Reis”. Furthermore, the majority of rich and rude characters are named “Haşmet” and an experienced Greek sailor named “Barba Vangel” appears in many stories and novels. In this case, one could observe that Balıkcı does not seek originality. Indeed, precision in his works factual precision is not important at all for him.

It could be seen that Balıkcı repeats himself by writing almost identical stories. Additionally, one may see that story arcs of his many stories are very similar. For instance, in “Gençlik Denizlerinde” one may see a story entitled “Kirman Belli”. Intriguingly, Balıkcı engages the same story to his novel entitled “Ötelerin Çocukları”. The main character of “Kirman Belli” is Davut, he finds a place in “Ötelerin Çocukları” with a different name, “Kerimoğlu”:



At the same time, people like bees regarded stinging Davut as a duty of honor. At a coast of many miles all robberies were counted as a crime of him. Whatever it is... but the worse was that he was accused of rapes in isolated places. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015c, 190)

Along the coasts of many miles all of robberies were regarded as his job. Whatever it is, but the hurting one was that he was accused of sexual harassment toward women. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2010, 13)

Consequently, two similar descriptions of two similar characters could be easily observed. In addition, story arcs are very similar too. Furthermore, Balıkcı's other stories entitled "Köy Ağası" ("Agha of the Village") (Halikarnas Balıkcısı, 2015c) and "Köy Âlemi" ("Atmosphere of the Village") (Halikarnas Balıkcısı, 2013a) are the same stories with small differences. Both stories are about the flirtation of Mahmut Agha and Güllü. Even the descriptions are almost identical. Moreover, in "Ötelerin Çocukları" there is a passage about finding a wreck in the deep of the sea. There is almost the same story arc in another story of Balıkcı entitled "Leş Kargası" ("The Carrion Crow"). It could be easily seen that even some paragraphs are almost identical:

İster fırtına, ister acemilik nedeniyle olsun, vapur, motor ya da bir kayık kayalara çarpıp parçalandı mı, Vasiliyos Zaharyadis'e gün doğdu demektir. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015c, 74)

İster fırtına, ister acemilik dolayısıyla olsun, bir vapur, motor ya da bir sac kayık, karaya çarpar da parçalanır ya da yirmi otuz kulaç derinliğindeki denizde batarsa, Rodoslu Stavro Kolarides'e gün doğdu demektir. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2010, 188)

One may observe that similarities between his stories are clear. However, names of characters are different. In this case, one may easily observe that he is not a productive author and his literary works revolve around similar subjects.

On the other hand, it is fruitful to compare Balıkcı's published and unpublished books to see Balıkcı's process of writing. Şadan Gökovalı explains that "Gençlik Denizlerinde" contains only Balıkcı's unpublished stories. Furthermore, Gökovalı underlines that stories added to the book were edited through Balıkcı's notes. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015c, 11-12) In this case, it could be said that Balıkcı writes his stories more than once and he connects stories

in a row to construct a novel claim here that Balıkçı is more a popular storyteller than a novelist. It must be noted that between his published works as well, similarities could be seen easily. Firstly, characters are usually similar. For instance, “Erkek Fatma” of “Aganta Burina Burinata” and “Çakır Ayşe” of “Deniz Gurbetçileri” are very similar female characters whose masculine sides are emphasized. Furthermore, Turgutca’s childhood in “Turgut Reis” (“Captain Turgut”) and Mahmut’s childhood in “Aganta Burina Burinata” are almost identical; both characters dream of being a sailor since their childhood they become a disciple of an experienced sailor and take a theoretical education at a young age. Similarly, their masters, “Kalafat Ahmet Usta” of “Aganta Burina Burinata” and “Tahtabacak” of “Turgut Reis” have identical characteristics.

Secondly, the same themes are often repeated in Balıkçı’s works. “The sea people” and “the land people” are usually compared, a child who wants to be a sailor despite his parents is a common motif, the sea is always impersonated, the setting of events is always an Aegean region and the descriptions of nature are alike. Furthermore, autobiographical lines are very remarkable in Balıkçı’s works as Şadan Gökovalı points out, “Barka Reis in ‘Gençlik Denizlerinde’, ‘Dede Kaptan’ in ‘Son Fırtına’ (‘The Last Storm’) and the experienced fatherly sailors in his other stories are in a way the Fisher himself or his close friends”. (Ibid, 12)

The most significant reason that Balıkçı is more a storyteller than a novelist is the narrator’s commentaries in his books. In “Deniz Gurbetçileri” the narrator gives information about different types of sponges in parentheses:

“One Melat!” (The pores of Melat sponges are small and they have the same size. This sponge is soft like velvet.)

“Kabadika two!” (The pores of Kabadika sponges are large and small. They are soft but not as soft as melat, they are very solid sponges.)’ (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2015b, 128)

Indeed, those informative parts to be seem taken from an encyclopedia more than a novel. Moreover, in his book entitled “Dalgıçlar” (“Divers”) the narrator addresses directly the audience:

I know that the information we are giving is boring but if they are not known by the audience it will be hard to understand what we are going to tell

after. The man deals with the salty and tasteless crust before he eating a pistachio.’ (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2013b, 22)

It must be noted that the narrator uses the first plural person and it is clear that the usage of the first plural person as a narrator comes from the “maddah” style which is the traditional storytelling performance in Turkish oral literature. Balıkcı’s narrators address the audience like an uncle or a grandfather who is inclined to give information in a fictional story. Besides, Balıkcı reflects didactic characteristics in his novels. In this regard, it could be observed that literary works of Balıkcı are didactic and they are close to the traditional popular writing style. The didactic side of his works are sometimes very direct. For instance, in the middle of an internal monologue of a sailor the narrator makes a reference to Thales:

Karabatak knew that vital water would be himself, Karabatak. One day that vitality could be reason, could be Thales. When he looked at the universe, he would say by reasoning, “The substance is immortal but alive.” The human-kind says... (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015b, 106-107)

In Balıkcı’s historical novel entitled “Uluç Reis”, the narrator addresses all the time the audience:

Let’s stop talking about the Turkish navy and let’s go with Kara Hoca to discover the navy of Allies. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017f, 419)

As it was shown, one may see that Balıkcı’s writing technique is not very complex and he prefers to tell a story like someone from the family. On the other hand, he tries to give his messages directly therewith his literary works revolve around similar themes with similar characters. It could be observed that Balıkcı is not an author who tries to find new techniques and new themes. Instead, he tries to create a popular narrative by writing a lot about with a simple story-arc on the same subjects.

### § 3.3 Balıkcı and Blue Anatolianism: A New View on Culture

Azra Erhat, author, translator, philologist and a very close friend of Balıkcı published her books entitled “Mavi Anadolu” (“Blue Anatolia”) in 1957 and “Mavi Yolculuk” (“Blue Travel”) in 1962. In those books, Erhat underlines that her wish is to present Aegean coast to the world because in similar to Balıkcı

she regards the Aegean regions as the sources of Anatolian culture. Furthermore, she offers educational and touristic agendas to develop those regions. In the preface of “Blue Anatolia”’s third edition Erhat complains that Bodrum’s development was not realized as Balıkçı wished. Besides, she adds that Bodrum became the most famous touristic place of Turkey therewith Bodrum faced environmental problems, plundering and many more. (Erhat 1978, 5) Furthermore, Erhat points out that “blue voyage” lost their function because of their popularity and the environmental problems. Erhat writes that Balıkçı is the founder of “blue voyage”. (Erhat 1979, 18-21) Moreover, she defines “blue travel” as a remedy to the alienation of urban people. She regards urban people as individuals who “lost their connection with the nature” and who “live under artificial conditions”. (Ibid, 28-29)

It is worth to bear in mind that Balıkçı worked as a tourist guide with Sabahattin Eyüboğlu in Aegean regions more than twenty years (Ibid, 21) Apparently Blue Anatolianists emphasized the importance of Aegean regions in cultural economic terms. Balıkçı did not prepare an agenda for Aegean regions’ development. Besides, he tried to spread a common consciousness about the Turkish culture and history among Turkish people in daily life because he asserts that Turkish people are alienated to their culture:

We try to accept the western culture. But the West accepts its classical culture and Western people define themselves by this culture. But we find strange and foreign the culture of our ancestors who lived once upon a time in Anatolia. We speak of mouth about westernization. However, when the ancient culture of Anatolia is mentioned, we shrug and we say, “Go away! That is the Greek culture!” by ignoring the subject. Because the West finds its roots in its classical culture but Western people regard us as Asiatic barbarians and we are agreed with them. Yes, we do not confirm that point by our mouths but we do it by our hearts. If it were not so, we would not need to imitate the West. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2015a, 13)

Consequently, Balıkçı claims that Turkish people regard Anatolian Aegan culture as Greek culture albeit it is the culture of their own ancestors. Furthermore, Balıkçı perceives an identity problem based on “nautical Anatolia”. Besides, he refers to ancient Anatolian civilizations to draw a line from the past

to the present. In other words, Balıkçı tries to imagine a continuous history from ancient ages of Anatolia to today.

In this respect, he turns his efforts on trying to demonstrate cultural connections between ancient civilizations of Anatolia and present-day inhabitants of Turkey he also tries to show that the Mediterranean is the source of cultural, economic and artistic developments of humanity. However, it is worth to bear in mind that Balıkçı's perception of Anatolia is limited by coastal regions he imagines a "nautical Anatolia". While, Balıkçı assumes an opposition between Europe and Turkey, he tries to show that the civilizational sources of Western culture are based in Anatolia. In the preface of his book entitled "Hey Koca Yurt" ("Ô Great Homeland") Balıkçı explains that the Mediterranean geography forms the major part of the "Fertile Crescent". Moreover, he puts coastal Anatolian regions in the center of "Fertile Crescent". (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2012, 11) Since he defends that civilizations do not belong to races. (Youtube, 2018) In other words, he makes a connection between geography and civilization.

In this regard, Balıkçı asserts that Sumerians were the first community who came to terrestrial Anatolia and that on the other side of Anatolia the Minoan civilization was established. He claims that both civilizations got influenced by each other therewith an amalgam of those two civilizations became the source of Mediterranean culture. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2012, 13) In this respect, Blue Anatolianism and Anatolianism have a common point because both movements regard Anatolia as the source of national culture. However, Anatolianists argue that Turkish history starts with the War of Manzikert in 1071. Indeed, they give a key role to Seljuks. (Deren 2008, 536) For instance, Nurettin Topçu assumes that "Turkish national history" begins with the War of Manzikert afterwhich Seljuks started the Turkish renaissance. Topçu describes Hittites as "farmers" who got mixed up with "nomad" Turks and they converted to Islam. (Ibid: 538) In this case, Anatolianists give a key role to racial and religious characteristics. Furthermore, they claim that this mixture did never change the purity of Turkishness. (Atabay 2012, 528-529) In contrast to the Anatolianists, Balıkçı does not regard Islam and race as fundamental elements of Turkishness. Indeed, he does not begin Turkish history with the War of Manzikert. Instead, Balıkçı asserts that there were already some Turkic

tribes in Anatolia even before Oghuzs. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2008, 51) Balıkcı does not pay attention to dynasties and political leaders as the makers of history. He assumes that Anatolian history is a total history thereafter Balıkcı (2012, 12) offers a secular history:

However; the people living in this atmosphere had not known holy orders and they did not have a moral god that could limit the reason of mankind. The reasoning function of mankind was liberated for the first time to make an interpretation of the universe and of nature. In that society there was not a class of clergy because the clergy has always been the clowns of the dominant classes in all eras. During the Friday sermon, the sultan was called the shadow of God.

In this example, one may easily observe that Balıkcı does not portray an Islamic history. Instead, he insists “on the role of people” during the development of a civilization. In parallel, he defines Turkish history as “the history of all ethnic and cultural elements of Turkey”. In this respect, Balıkcı points out that beginning Turkish history with the Battle of Manzikert is “worse than cutting the umbilical cord” therewith that is “cutting the waist of the history of Turkey”. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2008, 15) Balıkcı claims that Turks who came to Anatolia before Seljuks played a remarkable role during the development of Sumerian culture. Additionally, Balıkcı supports his arguments with linguistic similarities between Sumerian and Turkish. (Ibid, 16-17) However, he insists that the role of Turks must not be exaggerated because he does not think a civilization could be ownable therewith he says, “a civilization which is limited to a nation gets corrupted”. (Youtube, 2018) Balıkcı tries to support his arguments by giving examples from ancient Anatolian culture where he finds the roots of Turkish culture. Firstly, he assumes that the “speed” is the basic element of Anatolian civilization. Balıkcı argues that status quo has never existed in Anatolia because traditions and other elements of societies such as morality and religion had no place in Anatolian civilizations. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2008, 18) Balıkcı defines the “speed” as the continuity of cultural and scientific development. In other words, “speed” is the wish of taking risks to start a new “adventure” and also that is “the relativity of the reality”. Furthermore, Balıkcı states that the Mediterranean geography encouraged Anatolian people to take risks. It is worth to bear in mind that Balıkcı uses the word “adventure” to

signify scientific and intellectual progresses. In addition, he defines Mediterranean people as an “adventurous” community. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2007a, 32) In this case, Balıkcı counts Heraclitus as the founder of modern atom physics and therewith he tries to state the role of “speed” with a quote of Heraclitus. In other words, Balıkcı assumes that reality is always relative therewith he tries to show that history is relative as well and he names this relativity “speed”. (Ibid, 143,144) Balıkcı goes further and he states that Heraclitus wanted to define the reality as a fact between the existence and the inexistence. Balıkcı argues that the concept of relativism was founded by Western Anatolians. In parallel, Balıkcı makes a reference to Anaximander’s definition of evolution which is based on the continuous change of substance. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2008, 71-72) Moreover, Balıkcı explains that Ionian thinkers did not call themselves “philosophers” and they called themselves “fusiologos”. For them the word “philosopher” means “the lover of wisdom” but the word “fusiologos” meant the “savant of nature”. Consequently, Balıkcı comes to assume that the word “fusiologos” means the natural scientist of today. (Ibid, 59) In sum, one may clearly see that Balıkcı gives all of those examples to prove that there was already an elevated civilization in the West-Anatolia. It must be noted that all of his references are linked with the Mediterranean Basin.

Furthermore, Balıkcı complains that Anatolian scientists and thinkers have always been underestimated in “the West” until the end of the nineteenth century because until that time European culture was under the influence of Neo-Platonist interpretation of Christianity. (Ibid, 70) In this case, he compares Hellenistic culture and Anatolian culture repetitively in his works and he tries to demonstrate that Hellenism was corrupted by scholastic philosophy yet romantics such as Keats, Shelly, Byron, Victor Hugo, Goethe described Hellenistic culture as the base of the European culture. (Ibid, 45) In this regard, Anatolian culture was disregarded and a corrupt version of Hellenistic culture rose in Europe. Moreover, Balıkcı accuses Neoplatonism of bringing about a historical status quo and therewith historical status quo went hand in hand with historical anachronism. Consequently, Balıkcı criticizes the usage of historical anachronism as a methodology because it allegedly provided corrupted metaphors in social psyche. For instance, Balıkcı criticizes that Socrates was described as a Christian figure who died like Jesus Christ. (Ibid, 54) Besides,

he states that in contrast to religious sources of the new perception of Hellenist culture in Europe, ancient Anatolian culture was based on secular sources. Balıkçı argues that Anatolian culture did not approve of any religion and consequently, a clergy system was never established in Anatolia. (Ibid,59)

In this case, Balıkçı assumes that three stages are needed to create a civilization: The first one is called “the era of magic”, the second one is called “the era of religion” and the last one is called “the era of science”. (Ibid, 60) Furthermore, Balıkçı underlines that the second stage was reached in Anatolia under the influence of Ionian culture but he claims that Hellenism was always stuck in the first stage because of “ethics”, “metaphysics” and “mysticism”. It is remarkable that Balıkçı does not find any contribution of Hellenist culture in Anatolia during the process of reaching the third stage. (Ibid, 61) However, he argues that Hellenist culture was the dominant power of its era and the civilizational development of Anatolia was under attack of “this darkness for thousands of years”. Balıkçı defines “Orphism” as the source of that “darkness”. In Balıkçı’s regard “Orphism” was a “moral revolt” against the mythology of Homer and Hesiod in the 7th century BC. In other words, “Orphism” was a moral interpretation of mythology. Consequently, it was the process of creating a religion which caused a metaphysical movement that blocked the intellectual development in Ancient Greece. However, Balıkçı argues that Anatolian people were aware of “the danger” so-called “Orphism” and they did not allow “Orphism” to find supporters in Anatolia. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015a, 24-29) Moreover, Balıkçı underlines that one may find the roots of “Orphism” in Plato’s idealism and he states that “Orphism” was spread by Pythagoras. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2008,64) On the other hand, Balıkçı did not disregard the contribution of Pythagoras for the development of science but he highlights that Pythagoras and his followers changed their minds and they turned their efforts on spreading “Orphism”. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015a, 26) Balıkçı criticizes Socrates and Plato for believing that the soul is immortal in contrast to Ancient Greek philosophers. In other words, Balıkçı argues that Greek philosophers were stuck in metaphysics therewith they could not comprehend the importance of the present. In contrast to the Greek philosophers, Anatolian thinkers comprehended the importance of the present and they dedicated themselves to the scientific development. For instance, they invented the sun



clock. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2008, 66) Moreover, Democritus founded the smallest part of the substance and he named it “atom”. He discovered the rule of causality and Anaxagoras discovered the structure of substance. On the other hand, Socrates was judged for denying the existence of gods in this way he believed that the soul was immortal. In this case, Anatolian thinkers did not regard natural elements as gods because they constructed the base of modern physics. In the words of Balıkcı, “Anatolians’ denial of God was scientific but Socrates’ denial was mystic”. (Ibid, 74-75) Furthermore, the medicine was not developed in Greece because the human body was regarded as a “dirt” to get rid of. However, it was developed in Anatolia by the studies of scientists like Hippocrates and Gallienus. By those examples, Balıkcı concludes that scientific development could be seen everywhere in Anatolia. He goes further and he gives more examples; for instance, the functional urbanism was practiced in Anatolia and Hippodamus of Miletus was one of the early urban planners in world history. (Ibid, 76) Moreover, Balıkcı claims that “Hellenism was not the source of anything but Anatolia was the source of everything”.

In this respect, Balıkcı turns his efforts on demonstrating the importance of “an Anatolian God” called “Dionysus” also known as “Bakkhos”. (Ibid, 81) Moreover, Balıkcı asserts that Anatolians’ old belief was called “Bakkhos” thereafter he tries to explain that “Bakkhos” played a remarkable role in Turkey’s history because it was against status quo. Balıkcı explains that “Bakkhos” was Hittites’ god of wine who signified the joy of life. He highlights that “Bakkhos” was not a spiritual belief. Instead, “Bakkhos” was based on the unity of body and soul. In other words, that was the antithesis of idealism and Sufism. In this case, Balıkcı claims that the roots of Ahi order, of Bektashi order and of zeibeks could be found in “Bakkhos”. In parallel, Balıkcı assumes that zeibek ceremonies and Bektashi prayers are related to “orgias” of “Bakkhos”. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2012, 171-179) In this respect, Balıkcı regarded the Ahi-order as an organization which is similar to the English “guild system”. He tried to show the crucial role of Ahis for Anatolia’s economic and social development. Besides, Balıkcı adds that Ahi order’s moral principles did not reflect a Sunni tendency. Instead, Ahi order’s moral system could be defined as a “heterodox” interpretation of Islam similar to Bektashism. Balıkcı tries to show that one may observe a connection between Bektashism and

zeibeks based on similarities between their dances, their clothes and their rituals. Additionally, he claims that the Janissary organization was founded by Bektashis and Ahi. Balıkçı explains that Ahi-order had two principles; the first one was generosity, and the second one was bravery. In this respect, he relates zeibeks with the second principle of Ahi. Furthermore, Balıkçı argues that Ahi played the key role during the development period of Ottoman Empire because they already had an economic organization in Anatolia through the most important trade roads. However, Balıkçı asserts that Ottomans destroyed the Ahi system when they reached enough power. (Ibid, 185-187) During the period of Mehmed the Second, the grand vizier Çandarlı Halil Pasha was murdered because he was related to Ahi and the Ahi-order was disbanded in the same period. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2008, 169) In this regard, one may face a cultural-historical approach which could be placed as an antithesis of the Ottomanist view. Indeed, Balıkçı did not regard Ottoman sultans as history makers. Instead, he accentuated the role of Anatolian people as the agent of Turkish history as he (Ibid, 168) points out, “The ones who wrote the Ottoman history did not write the history of the Turks but they wrote the history of sultans and the palace. The economic and the social sides of that history were not written or they were ignored.” Furthermore, Balıkçı (Ibid, 170) criticizes other historical approaches:

The ones who count the blood of Anatolians inherited by their ancestors as foreign are a few kinds. One kind regards Turan at Far East as the homeland. There are also fatalists, even if one says Turk to them, their heads are stuck in Arabia. “The obscurantists” make another team. Their homeland, in other words, their Turkey begins with the sultans and ends with the sultans. By ignoring the Turkish ethnic unity which reaches to the atomic era, as the national culture they in turn count Turanic, Arabian and Ottoman cultures. However, there is no longer Turan and the Ottoman Empire.

However, it must be noted that what Balıkçı signifies by an “ethnic unity” does not make any racial reference and differs from Pan Turkism. Instead, what he means by an “ethnic unity” is an amalgam of different peoples that got mixed up in Anatolia as it was explained. Furthermore, Balıkçı calls this mixed community “Turks of Turkey”. (Ibid, 155) In this case, one may see that

Balıkçı does not agree with Pan Turkist historical approach as with their emphasis on Central Asians roots and he does not pay attention to common values of Turkic races. In other words, he does not try to find a connection between “Turks of Turkey” and other Turkic communities. By this example, one could easily see that Balıkçı criticizes Pan Turkists, Islamists and Ottomanists all as he tries to find a connection between the Anatolian past and the Kemalist present. Furthermore, he defines the Village Institutes project as an “antidote” against the “obscurantists” such as Pan Turkists, Islamists and Ottomanists. (Ibid, 174) It is noteworthy that Balıkçı regards Turkey’s War of Independence as a war between Hellenist culture and Anatolian culture. Furthermore, Balıkçı adds that the war between “İstanbul” and “Atatürk” must be seen as the war of Ottoman elites and Anatolian people. Balıkçı notes that Atatürk and Turkish people were the real conquerors of Istanbul. (Ibid, 177-178) In this regard, Balıkçı could be seen as a populist intellectual who tries to construct a historical approach from below within the broader framework of republican ideology.

Balıkçı refers to Nietzsche’s distinction of historical tendencies to support his arguments. He points out that Nietzsche determines two historical tendencies i.e. that the “Dionysiac” tendency and “Apollonian” tendencies. The first one is based on the joy of life, but the second one is based on idealism. Balıkçı notes that the Apollonian tendency is elitist but Dionysiac tendency is populist. Consequently, he supports Dionysiac tendency and he explains that Dionysiac tendency was founded by Ionians. On the other hand, Apollonian tendency was founded by Greeks when the “true” Hellenism was corrupted. In this respect, Balıkçı argues that Greek idealism could not reach the “instincts” of life because it was based on metaphysics. As an example, Balıkçı asserts that in contrast to Greek scholars, Ionians gave importance to sexuality because it was regarded as the sign of “victory against the death”. In sum, Balıkçı tries to show that while Ionians respected life more Greeks respected the afterlife. In this case, the Greek philosophy and Christianity melted in the same pot during the era of Saint Paul. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2016b, 173-175) Consequently, the East of Mediterranean was the center of civilization in world history, in Balıkçı’s words it was the “cradle of humanity” and of the “Dionysiac pace” (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2012, 195) Indeed, Balıkçı does not count the Ottoman

Empire as a part of Turkish history instead, he turns his efforts on explaining the importance of Anatolian people through Anatolian culture such as folk music, zeibek dances and many others. It is noteworthy that Balıkçı regards Ottoman Empire as a successor of the Byzantine Empire and he tries to demonstrate that Ottoman Empire was deeply influenced by Byzantine culture. In this case, Balıkçı claims that the majority of artistic, scientific and technical words in Ottoman language were adapted from Greek. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2008, 164) For instance, he underlines that “allaturca” music comes from Byzantine culture because it was an artistic form of submission and a denial of real life. Furthermore, Balıkçı regards folk music as the “true Turkish music” and indeed, he accentuates the cultural significance of zeibek music. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2007a: 169-170) Balıkçı notes that Mimar Sinan a classic Ottoman architect was Bulgarian descent but his works were the true reflections of the Dionysiac tendency. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017c, 16-17) In other words, he does not regard Mimar Sinan as an Ottoman figure.

Consequently, one may clearly see that Balıkçı assumes a Turkish culture rooted in Anatolia’s Dionysiac practices taste and the Republic should responses those roots. On the other hand, Balıkçı puts forward the view that returning to the Dionysiac tendency could be the remedy of the complex of belatedness. In other words, imitating the West is not a good strategy to fight against the belatedness problem for republican cultured policies. Instead, he insists that the key of development in all fields is to comprehend the “true” Anatolian culture. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015a, 14)

As Balıkçı writes to Azra Erhat, he describes God as “the movement of atoms in substance”. (Erhat 1976, 180) In other words, he tries to find “the speed” in nature and in social life. In this case, the rhythm could be counted as an important theme for Balıkçı because he relates the rhythm of life with the Dionysiac tendency. He defines folk culture as the base of “true” Turkish culture because Anatolian heritage is a mixture of different communities such as Turks, Hittites, Minoans, Ionians and many others. Moreover, this mixture of different cultures creates an Anatolian civilization which is also reflected in the Mediterranean identity. In this respect, Balıkçı gives a larger definition to Anatolian culture because he links it with the Mediterranean identity.

He uses the term “sea civilization” for Anatolian civilizations and he emphasizes the role of “the sea” during the process of creating a civilization. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2012, 22-23) Balıkçı underlines that the “sea” is the “mother” of cultural creativity. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2016b, 25) The sea and history are strongly connected since the sea contains a lot of archeological data like shipwrecks and sunken cities and settlements. Consequently, Balıkçı is proud of claiming that the first “sea people” were Anatolians. Besides, he assumes that Anatolian people are talented for diving for fishing and for other activities which are related to the sea. (Ibid, 23-29)

## The Role of the “Sea” in Balıkçı’s Fictional Works

It is worth to bear in mind that in literary works of Balıkçı, the “sea” theme is very dominant. Yazıcı points out that the “sea” theme signifies almost the whole nature in his works. (Yazıcı 1998, 109) In this section, the role of the “sea” theme in Balıkçı’s fictional works will be studied. Notably, it could be seen that the sea is usually personified in his works. On the other hand, the sea is often used as a metaphor related to themes such as death, hope. Furthermore, the sea has a key role for Balıkçı’s personages. Moreover, the sea “theme” is related to Balıkçı’s historical approach as it was explained in the last chapter. It is worth to bear in mind that sea means the Mediterranean in Balıkçı’s works. One may easily observe that Balıkçı tries to emphasize the uniqueness of the Mediterranean.

### § 4.1 Sea Animals, Seals and Mermaids

In Balıkçı’s fictional books, one may see that sea animals have a remarkable place. In his fictional books, numerous sea animals such as dolphins, whales, seals, fish and others could be seen. However, it is worth to bear in mind that sea animals are usually related to folk culture. In other words, Balıkçı tries to show the role of sea animals in folk culture to portray a “nautical” Anatolia. For instance, in “Deniz Gurbetçileri” a group of fishermen see a seal and a kind of bird called “exile of the sea” thereafter they regard them as a sign of

good luck, “We saw the exile of the sea and the seal. They said, “That is double good luck””. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2015b, 21)

On the next pages, the narrator assumes a similarity between seals and humans. Notably, the narrator finds a connection between seals and mermaids as well. In this respect, one may observe that the author turns his efforts on linking folklore and mythology. Selim Dede’s story is a significant example of those efforts. Selim Dede is a fisherman who allegedly got married to a mermaid therewith it is added that mermaids are called “daughters of seals”. Consequently, Selim Dede tells that seals and humans are somehow related:

Selim Dede had always been said, “Do not kill seals. Because they are human beings like us, they are our sea comrades.” to my father. My father was a child when Selim Dede used to say this. (Ibid, 23)

Notably, on the next pages, similarities between seals and humans are more emphasized. Firstly, it is told that seals’ pregnancy lasts nine months and they feed their babies with their milk similar to humans. Secondly, in the story of a sailor called “Kara Memiş” seals are described as sacred living beings: Kara Memiş attacks three seals in a cave with a bat, and later as he sails in his boat he finds himself in the middle of a very strong storm, where he sees a light at the sea. He looks at the light and he sees three wounded people, thereafter he vows not to attack seals until the end of his life. (Ibid, 25) Thirdly, in another story, a personage named Mehmet runs across a mermaid and tries to catch her thereafter she transforms into a seal. It is noteworthy that the narrator finishes the story by saying that “Pan used to live in that region”. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2013a, 40) In this regard, one may see that the seals are not only related to humans, they are also connected with mythology as it was explained. In other words, they are portrayed as a part of the Anatolian culture. Lastly, in “Gençlik Denizlerinde” as well, seals have a remarkable role therewith the narrator gives a message to the audience directly. Simply, the narrator claims that seals are killed in many places therefore they prefer living in the Mediterranean coasts of Turkey. Furthermore, the narrator adds that they are not killed in Turkey because they signify good luck in Turkish culture. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2015c, 25) Additionally, Balıkçı has the same claim in his book entitled “Sea Breeze” which is a collection of his radio speeches. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2011, 127-130)

Moreover, one may see that sharks are other animals mentioned in Balıkçı's fictional books. For instance, in "Dalgıçlar", they are described as dangerous sea animals which make it hard for divers to gain their lives. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2013b, 133) On the other hand, whales are not portrayed as dangerous sea animals hereby they also become a handicap for divers. (Ibid, 141-142) In contrast to sharks and whales, dolphins are described as game friends of sailors, particularly in their childhood. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2013a, 37)

It is worth to bear in mind that Balıkçı is a writer who regards mythology as an inspirational source. In this respect, he used mythological figures from Zeus to Poseidon as a part of Anatolian culture. Indeed, mythological beliefs, mythological elements of nature and mythological creatures could be seen in his books. (Kılıçaslan 2010,167) In this regard, Balıkçı aims to portray the Mediterranean with its ancient past. In other words, the Mediterranean is described with its "unique" cultural references. Mermaids are the most significant mythological creatures in Balıkçı's books. For instance, in his story entitled "Denizkızı Adası" ("Island of Mermaids") mermaids are described as beautiful and dangerous mythological creatures because sailors lose their mind since they get extraordinarily fascinated by their beauty. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2013a, 36-40) Additionally, mermaids are usually mentioned in long descriptions (Kılıçaslan 2010, 69-73) because Balıkçı regards myths as a part of Anatolian culture therewith he pays particular attention to descriptions of mermaids. In "Merhaba Anadolu" ("Hello Anatolia"), Balıkçı turns his efforts on explaining a myth about mermaids (Nereids) and he assumes that mermaids could be seen by "the eye of heart". (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2012, 54-56) It is noteworthy that mermaids are linked with motherhood and love as well. For instance, in "Ötelerin Çocukları", a sailor named Davut prefers to imagine his love (Vedâ) like a mermaid:

He remembered some things said by old sailors about mermaids: In open waters of South coasts, in the eternal silence of the sea, sailors burning with the hope of coming back to the homeland felt like they heard some songs from afar. They remembered lullabies that they used to listen in their mothers' arms. The ones who heard those voices allegedly drove into the sea by leaving shovels and sail and they swam through the voices like a fool. No one would see them



ever again. Davut too, he felt like he heard that maddening song from afar and he had the wish of going to an unknown place. According to what the old sailors say, eyes of mermaids were like the sea. They were sometimes blue and sometimes green and colors were pursuing each other. Davut fell asleep by thinking that Vedâ looked like a mermaid. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı, 2010, 196-197)

In this example, one may observe that mermaid myths play a remarkable role in sailors' lives because they represent women, love and motherhood to sailors are isolated in open waters. On the other hand, mermaids are dangerous because they sing a "maddening song" therewith sailors get fascinated by them and they lose their minds as it was explained. Furthermore, it must be noted that Balıkçı prefers to use metaphors related to the "sea" theme such as mermaid myths to describe sailors psychologically.

#### § 4.2 Sea and Abstract Themes

It must be noted that the sea theme is also related to abstract themes such as hope, death, existence in Balıkçı's fictional books. It is very often repeated that sea is dangerous because it wants to steal young men from their families. Oppositely, the sea theme could be related to hope or liberation as well. Indeed, the role of sea theme changes up to context.

For instance, in a story entitled "Aygır Zehra'nın Kurabiyeleri" ("Stallion Zehra's Cookies") the author describes the sea as a cruel enemy:

Is not there this storm? That is the hate of the sea for me. The humans do not care about anything when they are young. I tried to have some money. My goal was to buy a farm. There are a hundred forty-five liras under the bed. Indeed, the sea knew that. That is why it made a storm. It will not let me come back to the land; it will pull me into itself. I will be buried in the sea. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2007b, 116)

On the other hand, the sea theme could be related to hope and liberation. In another story of Balıkçı entitled "Adadan Adaya" ("From an Island to Another") one may see that an island represents hopes of a young lady who does not want to marry with someone she does not like. Furthermore, the island is portrayed as a utopian place to escape from reality, "Fatma had to escape, she

had to go to her little island world. That was another world which was eternal". (Ibid, 88)

Apparently, the sea theme is related to the human existence. In other words, the author underlines that humans may find the essence of their existence in the sea. In another story of Balıkçı entitled "Son Türkü" ("Last Song") the main personage called "Kör Hüseyin" ("Blind Hüseyin") is an old sailor who is more than a hundred years old who feels lonely when he is on the land. Remarkably, when he goes to sea he says, "Gladly, we left the land." (Halikarnas Balıkçısı, 2016a, 131) Moreover, Kör Hüseyin "finds the main wish of his heart in open waters" although he had lost his three sons at sea. (Ibid, 132) In this case, "the main wish of the heart" seems like an ontological metaphor in the story. In another story entitled "Yaşasın Deniz" ("Hooray Sea") the sea theme is related to danger. The story is about a kid who wants to be a sailor. His father who is a captain tries to warn his son about the dangers of the sea:

When I was a kid, in our house in the village there was a window with a view of the sea. I used to watch the sea for hours. My father was a captain. He used to say, "Do not look at the sea like that, it breaks everything; the wood, the steel, your bones and your heart. But nothing can break it." (Ibid, 149-150)

However, the kid does not listen to his father and he becomes a sailor spending his life under difficult conditions for years. Ultimately, he gets older and he makes a summary of his life. Notably, he does not regret and he screams, "Hooray Sea!" with other sailors. (Ibid, 152-155) In "Aganta Burina Burinata" as well one may observe a similar story about a kid who wants to be a sailor. Remarkably, even the beginning of the novel is focused on dangerous aspects of the sea:

The majority of men of our family died at sea. My mother was a captain's daughter. When she got married to my father, she became a wife of a captain. She says, "I could not have seen my father enough. I got married, I could not even spend two months with my husband." And she points at me, "If this little becomes a sailor what will be my situation? I became a captain's daughter, I became a captain's wife, like that is not enough I hope that I will not be a captain's mother." she adds. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2017a, 7)

Mahmut's parents warn him about the dangers of the sea yet those warnings encourage him to be a sailor as he says, "When my father speaks like that,

instead of getting scared of the sea, my ego becomes greater and I want to fight against the difficulties of the sea". (Ibid, 14)

In this regard one may see that the wish of being a sailor starts in childhood therewith it becomes an inescapable passion. Consequently, the sea is portrayed as carrying an irresistible force which controls one's destiny. The same situation could be found in Balıkçı's historical novels as well. For instance, Uluç hears "the call of the sea".

Even if he knew that he would get beaten up he could not resist, whenever he had the chance he made a mistake by going to sea. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2017f, 39)

In parallel, Turgutca hears "the call of the sea" as well and he decides to be a sailor without hesitation as it is explained:

(...) He would stay in the village? A voice from his interior was saying, "No!" to him strongly. Then, he heard the call of the sea. Because of those kinds of thoughts, he could not sleep until morning. He was sitting on a rock like a statue. His look was becoming greater, and he was trying to see beyond horizons. The way of his life was in the open waters. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2014, 45)

Consequently, in Balıkçı's fictional books the sea is always portrayed as an inevitable destiny. Furthermore, the "sea" theme is sometimes related to punishment and justice. For instance, a personage named "Aksi Mahmut" ("Moody Mahmut") in a story entitled "Ege'nin Öfkesi" ("The Anger of Aegean") kills a mother seal with a bat on an island. After a while he goes to the same island to see his lover agha's wife thereafter, he faces enormous waves and he falls through the rocks. His face is crushed and he is dead. Notably, the narrator pays particular attention to describe him dying as he killed the seal. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2016a, 40-42) It must be underlined that the sea was personified in the story and the fact that Aksi Mahmut's corpse was brought to the coast by waves is described pejoratively, "Through the morning, the sea spitted him to the coast". (Ibid, 42)

In this case, one may clearly observe that the sea punished him. In other words, the justice was served by the sea. Similarly, this story, the same themes could be found in "Gülen Ada" ("Smiling Island") as well. In the story, the main personage called "Deli Davut" ("Mad Davut") is described as the nicest

person on earth whose only passion is going to “Gülen Ada”. One day, a rich and a bad person named “Murat Kocadağ” wants to see that island and he pays Deli Davut to be his guide. They go to the island together, but the island knows that he is a bad person. On the way to the island, he was warned by nature, “the sea spitted on him”. (Ibid, 81) In sum, when he arrived on the island, the island refused to smile at him. Moreover, he was punished by the island; he fell down and waves soaked him and he had to leave the island immediately. (Ibid, 79-83) Consequently, it could be observed that in Balıkçı’s fictional books the sea theme could be related to different abstract themes such as hope, danger, justice and many others.

#### § 4.3 Sea, Family and Women

It must be noted that the “sea” theme is often related to family and women. In fact the, sea is usually portrayed as a woman. For instance, in a story entitled “Koca Orfoz” (“Great Grouper”) the sea is described as a bride, “The colorful world of the depth could be perceived as a smiling bride under a green veil”. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2013a, 30)

It is well known, divers may get fascinated profoundly by the beauty of the depths therefore they may risk their lives. For instance, a young diver named Aliş dreams his lover in a wedding dress when he dives and he hears a lullaby therefore he loses his mind. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2010, 162) The captain understands this situation and he sends Aliş harsh vibrations through his helmet’s cable. Aliş comes back to the boat and the captain says, “He is coming, we saved him from the sea.” (Ibid, 163) In “Parmak Damgası” as well, one may see that sea is described as a beautiful woman:

In depths there was something which was begging him and which was calling to him but now, there was something dark and green, something purple, a beauty which wants to kiss him. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2007b, 14)

It is worth to bear in mind that sea is often described as a dangerous woman who wants to separate all men from their families:

Whenever my grandma pointed at the sea by saying, “Alas, that is the one who takes all fathers, husbands, brothers! She took my father first, and then she took yours. One day she will invite you to be her friend. Do not listen to

her because she gets all men. Scream ‘No’ to her my son”, to obey my grandma’s words I used to throw stones to the sea and I spitted a lot to it. (Ibid, 117)

Furthermore, the beauty of women is usually related to the sea. For instance, in another story of Balıkçı entitled “Ay Işığı” (“The Moonlight”) the narrator describes Akkız’s beauty by using natural and mythological elements therewith the sea is the most used natural element in Balıkçı’s descriptions, “She was looking like moonlight. Because her whiteness was like the sea foam and her blackness was like the shadow of the moon and juniper trees”. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı, 2013a, 66)

It must be noted that the goddess of beauty, Aphrodite was created from the sea foams and Balıkçı claims that she is an Anatolian goddess because her name does not come from Greek. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2015a, 47). In another example, there is a similar description of a woman:

Before he needed to ask if there was, like an old fairy tale, a secret current which goes into the depth of the sea or a vortex of fairies, the body of Güllü which was shiny like a sword getting out from its scabbard, rose among foam. She screamed when she saw the shepherd and she covered her body by diving into the sea. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2013a, 61)

In this example as well, one may observe that the “foam” finds a place in description paragraphs about women’s beauty. Indeed, Balıkçı links Anatolian women’s beauty with the myth of Aphrodite. The shepherd and Güllü meet in an Aegean region which is described as a utopian place where “islands, fair clouds, green fields” and “songs of the sea” are altogether. (Ibid, 61) However, the shepherd sees some galleys and he forgets the beauty of nature and the charm of Güllü, because the galleys “were speaking with him in a language which was closer to him more than his mother language”. In parallel, the narrator explains that the Mediterranean reflects “some feelings” coming from the ancient ages. In sum, the narrator adds that nothing could save the shepherd from open waters. (Ibid, 64-65) The call of the sea is usually described as an instinct coming from ancient ages. Balıkçı underlines the continuity between ancient ages and today. In “Mavi Sürgün” as well, Balıkçı assumes that he heard the voice of the sea. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2017d, 45) In “Deniz Gurbetçileri”, a personage named Ateşoğlu hears the strange language of the sea,

“The sea was talking to him in an old language that he forgot”. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015b, 266) By those examples, one may see that sea is usually described as a person playing a crucial role in one’s life.

As told above, the sea theme may be found related to the motherhood as well. It is worth to bear in mind that this motherhood is likely psychological. For instance, in “Deniz Gurbetçileri”, a sailor’s first ship is defined as a “second mother”:

A sailor can never forget his first ship. The first ship is like a woman who teaches the manliness to a man. The man could never forget her. Yes, her mother gave birth to him but then the second woman made him a real man and she gave birth to his manliness. The first ship made him a real man. Can he ever forget? (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015b, 137)

In this regard, it would not be wrong if one says that sea encourages men to revolt against their mothers therefore the sea theme could be related to revolt against family and tradition. In other words, the sea theme may also be related to liberation in Balıkcı’s fictional books. For instance, in a story entitled “Ay Işığı” (“Moonlight”) a personage named Sarı Ali wants to leave his family to gain his freedom therewith he compares his mother’s wealth and the irresistibility of the sea:

His mother had a garden of figs with a good income, but he was not one of those chicks under the wings of the mother chicken. In his eyes, there were always colors of the sea which were flowing. He wished to see new places lonely. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2013a, 68)

In this example, one may clearly see that the sea theme is related to one’s liberation. In addition, it must be noted that female personages also share the wish of going to sea since they too find freedom in the sea. For instance, Akkız cannot resist the charm of the sea: “The wish of diving immediately into the sea became a torment for her. Generous lights were shining on her thighs and her strong legs”. (Ibid, 68)

However, female figures cannot reach the freedom of the sea because of their parents as it is seen in “Aganta Burina Burinata”. Fatma is a kid who likes swimming but when she becomes a teenager, her family forces her to wear a headscarf her aunt begs her not to swim anymore. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017a, 77) She wishes to go to sea with her lover Mahmut but she cannot and she

wishes she were a man. (Ibid, 78) On this case, sea is described as a metaphor for one's freedom against the mores and traditions the family represent.

#### § 4.4 Sea, Culture and Blue Anatolianism in Fiction

Balıkçı aims to create a popular narrative through the “sea” theme. Balıkçı tries to relate the “sea” theme with Anatolian culture and its historical continuity. Notably, themes related to his historical approach are also employed in his fictional books. For instance, in a story entitled “Etrim Yolunda” (“On the Way of Etrim”) the narrator links Etrim's characteristics with ancient ages of Anatolia. It is told that Etrim was the capital of Karians. Thus the narrator gives historical information underlying the significance of historical continuity, “On those lands once upon a time Karians, Persians, Mysians, Pelajs, Phoenicians, Lydians, Lelegs walked”. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2007b, 23) It must be noted that the usage of demonstrative adjectives, shifts the emphasis on Anatolia. Indeed, one may easily perceive that “those lands” signify Anatolia. The usage of demonstrative adjective to emphasize historical continuity could be observed in another story as well, “When the Goddess of Love, Aphrodite was about to be born from those seas, those seas were absolutely that beautiful”. (Ibid, 101) In this example as well, it could be seen that the narrator tries to underline Blue Anatolianist themes. In another story of Balıkçı entitled “Knidos Afrodit” (“Aphrodite of Knidos”) one may clearly see that historical continuity is emphasized more:

This sea is called “Aegean” or “Arshipel”. Because six seven thousand years ago the waves which made the first boat float and the first boats which floated over wave from there. Aegean is not a sea which wakens ordinary desires. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2016a, 15)

Consequently, the narrator draws a line from ancient ages of Western Anatolia to today. On the other hand, the Aegean is described as an extraordinary geography. It is accentuated that Aegean Sea wakens “extraordinary desires”. The narrator perhaps regards Seven Wonders as reflections of those “extraordinary desires”. He asserts that the Mediterranean's unique geography and its unique climate created a fertile atmosphere for the development and humanity:

The existence of those Ecuadorian fish shows that the climate is very nice here. The climate has humankind as its measure. When it is hot or when it is cold, it does not pass the limits of human conditions. It is not needed to correct the climate with a coat, with a stove or with a range. (Ibid, 15)

The narrator regards intellectual and technical development of the Mediterranean region as a natural result. He explains that the coasts of Knidos are good examples of that geographical fertility.

The narrator tells he takes a nap near ruins where he sees Aphrodite in his dream. Aphrodite talks with him and she says that she is an “Eastern goddess” therewith her different names given by different communities are explained from her mouth:

I am an Eastern goddess. Assyrians said “Ishtar” to me. Phoenicians begged to me by saying, “Astoret! Astoret!” My name in Syria was Atargatis. Babel people worshipped me by calling me “Belit” (Melita!). I have always existed before the humankind existed. I am Astarte. (Ibid, 21)

Furthermore, Aphrodite addresses the narrator and she says, “I gave birth to you” thereafter she says that she is a mother. On the other hand, she underlines that she is not a woman from “an imaginary world” because she explains that she is made from natural elements such as soil. It must be noted that Aphrodite compares herself with “imaginary angels of sky” she claims that they cannot give a birth but she can. (Ibid, 21) In this example, one could easily observe that Balıkcı reflects his secularism. In other words, he tries to explain that the truth could not be found in religions but only in the real world. Notably, Aphrodite insists that she is an Eastern Goddess. Balıkcı opposes Anatolian culture against Western culture. Indeed, on the next pages, the narrator criticizes Western culture and Hellenism. The narrator claims that life was “fluent” like “water” therefore it was regarded as a “progressive” process in the East. Furthermore, Aphrodite complains that Hellenists could not understand that “her star rose from the East”. (Ibid, 22) Furthermore, Aphrodite claims that she “showed that I was the purest and the most right instinct of humanity” at Knidos. (Ibid, 24) Indeed, Knidos is directly linked to the human existence. In other words, Balıkcı assumes that Anatolia was the source of life and civilization. Notably, the narrator describes the continuity as a song which could



be heard still, “Those places are now a ruin but now you can hear the harmony of that song which is reflected on sea colors and sang in a whisper”. (Ibid, 22)

Balıkçı also uses the “music” theme to describe his assumption of historical continuity. In this respect, he pays particular attention to folk music in his fictional works. For instance, a folk song sung by a shepherd gains a profound meaning, “It was not like a song sung by humankind, it was the voice of poor, hungry and naked Anatolia which has witnessed bad administration and oppression for hundreds of years”. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2010, 70)

In this example, one may observe that Ottomans’ period was described as an period of oppression for the Anatolian people. It is worth to bear in mind that Balıkçı regards the Ottoman period as a historical rupture as it was explained in previous chapters. Notably, Balıkçı makes his critic through a song metaphor. On the other hand, the song of shepherd is described as a mystic song because Balıkçı refers to ancient ages of Anatolia.

Furthermore, Balıkçı tries to explain the role of music in Anatolian people’s daily life. For instance, in a story entitled “Geç Kalma” (“Don’t Be Late”) the narrator claims that singing, “O Ghazis!” is a tradition when someone leaves his family for his military service. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2013a, 104) In another story entitled “Deprem” (“Earthquake”) the narrator shares a couplet of a folkloric song about the dangers of the sea:

O sea, the sea, poisonous sea.

You always give the mourning to our island (Ibid, 42)

In “Uluç Reis”, it is told that folk singers could always be found in warships to motivate Turkish pirates. Additionally, the narrator shares a part of their songs on the page. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017f, 45) Balıkçı notes that folk singing is strongly related to Bektashism in Turkey. Thus he refers to his assumption of Anatolia’s Dionysiac tendency. In Balıkçı’s fictional books folk songs serve also purposes. On the one hand they reflect Anatolian people’s social life and on the other hand they reflect the pastoral landscape.

Balıkçı pays particular attention to the sounds of nature. At times the sound of nature and human voice are found identical, “The day after, the girl sat over the sands and she was looking at the sea. The sea was fizzing with all its foams. The sound of the sea and the voice of the girl were mixed”. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2013a, 88)

In this example, the sound of the sea and the voice of the girl are mixed because the narrator assumes that human essence could be found in nature. In this regard, humans can always find a common language with all elements of nature from the land, the sea to animals. The story entitled “Selim Dede” is a good example of that common language between humans and nature. Selim Dede is an old sailor who speaks with a seagull. One day, Selim Dede could not get a response from the seagull and he discovers that she laid eggs. Unfortunately, an eagle kills the seagull. Selim Dede climbs over the mountain every day to keep the eggs warm but he is old and weak. When baby seagulls get out of their eggs, he keeps taking care of them and when they are grown up enough to fly, Selim Dede throws them into the air to make them fly because “the nature flows”. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2010, 77) Selim Dede does not want to stop the nature’s balance but he falls off the cliff and he dies. (Ibid, 71-78) The narrator refers to the “speed” theme, “It was like that they were not the wings which made the babies fly but it was the throwing speed of Selim Dede”. (Ibid, 77)

Bodrum (Halicarnassus) and its villages were never dependent on the other places of Anatolia since antiquity, maybe that is why since the passing of Alexander the Great’s war carriages its streets and roads – except the hoop turned by children – have not seen any wheel. (Ibid, 146)

The narrator tries to show that Halicarnassus or Bodrum has always been a self sufficient place antiquity therefore Balıkçı underlines his assumption of historical continuity. Moreover, Balıkçı underlines the issue of historical continuity in another story entitled “Ay Işığı”. In his “Knidos Afroditi” as well, Balıkçı prefers to give messages through a dream. In the story, a personage named Sarı Ali looks at depth of the sea and he sees a fish, then he starts dreaming about Anatolia’s ancient past with mythological personages such as Amphitrite, Tritons and Nereids. Furthermore, the fish tells that the white lights of the Mediterranean are their own reflections so that sea is called “Ak-deniz”. The story has a fantastic end. Sarı Ali and his girlfriend dive into the sea under moonlights and they disappear. The people think they transformed into moonlight. In other words, they merge with nature. Furthermore, the narrator explains that Sarı Ali is not someone who lives “slowly”. On the other

hand, the fish defines itself as a “piece of speed”. In this case, the emphasis on “speed” is one again obvious. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2013a, 70-72)

The “speed” theme could be found repetitively in Balıkcı’s fictional works. For instance, in his story entitled “Işık Teli” (“The Wire of Light”) a personage named Avaramet is described as someone “who lives slowly” in contrast to Sarı Ali. Avaramet criticizes sailors, fishermen and other people who gain their lives at sea saying that they put their lives in danger. Intriguingly, a few years later Avaramet loses his mind and the narrator assumes that he turned mad since he did not live fast. Furthermore, the narrator regards his madness as a punishment of life:

One could wonder if life was bored of the narrow and hard protection of a turtle’s shell and that is why by hiding its hard bones and by getting his soft hands which are open to dangers out, life became the speed itself in the guise of gazelle? (Ibid, 83)

On the other hand, the narrator puts forward the view that people who live fast such as “sea people” have a Dionysiac tendency and their only wealth is the sea. In this case, the sea is portrayed as an eternal wealth for “sea people” and those people do not save anything when they are alive:

Vangel planned such a nice and such a brilliant future for his three sons. The sailor! He does not have a grave! Anyway, it does not matter the nation of one, the sailors have only one grave: The sea! His heritage? Like the majority of the people of those islands: The sea!’ (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015b, 69)

In this example, one may observe that sailors cannot make future plans because their lives are dedicated to the sea. It is worth to bear in mind that they dedicate their lives to the sea because they follow their instincts and they choose not to live slowly. In this regard, their choice of living fast could be related to their Dionysiac tendency coming from ancient ages. “Son Türkü” is a story about a blind sailor who dies on his boat. In the story, the narrator refers to Homer:

At his glance, there was no hate but a complaint to a lover. At his blind glance there were more poems than Homer’s 50 pages. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı, 2016a, 131)

In other words, Anatolian people’s instinctual wisdom is compared to Homer’s wisdom. On the one hand, the narrator assumes a continuity from

Homer's era to the present. On the other hand, the narrator claims that common Anatolian people's instinctual wisdom is even more significant than Homer's works. (Ibid, 131–134) Consequently, it could be observed that the Mediterranean is portrayed with its ancient past and Anatolian people are described as a part of this historical continuity.

It is worth to bear in mind that music plays a remarkable role in Balıkçı's fictional books. As it was explained, the old sailor and sea had a connection through a historical continuity therewith he sang a song about sea before he died. Besides, in another story entitled "Unutulan Şarkı" ("The Forgotten Song"), one may find that the role of music is more emphasized in Anatolian people's daily life:

Aegean sailors could work without folk songs? The music gives their muscles their energy. Thus, any work becomes a dance. The sailors are different like musical notes already, is not it for them to construct a common harmony? (Ibid, 135)

The narrator explains that each work has a different rhythm and it is assumed to find the right song to finish a work easily. (Ibid, 135) In this case, dance, rhythm and music gain a remarkable place in sailors' lives. Notably, natural sounds such as the fizz of waves, the sound of the wind and other onomatopoeias as well are related to the "music" for Balıkçı. (Ibid, 138) Balıkçı notes that folk music is never sorrowful or slow, instead it is happy and dynamic. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2007a, 70) Furthermore, in his article entitled "Painting and Music", he compares "allaturca" music and folk music therewith he asserts that "allaturca" music does not belong to the Turks:

Now, we have two kinds of music. One is the peasants' very vivid but single-voiced music, the other one is the allaturca music which does not belong to us at all, even its name comes from Italian. In the music of peasants, there is the joy of life and a humble defiance. In the other one there is the fear of life and there is a laziness which counts it as a grace. (Ibid, 183)

In sum, it is clear that Balıkçı tries to explain his thoughts in his fictional works therefore it could be easily seen that his technique of writing is weak. Furthermore, he gives too much information and he does not pay enough attention to the story arc. In this case, one may not easily separate Balıkçı's fictional books from his essay books. In his historical novels, his didactic side

could be seen clearly. For instance, in “Uluç Reis” some paragraphs seem to be taken from history books:

By Crusades Europe became the neighbor of a superior civilization and Europeans took information which could be the essence of their civilization. Some Western historians are blind to an ancient Turkish culture and civilization and they see nothing about Turks except their military success and those historians claim that Turks were infertile on creativity but their claims are not true. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017f, 30)

It is noteworthy that Balıkcı does not tell who those historians are. In his essays as well, he does not cite any sources except mentioning a few names. In this example, Balıkcı claims that Europeans stole the Anatolian culture to construct their civilization. That claim could be found in numerous works of Balıkcı. For instance, in his story entitled “Tünek Ahmet” (“Roost Ahmet”) the narrator claims that mythological gods have Anatolian roots:

All gods of antiquity were created from the sea like Aphrodite or they went to Europe from those seas, from Anatolian coasts. Birds were following the same direction too. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2016a, 143)

Balıkcı tries to show that European civilization got influenced by Anatolian civilization. In other words, Balıkcı regards European civilization as a corrupted version of ancient Anatolian civilization. He assumes that Anatolian culture stayed pure in contrast to European culture. His story entitled “Halicarnassus” is a significant example of Balıkcı’s assumption about Anatolian civilization’s purity. In the story, the narrator travels to “Halicarnassus” to visit “a history of four thousand years”. Notably, since the first pages of the story it is asserted that Halicarnassus was made “by the blue sea, blue sky and lights”. Moreover, on the way to the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus he hears songs of nature and history. He tries to analyze appearance of Aegean women. He claims that Aegean women are usually tall, they have long fingers and long eyelashes. In his words, they are “from the race of roses and jasmines”. Notably, he gives information about Anatolian marriages and characteristics of Anatolian music he insists that Anatolian folk music is not “sleepy” instead it is “lively”. In parallel, he makes an analysis of Anatolian dances as well therefore he underlines the dynamism of Anatolian dances.

It was explained, themes related to Blue Anatolianism could be found repetitively in Balıkcı's fictional works. It is worth to bear in mind that Balıkcı writes popular fiction for conveying certain ideas to masses. Popular history and popular fiction merge in these works.



## Identity Questions in Balıkçı's Fiction

**M**urat Belge asserts that xenophobic and racist tendencies could be found in Balıkçı's fictional books. (Belge, 2006) Furthermore, Belge claims that Blue Anatolianists aimed to rationalize Kemalist ideology. (Yıldırım 2012, 338) On the other hand, Emre Yıldırım puts forward the view that Blue Anatolianism was an original historical approach. Notably, Yıldırım points out that Blue Anatolianists' goal was to construct an eclectic national identity therefore they tried to demonstrate that ancient Anatolia was the source of Western civilization. Yıldırım does not underestimate the Kemalist tendency of the movement. (Ibid, 351–353) Similar to Yıldırım and Belge, Barış Karacasu underlines the Kemalist tendency of Blue Anatolianism as well. Moreover, he asserts that Balıkçı's regard of culture and Kemalism could be related to Third-Worldism. It must be noted that Karacasu does not regard Blue Anatolianism as a result of the Republican regime's official cultural policy. (Karacasu 2009, 337) The debate about Blue Anatolianism and Balıkçı revolve around Kemalism and nationalism. In other words, researchers seem to be focused on the relation between Blue Anatolianism and Kemalism, i.e. Furthermore, while agreeing with these viewpoints that Balıkçı reflects a version of Kemalist view on civilization and culture to a great extent, his emphasis on the Mediterranean Sea and meantime culture of Anatolian people makes him diverge from other interpretations of official ideology. In what follows will discuss the social realist dimension in this works.



### § 5.1 Social Realism and Humanism in Balıkçı

In his fictional books, Balıkçı separates people in two that are “sea people” and “land people”. Balıkçı regards land people as foxy and selfish people whose life goal is to have access to money and power. “Land people” could be violent when they cannot reach their goal. That goal could be a woman, a land, money or anything else. Simply, “land people” are portrayed as pragmatist people. The most significant examples of the land people for him are landlords.

In contrast to land people, the “sea people” are described as nice and honest people whose life goal is to survive under difficult conditions. “Sea people” are poor sea workers such as divers, sailors and fishers who get oppressed by sea lords. Balıkçı’s social classification is remarkable because even his first novel begins with a description of this hierarchy:

The sea worker who gets drowned in the sea, like a dream, like an image, has a real loss, a real wipe. My mom, “So what, land man is created from the soil and sea man is created from the sea. Land people go back to the soil, sea people flow into the sea and get merged there.” he said. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2017a, 7)

Furthermore, the main character named Mahmut compares himself with other children who are counted as “land people”. Mahmut explains that they play with their peg tops or they pick berries but he prefers going to the beach to watch sea waves. (Ibid, 7) It is worth to bear in mind that the comparison of “sea people” and “land people” may be seen repetitively in the whole novel. On the next pages, Mahmut grows up and becomes a young man. He falls in love with a young woman named Ayşe and he wishes to marry her. Ayşe’s father is a land lord and he allows their marriage if Mahmut promises that he quits working as a sailor. Mahmut accepts this condition thereafter he marries her. At the beginning of their marriage, everything is utopian for Mahmut because he is in love with his wife and he becomes wealthy. He describes the soil as “a grateful woman who thanks Mahmut’s efforts by giving him a lot of colors, flowers and nice odors”. (Ibid, 138) However, after a while his wife wants him to collect peasants’ debts. Moreover, Ayşe wants Mahmut to beat them up if they can not pay. In this case, Mahmut realizes that Ayşe’s wealth comes from the money of poor peasants who work in their fields. Moreover, Mahmut

gets the chance of observing difficult life conditions of peasants and he starts supporting peasants. In sum, Mahmut comprehends that “land works” are based on social inequality. Consequently, he leaves Ayşe and his wealthy life thereafter he starts working as a sailor. (Ibid, 135-159)

A similar story could be found in “Gençlik Denizlerinde”. “Dede Kaptan” (“Captain Grandpa”) is a seventy-year-old retired sailor who has a small grocery store. In this case, he becomes a “land man”. His change reminds of Mahmut’s change. Similar to Mahmut’s story, Dede Kaptan supports the poor and he, soon goes bankrupt. In the end, he decides to work as a sailor despite his old age. His boss, Mr. Çongurtekin is a typical example of “land people” portrayed as a rich and foxy man who always wants more than he has. He forces Dede Kaptan to sail his ship whereas he is warned many times that a big storm will occur. Dede Kaptan saves the ship during the storm yet he dies afterwards holding the steer like “Jesus Christ”. Indeed, his death was idealized by the author to emphasize his personal qualities. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2015c, 32-37) Mr. Çongurtekin did not care about his death therewith he accused Dede Kaptan of being “clumsy”. He says, “Luckily we were on the ship. Otherwise we would get drowned because of those dudes. Sir, taking precautions is a must! Before and after”. (Ibid, 36)

At times Balıkçı’s classification of the sea and land people gets blurry. Sometimes it is based on the character of people. For instance, a poor, honest and sincere person working as a farmer could also be counted as a sea people as well. It must be noted that, the classification is usually based on work types therefore Balıkçı finds sea people’s life more difficult. In this case, Balıkçı compares lives of “sea people” and “land people”. Indeed, it is underlined that sea people’s life is heavier than land people’s:

We know, you have landlords, butlers, clerks, usurers. We have sea lords, storms and sea pressure. Sea bosses are worse than your land bosses. Because they hold the life of a diver in their palms. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2015b, 64)

In this example it could be seen that Balıkçı compares two different working classes based on their work types. Notably, it is propounded that both classes have almost same difficulties. Furthermore, he adds that sea people are more helpful and supportive because their lives are always in danger. In her words, humanistic qualities of “sea people” are emphasized:

Sea workers help each other more sincerely than land workers. Because the life of a sea worker is more open to dangers than the life of land people. Two ships have to help each other when there is a storm. If there is a on the coast, sea workers who are about to enjoy coastal cafés run to help the others. However, when a farmer is tired of grubbing, his neighbor does not help him. But if there is a danger of being hungry everyone is the same in the sea and on land. (Ibid, 224)

As it could be seen, the narrator explains that sea people are more humanistic than land people. The narrator also adds that sea people's relation with women is more "dignified". Remarkably, sea people are described as lonely people because they do not see other people for months and they do not treat women badly. Instead, it is told that "sea people" idealize women positively not seeing women as sex objects. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2010, 194) In other chapters as well, sea people's solidarity could be observed. For instance, in "Ötelerin Çocukları" a young diver named Aliş wants to marry "Çakırkız" but he cannot afford his marriage therefore all divers and sailors come together to finance his marriage. Furthermore, they talk with Çakırkız's father and they assure him that the marriage will be better than he wishes. (Ibid, 154) However, Aliş has a very strong connection with the sea therewith he gets fascinated by the sea's depth. One day, he loses control and he dives too deep and gets crippled by the bends. His legs get paralyzed. However, he is able to move into the sea and each morning his friends carry him to the boat therefore he continues to gain his life. Remarkably, the narrator idealizes the connection between sea and the sea people he notes that Aliş has become "sea's property". (Ibid, 164-165)

In Balıkçı's historical novels as well, sea people and land people are usually compared. For instance, in "Turgut Reis", land people are portrayed as "the slaves of land" criticized for having a stable life. Moreover, even graves of sea people and land people are compared. Notably, the narrator says land people to "be proud of" their "grave stones" therefore it is told that sea people's graves are "endless seas". (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2014, 10-11) In "Uluç Reis" as well, land people are described pejoratively as "selfish" and "clumsy" people. For instance, a general (Mustafa Pasha) is described as a narcissist person who gained a good position in the army his big brother's help. Before the conquest,

the Sultan tells his pashas to follow Turgut Reis' orders (the admiral) therewith Mustafa Pasha underestimates navy forces thereafter he says, "Conquering a castle on land is not like thieving on the sea". (Halikarnas Balıkcısı, 2017f, 388) Mustafa Pasha aims to conquer the castle without Turgut Reis' support to prove that he is more talented. In this case, he does not wait for Turgut Reis to support him with naval forces. Instead, he attacks to the castle only with his own forces. However, his cannons cannot destroy the castle's walls since the roads were not blocked by naval forces and enemies could repair the castle's walls easily. In sum, the conquest is not successful. It is noteworthy that, Balıkcı's social critic gains a larger meaning in some stories.

Kerimoğlu is the main character of "Ötelerin Çocukları". He is portrayed as a bandit who steals from the rich to support the poor. It must be noted that Kerimoğlu is an "alternative hero" who wants to establish social equality in the village. For instance, he donates money to the headman of the village to build a school. Instead, he buys camels with that money. Officers and landlords hate Kerimoğlu therefore they spread bad information about him molesting or raping women. Kerimoğlu's greatest enemy is Hacı Resul who is the most powerful land lord of his region. The narrator describes him as "someone who believes in nothing but money" therefore he adds that Hacı Resul steals poor peasants' fields and makes them work as his sharecroppers. He abuses sharecroppers by increasing their rents enormously "he does whatever he wants to their daughters and their wives". (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2010, 23) In addition, he is someone who kills animals for fun and who makes them suffer before they die. (Ibid, 27) In the end, Hacı Resul sets a trap for Kerimoğlu; when Kerimoğlu is about to help a child, he gets murdered by Hacı Resul and his men. In the last scene of the story, Kerimoğlu's dead body falls down into the sea. In other words, "he lays on the sea as it was his bed" because he was regarded as a sea man. (Ibid, 37)

The story of Kerimoğlu is remarkable because he is not a sea worker yet he is counted as a sea man by Balıkcı, because he is a bandit who fights against social inequality. It could be observed that Kerimoğlu is described as a sea man because he relates and talks with the sea very often. In this case, one may clearly see Balıkcı's social realism is reflected in this classification of the sea people vs. the land people. His social realist tendency is even clearer when the

conflict between peasants and intellectuals is portrayed. In “Aganta Burina Burinata”, a self-righteous teacher comes to the village with his pupils. Notably, he regards peasants as ignorant people. He wants to show peasants the “modern way of agriculture” and he asks them how they understand when the soil is ready to get cultivated. The response of a farmer named “Hüseyin Dayı” (“Uncle Hüseyin”) is “sitting on the soil with his bare bottom”. The teacher urges him to use a thermometer instead. Hüseyin Dayı explains that they do not even have the iron to make a primitive plough. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017a, 142-144)

On the other hand, Balıkcı criticizes hypocritical people who use religion as an instrument to take advantages of other people. In his novel entitled “Deniz Gurbetçileri” a so-called religious person named “Hacı Latif” (“Haji Latif”) lies to everyone permanently. He wants to own the cabin of “Salih Reis” (“Captain Salih”) who is an old sea man. “Salih Reis” is sick and his last wish is to die looking at the sea. However, Hacı Latif finds a way to ruin his last wish and he owns the cabin by fraud. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015b, 144-147)

## § 5.2 Xenophobia, Racism and Nationalism

In the previous chapters it was explained that Balıkcı wrote two historical novels entitled “Uluç Reis” published in 1962 and “Turgut Reis” published in 1966. Notably, they are the longest books of Balıkcı. In his article entitled “Thesis of Blue Anatolianism and The Fisher of Halicarnassus” Murat Belge asserts that those two novels could be seen as primary references of Balıkcı’s xenophobic, racist and nationalist tendencies. Furthermore, Belge puts forward the view that Balıkcı has a primitive technic of writing therefore his “nationalist, maybe better xenophobic” tendencies go hand in hand with his literary style. However, Murat Belge (2006) does not deny Balıkcı’s humanist tendency claiming that Balıkcı’s humanism goes hand in hand with a sometimes-xenophobic nationalism.

Let’s accept that I chose them intentionally. But in sum, all of those sentences exist in the texts of the Balıkcı and in addition to these the existence of more humanistic passages (that they do not exist in the texts I studied, they exist in his other books) does not make them “unsaid”. (Belge, 2006)

In this case, Murat Belge (2006) limits his article's references to Balıkçı's historical novels therewith he jumps into a general conclusion. It must be noted that one may use Belge's methodology to demonstrate that Balıkçı has a humanist tendency. In other words, it could be a mistake to make a general conclusion in an article which is limited to only two novels of an author. Furthermore, Belge (2006) refers to psychoanalytic criticism and he propounds that one may doubt if "Balıkçı's regard for sexuality is human". However, as it was noted, Balıkçı published his first historical novel in 1962. In this case, one may find it debatable if an author who is more than seventy-year-old may reflect his "inhumane" view of sexuality through his novels. Lastly, Belge (2006) underlines the historical mistakes of Balıkçı but it is debatable as well if a historical fiction has to reflect the truth like a history book. In his first historical novel entitled "Uluç Reis", it could be easily observed that from the first pages a popular writing technique is used because the author writes foreigner names in Turkish. He also employs different dialects. In other words, the difference between spoken language and written language in dialogues are removed. However, the narrator adds some sentences in foreign languages to make his novel realistic. Additionally, it must be noted that Balıkçı does not write like a novelist but he writes like a storyteller therefore he does not construct a text which is independent of its author's character. For instance, the author can jump into different events, he can address directly the audience and he can give information. Notably, the author refers to some historians but usually they are anonymous. On the other hand, Sufism could be observed as a background theme. Lastly, the characters of the novels are idealized.

At the beginning of the novel the author describes a French personage as someone who "wants to kill Turks" and who "is thirsty for drinking Turkish blood". On the other hand, he describes Turkish and Greek people as peaceful people. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017f, 8) On the next pages, the author propounds that Sean Jean Chevaliers' religious belief regards killing a Turk as a good deed. (Ibid, 19) An earl named "Kont d'Aspromonte" order a folk story his butler to kidnap a Turkish woman. (Ibid, 21) In this case, it could be seen that foreigners are described pejoratively. There are more examples of these kinds of description in the book. For instance, a Spanish noble named "Don

Alfredo” defines Turks as “Muslim dogs”. (Ibid, 46) Moreover, an Italian commander named “Kostaççıyo” is portrayed as someone who loves killing Turks and who loves raping Turkish women. (Ibid, 77) Additionally, foreigner soldiers are described like “drag queens” because of their long hair and beards.

One of their powerful ones was held captive by us. There was one; let me think. Ah, his name was Kantar Çıntar (Kont Karl do Sent Sinar). That was a long-haired – all of them were long-haired and we thought they were drag queens and we got surprised – sallow and a tiny man. (Ibid, 124)

We cut his hair off to make him look like a man and so that he gets comfortable we made him bold. It seemed like he had no mustache. Not because he was young, he was around forty-year-old. (Ibid, 124)

In those description paragraphs, one may clearly see that foreigner personages are humiliated by Turkish personages. Similar descriptions could be observed in “Turgut Reis” as well. For instance, social relations of foreigners are criticized strongly with bad words. In a passage, the narrator tells that Sean Jean Chevaliers have numerous kept women and they have lots of “bastards who call their fathers uncle”. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2014, 67) This example shows that the author does not pay attention to use a proper language thereafter he insults unofficial kids of Saint Jean Chevaliers by calling them “bastards”. Moreover, a comparison of Turks and Christians could be seen as another xenophobic tendency of Balıkcı:

(...) When we take care of our works humanly in our lands, The Crusaders make a conquest and they annoy us, they kill us because we are Muslim, they plunder our homes, they burn and they destroy them. Because of that we have to beat them up. When they are beaten up, they say, “Do not hit us! We are not numerous, let’s make peace”. We say, “Alright”... They say, “Let’s sign a peace treaty for such years”. We sign it! When we leave our weapons and come back to our work, they betray their promise by organizing a crusade and they deter us. (Ibid, 28)

On the other hand, Turks are idealized as nice and strong people whose life goal is to gain their lives therewith Christians are portrayed as hypocrite people who want to kill Muslims to conquer their lands. In the next chapters, the author explains that “foreigners are so thirsty for Muslims’ blood” because of their “nature”. (Ibid, 47) In this case, the author jumps from xenophobic

themes to racist themes because he draws a line between foreigners' nature and their negative qualities. On the other hand, nationalist themes go hand in hand with xenophobia and racism. Balıkçı's nationalist tendency could be observed through his idealization of Turkish people. First of all, it is always underlined that wars between Turks and Christians are realized under unequal circumstances. It could be seen that Christian armies are always more numerous than Turkish pirates but still Turkish pirates win the majority of battles. Even if they lose a battle, they get their revenge or they destroy more than half the enemy forces. In this case, during all battle scenes audience's katharsis is guaranteed. For instance, after a loss the author writes:

"If Christians" -That is the opinion of a French historian- "did not lose the ship on the left wing, it would be a must to confess that Turks would gain the battle." (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017f, 442)

This example shows that even if Turks lose a battle the author explains that they almost win the battle. Remarkably, the author refers to an unknown Western historian to support his arguments. In this case, one may ask if the author uses a real reference or not therefore the author's arguments are not credible. In another passage, the narrator says that Uluç Ali "was able to destroy the whole enemy navy forces alone", thereafter he adds that "even the most partial Western historians counted him as the moral victor of the battle". (Ibid, 455) Furthermore, Turkish pirates are loved by everyone and foreigner people regard them "as angels coming from heaven to help" because foreigner people are allegedly under the oppression of feudal lords. (Ibid, 320) Particularly, Greeks are very happy that Turkish pirates invade their lands. (Ibid, 322) In parallel, all Christian women fall in love with Turkish pirates whenever they meet. "Dona Arabella" falls in love with Uluç Ali at first sight and they get married in a short time. (Ibid, 352)

On the other hand, physical qualities of Turkish pirates are exaggerated. It is said that Uluç Reis' arm was burned by hot oil and a sailor named Kara Süleyman had to cut his arm off but he could not thereafter Oruç Reis gets the knife and he cuts his arm off himself. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2014, 136)

On the contrary, some passages reflecting a humanist tendency could be found in Balıkçı's historical novels. For instance, in "Uluç Reis" the narrator



portrays some sailors from different races as a peaceful community under the unity of the Mediterranean identity:

At that time, who knows what kind of dreams they used to see and during the coolness of night -whether they are Turkish or Italian or English- they were happy to see each other . If someone left, others -like a piece of them was broken- felt his absence (...) (Halikarnas Balıkcısı, 2017f, 153)

In this example, the solidarity of pirates from different races under the Mediterranean identity is underlined. Furthermore, when an old sailor named “Tahtabacak” (“Pegleg”) presents three women from his village (who are going to take care of a kid named Ali) he disregards their races:

My son Ali, in your quarter you will have three aunts. One is Ayşetülşakşaki, the second one is Zeynep, the third one is Emeti. The first one is Algerian, the second one is Andalusian, the third one is Turkish. So, your southwester, your northeaster, your west will be your aunts, since now on you can go in full sail. (Ibid, 159)

In this case, three different women from three different races are presented equally and they are all Mediterranean women. The author pays particular attention to the Mediterranean geography therefore it could be said that he offers a Mediterranean identity. However, passages reflecting a humanist tendency are not numerous in Balıkcı’s historical novels.

In sum, Balıkcı aims to assure Turkish audience’s katharsis in his historical books. In this regard, he does not try to construct a complex story arc therefore he continues to use the “maddah” style where the oral narrator spontaneously animates the stories in front of an audience. In other words, he uses popular instruments. In this regard, one may observe that Balıkcı changes his point of view at the beginning of the 1960s therefore he writes two popular historical novels with xenophobic, nationalist and racist themes as Murat Belge points out. On the other hand, Balıkcı publishes “Deniz Gurbetçileri” in 1969 thereafter he comes back to his old themes. In this case, one may observe that his historical novels are the fruits of his popular writing techniques in the 1960s.

### § 5.3 The Role of Gender in The Works of Balıkçı

In Balıkçı's fictional books it is a must to study gender problem in two sides. Firstly, one may face pejorative descriptions of foreigner women. Secondly, Turkish women's "masculine" characteristics such as fighting in a battlefield are emphasized. On the other hand, motherhood plays a crucial role in women identity. Women personages are portrayed with nationalist themes.

It was explained that foreigner women fell in love with Turkish pirates at first sight. However, exaggerated descriptions could be found about Christian women. For instance, the narrator says that foreigner women wait for getting raped by Turkish pirates:

They talk about getting raped; but the interesting thing is that they look forward to get raped. There is something else too; they say that they will love the babies carried in their tummies like they belong to their husbands. (Halikarnas Balıkçısı 2017f, 246)

In this example one may easily observe that the author tries to melt a sexual fantasy and motherhood in the same pot. On the other hand, it could be seen that foreigner women are degraded. Intriguingly, the motherhood is usually underlined by the narrator:

I am dying to feel him caressing my naked body. I want his seeds inside of me so that I develop his baby and I give birth and I feed that baby with my boobs. (Ibid, 258)

Indeed, sexual desires and motherhood could be seen altogether. However, it must be noted that christian women are usually described as lustful people. For instance, "Marquise of Villanueva (Manuela)" is portrayed as a very lustful woman whose greatest fantasy is to have sex with a wild Turkish pirate. Furthermore, the narrator adds that "more than one fleet of pirate men would not be enough" to satisfy her sexual desires. (Ibid, 295) In another example, "Comtesse of Polenza Dona Inez" wants to be treated like a "slave" by a Turkish pirate. (Ibid: 298) In contrast to lustful descriptions of foreigner women, it could be seen that Turkish women's "masculine" characteristics are usually idealized. In other words, Turkish women are usually portrayed as good warriors therewith they want to help their husbands in the battlefield. Moreover,

it could be seen that they wear man clothes thereafter they sneak into the warship. For instance, Musa's wife cuts her hair off and she sneaks into the warship to support his husband. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2014, 99-102) Similarly, another female personage named "Hamra" does not marry his lover named "Sarı Hamdi" ("Blonde Hamdi") until she takes her mother's and her big sister's revenge:

But I cannot get married unless I take the revenge of my mom and my two big sisters who were burned by the Spanish. I vowed. Whether they kill me or not, first of all, I have to do that. If I survive, I will count marrying with you as the greatest happiness on earth. (Ibid, 179)

On the next pages, Hamra tries to assure Sarı Hamdi that she can "swim like a fish" and she can "shoot arrows like a man". Furthermore, she wants him to allow her to be "a befitting wife for a pirate man". Additionally, motherhood is emphasized again therefore Hamra says that she wants to give birth to Sarı Hamdi's babies from her "big hips". (Ibid, 182)

A similar story could be found in "Uluç Reis" as well. On the day of her marriage, Uluç Ali's future wife named "Kara Hatçe" disappears Uluç Ali's master named "Tahtabacak" explains to him that Kara Hatçe gets to marry him on the condition that she gets the chance of showing her combat skills. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017f, 286) Kara Hatçe wears man's clothes and she sneaks into Uluç Ali's warship. She defends Uluç Ali during a battle with two pistols in her hands and she gets wounded. Thus, she gets the chance of showing her combat skills. Consequently, Kara Hatçe tells Uluç Ali that they could get married. (Ibid, 306) Turgutca's wife has similar characteristics as well. She learns "shooting arrows, using harquebus and pistol" to help her husband. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2014, 229)

It must be noted that other women personages are portrayed with their masculine characteristics as well. For instance, in "Aganta Burina Burinata", an adolescent girl named "Fatma" can beat boys who annoy her, her nickname is "Manly Fatma". (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2017a, 76) Similarly to Fatma, "Deniz Gurbetçileri" s female personage named Ayşe beats men who try to "get fresh with her". (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015b, 83)

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that hips and breasts are described as the essential sources of women's beauty. It seems, the author wants to shift emphasis female figures' motherhood as well as sexuality. Big breasts and big hips are clearly related to Anatolian Venus statues which are the representatives of fertility, love and motherhood. Balıkçı explains the measures of beauty in Anatolian folk culture in his article entitled "Anatolia Beauties". In the article, he underlines that representations of Anatolian goddesses are not skinny, instead they have big hips and big breasts but their measures are not exaggerated in contrast to the first ages of Venus statues. (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2012, 82-83) In a story entitled "Doğum" ("Giving Birth") the narrator defines giving birth as "the dream of plants, animals and other living beings". (Halikarnas Balıkcısı 2015c,153) In parallel, the story is about a woman named "Ayşe" who gets pregnant. The narrator says that Ayşe "felt honored" (Ibid, 154) of being pregnant. However, during the birth the doctor says that he can save only one person, the baby or his mother. Consequently, Ayşe chooses to die and she saves her baby. (Ibid, 155) In this respect, one may easily observe that the author pays particular attention to motherhood. In sum, one may easily observe that Balıkçı's women characters could be counted in nationalist canon because, on the one hand, their masculine characteristics are underlined. On the other hand, their motherhood is always emphasized.



## Conclusion

In this thesis, literary and historical implications in Balıkcı's works were studied. Balıkcı's works were considered within the debate on, the identity crisis during the nation-building period of Turkey and his approach, namely. Here, I argue that Balıkcı cannot be categorized in a singular tendency such as social realist, xenophobic, nationalist and other. Firstly, during the nation-building period of Turkey, the regime aims to bring Western rational thought to reach the modernity. However, it is wished not to bring Western culture. In this case, one may ask if it is possible to conserve the Turkish culture by adapting Western modernity in all fields. There lays, "the thematic-the problematic" dichotomy of Chatterjee which plays a key role in this thesis. On the other hand, Bhabha's concept of "nation as a narration" play the second key role because Bhabha puts the idea forward that national texts based on this dichotomy are ambivalent. In this thesis, it is tried to be demonstrated that Balıkcı must be regarded as a popular author created a national narrative through the "sea" element. It must be noted that the "sea" is the dominant motif in Balıkcı's works. He tried to describe an Anatolian culture under the influence of the Mediterranean Sea with its cultural heritage. Furthermore, the Mediterranean gains importance as the "sea" and it is usually related to abstract themes such as hope, death and other. Additionally, the sea is often related to characters' destiny. Divers, for example, get fascinated by the beauty of sea depths and they could be crippled by the bends because of their admiration. The sea is

also related to family and women in Balıkcı's fiction. It is depicted as a second mother or a dangerous seductive woman. In sum, the sea almost become a metaphor of Anatolian culture and Blue Anatolianism. Remarkably, Balıkcı underlines that the Mediterranean geography encouraged Anatolian people to construct a civilization because it is assumed that the Mediterranean Sea has unique characteristics. In this respect, as the heirs of ancient Anatolian civilizations Turkish people are naturally inclined to elevate the development of humankind.

In this thesis, firstly, the role of literature during the nation building era was studied. It was explained that nation states use literature as a tool to create a national narrative based on a myth of genesis. Indeed, during the Early Republican Period of Turkey the nation builders aimed to use literature as a tool to establish an official cultural policy. In this case, the regime turned its efforts on creating a genesis myth through a new history thesis based on physical anthropological studies. It could be observed that Turkism was no longer on the regime's agenda. Instead, republican intelligentsia turned their efforts on constructing a synthesis of European and Turkish culture where they went further and they propounded that European culture came from Turkish culture. Consequently, the people's houses and village institutes and a secular educational system were promoted. In fact, one may clearly observe an identity crisis from the 1910s to the 1940s. In other words, the regime's goal was to bring Western rational thought but not its culture therewith the idea of cultural synthesis was considered. Among the literary intellectuals, Yahya Kemal for example, founded the Neo-Hellenism movement and he claimed that Turkish history must be started with the Battle of Manzikert. Moreover, he emphasized the Mediterranean identity and he regarded ancient Greek and Latin classics as a part of Turkish culture. Nevertheless, Yahya Kemal's influence on Turkish intelligentsia debating the identity problem continued. Similarly, a literary current called, Anatolianists propounded that Turkish history must started with the Battle of Manzikert. In contrast to Yahya Kemal, they refrained from emphasizing Islamic past of Turks; instead they claimed that Islam played a role in everyday Turkish culture. Anatolianists criticized Turkists and they put forward the view that race must not be the basis of a historical approach. Yet, they

gave a crucial role to “Muslim Oghuzs” in Turkish history. Additionally, Anatolianism was supported by prominent intellectuals in the 1920s and in the 1930s thereafter in the 1940s, during the ministry time of Hasan Ali Yücel, the Turkish Renaissance project was put into practice. The project was established to discover the “true sources” of Turkish culture. During this period, the translation of ancient Greek and Latin works started at full speed.

Balıkçı, in similar to Anatolianists turned his efforts on trying to show that ancient Anatolian civilizations were the source of Turkish culture. Furthermore, he asserted that European culture was a corrupted version of Anatolian culture. It is noteworthy that Balıkçı’s approach was secular and he did not regard Seljuks and Ottomans as history makers. Instead, he tried to construct a history from below. Furthermore, he did not emphasize the role of race in Turkish history. Consequently, his approach served the needs of the regime. I assert here that the cultural synthesis viewpoint of Balıkçı went hand in hand with official cultural policy as a national narrative as Chatterjee (1993, 51) points out:

This ideal, however, necessarily implies an elitist programme, for the act of cultural synthesis can only be performed by the supremely refined intellect.

Indeed, Balıkçı’s aim was to construct a cultural synthesis under an elitist programme which was already established by the regime. In this case, Balıkçı turned his efforts on creating a genesis myth through the “sea” element. He tried to change the perception of “terrestrial Anatolia” to “nautical Anatolia” by linking Anatolian’s ancient past to the present day. Balıkçı claimed that the “nationness” have always kept its purity in the folk culture. Simply, he aimed to “rediscover” the “true national past” as Bhabha (2000, 303) points out:

The present of the people’s history, then, is a practice that destroys the constant principles of the national culture that attempt to hark back to a ‘true’ national past, which is often represented in the reified forms of realism and stereotype.

Indeed, one may easily observe that Balıkçı was strongly stuck in stereotypes in his works. Firstly, he preferred to use popular writing techniques coming from old storytelling tradition of Ottomans named “maddah”. Secondly, he did not construct complex story arcs in his fictional books gravitating



around similar themes and messages. In sum, it could be clearly seen that he is more storyteller than a novelist.

It is argued that a number of different identities coverage in Balıkçı's Blue Anatolianism. Balıkçı separates people in two that are "sea people" and "land people". "Sea people" are fishermen, divers, sailors and other people who gain their lives by the sea. These people do not focus on ownership of land and material goods but choose a life of everyday struggle at sea. Without material ambitions and capital accumulation, they directly relate to nature to make them everyday earning. They are strongly related to Anatolian culture and they are represented as successors of ancient Anatolian civilizations therewith they comprehend the "speed" of life which means taking risk for the civilizational development for Balıkçı therefore they have an instinctual wisdom. On the other hand, they live under different social and financial conditions. In contrast to "sea people", "land people" are usually portrayed as rich and stable people who are not aware of "the speed" of life. They do not take any risks they want to have a wealthier life.

In the 1960s, Balıkçı published two historical novels entitled "Uluç Reis" and "Turgut Reis". Murat Belge (2006) asserts that in those books one may find xenophobic, nationalist and racist themes. Indeed, one may observe those themes in Balıkçı's popular historical novels: Firstly, foreigners are described as corrupted people. Secondly, qualities of Turkish pirates are exaggerated. Furthermore, Balıkçı aims to assure his audience's katharsis and he gives incredible information about historical events in the books. For instance, battles between Turks and Europeans are always described as taking place under unequal circumstances. In other words, European forces are always more numerous than Turkish forces, however, Turks win the majority of battles. Furthermore, European men are described as feminine people and their appearance is always found ridiculous because of their long hair and their short beards. It is noteworthy that in Balıkçı's historical books, foreigners are accused of hating Turks because of their "nature". In other words, foreigners are portrayed as naturally cruel. Consequently, it could be seen that Balıkçı jumps from xenophobia to racism. Again Chatterjee's "the thematic-the problematic" dichotomy could be seen clearly: As it was explained, on the one hand, Balıkçı dares to bring Western material qualities by suggesting a cultural synthesis, on the

other hand he describes Western people pejoratively as Chatterjee (2000, 41) points out:

Thus nationalist texts will question the veracity of colonialist knowledge, dispute its arguments, point out contradictions, reject its moral claims.

In parallel, Balıkcı portrays foreigner women as lustful ladies who fall in love with Turkish pirates at first sight. In contrast to foreigner women, Turkish women are portrayed as moral women therewith their masculine characteristics such as shooting an arrow or using a pistol are idealized. On the other hand, Turkish women are defined as helpers of their husbands on the battlefield. For instance, they wear men's clothes and they sneak into the warship to show their fighting skills to their husbands during battle. In this case, one may observe that women's nation plays the key role for Balıkcı's female personages.

In sum, Balıkcı's fictional books are still popular and they always have a place in Turkish Ministry of Education's "reading lists". It was explained that his popularity comes from his literary style which could be called "storytelling". His approach had a remarkable place in official culture policy of Republican Regime. As it was demonstrated in this thesis, Chatterjee's "the thematic-the problematic" dichotomy could be seen in his works therefore they must be regarded as national narratives constructed through the "sea" element and the most basic characteristic of national narratives is being ambivalent as Bhabha explains therewith Balıkcı cannot be categorized in a particular tendency such as social realism, xenophobia, racism, Kemalism and other.



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