

Tarih ve Günce

Atatürk ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Tarihi Dergisi
Journal of Atatürk and the History of Turkish Republic
1/3, (2018 Yaz), ss. 29-50.

SOCIAL REALITY AND WOMEN IN THE NOVELS OF SABAHATTİN ALİ

Derya Genç Acar*

Abstract

Sabahattin Ali has been a popular author not only in his period but also today. The author has revealed his works by pointing out that art should direct society towards the good. At the same time, he has opened a new page in contemporary Turkish literature by bringing social events to the agenda for the first time with a realistic and critical perspective. In these works, in which the social background is described very successfully, the contradiction between the ordinary people and the bureaucracy in the upper class and notables is reflected.

Sabahattin Ali has had three novels, *Kuyucaklı Yusuf*, *İçimizdeki Şeytan* and *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*. Among these novels, *İçimizdeki Şeytan* and *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* take place in the city; *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* takes place in the town. The author in his novels starting with individual love stories forms plot based on his observations and some traces of his own life. In this context, he describes the social structure of the period and very important details about the women. In the plot, the women characters have important roles. As a matter of fact, the observer and realistic side of Sabahattin Ali in the novels gives us to observe the author's thoughts about women and women in social life. In this study, starting from the novels of Sabahattin Ali, we will evaluate the social structure of the period and the thoughts of the author's opinions about woman issue in this structure on the basis of female characters.

Keywords: Sabahattin Ali, woman, novel, social structure, modernization, urbanization.

Toplumsal Gerçeklik ve Sabahattin Ali Romanlarında Kadın

Öz

Sabahattin Ali, yaşadığı dönemde olduğu gibi günümüzde de popülaritesi çok yüksek bir yazardır. Yazar, sanatın toplumu iyiye güzele yönlendirmesi

* Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi, (drygncacar@hotmail.com).

gerektiği noktasından hareket ederek eserlerini ortaya koymuştur. Aynı zamanda toplumsal olayları, gerçekçi ve eleştirel bir bakış açısıyla ilk defa gündeme getirerek çağdaş Türk Edebiyatı'nda yeni bir sayfa açmıştır. Toplumsal arka planın oldukça başarılı bir şekilde betimlendiği bu eserlerde sıradan insanlarla üst sınıfta yer alan bürokrasi ve eşraf arasındaki çelişki yansıtılmıştır.

Sabahattin Ali'nin Kuyucaklı Yusuf, İçimizdeki Şeytan ve Kürk Mantolu Madonna olmak üzere üç romanı vardır. Bu romanlardan İçimizdeki Şeytan ve Kürk Mantolu Madonna kentte; Kuyucaklı Yusuf kasabada geçmektedir. Yazar romanlarında bireysel aşk hikâyelerinden yola çıkarak gözlemlerini ve kendi hayatından birtakım izlerle birlikte bir olay örgüsü oluşturmuştur. Bu kapsamda dönemin toplumsal yapısı ve kadına dair çok önemli ayrıntılar anlatılmaktadır. Olay örgüsü içinde kadın karakterler çok önemli rol oynamaktadır. Nitekim Sabahattin Ali'nin romanlarındaki gözlemci gerçekçi yönü bize dönemin kadın algısı ve yazarın toplumsal yaşamda kadına ve kadın sorunu hakkındaki düşüncelerini gözlemleyebilme imkânı veriyor. Bu çalışmada Sabahattin Ali'nin romanlarındaki gözlemci yönü toplumsal yapısını ve bu yapıda yazarın kadın sorununa dair düşüncelerini kadın karakterler üzerinden değerlendireceğiz.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sabahattin Ali, kadın, roman, toplumsal yapı, modernleşme, kentleşme.

Introduction

Sabahattin Ali who revealed his works in the context of art for society has tried to stay far away from individualism and stay as close as possible to the life and environment. While doing this, he did not allow his realist identity to repress the romantic side¹. His aim was to understand humanity and life with all its simplicity and show this to the readers starkly². It was his greatest success to make the plot pattern of his novels that started as an individual story, into a social, political and economic event that everyone lived and to discuss the impact on individuals. This discussion soon leads to a connection with the reader and causes the internal contradictions and solutionlessness of the hero to become things that are actually experienced by other individuals in society³. He has shown the deserved importance by making emotion an art piece. In other

¹ Marko Paşa yazılarında realist olacağım diye hayatta vakıa halinde mevcut bulunan romantizmi inkâr etmek saflık olur demektir. Bkz., Sabahattin Ali, **Marko Paşa Yazıları ve Ötekiler**, YKY, İstanbul, 2004, s. 87.

² Konur Ertop, "Sabahattin Ali'nin Sanatının Dayanakları", **Yaşasın Edebiyat**, April 1998, S: 6, p. 42; Sevgül Sönmez, "Sabahattin Ali'nin Sanat ve Edebiyata Bakışı", **Kitaplık**, February 2007, S: 102, p.p. 87-88.

³ Konu ile ilgili olarak bkz., Mustafa Kutlu, **Sabahattin Ali**, Dergah Yayınları, İstanbul, 1980, p.p. 3-4; Alper Akçam, "Sabahattin Ali ve İçimizdeki Şeytan", **Oggito**, www.oggito.com.tr

words, Sabahattin Ali has tended to reflect and keep alive the characters as a whole. This point of view also caused to distinguish him from the renowned names of the period⁴. In his works, he preferred to narrate bureaucracy-people or notables-bureaucracy-community contradictions rather than expressions based on class contradictions. These novels also convey the author's point of view about the relations between women and men in society, marriage institution and the place of women among the relationships in social classes. Our work will be based on evaluating the author's point of view on women in the framework of social structure.

SOCIAL REALITY AND WOMEN IN THE NOVELS OF SABAHATTİN ALİ

Sabahattin Ali has had three novels. These novels are *Kuyucaklı Yusuf*, *İçimizdeki Şeytan*, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*. The novels were first serialised in newspapers and then published as books. His first novel, *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* was published as a book in 1937 after it had been serialised in *Tan Newspaper*. *İçimizdeki Şeytan* was serialised as 87 parts in *Ulus Newspaper* then published as a book in 1940. Finally *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* was published in the *Hakikat Newspaper* with 48 episodes with the title of *Great Story*. It was in 1943 that the work became a book.

Kuyucaklı Yusuf was the first of these novels, which he fictionalized on three layers, individual, social and philosophical. It is known that the author put down that novel on paper with the influence of Yusuf whom he had met or listened in Aydın prison⁵. The novel, *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* begins with Kaymakam Salahattin Bey, who came to investigate the murder of the parents of a boy called Yusuf by bandits in Kuyucak village of Nazilli, with Yusuf as his adopted son. Edremit is the place where the story takes place. At the beginning of 20th century Edremit was a place where corrupt feudal relationships prevailed. In fact, the relations between tradesmen who were dominant in the life of the town and notables and representatives of the government maintained their old structure. Government agencies could not get rid of the corrupt nature due to current economic and social structure despite all the transformation to be made and the oppression of the dominant class over the poor continued. Yusuf is never accepted

⁴ Mehmet Ergün, "Sabahattin Ali'nin Önemi", *Yansıma*, April 1973, Volume: 16, p. 272.

⁵ Ramazan Korkmaz, *Sabahattin Ali (İnsan ve Eser)*, Kesit Yayınları, İstanbul, 2016, p. 283. Bazı araştırmacılar ise hapishanede duyduğu bir hikâyeden esinlenerek yazdığını söylemektedir.

by the wife of the district governor in his new life that he would continue with district governor's wife, Şahinde and his daughter, Muazzez. Moreover, Şahinde keeps up with mentioning that he does not belong to their own home until the end of the novel. Yusuf does not feel closer anybody except Muazzez that he often cares her like a parent more than a sibling. He protects her in every means. This closeness as brother and sister changes after the events on a festival day. Yusuf, Muazzez and their friend Ali go to festival place. Muazzez wants to swing. As Yusuf doesnot want to swing due to his dignity, Ali accompanies Muazzez. Meanwhile, Şakir, son of Hilmi Bey who is one of the notable wealthy men in the town comes to them. Şakir who is drunk starts to harass Muazzez. Yusuf who reacts to this punches Şakir. With this incident, the two opposing forces in the novel (good-bad = Yusuf-Şakir) face for the first time and conflict starts. Over time, the events in the novel that will "turn into town or city struggle in the spirits of the countryside or mountain climates" reveal all the nakedness of the relations of power and sovereignty in the province⁶.

The novel, İçimizdeki Şeytan is fictionalized around the love between a university student Ömer and Macide before World War II. Ömer, the young protagonist of the novel, comes to Istanbul from Balıkesir to study philosophy but does not finish the school after a long time. On the one hand, Ömer attends the school and on the other hand he works in the post office with the help of a close relative. Ömer, the protagonist of İçimizdeki Şeytan represents the lumpen person who lives contradictions within himself and thinks that life is meaningless, takes each day as it comes. Throughout the novel, he refers to the evil as the reason of his laziness through various internal dialogues, and frequently expresses the contradictions he has experienced.

In the novel in which the plot is based on the love story of Ömer and Macide , internal talks and psychological conflict situations are given widely at the background. The background of the story comes as the reflection of university and art society. The author makes a sophisticated critique in his work. He reflects the racist views on the one hand and also shows the mood and corrupted

⁶ Hanife Özer, "Kuyucaklı Yusuf'ta Arzu Üçgenleri", *Türk Dil, Edebiyat ve Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2013, Yıl:1, S: 2, p.p. 399-408. www.dergipark.gov.tr

values of the intellectuals on the other hand⁷. At the same time he does not hesitate to criticize the negative attitude of the political administration against the knowledge, book and intellectuals⁸.

Kürk Mantolu Madonna is about the love of Raif Efendi, who worked as a German translator in Ankara in 1933, with a woman named Maria Puder. Raif Efendi, who comes from a wealthy family goes to Berlin to learn how to make soap during his youth, and he falls in love a painting than the woman who painted the picture, Maria Puder. The only and most important period in Raif Efendi's life who is introverted and silent, is the love that he has for Maria Puder in a short period of time like three months. In this novel, Sabahattin Ali describes Raif Efendi's unforgettable love and the process of loss in the individual level; the relationship of the people and the structure of the society in the social level and in the philosophical aspect he shows how even the simplest person is actually complicated and worth to be understood. Raif Efendi has never forgotten the love he lost, he keeps the rest of his life by throwing himself upon this memory. In social life where inter-human relations are highly artificial and based on interest, this escape of Raif Efendi is as a result of his inner reaction... In the Raif-Maria love where the real fictionalizing starts, we know all the details about Maria Puders who has a feminist personality.

The main female characters of Sabahattin Ali are Muazzez in Kuyucaklı Yusuf, Macide in *İçimizdeki Şeytan*, Maria in *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*. In these novels, it seems that the author especially clarified the characters of Maria and Macide with thick lines in positive direction. In these novels, in which the social background is reflected in a highly realistic perspective, female characters sometimes play a very important role in the occasion, sometimes as an observer (Macide). As we briefly know the main characters of the author : Muazzez is a young girl who has grown up with the comfort of growing up in a civil servant family and is childish and generally introverted. In accordance with the social structure of the period, she finishes primary school and despite her mother's neglect, with the help of the neighbors she learns about embroidery and some sewing. At the same time, she has oud lessons from tailor Mürüvvet Hanım with her peers⁹.

⁷ Mehmet Ergün, "Sabahattin Ali'nin Önemi", *Yansımalar*, April 1973, Volume: 16, p. 275; Konur Ertop, "Sabahattin Ali'nin Sanatının Dayanakları", *Yaşasın Edebiyat*, April 1998, S: 6, p. 43.

⁸ Ertop, *ibid.*, p. 43.

⁹ Sabahattin Ali, *Kuyucaklı Yusuf*, YKY, İstanbul, 2014, p. 27.

The author emphasizes her young age, purity and fragility of Muazzez at every opportunity.

Macide who is grown up in a typical environment in Balıkesir has a musical ability. Although the environment she is growing seems more appropriate for her to marry at fifteen years old; she attended secondary school as his father lost himself in business. Despite the dignified and oppressive atmosphere that Macide is grounded and she has a critical look comparing the life she is living and the things she has read. Except her mother's occasional involvement in her clothing she has a partial freedom of movement. Being in peace with her loneliness keeps her away from other friends in the school. Also, the belief that her girlfriends worlds' that consistently consist of men and marriages are extremely unnecessary for her, and that their sexual conversations are contaminating her own dreams, further deepening this gap.

Other than these, Maria is a character born of a Jewish father from Prague and a German mother and she has a feminine personality that never sees herself as belonging to a religion. Maria lives with her mother after she lost her father at the age of seven. Maria, through this sad coincidence, succeeds in standing alone in life without being exposed to male domination:“ ... *I did not learn anything to make myself feel like a man. I have never felt embarrassed in front of men and I did not expect a compliment from them. This situation has condemned me to a terrible loneliness. My girlfriends found it incompatible with my pleasure and comfort in accepting my ideas and friendship with me. Being a cute toy was easier and more appealing than being a human being. I have not been friends with men either. When they can not find the soft spot they are looking for, they prefer to flee*”¹⁰. Later in her life she is against to the role expected from a woman to be obedient. She can make a living by working in a job that she does not love for not being in need of a man. When time, space and the social structure are taken into consideration, according to Sabahattin Ali, it is impossible for a feminine character like Maria Puder to live in Turkey. Thus, Maria, who comes to life in Germany appears as the ideal woman¹¹.

In the context of social reality, in this research in which we examined the views of Sabahattin Ali about women and women issue, we see that love and marriage are at the top of the topics that the author has been most concerned about. The love phenomenon has an indispensable place in his novels as well as

¹⁰ Sabahattin Ali, **Kürk Mantolu Madonna**, YKY, İstanbul, 2011, p. 97.

¹¹ Nüket Esen “Sabahattin Ali'nin Kadın Karakterleri”, **Yaşasın Edebiyat**, April 1998, V: 6, p. 37.

in his own life. He shapes the events around an individual love story and intensifies the attention of the reader, at the background he processes social events, in other words he surrounds the second ring around this first ring. The plot of the novels evolve around love between Ömer and Macide, Maria and Raif Efendi Yusuf and Muazzez. In Sabahattin Ali's novels love that a person suddenly confronts is an inverse state.

Female characters in stories based on love are mysterious and as a turning point in the lives of male heroes... The only thing that is needed for the rest of the heroes lives is the love of these women ... Ömer falls in love with Macide, Raif Efendi falls in love with Maria for the first time. All Ömer, Raif Efendi and Yusuf have assign a different meaning to their lives. Two completely different worlds have always felt a sense of familiarity as if they had waited forever to find each other. This sense of acquaintance has both become complete and almost a moment of shock. As a matter of fact, Raif Efendi saw Maria for the first time as a painting in a painting exhibition, "...*This pale face, these black eyebrows and the black eyes beneath them this dark brown hair and the original, innocence and will, an endless melal and a strong personality, could never have been a stranger to me. I knew this woman from the books I've read since I was seven, from the world of dreams I've had since I was five. I envisaged Halit Ziya's Nihal, Vecihi Bey's Mehçure, Şovalye Buridan's lover and Cleopatra, which I read in history books, and even Mohammad's mother Amine Hatun, which I envisaged while listening to Mevlit. She was a detainee, a deterrent to all the women in my dream..*"¹²

The feeling of familiarity and infauation is also experienced on the scene where Ömer sees Macide on the ferry: "... *Something terrific happened or will happen. The young girl I saw there came to me like someone I knew from the lines of the universe, rather than the world,. How can I tell you. At first sight, I'm in love like crazy, I'm yearning!*"¹³. In Kuyucaklı Yusuf, the lives of Yusuf and Muazzez have gained a totally different dimension with the transcendence of love between them. It is about acceptance that they can not spend the rest of their lives without each other. Yusuf's feelings towards Muazzez are quite different: "... *...He does not think of him as a foreigner, other person, but feels as part of himself, as arm, eye, and heart. There could be no concern of appreciation or not, love or not, humiliate because he did not think such things once. A sense of waking up and coming to consciousness was a terrible pain that he feared for the possibility of her being torn himself.*"¹⁴ Muazzez

¹² Ali, *Kürk...*, p. 55

¹³ Sabahattin Ali, *İçimizdeki Şeytan*, YKY, İstanbul, 2015, p. 18.

¹⁴ Ali, *Kuyucaklı...*, p.p. 82-83.

represents the most noble, cleanest and highest emotions, eternal happiness and happiness of man. In other words, it can be said that the interest and desire for Muazzez has a message about these values¹⁵.

In a comparative reading we see, that the female characters are in a more intelligent way of looking at love and affection, and are grounded in contrast to the male characters. Love for Maria is beyond description, impossible to describe and unknown. She separates love and affinity from each other and expresses that love will not endure; “...want, with all spirit, with all body, with everything is different ...”¹⁶ Maria tells that her love to Raif is not a infutuation but a rational love.

Macide and Muazzez do not make a distinction between love and affiliation, and they think that the love they have hang them to life. Macide confesses that before seeing Ömer, she does not know the meaning of life in real manners and she can not live without him. At the same time, she feels stronger as she sees these feelings bringing a sense of admiration and gratitude towards Ömer. It reflects the comfort of the feeling of completeness with the question of “*Now I'm in peace, I'm in peace like a woman who finds the love looking for and does not want anything else....Can there be a greater happiness in the World?*”¹⁷ For Muazzez, Yusuf is a person who completes her own existence, protects her, and a person whom she likes just sitting together silently. Not imaging herself with another and sharing the ordinary daily life are enough for her happiness.

In the love stories that are shown in three novels, the male heroes are able to reach the women by defeating all difficulties even for a short period¹⁸; but none of them ends with a happy ending. At the same time some of the causes of the social conditions of the result in the individual weaknesses of the characters. In these ending, which are very annoying for the reader, Sabahattin Ali shows that a great part of the reasons for love and affiliation are rooted in the social structure itself. According to him, the economic and social conditions prevent these lovers from happy ending. As a result, in Sabahattin Ali's novels the love starts suddenly and strong trauma of emotions and turns into a short relations

¹⁵ Korkmaz, *ibid.*, p. 296.

¹⁶ Ali, *Kürk...*, p. 107.

¹⁷ Ali, *Kürk...*, p. 109

¹⁸ For detailed information see., Mehmet Fatih Uslu, “Romansa Sıgmasa da Romans: Kürk Mantolu Madonna”, *Kitap-ılık*, S: 102, February, 2007, p. 84.

looks like deep cliffs. Yusuf, Omer, and Raif, who throw themselves out of this cliff, cannot be saved either. Only the sorrow and pain remain to the reader¹⁹.

The beginning point of Sabahattin Ali's plots about the woman's problem is undoubtedly the upbringing style of young girls. He is opposed to their closed life between the four walls of the house, that is to say, in his own expression, "away from everything" like a "pet"²⁰. He argues that being forced to throw away all your desires and needs for years causes deeply wounds or even deterioration in young girls' psychology. Indeed, he tells that it is impossible to understand this life without purpose and without doing anything. Through Muazzez he expresses this amazement: "...Fortunately, she has the ability to wait for hours, days, perhaps years like the girls who are grown like a pet in a house without any aim and when she is tired of the thoughts that tear her heart, she burst in upon this absolute nihilism"²¹

The author argues that young girls should be involved in life as an individual, but he opposes to bringing young girls into ornamental dolls and their only purpose in life is to find a husband. He even prefers to show this thought in Şahinde, no matter how repulsive, corrupt and hateful the character she is. She is a young girl who is very beautiful in her youth. His family gives all his energy to find a wealthy husband. It is a fact that this way of upbringing is part of her cheese-pairing personality: "... While her mother tires to tidy her hair for hours, none of the parents have thought to be busy with inside of her head. They dressed her up like an apple on a stand, cleaned and shined then palmed her to a wealthy customer. Isn't that the aim of raising a girl?"²².

Macide makes the reader to question the suffering a young woman who doesnot have any future any expectation.: "...Neither her mother nor father, or teachers or a parent of any girl know what to do next? Like everyone else, her fate would be determined by coincidences. Perhaps they would want her to marry and she would reject, they would offer someone else, she would not want him either, soon afterwards the persistence of the girl would end, she would say "no matter what happens" and accept. So life was a foggy and wobbly sea that you cannot see not even two steps ahead. If we became a puty in coincidences, why on earth we would have will? What do the feelings that fill our chest for when we could not use and the thoughts in our heads help us? Isn't

¹⁹ Korkmaz, a.ge., p. 300.

²⁰ Ali, **Kuyucaklı...**, p. 86

²¹ Ali, **ibid.**, p. 86.

²² Ali, **ibid.**, p. ..., p. 13.

it easier to live a life that the neighbours and the neighborhood shapes then living with a desire to shape our lives?"²³.

Maria opposes the role that the society and the men give them and the expectation of being a sitter for them: *"Do you know why I hate you, I mean all the men in the wold? Only they want many things as if it was their natural right ... Don't get me wrong, it isnot necessary to carry out these requests... Men have such a glance, such a smile, they take their hands up and treat women like that...One has to be blind for not realizing how much they believe in themselves foolishly. It is enough to see their astonishment when they are rejected in any way, understand their arrogant pride. They never give up seeing themselves as hunters and us as poor preys. Our only duty is to obey and do what they want... We cannot express our wills and behave spontaneously ... I detest this idiotic and arrogant male pride"²⁴.*

Sabahattin Ali is very opposed to upbringing style of Muazzez and young girls like a decorative baby and subject to man, and shows a style that is opposed to this situation with Macide and Maria. He thinks that it is extremely important to have education against the way of upbringing. It is very important for the woman to be involved in the education process because she has the ambiguity in her life and gives her opportunity to gain a place in the society. Macide and Maria still have to pay for their self-sufficiency with their loneliness, far from their peers. Maria and Macide sometimes think that it is much more humiliating to accept even if they complain about it.

Young girls who are grown up in such a closed and uneducated environment are also exposed to various forms of social oppression. Today, this "neighborhood oppression" is shown with phrases such as "it is a small place" ", "what do the others say", "what do the neighbors say" and forms a powerful kind of control mechanism over women.

Şakir kills Ali in a wedding ceremony just to take a revenge from Yusuf and this is a disaster not only for Şakir but also for Muazzez. The subject is the oppression mechanism that is developed over the "small place" and "what do the others say" thoughts. When a young girl has to marry quietly, her name is tarnished by a murder. What interested the society is not that the unfair murder, but it is the girl who causes the murder to be committed. As these events are recorded as minus points for a young girl, even the district governor begins to

²³ Ali, *İçimizdeki...*, p. 41

²⁴ Ali, *Kürk...*, p.p. 81-82

worry about the future of Muazzes: “..Then they do not like a girl who is known so much and the incidents for the sake of her. It is a small place.”²⁵.

The matron who sees Bedri giving a letter that is written for his mother to Macide seizes with the excuse of how the neighborhood has bad intent, this is an example of abovesaid. The fact that the matron tells him that he should thank her instead of bringing account for it because she rescued him from falling into a bad situation, causes Bedri to fall back desperately even he understands the irrationality of the incident²⁶. While Bedri observes the irrationality of the incident openmoutedly, Macide makes the reader question how these irrational thoughts directs her own life: “Do they have a right to humiliate her, to make fun of her, to cause all these disgusting things? Going to school seems like a terrible thing to her, and it seemed more wonderful to go and tell why she was not going or to think that it is whispered among others”²⁷.

Macide is exposed at a similar oppression at aunt Emine's house in Istanbul. The time spent with Ömer when the money that is not delivered for two months (though it is not a matter of concern for the household) becomes a problem. Auntie Emine weighs upon her with riddles from neighborhoods and acquaintances as a means of oppression. Neighbors are in the scene again... She makes a mountain out of a molehill by telling that Macide is seen with different people at different places and although she does not believe these things in the beginning, she continues saying that everyone can not be a liar: “...Hopefully there is no one in our family that everyone speaks ill of. But all the Muslims cannot be liars... I swear they told. Not once or five... We waited for you to listen to reason... Bu we donot let more. May God rest him, your father's watching. He entrusted you to us. How do I know! You have never seemed like...”

After all this, Macide knows that it is no longer possible to stay in that house, and it is the turning point of her life. On the one hand, there is the option of returning to the countryside (even though this thought is still staring at his hair), but on the other side she has no choice but to continue to study in Istanbul and save her life. Sabahattin Ali once again shows us the unbearable weight of the economic conditions on women and at the same time the sweltering and breathless face of the countryside over the women.... On the other hand, when she leaves home, seeing Ömer waiting for her increases her self-confidence and she

²⁵Ali, *Kuyucaklı...*, p. 110.

²⁶ Ali, *İçimizdeki...*, p.p. 34-35

²⁷ Ali, *ibid.*, p. 36

sweeps away all her negative thoughts. You can question "everyone" who is entitled to everything on herself, like all women: "...What would they say?... But what have I seen so far... All these people, including those closest to me, did what they said, except saddening me, making my life meaningless? By this time, I have had better days only when I could stay alone. Ömer is the first person who pleased me and gave me happiness...Who is everybody? Aunt Emine? Immoral uncle? Or my poor mother who is unaware of the things?... How much I have suffered for them, but now they can set me free ...I will let them free...suppose that I'm dead..." Here is the existence of a man, Ömer, who gives Macide the power to rest from her nostalgia to her past and surroundings. Although Sabahattin Ali thinks that free women are very important in society, he also emphasizes the difficulty of being able to get out of the boundaries determined by a society and to stand on her own feet due to the conditions of the time and current social structure. Given the economic and social circumstances of the period, it is impossible to imagine how vital it is for a woman to be able to really stand without a man.

The criticisms that lead to the way the girls are raised and their social position continue in different ways in the marriage institution where two people's lives are united. According to the new revolutionary concept brought by the Republic, Sabahattin Ali accepts the passive role of the old Ottoman society, but the woman and the man as two companions complementing each other in. In his speech in Konya Halkevi in 1932, he tells us his thoughts about the subject in the most clear way as follows: *A woman doesnot go to a man, or she cannot be given to a man and a man doesnot get a woman. These expressions (to give and get) humiliate the women and first of all women must give up these thoughts; they should know both of the genders have equal preciousness while uniting their lives, and a husband means a faithfull spouse. When this though is accepted by the women, it is obvious that they would want to be stronger in the intellectual level.* (Ali 2007,118)

He expresses how important is the love in marriage in Kürk Mantolu Madonna with the following words: *"People do not need each other wealth and financial aid, they need love and interest. If one does not have this, the real name for having a family is "having some foreigners"*²⁸. Although Sabahattin Ali regards marriage as a whole, social reality is shaped at a completely different dimension. For girls, there is almost no future other than marriage. Because of this, young girls want to get married as soon as possible because of having a chance to live comfortably and get a place in the social structure firstly as a wife and then as a mother. For

²⁸ Ali, Kürk..., p.p. 149-150.

a man to have a beautiful woman at home, to raise children are enough to have a regular home life. These coupling, which financial priorities are important, can not go beyond establishing a company. The things Aunt Emine from Istanbul, said to Macide's parents to convince "Your daughter here you can not find another an officer husband... However, she deserves the doctors, engineers... a few years, you will also see after a few years"²⁹.

While the changing breezes that started in the last periods of the Ottoman Empire gives a more active role to the woman, the known structure in Anatolia continues. Although this change, which is evident in civil servants and soldiers lives, differentiates expectation from opposite sex, the society structure is not yet appropriate. Therefore, the expectation of marriage is different between the two sides. Sabahattin Ali is not about marriage but about the process of marriage in society: "In our small Anatolian cities this precious marriage always prevails. Even the strongest ones can not survive for a year or two, and then they can not save their lives from this pitiless germ and marry them at first sight, like blind. Of course, this marriage does not have any common duties, there is a woman at home for the man; it is thought that she would not miss an appropriate marriage"³⁰. Indeed, it is easier for both men and women to take the form prescribed by the social order, and those who are trying to escape are disappointed. The most striking expression of this was made over Salahattin Bey and Sahinde: "Indeed, for many husbands who come home with a serious attitude after playing backgammon and chat at twelve at night and looking for a white, plump body in bed, But those who want to "think of building a family home" like Salahattin Bey are disappointed when they see that things change that way"³¹.

The biggest problem with marriages in this way is undoubtedly the fact that girls are married at a young age. According to Sabahattin Ali, these girls, who are married at the ages of 15-16, are the only reasons for the fact that they are thrown as penniless miseries³². At the same time, this age difference makes it impossible for two individuals to reach each other. Couples who are witnessed a struggle before their marriage and then are forced to live together by the influence of social pressure often live in their own world and live away from each other: "Salahattin Bey thought that the woman is young and she opened her eyes in his home, he thought she could be a friend of him. He tried to behave like a daughter and sister but she made fun of him; when he tried to behave like master she was rebellious

²⁹ Ali, *İçimizdeki...*, p. 42.

³⁰ Ali, *Kuyucaklı...*, p. 12.

³¹ Ali, *Kuyucaklı...*, p. 13.

³² Ali, *ibid.*, p. 33.

*and he was confronted with fainting spell; finally when he behaved equally he had to bear injudicious requests, nonsensical behaviours or new desires*³³.

In addition, Sabahattin Ali thinks that the marriage institution in society is means of acting as a company rather than a partnership established with love and continuing the current unjust and corrupt structure. While telling the power of the notables and the tyrants, he revives the role of the marriage institution. As a matter of fact, the influence of these is not solely derived from their own wealth, but from their powerful relatives in town: "*Although the men whose relatives are mayors or businessmen do not want to come together with their relatives, they had to defend them at their homes because of their wives. Because their wives can be sister of such a vagrant, the family thoughts and the relative relations are important for them*"³⁴. Perhaps as a result of reaction to the fiction we have mentioned above, marriage does not take place in two of the three novels, they prefer living love despite all its rise and falls.

While trying to determine the views of Sabahattin Ali on the woman and the issue of women, we see that he gives importance to the issues of inequality, injustice and corruption, which cause the deterioration of the social structure in the plot that is based on the social reality. Sabahattin Ali discusses these matters without an ideological stance and rogue style. Ramazan Korkmaz says that the basis of injustice in Sabahattin Ali is based on factors such as opportunity inequality, the terrible imbalance in income, selfish attitudes of the environment, abuse of government power, ignorance and cowardice³⁵. Indeed, the author does this without questioning the characters, without glorifying them for their goodness, or judging them for their evil.

Rural areas are places where the inequality of the period is the most intense. Kuyucaklı Yusuf, the first novel that expresses the problems of the countryside, is a novel that most clearly explains the co-operation of bureaucracy and the notables and the contradictions of the unfair order that they created. The novel makes the relations of the ruling classes with each other and lower class through the love of two young people. In the struggle shown over Muazzez, while she is the dearie love of Yusuf, Şakir sees her as a goods he can have just because he belongs to upper class. After the quarrel that takes place at the festival place, drunk Şakir's statements, "If I take that girl as a wife and do not take

³³ Ali, *ibid.*, p. 13.

³⁴ Ali, *ibid.*, p. 34.

³⁵ Korkmaz, *ibid.*, p. 122.

her home.. That foreigner Yusuf must know who is Şakir” fires the the events. Having Muazzez and humiliating her will be a sign of vengeance that the Şakir will take from Yusuf. From another point of view, owning Muazzez, who is a passive object, means that Şakir who holds the power in the dominant structure, will snub Yusuf who belongs to lower class and show his power³⁶.

The environment of Muazzez except two men who love her is a circle of evil. Her mother considers her as a medium to live more colorful and good life. The notable people in the town except her district governor father are all like ruthless hunters who set all sorts of trappings to capture Muazzez. But the real hunter, as Oğuz Demiralp stated, is of course the dominating order in the town ...³⁷ Berna Moran, claiming that he has a more striking narrative by bringing the town reality and the love of two young innocent people and to emphasize the the corrupt sexual love in city (abuse of Şakir, her mother’s dike, sleeping around prostitutes, rackjacking to Muazzez at rakı table etc.)³⁸. Starting from this point of view, the reality in Kuyucaklı Yusuf , first and foremost, reveals the structure of the society and the people are the result of this structure.³⁹ Muazzez for Sabahattin Ali has a vital role in revealing this reality. So, Sabahattin Ali emphasizes the childish, pure and fragility side of Muazzez every time ... This is also an explanation of Muazzez's inability to show sufficient reaction.

Yusuf's stance is against a mass representing a corrupt, unjust, and depressed society. Muazzez is so passive and poor that she can only say “Brother, how much did you sell me?” as a reaction to the decision of marriage with Ali. After Şakir who cannot bear the fact that marriage of Muazzez with Ali, kills him, it shows the inequality and injustice to the reader once more. Indeed, the incident goes to the court, but it ends with the acquittal of Şakir. The author shows an objective approach to this conclusion, which everyone knows and ties the cause of the problem to the unequal nature of the society: “... because there was no other way to be. This is how it came and went, and even the wisest of those who were at the top of the town did not admit that Hilmi Bey's son could be really imprisoned, despite the liberty and a few convictions he brought. The prison was only for slanders, peasants and people from the lowe class; the son of a Hilmi Bey, even if he killed a man, could not be held with them”⁴⁰.

³⁶ For detailed information see. Özer, *ibid.*,

³⁷ Oğuz Demiralp, Sahip Çık Sevdiğine”, *Kitap-lık*, February 2007, Volume: 102, p., 74.

³⁸ Berna Moran, *Türk Romanına Eleştirel Bir Bakış 2*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002, p., 37-38

³⁹ Moran, *ibid.*,p., 40.

⁴⁰Ali, *Kuyucaklı...*,p., 96.

At the same time, this unfair structure in society is even more dramatic for the people in the lower classes. As a matter of fact, women are opposed to the exploitation of their labor and the exploitation of their bodies within this class. Kübra and her mother, who are miserable after her husband's escape with another woman, are an example. The working conditions of the working women are given to the reader through Kübra and his mother again. We are witnessing the tragedy of women workers with the knowledge that Yusuf fires the women and the owners do not even give them time to give a breast. In this economic and social structure, Kübra and her mother's only way out is to get Kübra to marry an artisan so that she can get rid of this and look after her grandkids beside her.⁴¹ The two women who had to work in the olive farm of the Hilmi Bey after the rape of Kübra by Şakir showed the dimensions of the desperation they had experienced with the following words to Salahattin Bey "*We would work or die, a gentleman, who would want to work under their orders after they had made us?*"⁴²

The last thing we need to mention is the place and meaning of death in Sabahattin Ali's novels. The death takes a considerable place in Sabahattin Ali's novels and stories, and it is seen as an image of both salvation and resistance. Death is a means of emancipation of social insensitivity. Two female heroes dies at the end of the novel. Maria Puder dies of a disease, Muazzez dies of the injuries she has from the fire of Yusuf. These deaths, which slam the reader's face, show the criminal beyond a dramatic end. Muazzez dies because of the one who has economic and social power, in other words Hilmi and his son Şakir and the new district governor dies because of the order he continued.⁴³ Raif Efendi ruined his own life because of the incapacity to change the current economic and social conditions and left Maria dead.

In Sabahattin Ali's novels, social inequality and corruption are two of the most interrelated concepts. We see degeneracy as a problem that arises from the alienation of human beings, their values and all humanity in professional and moral care. These degenerated types who are responsible for spreading, settlement and institutionalization of social injustice consist of cowardly, insincere and "*no need*" people, and the problem constitutes the most obvious characteristics of the heroes who represent the opposite powers⁴⁴. The women who represent the corruption in the author's three novels are Aunt Emine and her daughter

⁴¹ Ali, *Kuyucaklı...*, p., 42.

⁴² Ali, *Kuyucaklı...*, p., 60.

⁴³ Ahmet Oktay, "Bir Yetimin Romanı", *Kuyucaklı Yusuf*, YKY, 2014, p. 219-220.

⁴⁴ Korkmaz, *ibid.*, p.p. 133-134.

in the *İçimizdeki Şeytan*, *Şahinde in Kuyucaklı Yusuf*, and Aunt Ferhunde Hanım in *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*.

Sabahattin Ali has shown social corruption as characters that can not comprehend the values of time as culturally or cognitively but exaggeratedly with their appearances. The common thing that all three characters have is to give importance to appearance, insensitivity to their family and give importance to live outside. For example, Ferhunde Hanım sees her two children as a punishment instead of showing interest; she does not know how to get away from them in order to avoid touching them with their dirty hands⁴⁵. Whenever she has a chance, she lives children to her sister and does not think of anything other than dressing a silk dress and going out⁴⁶.

Aunt Emine in *İçimizdeki Şeytan* is a feminine who does not give up make-up even after Macide's father's death. *Şahinde* is fancy, and although she is matured, she draws his eyebrows in his eyebrows and paints his hair with various herbs.

The common aspect of these three characters is that the importance they give to money and staying indifferent to everything. Although Aunt Emine is not wealthy as before she continues organizing parties with her friends and sycophants, with doing this she tries to prove her wealth as before: “ *Some of fivepieces of gold and pearls of Aunt Emine have been sold in Sandal Bedesten. Unfortunately the sadness of Emine who cries everytime about the troubles she has doesnot continue more then twenty four hours; she organizes parties with her sycophants from Istanbul as soon as possible*”⁴⁷

Şahinde uses Muazzez in *baccahanalian* in order to continue her comfortable life. Her own comfort is more than everything. She does not feel disturbed by the fact that Muazzez becomes a toy in the hands of men. Another dimension of the corruption is the fact that the new governor and his relations with the notables and his role in trapping Muazzez. Everyone from the district governor to the gendarmerie commander is involved in all kinds of things, including reversing justice on the grounds that Muazzez is taken as an object.

⁴⁵ Ali, *Kürk...*, p. 29.

⁴⁶ Ali, *Kürk...*, p., 28.

⁴⁷ Ali, *İçimizdeki...*, p. 26.

Macide who starts a new life in a new environment, tells this environment as an observer. This environment that Ömer and his friends are in is an impersonal community pursuing material interest and pursuing power as much as possible under the mask of intellectuality. Muazzez does not let them destroy her with much strong personality and solid posture in this environment⁴⁸. Sabahattin Ali has preferred to give us the artificial and degenerated structure of this area especially with Macide who comes from countryside but rational: “...*In fact this high society doesnot make good impression. When she started tol ive with Ömer, she has been trying to see the good and fabulous sides of these important men but the only thing she has seen that their arbitrary behaviours to break the rules. Is this an important thing? Is it an extraordinary talent not to listen to someone who is speaking, to speak loudly in a musical recital in the garden, to humliate or to insult, to look upon down? For months they have done nothing except showing how stupid and incompetents they are and proving their own ideas. Although Macide tires to remember the ideas hardly she can only remember the quarrel of some people and discussions. And when compared to the people she has known up to now the only difference is their arrogant style, they never hide the spark of desire in their eyes and Macide cannot find a relation of these with being a human*”⁴⁹

Bedri, along with Macide, is opposed to the perception of power as a religion, criticizes this group's ability to seize and hold power no matter what the cost. Just because of this, seeing Bedri as the opposite of Ömer causes Macide to see the weaknesses of Ömer and feel closer to Bedri.

Another criticism of Sabahattin Ali's intellectual class is about moral corruption. The author reveals the dimensions of the moral corruption of this intellectual circle through the harassment of Macide. Macide, who can not stand this negligent environment that Ömer has, stands far away from Ömer: “...*Taking another woman on his lap, then suddenly feeling embarrassed talking while thinking about his debts....Forgetting his wife on the roads, but loving her so much to worth dying for... Walking with a man whom he hates extremely but walking with him just because of feeling ashamed...*”⁵⁰. After all these things Macide decides to continue with Bedri.

Here is also another class in this new environment. This class is passed on to the reader as a bad imitation. Sabahattin Ali chooses to reflect on this class' freak and being unlike state with Macide's observations. These young people,

⁴⁸ Demiralp, a.g.m., p. 75.

⁴⁹ Ali, *İçimizdeki...*, p. p. 204-205.

⁵⁰Ali, *İçimizdeki...*, p. 222.

who are between the ages of thirteen and twenty-five, think that it is a virtue to speak out and to laugh after every word. Macide finds these behaviors so meaningless and creepy, which are extremely unjust and unnecessary. She especially notices the girls. As a matter of fact, artificial behavior is accompanied by artificial red lips on girls' artificially dyed and artificially curled hair. Macide, seeing that they are in a completely artificial situation without any of their own, thinks that they are trying to resemble themselves as third-rate movie stars, but she thinks that they can not go beyond being tired and artificial in this way. She even compares this with her friends and respects the girls in the conservatories as they have purposes. Indeed, even if the girls in secondary school can not do anything, they feel that it means something in their own circumstances. But she finds the girls here more than nothing. She can not put them anywhere. Again, although the old environment is not an enduring one, it has little humanity, friendship and warmth, but she can not help thinking how strange and artificial this new environment is: "...Is Aunt Emine better than my friends in Balıkesir? Impossible! My be five times worse... All of them are wannabe from uncle Galip to Semiha... Their neighbours are like them ... Gossipers, thoughtless people... I came from that side to here. But the things I have seen here is worse than everything... There weren't any nonsense people neither in Balıkesir nor in Şehzadebaşı ... At least there are not any crowd as in here ... It is impossible to live among them ..."51.

CONCLUSION

In his novels, Sabahattin Ali talks about social and realistic view of women in the context of social and economic structure. He has thoroughly shared his thoughts about the issue of women and women in the context of the events fictionalized around individual love. Kuyucaklı Yusuf takes place in the town; İçimizdeki Şeytan and Kürk Mantolu Madonna take place in city. Parallel to these places, he addresses the issue of women and women. Along with male heroes in three novels, we see two female characters (except Muazzez) are more dominant.

In all three novels, love and marriage are among the main issues about women. He is against the place and the form of marriages which means establishing a common life for him in the society. This institution, which is believed to have formed by women and men with love, brings unhappiness because it is formed with various interests in terms of families and individuals. He attributes to the upbringing way of men and women. In other words, the real problem is

⁵¹Ali, *ibid.*, p., 134.

the upbringing of the girls and their marriage at young ages. In this structure, where education and employment opportunities are extremely limited, women are confronted with the possibility that they can find themselves in social structure through marriage only. On the other hand, women are at the bottom of this structure and are subject to all forms of violence and rape, although the only condition for women to take part in the social life is to work. In this respect, even a university-educated woman like Maria Puder has to work in a nightclub (the writer is looking at it with respect because she is standing on her feet). We can easily conclude that the author supports the women to take more place in the working life after education.

As a result, Sabahattin Ali who sees every individual complex and worth to understand is against seeing woman as an object. His attitude towards people who have equal right in society and are sensitive and free with the qualifications of the period are more important for women. As women are free and self-confident individuals, the social, economic and political structure is parallel to contemporary values and therefore the adoption of these values may be able to create a development for women.

REFERENCES

- ALİ, Sabahattin, Marko Paşa Yazıları ve Ötekiler, YKY, İstanbul, 2004.
- ALİ, Sabahattin, Kuyucaklı Yusuf, YKY, İstanbul, 2014.
- ALİ, Sabahattin, Kürk Mantolu Madonna, YKY, İstanbul, 2011.
- ALİ, Sabahattin, İçimizdeki Şeytan, YKY, İstanbul, 2015.
- AKÇAM, Alper, "Sabahattin Ali ve İçimizdeki Şeytan", Oggito, www.oggito.com.tr
- DEMİRALP, Oğuz, "Sahip Çık Sevdiğine", Kitap-lık, February 2007, Volume: 102, p.p. 73-76.
- ERGÜN, Mehmet, "Sabahattin Ali'nin Önemi", Yansımaya, April 1973, Volume: 16, p.p. 270-278.
- ERTOP, Konur, "Sabahattin Ali'nin Sanatının Dayanakları", Yaşasın Edebiyat, April 1998, Volume:6, p. s. 42-43.
- ESEN, Nüket, "Sabahattin Ali'nin Kadın Karakterleri", Yaşasın Edebiyat, April 1998, Volume:6, sp., 36-37.
- KORKMAZ, Ramazan, Sabahattin Ali (İnsan ve Eser), Kesit Yayınları, İstanbul, 2016.
- KUTLU, Mustafa, Sabahattin Ali, Dergâh Yayınları, İstanbul, 1980.
- MORAN, Berna, Türk Romanına Eleştirel Bir Bakış 2, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002.
- OKTAY, Ahmet, "Bir Yetimin Romanı", Kuyucaklı Yusuf, YKY, 2014, p.p. 219-220.
- ÖZER, Hanife, Kuyucaklı Yusuf'ta Arzu Üçgenleri", Türk Dil, Edebiyat ve Araştırmaları Dergisi, 2013, Year:1, S: 2, p.p. 399-408. www.dergipark.gov.tr
- SÖNMEZ, Sevgül, "Sabahattin Ali'nin Sanat ve Edebiyata Bakışı", Kitap-lık, February 2007, Volume: 102, p.p. 87-91.
- USLU, Mehmet Fatih, "Romansa Sığmasa da Romans: Kürk Mantolu Madonna", Kitap-lık, Volume: 102, February, 2007, p.p. 77- 86.

