

POLITICAL AUTHORITY AND SPECTRAL STORIES FROM THE MARGIN
IN SHAKESPEARE'S *HAMLET*, OĐUZ ATAY'S *THE DISCONNECTED* AND
TOM STOPPARD'S *ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD*

NESLİHAN ŐENTÖRK

BOĐAZİŐİ UNIVERSITY

2013

Political Authority and Spectral Stories from the Margin in
Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Oğuz Atay's *The Disconnected* and
Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*

Thesis submitted to the
Institute for Graduate Studies in the Social Sciences
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
English Literature

by
Neslihan Şentürk

Boğaziçi University
2013

Thesis Abstract

Neslihan Şentürk, “Political Authority and Spectral Stories from the Margin in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, Oğuz Atay’s *The Disconnected* and Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*”

This thesis is an attempt to explore ways in which political authority manipulates narratives about the past. It also analyzes how literature can be a site of the spectral through which counter-histories of those who are marginalized and overshadowed by dominant narratives in a society are written. Drawing centrally upon the figure of the ghost in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, I explore the role of the spectral in two texts: *The Disconnected* (1972) by the Turkish novelist Oğuz Atay, and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (1966) by the English playwright Tom Stoppard.

I begin by analyzing the relationship between collective memory, amnesia and trauma. I then examine the rise of the spectral in the Atay and Stoppard texts, with special emphasis on their social and political contexts. I argue that specters in these texts offer points of resistance that enable the production of counter-narratives pertaining to the past. This resistance comes in the form of the figurative language of literature, which is relatively less influenced by power relations and the manipulative potential of language in societies.

Tez Özeti

Neslihan Şentürk, “Shakespeare’in *Hamlet*, Oğuz Atay’ın *Tutunamayanlar* ve Tom Stoppard’ın *Rosencrantz ve Guildenstern Öldü* Adlı Eserlerinde Siyasi Otorite ve Kıyıda Kalmış Hayalet Hikayeleri”

Bu tezin amacı, siyasi otoritelerin geçmişe dair anlatıları kendi gündemlerine göre ayarlama / değiştirme / dönüştürme yöntemlerini irdelemektir. Ayrıca, topluma dayatılmış baskın anlatılar tarafından kıyıda ve gölgede bırakılmış olanların karşı-tarihlerinin edebiyat yoluyla yazılabileceğini, edebiyatın da böylelikle hayaletlerin çıkış noktası olabileceğini incelemektir. Bu bağlamda Shakespeare’in *Hamlet* isimli trajedyasını temel almak suretiyle, Türk yazar Oğuz Atay’ın *Tutunamayanlar* (1972) ve İngiliz oyun yazarı Tom Stoppard’ın *Rosencrantz ve Guildenstern Öldü* (1966) adlı eserleri üzerinde incelemeler yapılmıştır.

Bu çalışma, öncelikle toplumsal hafıza, hafıza kaybı ve travma arasındaki ilişkiyi analiz eder. Akabinde ise, özellikle sosyal ve politik bağlamı göz önüne alarak Atay ve Stoppard’ın eserlerindeki hayaletlerin ortaya çıkışını inceler. *Hamlet*’te olduğu gibi, bu hayaletler geçmişe dair karşı-anlatıların ortaya çıkabilmesini mümkün kılan bir direniş noktası oluşturur. Söz konusu direniş ise, toplumdaki güç ilişkileri ve dilin manipülatif potansiyelinden görece daha az etkilenmiş olan edebiyatın figüratif diliyle ortaya çıkar.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the people who have been instrumental in the completion of this project.

First of all, I would like to express my greatest appreciation to Dr. Kim Fortuny, who offered her valuable insights that improved this project considerably. I used to feel thoroughly motivated and encouraged every time I attended her classes during my undergraduate years, and she still has the same effect on me. I am more than grateful for her constant motivation and trust.

I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Cevza Sevgen, Dr. Özlem Öğüt, Dr. Louis Mazzari and Dr. Didar Akar, who agreed to read my thesis and offered their precious comments.

For support in writing this M.A. thesis I am grateful to Aylin Yılmaz who patiently shared my concerns regarding my thesis and supported me throughout this process. I am so glad to have a friend and a “bıldıycın” like her. My thanks also go to Lütfiye Metehan, my dear friend, who was invaluable in encouraging me to write at times when my enthusiasm wore out. I am grateful to her for sharing a part of her life with me in a neighborhood she otherwise would never reside, and chatting with me during our self-indulging breakfast “rituals”.

My mother Gülay Şentürk and father Adem Şentürk have provided me years of encouragement and support even under tough circumstances. They have always given me, along with many other things, their infinite and unconditional love and care. Though a woman in her late twenties, I still need their affection and they never turn me down. I will be grateful forever for their love. I also thank my brothers, İlyas Şentürk and my little one, Emir Alp Şentürk, for their care and support. Especially Emir Alp’s kisses on the cheek were my biggest source of motivation during visits home. I love and miss them both.

My deepest appreciation is to my sister, Melike Şentürk, who has been more than a sister to me for twenty six years. She has always been my best and dearest friend. From time to time during the writing process of this thesis, she came up with such strange suggestions for me as peeling potatoes and onions, or cleaning my place to overcome my depressions. And strangely enough, they did work. All in all, we have shared a life full of joys as well as sorrows, achievements along with failures. All these have made us cling more strongly to each other and, despite being parted due to her continental shift of residence, I always feel her existence nearby, probably thanks to our long-lasting phone conversations and, more importantly, our mutual love and affection for each other.

More recently, Orhan Çoban has enriched my life with his existence and love. He also inspired me to finish the thesis, and patiently kept me harmonious by helping to put my pieces together during my most pessimistic and hopeless moments. I am grateful to him for becoming an important part of my life, the rest of which I would like to share with him.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2: COLLECTIVE MEMORY, TRAUMA, HISTORY, AND THE GHOSTS OF LITERATURE.....	14
Social Memory and Collective Amnesia	
Speaking to Specters, Creating Resistance, and the Language of Trauma	
Literature as an Alternative to Official Historical Accounts	
CHAPTER 3: <i>THE DISCONNECTED</i>	37
Disconnected Narrative and Marginalized Characters	
Eradication of the “Errors” of the Past	
Collective Memory and Grown-up Children Devoid of “The Science of Life”	
Adoption of Games and Plays: Surmounting the Seemingly Unsurmountable	
Literature and Specters of the Past, the Present and the Future	
Conclusion	
CHAPTER 4: <i>ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD</i>	89
Being Overwhelmed by a Dominating Narrative	
Master Narratives, Changing Paradigms, Political Turmoil and the Writing of <i>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead</i>	
From Periphery to Center: Trauma and Chaos	
Exhaustion of Language, Crisis of Identity and Loss of Memory	
Alternative Narratives through Ghosts of Literature	
Conclusion	
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION.....	130
APPENDIX: TRANSLATIONS.....	135
REFERENCES.....	157

As in Hamlet, the Prince of a rotten State, everything begins by the apparition of a specter. More precisely, by the waiting for this apparition. The anticipation is at once impatient, anxious, and fascinated: this, the thing ("this thing") will end up coming. The revenant is going to come.
Jacques Derrida. Specters of Marx

[Shakespeare] helped to bring recognition to the horrors and dignities of human suffering, repeatedly having performed on stage the injustices often caused by those in authority over the government.
Anthony DiMatteo 178

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: *ENTER THE GHOST*

This thesis is an attempt to conjure ghosts and it does so by taking one of Shakespeare's most well-known plays, *Hamlet*, as the main reference. This is also a thesis concerned with the interaction between official history and collective memory, a connection to which the ghost of Hamlet's father has sound implications. As Anthony DiMatteo maintains it in his review "The Trauma of Empire in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture," "many of [Shakespeare's] works can be considered not mirrors of human nature but of what sovereignty is and how it functions or performs" (177). Although logic and reason may sneer at a belief in ghosts, it can be asserted that it is the power of literature that makes it possible to put forward interpretations of such irrational concepts as apparitions and spectres. One of those interpretations is that literary texts might pave the way to underlining what has been occluded in history, and thus challenge the "Machiavellian reduction of human beings to instruments of a sovereign prerogative or will to power" (179). Therefore, it seems quite apt to start

conjuring right here and now, based on the power vested by literature--*Enter the ghost:*

GHOST. I am thy father's spirit,
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away...
List, list, oh list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love -
HAMLET. O God!
GHOST. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.
HAMLET. Murder?
GHOST. Murder most foul, as in the best it is,
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.
HAMLET. Haste me to know't, that I with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love
May sweep to my revenge.
GHOST...Now Hamlet, hear.
Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me. So the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abused; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.
HAMLET. O my prophetic soul !
My uncle? (1. 5. 9-41)

The circulating story that the king was killed by a serpent while sleeping in the garden is a fabrication that Claudius raised for the purpose of whitewashing and abusing the fact that he himself killed his own brother and married his wife. He uses this story in such a way that the collective memory of the whole of Denmark is shaped and manipulated by this “forged process”. Claudius is the authority who endorses this to his own ends: he makes people forget his hasty marriage with his brother’s wife as well, thereby downplaying this process in the eyes of the people and clenching his sovereignty via these steps. Put differently, by eclipsing the facts about King Hamlet’s death from the ear of Denmark and sweeping them under the carpet for the sake of restoring his own sovereignty over his subjects,

Claudius not only manipulates the way people remember the past events but he also controls what portion of the past is to be forgotten, eroded and erased.

Garrett A. Sullivan in his compelling book *Memory and Forgetting in English Renaissance Drama* states that “the call to forget can function in the service of a sinister restructuring of the social order” (21). For instance, when Claudius tries to motivate Hamlet to *forget* his grief along with his father and become his chief courtier, cousin and son, he actually aims to “install a new set of familial, monarchical and court relations in which Hamlet will remain loving, loyal and subordinate to his father’s murderer. Forgetting here goes hand in hand with the attempted consolidation of Claudius’s authority” (21). However, there is a realm where Claudius has no means to exert his influence and power whatsoever: in the realm of the ghost, writes Derrida, a specter is always “a revenant” and “one cannot control its comings and goings because it begins by coming back. Think as well of Macbeth, and remember the specter of Caesar. After having expired, he returns. Brutus also says ‘again’: ‘Well; then I shall see thee again?’ Ghost: ‘Ay, at Philippi’” (11). Seen in this light, despite Claudius’ attempts to control his memory, Hamlet will always remember what really happened thanks to his ghostly armored father’s insistent hauntings: “Adieu, adieu, adieu. Remember me.”(1. 5. 91).

What precisely does the ghost demand of Hamlet when he asks Hamlet to remember him? What exactly does this act of remembering entail? Sullivan answers this question by saying that the act of remembering is “to perform a series of prescribed actions. A few lines later we see that the Ghost’s words initiate in Hamlet a fantasy of the annihilation and reformation of the self through forgetting and the subsequent inscription of a memory trace” (13). Indeed, despite the

difficulty of remembering in this “distracted globe,” Hamlet resolves to make a promise upon hearing his father’s commandment:

HAMLET. . . Remember thee?
Ay thou poor ghost, whiles memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee?
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there,
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmixed with baser matter: yes, by heaven! (1. 5. 93-104)

Immediately after hearing the call of the ghost to remember him, Hamlet’s reference to memory is not simply a coincidence. Only if he *erases*--not if he *forgets*--all the pre-existing records from his memory can Hamlet inscribe there the commandment of the ghost. This denotes that his beginning point is the radical cleaning and purifying of his memory contaminated by this “distracted globe” at a time that is “out of joint”. By getting rid of the illusions and disruptions that surround the reality, he may attain the knowledge of what actually occurred in the past and uncover the “truth”. In other words, the ghost enables Hamlet not only to evade the common sense of collective memory, but it also helps him expose the true face of the events by means of disclosing the fabricated “truths” of official records that have been adopted and acknowledged by collective memory.

Hamlet’s vow thus concludes with a dignified culmination of oath-swearing:

So uncle, there you are. Now to my word:
It is 'Adieu, adieu, remember me.'
I have sworn't.(1. 5. 110-12)

In these lines, what Hamlet attempts is to “reconstitute himself in terms of remembering the Ghost and his commands. The ‘I’ that swears performs an act that is built upon the previous erasure of Hamlet’s memory” (Sullivan 13).

Two acts after the oath, the Ghost re-appears in Gertrude's closet to "chide" his "tardy son" by commanding: "Do not forget. This visitation / Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose" (3. 4. 106, 109–110). With each of the hauntings of his father's ghost, gaps and cracks are inevitably opened in Hamlet's memory, a memory once influenced by the collective memory which Claudius rankly abused through a forged process after King Hamlet's death. Notwithstanding, Hamlet inevitably undergoes a transformation at the end of the events he experiences, ending up in a chaotic and unbearably unintelligible world. Being aware of the fact that this sort of transformation is a threat to the consolidation of his power, Claudius thinks that what troubles Hamlet must be "more than his father's death" and asks his childhood friends to "draw him on to pleasures" and glean what "afflicts him thus" in an attempt to distract Hamlet and direct his ill-advised thoughts to someplace else (2. 2. 8, 15-17). Indeed, Hamlet is preoccupied with issues of graver importance than his father's death: his identity, as he has known it so far, is under threat and the more he poses questions, the more he is drawn into chaos. That is to say, a range of possibilities and questionings are brought to Hamlet's mind with the visitation of the ghost. It could first of all be interpreted as a liar. He might be "a phantom who is not the ghost that he claims to be"; accordingly, it might be the ghost "in which History takes the stage and presents itself as a phantom full of lies" argues Anselm Haverkamp in "The Ghost of History: Hamlet and the Politics of Paternity" (173). Another interpretation is that it may be "the *anamorphosis* of a different story and history: there is always another history buried in History" (174). As for the last possibility the ghost offers, Haverkamp maintains that it might be related to

Hamlet's relationship to Claudius and Gertrude, which, in the course of the drama, uncovers a kind of disjointedness pertaining to Hamlet himself and

his conception of his own historical origins. It is entirely possible and conceivable that Hamlet is not even the son of the dead King, but of his murderer, Claudius. It is this specific uncertainty that makes him ask--last but not least--the question whether 'to be or not to be.' The uncertainty of conception--one's being as being of uncertain origin--is a mortgage that fuels history. (174)

The experience Hamlet goes through is quite transformative indeed, since not only his perception of reality but also his identity as he has known it up till now is at stake as a result of the *thing*, the apparition--the specter.

Considering all the sets of questions Hamlet has been preoccupied with, it needs positing that Hamlet is suffering from a severe trauma due to the questionings that have prepossessed his mind. This trauma is the very reason why the ghost re-appears and reminds him of his mission because potentially, traumas almost always have the tendency to be accompanied by forgetting in order for a trauma victim to heal the wounds originated in the past and overcome the pain as well as the suffering thereof. However, the existence of ghosts can never be ignored and they are the reminders of what really happened by haunting those prone to forget the past. The ghost of Hamlet the King and ghosts in general open up a space where alternative discourses related to the past that refute the accounts of the dominant powers are articulated and brought to the agenda of the present. Moreover, ghosts also have the potential to undermine and subvert narratives about the origins of a certain individual or nations.

Brad Baumgartner in "The Spectropoetics of Trauma: Ghosts, Language, and the Wound in *Nightwood*" states that from Antiquity to the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, to modernity, many noteworthy authors throughout history have continued to share a keen interest in what is spectral. The reason for this attention is, as Helen Sword puts it in her ground-breaking book *Ghostwriting Modernism*, "the subtle ways in which mediums and communicating spirits unsettle seemingly

stable ontological--or, as Jacques Derrida would have it, 'hauntological'-- boundaries between self and other, absence and presence, materiality and spirituality, life and death" (xi). Moreover, rather than stabilizing the worldviews and dichotomies that are already cherished and adopted within the society and its historical context, ghosts blur those perceptions, resulting in a process at the end of which people may end up finding themselves disconnected entities in a world that is chaotic and meaningless. Therefore, Derrida argues, "What seems almost impossible is to speak always of the specter, to speak to the specter, to speak with it, therefore especially to make or to let a spirit *speak*" (11). Notwithstanding, an interactive kind of communication is quite essential to the understanding of the true, unconcealed and non-fabricated face of the world. Colin Davis maintains in "Hauntology, Spectres and Phantoms" that "Derrida calls on us to endeavour to speak and listen to the spectre, despite the reluctance inherited from our intellectual traditions and because of the challenge it may pose to them" (376-77). Hamlet, as a trauma victim, "should learn," as Derrida entreats,

to live by learning not how to make conversation with the ghost, but how to talk with him, with her, how to let them speak or how to give them back speech, even if it is in oneself, in the other, in the other in oneself: they are always there, specters, even if they do not exist, even if they are no longer, even if they are not yet. (221)

Whatever the conventional perceptions of a ghost are, it can be asserted that the specter evades and rebels against boundaries drawn between dichotomies, leaving one with the difficult task of wrestling with gaps, thresholds, traces, porous and evasive meanings in language, namely the notion of *différance*. This Derridean concept is quite important because it is a sufficient means to explain why "[t]here is no closure for ghosts. Each ghost is an alienated other. Each ghost is a stranger, carrying a history that no trauma victim ever knows (or can know)" (Baumgartner

“The Spectropoetics”). The term hauntology, as well, is relevant to the discussion of *différance*.

Hauntology, or--as the term implies--the logic of the ghost, is a widely discussed concept in political and philosophical circles. First coined by Jacques Derrida during a lecture on the state of Marxism in the post-Communist era delivered at the University of California, Riverside, in May 1993, the term implies a conflict between the past and the present, because according to Derrida, argues Christopher Wise in “Deconstruction and Zionism: Jacques Derrida's ‘Specters of Marx’” what is considered as “now” is nothing but a slippery ground that is deeply rooted in the past and it is always in the process of being defined vis-à-vis the past as such (56). This, as a matter of fact, is a mutual relationship: being a construct, the past is at the same time what the dominant and popular narratives superimpose on their subjects in order to create an illusionary perception of the present. At this point, ghosts play a vital role since they not only shatter those current delusions by means of their unexpected hauntings, but also make their subjects remember the events that have gone unnoticed under trauma-like circumstances in the past. Moreover, the ghost as a figure belongs to a realm that makes it neither present nor absent. In other words, both present and absent simultaneously. Hauntology can thus be considered a different aspect of deconstruction because, as Davis says, it “supplants its near-homonym ontology, replacing the priority of being and presence with the figure of the ghost as that which is...neither dead nor alive” (373). It does not have anything to do with whether or not one believes in ghosts, as Fredric Jameson explains:

Spectrality does not involve the conviction that ghosts exist or that the past (and maybe even the future they offer to prophesy) is still very much alive and at work, within the living present: all it says, if it can be thought to

speaking, is that the living present is scarcely as self-sufficient as it claims to be; that we would do well not to count on its density and solidity, which might under exceptional circumstances betray us. (qtd. in Davis 373)

As for Derrida's specter, it is a deconstructive medium "hovering between life and death, presence and absence, and making established certainties vacillate" and it evades belonging to the order of knowledge (376).

During his lecture, Derrida draws upon Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: the ghost's secret is not a puzzle to be solved; it is the structural openness or address directed towards the living by the voices of the past or the not yet formulated possibilities of the future. The secret is not unspeakable because it is taboo, but because it cannot not (yet) be articulated in the languages available to us. (Davis 378-79)

Ghosts, in other words, push the limits of language and thought, thereby making it possible to evade the impositions exerted by the hegemonic powers within society. Haunting, as Jacques Derrida notes "belongs to the structure of every hegemony" and this is the reason why Derrida exemplifies his discussion on specters through one of the most famous ghosts in literature, the murdered King Hamlet "who haunts future generations by disrupting linear conceptions of history and reminding, through his uncanny revenance, that 'the time is out of joint'" (Sword 181).

It should be noted that the haunting of the past comes right after the assumed burial of it. As a result, a spectral quality is unconsciously attributed to what really happened in the past. This is an uncanny situation since "the trope of haunting, which underlies the ghostly nature of the past in its ever-returning nature," projects its shadow "towards the present and the future" states José Colmeiro in *A Nation of Ghosts?: Haunting, Historical Memory and Forgetting in Post-Franco Spain* (30). For this very reason, ghost is a governing figure in certain narratives of the past due to the fact that there is a mistrust towards the accounts of official history as to what really happened in the past. Here arises a

need to create an alternative counter-history in an attempt to make the ghost of the past speak and reveal what has been eclipsed from the discourse of official history. Colmeiro's evaluation of this point is quite noteworthy since he argues that these ghosts are nothing but the reflections of "the postmodern disbelief in master narratives of progress" and he also emphasizes that discontinuities and absences within the spectral histories answer the necessity to bring about alternative and refreshed accounts of the past "that do not replicate the official historical accounts, acknowledging the victims of modernity, those precisely disappeared from the historical record" (30). These narratives not only reveal but also put an emphasis on "the spectral aspect of history, a past which is already not there but at the same time makes itself present. The spectrality of history requires a process of acknowledgement of the 'traces' of the traumatic past, by allowing the repressed memories of the past to be told in ghost form" (30). The fact that the past returns in spectral guise means that there is something in the collective consciousness and memory that has not been dealt with appropriately--there is a truth to be revealed just like that of Hamlet the King; a truth that might be seen as the originating cause of the accounts of the past that are full of disappearances, cracks, voids, omissions and gaps, therefore densely populated by ghosts. Stated in other words, ghosts as the "embodiment of the past in the present, destabilize the accepted notions of history, reality, and self, and the clear demarcations that define them. Their here-but-not here borderline existence, between the dead and the living, blurs the binary divide that constructs our perception of reality" (31). The narratives about ghosts go beyond the official accounts, below which "lie those stories that have been silenced and erased, leaving only their ghostly traces, and therefore bound to return and haunt the present" (31). Why, then, is the past

supposedly buried without confronting it and why, as a result, do ghosts continue to haunt people today?

As social creatures, people are prone to overcome traumatic experiences of the past by forgetting them, either voluntarily or involuntarily--as Hamlet tended to. As a matter of fact, the process is as follows: a collective memory is forged throughout the ages by certain dominant powers within the society and individual memory inevitably diffuses into collective memory, which is highly selective in its nature. Individuals in a society attempt to ground their identity on this cracked and porous concept and this process is almost always aided by official accounts of history for the purpose of manipulating and molding collective memory. When the community undergoes a social transformation that poses a threat to the “normality” and expectability of everyday life, this shift makes these people reconsider, or even worse, erase substantially the ground on which they have built their identity for long; a process at the end of which the individuals in question end up finding themselves in the middle of a sphere that is unfamiliar, uncanny, *unheimlich*.

This sequence of events leads to the disappearance of whatever they have to identify themselves with, or to find any kind of meaning--that is, it paves the way for *chaos*. In this world full of chaotic definitions and accounts, there is no trust in either historical narratives or any account of the past because there is no concrete concept to cling to. This is followed by trauma in the company of ghosts that are born when, as Duncan Bell states in his introduction to *Memory, Trauma and World Politics: Reflections on the Relationship Between Past and Present* “historical events cannot easily be integrated into coherent and constructive narratives” (7). Communities gain a sense of identity only when their

historical narratives are trustworthy; but in the case of chaos, so rapidly do those narratives change that any interpretation to hold on to seems doomed to lack intelligibility and coherence. The most important part of this process for individuals would be the moment they come to realize the meaning of this trauma and the ghosts, and the subsequent opposition to an imposed collective memory and its mechanisms of constant forgetting and remembering determined by the dominant social classes in the society for whom this chaos poses danger. Therefore, a reconfiguration of identity and collective memory enters the agenda of community and a new forged process comes into view.

King Claudius, in this context, becomes a mouthpiece for the authoritative desire to control collective memory and suppress it through any means. Yet, what he ignores is the fact that the world is full of ghosts. Whether people recognize them or not, they are always there. They are like the air that surrounds, ever-present. Their call is irresistible. The ghosts are critical agents for resistance to the holders of power and manipulators of collective memory. By reminding their addressees of the undependability of official accounts of the past, the ghosts push them to probe alternative narratives. This is also a counteraction against collective forgetting and amnesia. Likewise, Hamlet's reaction to the call of his father's ghost, and his initial purification of memory in order to remember the call indicate that his endeavor to see what is real through the gaps opened up by the ghost has political results. It perturbs hegemonic classes since it poses a threat to social order and collective memory. What's more, ghosts are potentially influential in reminding people of the confines of language as well as thought that precede them, and that these have been devised for all human beings to perceive the world. The ghosts therefore are deconstructive figures showing their subjects beyond

what is presented. They encourage people to confront the unjust actions or conditions that have been inherited from their ancestors. The ghosts broaden people's horizons by shifting perceptions of reality that are taken for granted. For these reasons, the figure of the ghost is what ground-breaking literary texts make use of because of its revolutionary implications. With this in mind, two works are to be discussed in this thesis within this framework: *The Disconnected* by Oğuz Atay and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* by Tom Stoppard. They both point directly to the gaps and cracks resulting from the existence of ghosts that haunt their characters.

CHAPTER 2

COLLECTIVE MEMORY, TRAUMA, HISTORY, AND THE GHOSTS OF LITERATURE

You have to begin to lose your memory, if only in bits and pieces, to realize that memory is what makes our lives. Life without memory is no life at all...Our memory is our coherence, our reason, our feeling, even our action. Without it, we are nothing.
Louis Bunuel

Social Memory and Collective Amnesia

Memory is socially constructed. Both what are called individual memories and those constructed within the society are interdependent and related to each other. “It is in society,” says Maurice Halbwachs in *On Collective Memory*, “that people normally acquire their memories,” and he adds, “[i]t is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories” (38). Therefore, the process through which people come to remember events is under no circumstances linear and easy to make out. Rather, it is an intricate one through which subjective memories are replaced by the stream of collective thought. Halbwachs states:

if we examine a little more closely how we recollect things, we will surely realize that the greatest number of memories come back to us when our parents, our friends, or other persons recall them to us...Most of the time, when I remember, it is others who spur me on; their memory comes to the aid of mine and mine relies on theirs. (38)

Put differently, so-called “individual recollections” are in fact collectively shared reminiscences deeply engrained in the psyche of the society. Remembrances that are falsely attributed to people’s “authentic” experiences are misleading in nature since experiences tend to lose directness in the wink of an eye and get interfused

within the current of collective memory: “It is in this sense that there exists a collective memory and social frameworks for memory; it is to the degree that our individual thought places itself in these frameworks and participates in this memory that it is capable of the act of recollection” (38). Because individual memory is hardly independent of collective memory, traces of people’s immediate experience of events will eventually become lost in this fusion. As a result, directness and survival of what is called first-hand experience becomes beyond individuals’ grasp.

Memory is thus inherently social and closely linked to how individuals locate themselves vis-à-vis the political authority [such as governments and states] within a given society. In other words, since memory fully bears the traces of the others, it is ultimately manipulated according to the predominant political thoughts in the society. Put differently, as “no man is an island, entire of itself,” individuals interact with each other, through which individual memory diffuses into a wider form of memory. This gives way to the emergence of collective memory within which the subjective memory as such is shaped and pruned, inevitably leading to the homogenization of the recollections of the past with those in line with the current stream of politics. It can thus be inferred that remembering--as well as forgetting--requires others, and this process is invariably manipulative as well as political. It is largely because the exchanges between individual memory and collective one are so fluid and porous that it is unlikely not to consider the involvement of politics and political projects in the cracks of this relationship.

Formation of a collective memory addresses the needs of predominant classes in a community. In this way, some original parts of the past are either

distorted, changed, or forgotten altogether [collective amnesia] while particular recollections thereof are valorized and celebrated. This serves the needs of political authorities because collective memory is not only connected to the past, but automatically to the present and the future as well. As Duncan Bell suggests,

collective memory--or one of its many cognate terms, including social and cultural memory--refers to widely shared perceptions of the past. It shapes the story that groups of people tell about themselves, linking past, present and future in a simplified narrative. It is what keeps the past--or at least a highly *selective* image of it--alive in the present. This does not, of course, have to be an accurate and verifiable account. (2--emphasis added)

A full solidity or credibility of collective memory is simply impossible. Its constitution is indispensably selective since in order for the people in a community to exist together, they are bound not only to remember some portions of the past, but also to forget a certain part of it, either voluntarily or involuntarily. In other words, collective memory is a highly political project in its essence in that it shapes the memory of its subjects through the chosen data from the past. Thereby it not only makes people remember certain "facts" about their past and identity, but also leads to a forgetting thereof. This process can be explained by the term "selective memory," which refers, by definition, to the recollections of only certain parts of the events in a collectively shared experience. The partial retrieval of these events is by no means random. It is a part of the strategy adopted by those who operate in people's consciousness and this is exactly what makes collective memory possible in the first place. Instead of remembering the past accurately as it is--if something like this is possible at all--it suits the purpose of dominant groups in the society to remember it selectively. At this point, nation states' appropriation of collective memory is to be considered since it is an influential tool so as to secure national integrity and govern collective

consciousness; and what remains to be scrutinized is the kinship between collective and national memory.

Pantouvaki Stratigoula in “The Role of Collective Memory in National Identities Shaping” discriminates between collective memory and national memory by saying, “collective memory is influenced by the content of every dimension of identity, while its national dimension is constructed by the unification of different versions of the past to national memory in each nation” (2). Stratigoula also adds that “The construction of national identity is a process that never stops. National anniversaries, ceremonies, important dates, artworks and monuments intend to preserve the national memory and consequently the national identity” (4). Collective memory has its roots in the past but contrives new realities and facts for the present according to the needs of the carriers of authority. Similarly, national memory goes hand in hand with its collective counterpart.

Reassurance of a society’s coherence and integrity is formulated by collective and national memory, giving way to the construction and perpetuation of national identities. Moreover, national memory is influential in organizing the perception of “nationhood” among the members of a society, thereby affecting the distinct--sometimes supposedly superior--national identity of a group of people. Individuals who find themselves in the confines of what national memory dictates and those who cannot oppose it howsoever “magnetically [attract] reified slogans that serve more to sort out one's friends and enemies than to figure out the structure of reality,” suggests Russell Jacoby in *Social Amnesia: A Critique of Contemporary Psychology*, adding that this is “a dynamic that keeps society rattling along” (101). Daniela Gronold in *Identity Matters: Different*

Conceptualisations of Belonging from the Perspective of Young Slovenes suggests that it is Benedict Anderson's work *Imagined Communities* that explains "the commitment of individuals to a nation and their perception of belonging" (64).

She summarizes Anderson's basic idea in the book as follows:

Communities, larger than their members are able to know each other through face-to-face contacts, have to imagine their sense of community because most of the members will never meet. There has to be a shared idea of what, for example, citizens of one nation have in common... and a sense of what makes one nation different from other nations. (64)

The discourse and stress on "commonness" and "difference" in the formation of nations proves possible by means of a process which, as Andreas Huyssen puts in "Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia," is an "ongoing recodification of the past" (22). That is to say, the past is invoked and re-invoked perpetually in conformity with the demands or needs of the sovereign political power in charge of defining/revising the framework of a certain national entity. This manipulative desire to "pull all...various pasts into the present" is crucial for the "structuring of memory and temporality" as well as a history that "has not been experienced in the same way in past ages" (25). National memory, therefore, is not stable since it reframes and reproduces particular narratives in opposition to it and images belonging to the past--thereby affecting the present. This denotes that carriers of authority need to get their feet on the ground by using a range of influential tools within the community. Put differently, the effort to create a community that adopts illusionary common features for social cohesion would never be complete but for the tools to reconfigure those characteristics and the collective memory as such. Cultural *artifacts* are, for instance, among those strategies to uphold commonness in a given society.

Gökçen Başaran İnce in her article “Holy Birth Week Initiation: The Ordeal of the Republican People’s Party with Collective Memory” puts forth that representations of the past are anchored in collective memory via social and cultural artifacts. The channel of these representations can be the dynamics of social groups that individuals belongs to as well as public communication tools, course books, museums, flags, commemoration ceremonies, symbols, idols, documentaries...where the past is consistently immobilized. Rituals, as well, are effective tools to link the past to the present and solidify the collective identity and memory of a certain group of people. They have the function of keeping a memory alive by means of their ever-repetitive and performative characteristics. As the political problems come to the surface, İnce adds, the crisis of collective memory deepens and as those periods of crises reveal identity problems, politics of memory come into the play. As a consequence, the reference point to justify the legitimacy of identity is appointed to the past, providing the members of collective memory with stories that tell them where they come from and who they are while defining their identities. Those stories, though, more often than not celebrate and praise the majority, whereas the same stories exclude or marginalize certain groups as well as minorities. Achievements are foregrounded and unethical misdeeds and faults are whitewashed and swept under the carpet, thereby maintaining the self-respect of the majority of the community members. Choosing a past that is in line with the current norms and criteria in the society justifies the actions in the present (*Birikim*, 02 May 2010).

Artifacts, then, promote solid and fixed pasts, memories and collective identities in order to glorify and justify ideologically dominant groups while marginalizing any alternative accounts. However, rather than being stable and

fixed, collective identity is in a constant process of becoming due to the interaction between the past and the present as well as the future. Duncan Bell maintains that identity is commonly deemed to “refer to a relatively stable...sense of ‘self’ that either an individual or a group (or both) maintain over time. Identities are, to varying degrees, malleable, negotiable and open to challenge” and he adds that “memory plays a central role in virtually all conceptions of identity” (5). Cultural identity calls for cultivating collectively shared and communally believed historical accounts of origins for a certain society. It also provides a bridge between the past and the present--maybe even the future--that help individuals cling to a communal self-understanding and have a sense of belonging to and faith in the community that is “imagined”. Therefore, it can be asserted that construction of collective identities is accompanied by reconstruction and consolidation of the past through historical narratives by those in authority for government. As Stuart Hall argues in “Cultural Identity and Diaspora,”

Cultural identity [...] is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being’. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous ‘play’ of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in mere ‘recovery’ of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past. (225)

Notwithstanding, it should be carefully kept in sight that “neither communal identities nor social memories are [fully] homogeneous. They are always contingent, indeterminate and contestable” (Bell 15). Therefore, collective memory and identity are, on one hand, “capable of being yoked to state power, in the name of nationalism;” or, on the other hand, “employed in *opposition*, as a

challenge to the dominant narratives” (15). In other words, the connection between memory that is pre-constructed collectively and imposed notions of identity can be challenged by those individuals who reject their memory’s manipulation by dominant social classes.

Memory is thus inherently social. It is the accumulation of what people share with others. Therefore it involves a collective remembering along with a social forgetting because “Freud already taught us that memory and forgetting are indissolubly linked to each other, that memory is but another form of forgetting, and forgetting a form of hidden memory” (Huysen 27). It should be re-stated that such phenomenon as a “precise memory” or a “perfect memory” is not possible in any shape or form. It can even be asserted that the mutual interaction between remembering and forgetting is necessary. Tony Thwaites in *Reading Freud: Psychoanalysis as Cultural Theory* argues that forgetting is not “just an unfortunate accident or an inadequacy external to memory: it is at the very heart of memory. Without forgetting, nothing at all gets remembered” (54). Here comes the concept of collective amnesia which is the flipside of social memory and can basically be described as a tendency to forget certain portions of a past shared by the members of a society. It requires a degree of collaborative effort--whether willing or unwilling--of the members of society, promoted by those who hold power. The notion “social amnesia” does not necessarily mean forgetting everything. Rather, it denotes constituting a memory that involves recalling and forgetting of some certain parts of the past simultaneously, a fact which emphasizes the selective nature of memory. However, the critical question posed by this thesis is: who attempts to govern and manipulate the collective memory, and who selects what is to be remembered and what is to be forgotten?

Social order is realized through the stabilization/reconfiguration of collective memory and identity. In addition, it is secured by the official accounts of the past. To this end, historical narratives consist of the revised and chosen pieces of what actually happened in the past for the sake of consistency and cultural pride, which calls for the mechanisms of remembering and forgetting. This kind of an approach to the past inescapably gives way to cracks and gaps in collective consciousness. However, once this seemingly stabilized order faces social transformations or any damage to the normality of everyday life, it lends itself to chaos and, immediately afterwards, collective trauma. Thus, the specters of the past that have been hidden in collective memories begin to haunt the present insistently.

Speaking to Specters, Creating Resistance,
and the Language of Trauma

There exist various definitions of trauma according to the field in which it is adopted. As Duncan Bell categorizes:

In pathology, trauma is used to designate ‘a wound, or external bodily injury in general’. In psychology, trauma is understood as an emotional or psychic injury, and in psychoanalysis it is argued that such injuries are often repressed, remaining unhealed and leading to various forms of ‘acting out’. It is the languages of social psychology and psychoanalysis that have been invoked most frequently in discussions of social memory. (Bell 7)

Taking the definitions of social psychology and psychoanalysis for granted, it can be maintained that “the mechanisms of trauma operate in a homologous fashion for both societies and individuals” because while the concept of trauma is “applied primarily to extraordinary experiences in the personal lives of individuals,” it can also be “applied collectively to the experiences of an entire group of people” (Bell 7; Neal 3, 4). Put differently, the notion of trauma is of

great assistance when taking into account the events causing trauma and their effects on individual, thereby on communal identities.

There are a large number of reasons why societies might undergo trauma. Among those one can list revolutions, radical regime changes, genocides, immigrations, disclosures of top secret archives, ethnic cleansings, and mass killings. Briefly, trauma is the outcome of certain harrowing events and their destructive effects on everyday normality and prevalent perceptions of reality. As Neal suggests: “[C]onditions of trauma grow out of an injury, a wound, or an assault on social life as it is known and understood. Something terrible, deplorable, or abnormal has happened, and social life has lost its predictability” and the time has become “out of joint” (Neal 4, Shakespeare 1.5.189). Whatever the cause of trauma may be, it can be asserted that its effects are more or less the same.

Arthur G. Neal in *National Trauma and Collective Memory: Major Events in the American Century* lists the initial responses to a traumatic event as shock, disbelief, and incredulity. “*Chaos* prevails,” he says, and “people become uncertain about what they should or ought to believe. Individuals lose confidence in their abilities to see the interrelatedness of events, and disturbing questions are raised about the linkage of personal lives with historical circumstances” (4-- emphasis added). Collective trauma grows out of and is fed by chaos. Granted, human beings, by nature, desire to live in a setting which ensures order, routine, normality and consistency, and these conditions create a sense of security in the society. However, with the disorganization of the orderly and taken-for-granted world, “[p]revious feelings of safety and security are replaced by perceptions of danger, chaos, and a crisis of meaning” and as a result, a

disjointure: “a fracture has occurred in the lives that men and women have built”

(3). Chaos yielded by the social transformations not only disrupts but also threatens and challenges the feeling of safety and normality that defines self-understanding in a community. This is a realm to which the past returns in spectral guise because prior to the trauma, there was something in the collective memory that had not been dealt with properly in the name of the security of everyday life. Therefore, this realm proves to be a threshold from which the *ghost* comes onto the stage. Hamlet’s trauma upon learning about his father’s death, his uncle’s usurpation of the throne, and Claudius’ hasty marriage with his mother is an example to this state of trauma. After he undergoes this trauma, the ghost of his father appears and reveals the truth about his “most unnatural murder” because “Like in *Hamlet*, so too in trauma: ‘The time is out of joint.’ Ghosts are trapped within the disjuncture,” and the ghost, being “the guardian of the threshold” destabilizes the narratives that are imposed when one is within the current of collective memory (“The Spectropoetics” Baumgartner). With this in mind, it can be asserted that to be haunted by a ghost is something positive: the specter, rooted in chaos, opens up a space for challenge and re-definition of the past, the present and the future altogether because it is born out of the cracks opened by a remembering and forgetting process, as well as the wounds opened in the past through traumatic experiences.

On the other hand, collective trauma and its ghosts bring about such a deal of damage to the social system and order that the discourse of the dominant hegemonic thoughts in the society is directed toward *repairing* and re-stabilizing the integrity of the collective memory that has been shattered and threatened. In other words, according to the holders of power, social order, communal self-

understanding and collective values/memories are in such grave danger that there is an urgent need to reconfigure them owing to the fact that trauma threatens the centralized political power as well. Traumatic events potentially undermine social order and, in some cases, even reveal the tools governments wield.

Under conditions of collective trauma, then, borders and boundaries between order and chaos, the sacred and the profane, good and bad, life and death become fragile. As a result, people both individually and collectively see themselves moving into an “uncharted territory” and even if the perpetrators of a restabilization process re-employ collective amnesia in this reconfiguration, emergence of the traumatic past that is repressed might prove inevitable due to the thresholds and ghosts (Neal 5). Additionally, traumatic events leave such a “reality imprint” in the brain that “fixed in the mind, they are not altered either by the passage of time or the intervention of subsequent experience” suggests Timothy Melley in “Postmodern Amnesia: Trauma and Forgetting in Tim O'Brien's ‘In the Lake of the Woods’” (108). At this point, the question to be raised is whether collective traumas and ghosts can create a resistance against hegemonic powers who, in this new political landscape after paradigm shifts, aim to restore collective memory and, thereby, social amnesia.

Derrida suggests that it is vital to “speak to the specter” because it makes people confront their traumas to challenge the fragility of collective memory. It might also give people the fortitude to question a myriad of received notions that have been engraved in their minds through a collectively constructed memory. Trauma, chaos, and utterance by ghosts, seen in this light, can be considered effective tools for resistance. By means of this trio, individuals can gain insight into the slipperiness, artificiality, and groundlessness of collective memory and

history as well. Nothing, as a result, is the same after the traumatic experience because “the nation becomes permanently changed as a result of trauma in the social realm” (Neal 4).

Language, too, is to be re-interpreted after this transformation because prior to trauma, language is adopted as a powerful and efficient mechanism to convey meaning, and it is claimed to be self-referential. On the other hand, since trauma as a concept denotes a rupture in the normality of social life, and because it is an excess that shakes the foundations of collective memory, it is “in the characterization of such moments of extremity and their impact that *the language of trauma* is employed” (Bell 7--emphasis added). The “language of trauma” denotes that no single mode of language can describe the excess that trauma incorporates in its original immediacy and fullness. In other words, as Cathy Caruth puts it, there can exist no adequate language for trauma (qtd. in Bell 10). Furthermore, according to Melley, a traumatic event implants itself in the psyche, without mediation, yet it is never fully available to consciousness; besides, the event is utterly inaccessible and if it falls into language, it is no longer pure (Melley 109). Language is a site where a reduction of original cause of trauma occurs. Therefore translating a traumatic experience into language bears its own dangers. Language--being constituted and configured by the body social, therefore by the governing powers--can give way to a forgetting of traumatic experience altogether by reintegrating it into the stabilizing system of language. Cathy Caruth in “Recapturing the Past: Introduction” underlines the dangers of verbalizing a traumatic experience:

The transformation of the trauma into a narrative memory that allows the story to be verbalized and communicated, to be integrated into one's own, and others', knowledge of the past, may lose both the precision and the force that characterizes traumatic recall. Thus...the capacity to remember is also the

capacity to elide, or distort, and in other cases...may mean the capacity simply to *forget*. Yet beyond the loss of precision there is another, more profound, disappearance: the loss, precisely, of the event's essential incomprehensibility, the force of its affront to understanding. It is this dilemma that underlies many survivors' reluctance to translate their experience into speech. (153-54--emphasis added)

However, in order to see into how holders of power operate in our memories, it is necessary to stand at the threshold revealed by traumas and ghosts. Therefore, it should be considered whether it is possible both to articulate this trauma through other means and to prevent the reduction of the trauma through language.

It should be re-stated here that this thesis is an attempt to conjure ghosts not only by exposing how official history operates in collective memory, but also by pointing to the cracks and gaps in social memory opened up through traumas. The power of literature makes it possible to interpret the presence of specters as the emergence of whatever has been eclipsed from official history. Literature can also create a realm against the stabilization through language, and prove a tool in accessing trauma. Literature, then, is able to shed light on the past that has gone unnoticed while it was experienced. Besides, literature prevents people's recollections from going adrift and their past from slipping away--at least to some extent. Rescuing memories from oblivion, that is, from the pressure of collective memory and amnesia, is possible through fictional writing. This might be a means of reconciliation of the past with the present, though, ironically, by means of language itself, but in alternative ways accomplished by virtue of literary tools.

Literature as an Alternative to Official Historical Accounts

*There is history that remembers and
history that originates in a need to forget.
Lasch*

*History is what hurts.
Frederic Jameson*

Having considered the undependability of official accounts of the past, the connection between writing of history, the mechanisms of remembering / forgetting, and selectivity of memory, it is necessary to scrutinize the concept of “history” and dispute over the possibilities and ways of confronting the past. More precisely, it is possible through literature to talk to the specters so as to discover what has been hidden behind historical narratives.

At the hands of dominant political powers, the past is not a phenomenon fixed somewhere in previous times, independent of the present and the future. In contrast, what is called “the past” by official accounts is actually dependent on how much is remembered and selected from a wide range of events that actually took place in the past. That is, the past produced and re-produced within time and configured according to the current political atmosphere in the society, and reconceptualized under the term “history,” which is mainly rooted in collective memory. What end, then, does history serve if it does not recount the events in the past accurately--but manipulatively? According to Duncan Bell, “History has been shaped and mobilized in order to justify current political projects, whether in the name of political or ethnic self-determination, in the demand for justice, or to ground claims for the legitimacy of new regimes” (6). Therefore, what actually happened in the past goes partially undocumented and historical events are constantly revised and updated under the umbrella term *history*. “Historical

memory” states Bell, “is as much about the present and the future as it is about the past” and in addition, each attempt “to provide a final, uncontested, account of the past, and moreover to extract some sort of definitive ‘meaning’ from it, is fraught with danger” (22). Any claim that history is a science accounting for what happened in the past in an objective way through objective tools is a claim put forward to make people believe its neutrality and dependability. As a matter of fact, perpetrators of collective memory constantly need to eliminate some parts of the past and configure the remaining parts of it in order to produce consistent historical narratives and perpetuate their power in the present and in the future.

Memory too is not only connected to the past, but also to the present and the future. Thus, it is an integral part of history since “the exact boundaries between the two are elusive” (Bell 2). In other words, history does not actually deal with the past per se, but is rather concerned with portions of the past as they are remembered by society. José M. Gonzales in “Spanish Literature and the Recovery of Historical Memory” argues that “[i]t is no longer what happened what is interesting but its memory; not the real facts but its representations, that acquire a kind of independent existence, independent from the represented facts” (4). In such a world, argues Friedric Jameson, the past as a referent finds itself “gradually bracketed, and then effaced altogether,” leaving the reader nothing but texts and condemning them “to seek history by way of [their] own pop-images and simulacra of that history, which itself remains forever out of reach” (qtd. in Melley 107). Historical memory, then, is nothing but an illusion created by official narratives about the past, and it is a means to manipulate society in the present and the future.

Nancy J. Peterson in *Against Amnesia: Contemporary Women Writers and the Crises of Historical Memory* emphasizes the link between language and history and how they can be used to produce fictional accounts of the past:

Deconstructing the linkage of *written* history and past events, Jacques Derrida demonstrates in *Of Grammatology* the degree to which historicity depends on *writing*. His often cited pronouncement that ‘there is nothing beyond the text’ has been read by some commentators as indicating a radical ontological and epistemological skepticism that makes history pure fiction, with no referential link to events of the past. (8--emphasis added)

According to this, history is nothing but a text that is a construction of the past in narrative form, sometimes having little or nothing to do with factual events. This shows the contradiction between fact and text--what really happened on the one hand, and what has been spoken, documented and written on the other. Here, again, one can see that language is instrumentalized by ideology and power in distorting the past. Just like the language of trauma which is not trustable since it distorts the real events by deforming and integrating them into a stabilized meaning, language of historical accounts, rather than being merely an instrument of communication, seeks to pass off a chosen and carefully picked version of events as the only possible and valid interpretation, marginalizing counter-arguments that might seek to contradict or, even “worse,” refute it. Rather than being referential, language is in fact conceptual: it constructs a reality for people. Whatever individuals know and experience on the daily level is inherently mediated by language, determining their conception of the world. Therefore, those who hold power wield the dominance of language on people in order to pave the way for such constructions of reality as myths.

Complexity of human activities in the past and layers of meaning are reduced by dominant social classes or political power to the simplicity of either black or white--regardless of grey areas that make the past itself elusive and

non-referential. Roland Barthes, in his 1957 book *Mythologies*, argues this by elucidating the interaction between the original sign/signified and mythical speech. Barthes' argument depends on the tenet that myth is depoliticized speech: in mythical speech, what he calls the original sign [in this context, the past] gets integrated into a broader semiotic system of mythical speech [history]--putting a mythological layer onto the meaning that could be derived from the original sign, finally making it ahistorical and apolitical in return. At this point, a contradiction comes to the surface: despite its "naturalness" and "harmlessness," this mythological layer reinforces historically and socially dominant groups or narratives, the "status quo," in order to maintain and perpetuate their ideological agenda and power. This allows their opinions and values to be held up as universal truths, naturalizing and legitimating them by projecting these agents as immutable and inevitable. Seen in this light, myths are influential in understanding how the dominant structure in a society flourishes and wields hegemonic influence on its subjects. This constructed image of reality is taken for granted in the sphere of daily life for most of the members of a certain community at a given time.

The argument of mythologies put forward by Barthes is quite relevant to the discussion of history because it applies semiotics to a wide range of cultural phenomena. "In the account given of our contemporary circumstances," says Barthes, "I resented seeing Nature and History confused at every turn, and I wanted to track down, in the decorative display of what-goes-without-saying, the ideological abuse which, in my view, is hidden there" (11). Myths have the potential to transform history into nature, as Barthes puts it, and "what causes mythical speech to be uttered is perfectly explicit, but it is immensely frozen

into something natural; it is not read as a motive, but as a reason” (129).

This is the reason why mythologies are everywhere, and their ever-presence makes it almost impossible to elude and undermine them at the level of daily experience.

Existence of collective memory per se poses no threat for governing powers in societies simply because it is used as a political tool. However, the *study* of collective memory, for example through literature, does have alarming implications for them owing to the fact that such an effort creates awareness within different dynamics in societies by creating alternative accounts of history. It potentially reproduces counter-histories that unsurprisingly fall at odds with the myths of the official history. The study of collective memory entails that people *might* learn or get a hint about a past that was eclipsed from official national history; a past that was “denied to them...a period in which people were indoctrinated by the official version of the winners” (Gonzales 2). While dealing with collective memory, the events that are probed into are certainly not the magnificent accomplishments in a nation’s “glorious history”. This is already dictated and maintained by official national histories and institutions thereof. A study on collective memory scrutinizes what official histories ignore, put pressure on and even exterminate. This is where it comes to open way for counter / unofficial histories.

Derrida suggests that “[i]f I am getting ready to speak at length about ghosts, inheritance, and generations, generations of ghosts, which is to say about certain others who are not present, nor presently living, either to us, in us, or outside us, it is in the name of justice” (Exordium 18). Similarly, the study of collective memory is able to talk about ghosts as a means to provide justice for

those whose historical victimhood or marginalization has gone unnoticed by the accounts of official historiography. However, confronting the past in order to heal the wounds of history that are still open is a big challenge because “the past to be remembered is painful most of the time”; and in addition, “[h]istory is what hurts’ because the painful effects of past events continue to pressure the present moment” (Peterson 1). Notwithstanding, confronting oneself with the traumatic past of the society, confronting with ghosts for the sake of uncovering what has been kept in dark for ages is a journey full of chaos, phantoms, apparitions, traumas and wounds. Considering all these uncanny aspects of uncovering the excluded stories pertaining to the past, it can be asserted that this confrontation is accomplishable only through literature and via the production of counter-histories.

No trauma or wound can be healed with silence. Literature at this point plays an essential role because, contrary to language which leads to the perpetuation of memory, it offers a possibility of awakening for those who are traumatized and wounded “by virtue of its figurative language,” and by “constantly [exceeding] straightforward understanding” (Peterson 13). Since literature has an eminent role as a medium of memory, and because “[t]he stories told by poets, those stories that speak to us of good and evil, frame the horizon of our lives, much more so than do the laws born from a Parliament,” narration of counter-histories through literature is more than necessary (Gonzales 1). It is a duty towards the “losers” of history due to the fact that accounting for the traumas of the past is to remember and confront them as well as the ghosts thereof. Ann Rigney and Astrid Erll in “Literature and The Production of Cultural Memory: Introduction” suggest that “as a memorial medium in its own right” literature is “a

way of contributing to the larger discussion of the ways in which societies recollect their past” (112).

At this point, it is crucial to question whether counter-histories achieved by literature “matter much if history is purely fictional,” and how the claims for justice can be “vigorously pressed without a firm sense of what really happened” (Peterson 9). Whereas it is “epistemologically naive today to believe in the existence of a past to which a historian or novelist has unmediated access” and while “[r]adicalized in the poststructuralist movement, language and linguistics have not only led to skepticism concerning access to the past but also instigated a debate about whether historical narratives can be regarded as objective representations or are (merely) subjective constructions of a researcher’s and a culture’s ideologies,” literary texts at least provide people a ground upon which they can plant their supposedly “fictional” accounts of the past as alternative to those of history’s (8). They also have the potential to record historical data that has not entered the collective current of thought under the limitations of official accounts. This is what may be called the articulation of counter-histories as opposed to teleological accounts of the past.

Works of literature that narrate alternative stories about the past differ from those of official history. While the former is concerned with what is occluded from or marginalized within historiography, the latter renders some facts regarding the past invisible, and puts them under erasure. Since an unrecorded story in the past is a wound, healing or at least dealing with it requires literature, which is “a significant historical and cultural intervention” (Peterson 6). This is a double burden--writing both literature and history. Nevertheless, “to investigate the aphorias of [a certain] history one must... turn to *unofficial* histories,” that is,

“the historicist dimensions of literature” (5). Literature has the power to subvert official historical records because just like collective memories, these records are marked by gaps. The figurative language of literature gets the cracks in master narratives revealed, through which it produces its own version of the past.

Peterson asserts that articulation of alternative stories is only possible by means of literature because

to even begin to tell these kinds of stories...requires the capacity to exceed normative narrative expectations. And so, of necessity, wounded histories are written as literature, or fiction, and not as history, for only literature...is allowed the narrative flexibility...that [is] crucial to the telling of these histories. (7)

Though unofficial, literature is indeed a site for writing history, “if not to restore the record through speculation, to mark the spaces, gaps, aphorias that cannot be filled” (9). Literature paves the way for the destabilization of collective memories by “provocatively opening up cracks in the consensus” (Rigney 114).

It is true that literary texts can produce a resistance toward collective amnesia by means of the ghosts they conjure--ghosts that open up a space for the marginalized stories of even those who are disconnected. However, this does not necessarily denote that it attempts to re-write history in its pure form. This kind of a claim would be preposterous since it has been argued so far that such an attempt is not possible and is no way innocent. The objective of literature in resisting the main current of historiography is to underline and demonstrate that history, rather than recounting *what has happened*, deals with the portions of the past that can be utilized in the current dynamics in the society.

In what follows, two texts will be closely analyzed: *Tutunamayanlar [The Disconnected]* by Turkish novelist and playwright Oğuz Atay, and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* by British playwright Tom Stoppard. Both of the texts

are famous for such themes as disconnectedness, erosion of memory, amnesia, traumatized identities, and mistrust in history. What's more, both of them deal with producing alternative discourses against dominant narratives, and make direct references to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* by including dialogues with several characters in the play.

CHAPTER 3

THE DISCONNECTED

Disconnected Narrative and Marginalized Characters

First published in 1972, *Tutunamayanlar* is the first and most well-known novel by Oğuz Atay. It is commonly regarded as one of the most important novels in Modern Turkish literature and considered revolutionary in terms of the language adopted and its avant-garde literary style. Suna Ertuğrul in her article “Belated Modernity and Modernity as Belatedness in *Tutunamayanlar*” explains that “*Tutunamayanlar* literally means ‘those who cannot hold on’. But Atay turns the word *tutunamayan* into a term that unearths other possible meanings, such as ‘disconnected,’ ‘dispossessed,’ ‘underdog,’ ‘marginalized,’ ‘outsider,’ ‘loser.’” (644)

There are two protagonists in *Tutunamayanlar*, hereafter *The Disconnected*: Selim and Turgut. Selim is almost never present in the book in flesh and blood. Turgut’s perspective, as well as Selim’s manuscripts, is the window through which the reader comes to know Selim. Upon learning from the newspaper that Selim--an old friend from university--has committed suicide, Turgut sets out to trace Selim’s past and attempts to become profoundly acquainted with his mysterious friend by meeting Selim’s other friends from the other parts of his puzzle-like life. The more Turgut learns about his friend, the more his identity diffuses into that of Selim’s. At the end of this process, Turgut leaves his previous bourgeoisie life and family behind and makes a clean break

in order to get involved in Selim's so-called *Tutunamayanlar Ansiklopedisi* [Encyclopedia of the Disconnected]. During his journey, Turgut brings together different manuscripts Selim has left behind and writes his own account of "the disconnected" by incorporating what Selim has written with his own words. Towards the end of the book, he hands the manuscript to a journalist whom he meets on a train in order that the story of the disconnected, namely the book scrutinized here, can be published and reach other people.

What, then, is a *disconnected* world like? And what is the phenomenon called *disconnectedness*? It is important to note at the very onset that the book itself is renowned for its disconnected quality. Offering almost no logical chain of events and hardly any linearity, a multi-layered mode of language is created through disconnected sentences as well as a shattered narrative. A redundancy of details crushes any possible claims to coherency. Furthermore, Atay seems to have put into the book whatever he knows, indiscriminately and without any selective intention. Atay's style has a sound agenda; that is, he adopts the language of everyday life and uses it in such a way that it is no longer a mere medium of expressing thoughts and ideas. Rather, it is intentionally rendered as a main unit of fiction. In other words, contrary to the narratives of real life, Atay's book has no purpose of choosing some details and excluding others about any given issue: it reveals whatever there is to be revealed through its unintelligible and disconnected narrative. What's more, as Jale Parla in *Don Kişot'tan Bugüne Roman (The Novel from Don Quixote to the Present)* suggests by partially quoting Nurdan Gürbilek that the narrator in *The Disconnected* constantly shifts position: first he makes fun of something or somebody depending on a certain value, but right after that he mocks the same concept directing his mockery towards

something else and this is the very reason why the reader find oneself on narrative ground upon which there is nothing to be connected or cling to. She adds that each and every concept, notion, language sequence, idea and connection is undermined constantly and this forces the reader to negotiate the issues he is talking about from different perspectives (Parla 204).

What Turgut does throughout the novel, according to Parla, is read: in this journey Turgut struggles with a plethora of fragmented and missing texts through which he is claimed to have constituted the book in question, *The Disconnected* (205). In other words, Atay pushes the reader to assume that it is Turgut who compiled and prepared this book. Turgut zealously tries to follow Selim's off-beaten track. However, Turgut's initial trouble is that he has been surrounded by the values of his own society. This is why he cannot break away from it easily and smoothly. His reading process, on the other hand, helps him loosen the ties he has long cherished with the settled order and norms in the community. As a result, the more texts he discovers, the more he comes to see how he has been blindly clinging to the bourgeoisie values of his own society. Put differently, those fragmented and missing texts begin to show him how an artificial order within the community is covering up the inherent turmoil of everyday life. At the end of this impasse, Turgut gradually becomes estranged to his social circle and becomes a man dragged into schizophrenia culminating, probably, in death.

Eradication of the “Errors” of the Past

Our old hats, shoes, dresses become a part of us as days glide by, don't they? Isn't this the very reason why we often seek to change them? The man wearing a brand new garment is like the one who goes beyond the self: growing away from oneself, the need to glance at it through an alteration, or the bliss of being able to say 'I am not what I used to be any more'. (Tanpınar 16)

*My friends, our rich and harmonious language will now be able to display itself with new Turkish letters. We must free ourselves from these incomprehensible signs [Arabic/Persian letters], which for centuries have held our minds in an iron vice. You must learn the new Turkish letters quickly. Teach them to your compatriots, to women, and to men, to porters and to boatman. Regard it as a patriotic and national duty.... Now is the time to eradicate the errors of the past. We shall repair these errors.... Our nation will show with its script and with its mind that its place is with the civilized world.
Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. (Lewis 278)*

The Disconnected does not rank as a historical novel; however, it raises awareness about history and historiography. When Selim says, for instance, that he longs to “get rid of the deceptiveness of history” and when he asserts “History is nothing but distortion,” the reader is led to take a critical position vis-à-vis historical narratives (Atay 136, 231). Therefore, if one is to make sense of the agenda behind this fragmented narrative and grasp Atay’s references and his playful language in *The Disconnected*, it is crucial to have a look at the process which inspired Atay to write this novel.

The reform projects that were implemented in the foundation years of Turkey constitute an important part of *The Disconnected*. For instance, Atay ridicules the zealous attempts of some people to revolutionize every single aspect of the previous order during those years (163-165). It can be posited that Atay intentionally puts emphasis on a time when the newly-constituted Turkish Republic headed for the construction of a new and inherently Turkish culture. He is critical of the reforms in question that took place to “eradicate and repair” the

errors of the past with the aim of taking a belated part in the civilized world. In order to realize Tanpınar's aforementioned "bliss" that is generated through the ability to say "I am not what I used to be any more," Turkish society needed to adopt new sets of reforms. Put differently, in an attempt to construct a new collective and national identity, the new Republic of Turkey was supposed to do away with nearly everything remaining of the Ottoman Empire. Obviously, the new formation in Turkey regarded the Ottoman as antithetical to its progressive vision of itself and it could not find in the Ottoman heritage the core ideology and ideas that were initially adopted to define and build a new national identity. As a result, there were a number of projects that mainly focused on getting rid of the influence and heritage of the Ottoman Empire on the newly founded Republic of Turkey. Erik Jan Zürcher in his book *Turkey: A Modern History* gives a detailed account of the Turkish Republic beginning from its foundation years and provides critical information on the reforms that took place in this process. He states that in the first years of the new-born republic, "the Kemalist reforms aimed to secularize and modernize society" and adds that "these measures met with stubborn resistance from the population" (173). Indeed, rather than opening up a blank slate on which this new ideology would take root, this attempt led to a loss of meaning and ground for most people. The collective consciousness that used to define identity had been replaced by a new one in a top-down fashion. Unsurprisingly, people were not able to adapt themselves to this loss and chaos easily. As a consequence, they started to react to those new reforms and revolutions that were supposed to replace the old system. This was due to the fact that what they conceived of as their core identity was being re-defined and re-written by those who were the founders of this new republic. In the construction process of this

new identity and collective culture, a number of fundamental reforms took place.

Those that are specifically relevant to the discussion in this thesis were the language and alphabet reform (1928) and the foundation of the Society for the Study of Turkish History (1931).

Westernization was the core objective held by the revolutionists and there were a large number of attempts to this end. For instance “in the first half of 1926, the European calendar was adopted, as were the Swiss civil code and the penal code from Mussolini’s Italy” (Zürcher 173). Zürcher describes the difficulties presented by the language and script revolution in Turkey as follows:

Perhaps the most drastic measure was the adoption of the Latin alphabet in 1928. Ottoman Turkish was written with a version of the Arabic/Persian alphabet...From 1923 onwards there had been sporadic discussions of the matter...At that time there was still much opposition to the adoption of the Latin script in conservative and religious circles, but from 1925 the opposition was silenced...In the summer of 1928, a commission under the personal direction of Mustafa Kemal drew up a report on the matter and on 9 August the president officially announced for the first time that the Turkish script would replace the Ottoman alphabet. An ‘alphabet mobilization’ was proclaimed and in the following months Mustafa Kemal toured the country explaining the new letters and exhorting everyone to learn them quickly and to teach them to their compatriots. On 1 November a law was passed that made the use of the new alphabet in public communications compulsory from 1 January 1929. (188-89)

The revolution of Ottoman Turkish is still a highly controversial topic in Turkey.

The arguments in favor of the reforms--such as Latin alphabet was easier to learn--can surely be contested even today. However, the zealous attempt by Mustafa Kemal and his followers was not necessarily only for the sake of making the language easy for the public--it was largely ideological as well. According to Zürcher, this actually was “yet another way to cut off Turkish society from its Ottoman and Middle Eastern Islamic traditions and to reorient it towards the West” (189). In the aftermath of this script mobilization, the realization of the alphabet reform encouraged those who held that a reform of the language itself

was necessary. This was an attempt that dated back to the middle of the nineteenth century--to the times of the Young Ottomans, and the first Ottoman journalists who had played a pioneering role and during the reign of the İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti (Committee of Union and Progress) (189). In the 1930s, there was a relatively radical group of people who can be called *the purists*. What they aimed for was to “remove all Arabic and Persian words from the language and create a pure Turkish one,” a project “in tune with the extreme nationalism of the 1930s” (189-90). As a result, an initiative was taken by Mustafa Kemal to hold the first Turkish linguistic congress in 1932. At the end of the congress a “reform programme was drawn up and a Society for the Study of the Turkish Language (*Türk Dili Tetkik Cemiyeti*, later *Türk Dil Kurumu*) was founded. Its members enthusiastically began collecting words from dialects, ancient literary sources and even Turkic languages from Central Asia to replace the Ottoman vocabulary” (190). However, it soon turned out that the movement was bound to run into a range of difficulties:

The population only adopted some of the new words and these often existed side-by-side with the word they were intended to replace, acquiring a different meaning. A kind of artificial language, intelligible only to insiders, came into existence. (190)

The outcome of these changes and revolutions has been scrutinized for years and still gives way to hot debates in the current politics of Turkey. Oğuz Atay, as well, seems to point to the ordeal the language was in those times and ridicules the awkwardness thereof.

Atay draws attention to the artificial language called *Öztürkçe* (Pure Turkish). He parodies it whenever he finds a chance. He seems to hold that the attempt to find pure Turkish translations for every single word yields quite far-fetched results. For instance, Turgut says that he finds Olric ridiculous when he

speaks pure Turkish (582). In his fabricated story of seven young people who are, as the story goes, the ancestors of Turks before they migrated to Anatolia, he makes up supposedly Pure Turkish words that might sound ridiculous to the speakers of Turkish. Those include *saklantı* for archive, *güzelçizi* for painting, *sakalsaçkeser* for hairdresser (184-185). Atay's criticism between the lines suggests that while the alphabet and language was being revised and renewed, the society became more and more estranged to the language through which they expressed themselves. This dilemma is expressed by Turgut when he says: "One of the realities I happened to learn at school was that my father...had sent me to *okul* instead of *mektep*. They put in front of us an unintelligible book called *alfabe*. My father called it *elifba* as well. There was no chance for my father to reach a compromise with the school" (Atay 74). *Mektep* and *elifba* are the old versions of the words "school" and "alphabet" respectively. The tension between the old and the new is expressed with the clash between Turgut's father and the school where he was taught the tenets of the new republic including the language and alphabet revolutions.

Just as the language reform was hopelessly leading to a deadlock owing to its artificiality, the launch in 1935 of *Güneş-Dil Teorisi* (The Sun-Language Theory) came to the rescue. This infamous theory posited that "all languages derived originally from one primeval language, spoken in Central Asia, that Turkish was closest of all languages to this origin and that all languages had developed from the primeval language through Turkish" (Zürcher 190). Nergis Ertürk in *Grammatology and Literary Modernity in Turkey* mentions the function of the invention of Sun-Language Theory and posits that "the production of national subjects at once severed from the Ottoman-Islamic past and

autochthonous to an irreducibly heterogeneous Anatolia, and the very same time figured in kinship with Europe” (100). Whereas Turkish linguists were skeptical of the theory because of its shaky ground--or no ground at all--it “gained the support of Mustafa Kemal, who ordered the Society for the Study of the Turkish Language to study it in detail. The society’s third congress in 1936 officially adopted the theory, and courses in it were made obligatory at the Arts Faculty in Ankara” (Zürcher 190). The adoption of this linguistically groundless theory had a very practical reason: “if all words came from Turkish originally, there was no need to purge them now: they could simply be ‘nationalized’ through a fake etymology. Nevertheless, it is clear that many Turks, along with their president, were actually fascinated by the doctrine” (190). The initial enthusiasm in the face of Sun-Language theory existed largely because building up a new national identity that had hardly any ties with that of an Ottoman past necessitated another reference of origin that could be utilized in order to glorify the national identity. As İbrahim Kaya in *Social Theory and Later Modernities: The Turkish Experience* explains, although the new reforms on historiography and language did not last long, “they provided a source of legitimization for ultra-nationalists wishing to claim a connection between Kemalism and their own ideology” (65). In *The Disconnected*, on the other hand, such far-fetched theories of origin are crushed down with an underlying tone of sarcasm. Atay mocks the attempts to put Turkishness at the origin of everything in order to create a sense of authentic identity when “the unique and Turk” Selim playfully says: “History, civics, geography...everything has emanated from us and will be returned to us” (114, 77).

Language and alphabet reforms in the young Republic of Turkey were backed up and accompanied by a national historiography in order to justify the claims pertaining to the glorified origins of the Turkish language and nation, though they were weird and partially fabricated. The Society for the Study of Turkish History (*Türk Tarihi Tetkik Cemiyeti*, later *Türk Tarih Kurumu*) was the institutionalized form of these aspirations. Held in 1932, the first congress of this society resulted in the proposal of another infamous theory called the Turkish Historical Thesis. Supported by Mustafa Kemal, this theory maintained that Turks were actually the descendants of white inhabitants of Central Asia, who had been “forced by drought and hunger to migrate to other areas, such as China, Europe and the Near East. In doing so, they had created the world’s great civilizations. In the Near East, the Sumerians and the Hittites were really proto-Turks” (Zürcher 190). This thesis, supported by the Sun-Language Theory, allowed Turks to be proud of their remote past rather than the Ottoman era. Furthermore, attesting that the Hittites (and the Trojans) were in fact proto-Turks had “the added advantage of proving that Anatolia had been a Turkish country since time immemorial, thus extending the roots of the citizens of the republic in the soil they inhabited. It was one of the means whereby the Kemalist leadership tried to construct a new national identity and strong national cohesion” (190-91).

In *The Disconnected*, this attempt to lay claims to Anatolia by asserting to be the original inhabitants of this soil is ridiculed with the story of seven young pioneers called *Yedi Işık* (Seven Lights) who escape from Ortu Alga (an imaginary place corresponding to Central Asia) and settle in Anatolia. In fact, this legendary story is directly taken from the myth of *Dokuz Işık* (Nine Lights) that Turkish nationalists adopted to justify the Turkish Historical Thesis and glorify a

long-established history of the Turkish nation. Selim puts forward that he has acquired the diary of a young Turkish man who is one of the Seven Lights and says: “Western historians obsessively talk about documents. Accordingly, I want to publicize a document...by referring to bits and pieces from the diary--which dates back to thousands of years ago--of a young man called Düzgen Silik” (Atay 183). He never presents a document, of course. However, despite his lack of any sound document, Selim keeps recounting his myth of the origin as if it is an evident historical fact:

“Seven Lights” put a firm mark on our history by coming from Central Asia to Anatolia. That [these] seven young men...migrated from China and settled around a place known as Sivas today has been a defining moment in our history...[These seven young men] who escaped from Central Asia to China, finally...coming to Anatolia had decided to illuminate this new destination of theirs. (203)

Atay provides the reader detailed encyclopedic information with a quasi-scientific and pseudo-historical voice in his fictional story. Throughout his account, Selim maintains a serious tone which serves the purpose of mocking the official historical thesis by means of mimicking it. He is right to do so since the Turkish Historical Thesis constituted the main core of history classes at schools as well as universities in the 1930s and as late as the 1940s. Certain far-fetched claims of the Turkish Historical Thesis have been partially cropped and discarded beginning from the 1950s up to the present. However, the main idea put forward by it can still be recognized in the textbooks studied at schools today. This is in line with Turkish nationalism and a need to celebrate the origin of Turkishness.

As for the Westernization ideals and fascination with almost anything western during the first decades of the young Turkish Republic, it can be proposed that this was supposed to be at odds with the extreme nationalism endorsed by the Turkish Historical Thesis. However, strangely enough, it paved the way for the

new formation in Turkey to adopt Western ideals. As a result, admiring and imitating the West was an inevitable outcome of Kemalist policies. M. Şükrü Haniöglu in *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography* points out the bilateral characteristic of the Westernization movement in Turkey and states,

for Turkey to become an integral part of the West, wholesale cultural and societal transformation was necessary. Accordingly, the Westernization project embarked upon by Mustafa Kemal had two ambitious aims: first, to convince the Turkish populace that Turkey was Part of Europe; and second, to persuade Western public opinion that the West shared the same culture as the Turks. (202)

When it comes to the practical outcomes of the Westernization ideals, Zürcher puts forward that,

On the one hand, the emphasis on the Turkish heritage, even if it was largely mythical, as something separate from the Middle Eastern and Islamic civilization of the Ottoman Empire, made it easier to exchange elements from traditional Middle Eastern civilization for those of the West. On the other hand, it instilled in the Turks, especially those of the younger generations, a strong feeling of national identity and national pride, sometimes bordering on a feeling of superiority, which in a sense psychologically counterbalanced the need to follow Europe. (190-91)

In other words, the Turkish Historical Thesis granted the nation a pride that could almost rival that of the West. After all, now that the Turks had been “proved” to be at the origin of the great civilizations throughout history (as Atay puts it, “everything has emanated from us and will be returned to us”) then they could welcome and adopt the Western ways with an inner peace.

At the heart of this confidence lies the idea that it was the civilizations in Central Asia that realized the most important breakthroughs in the past, but their ideas were “stolen” by the Western World--which supposedly helped modern Western civilization flourish and surpass the Eastern World and especially Turkey in many aspects. *The Disconnected* gives the reader a crucial parody of this logic. In a tongue-in-cheek style, Atay writes,

The principal mastery of the Europeans is that their practical skills are powerful, and they utilize and furbish a wide range of inventions by the Turks, the Arabs and the Chinese by means of appropriating them... As for the Easterners who have pioneered a variety of civilization movements as such, they have lost the leadership and given rein to the west due to some trivial shortcomings. (78)

Atay's obvious reference to the Turkish Historical Thesis skillfully foregrounds the incapability of the official historiography to represent the past without manipulation and appropriation. More specifically, he sardonically imitates the official language that strokes the new republic's ego and lays emphasis on the mythical aspect of its assertions. In another part of the novel, Atay first poses a couple of provoking questions that have been ingrained in the psyche of Turkish nation for hundreds of years. These include "Why can we not become Westernized?", "Why do we keep assimilating everything?" and "Why can we not attune to our own structure and the practices experimented with for hundreds of years?" (146). Atay answers them back by asking other cynical questions:

First of all, why on earth do we presuppose that we have degenerated the Western culture? What if the West have appropriated and degenerated our own culture in the first place? Beginning from Tanzimat (the political reforms made in the Ottoman State in 1839), did Westernization movements denote mimicking a culture imprudently? Or were we returning to the civilization that had been bequested to us by our ancestors? (147)

His response in return to these questionings is a perfect replica of official doctrine distributed through historical accounts of a glorified past:

We were by no means ignorant and confused while re-constructing all the institutions, movements, and the schools of thought that constitute the origins of our new civilization; rather, we were retaining a scientific tradition the roots of which date back as far as two thousand years ago... Could we have survived to date otherwise? (147)

These words of Atay draw attention to the crucial point that all the cultural and historical practices of the new republic paved the way for the forging process of a new collective memory within the society. This memory was also embroidered

with the Westernization ideals. The objectives of the new republic outlined above are apparently attempts to “revive” a past that had been overshadowed by the Ottoman Empire on the part of the Turkish state. However, it is evident that in constituting a newly formed national identity that is extensively stripped of its Ottoman past, it was necessary to resort to a new mythology, a sort of creation myth, so as to find bits and pieces from “history” of which to be proud. Nevertheless, what probably went unnoticed or ignored during this process was that the society was on the edge of a radical transformation of identity and this was potentially a threat to the normality of everyday life and the conception of how the society had come to define itself.

Once the reference point for the origins of a society shifts, and once language is simultaneously re-defined and reformed, this condition results in a wide range of cracks opened in collective memory and identity. Manipulation of the collective memory that is rendered vulnerable and rootless after these reformations is unavoidable. The firm ground and the dynamics upon which the community has long come to define itself are abruptly shattered by the sudden changes carried out by a new political power. Chaos inevitably takes place, though not for every single individual. As a consequence, social trauma becomes a part of the collective identity. Since those social transformations necessitate crossing out and forgetting specific portions of the past that were once taken for granted, this situation is almost always accompanied by collective amnesia. It should be noted that this is by no means a linear process. On the contrary, it is a never-ending circle: collective amnesia comes into the play as a consequence of sudden or uncanny changes such as revolutions, reinterpretation of history / identity, or emergence of a portion of the past that has long been repressed.

Because this is a critical condition for the holders of power, collective memory then undergoes a restoration process and its stabilization is considerably secured through the official practices until another unexpected and shattering change.

In the case of Turkish republic, it can be asserted that collective trauma was unavoidable. The community underwent not only a collapse of a six hundred-year-old empire and the Ottoman identity, but it also dealt with/adapted to a wide range of new reforms and revolutions. The consequence of this was a nation struggling with the ghosts that arose from the graveyard called the Ottoman Empire that haunted it now and then because of the wounds opened by the social transformation. In other words, if something that has existed for centuries is eliminated, a void is inevitably left in its place. What fills in that void is nothing other than a ghost that haunts those who are traumatized. In “The Spectropoetics of Trauma: Ghosts, Language, and the Wound in *Nightwood*” Baumgartner argues along the same line when he states that “the now precedent body that has been traumatized becomes a dwelling place for the ghosts (haunting feelings) of the initial traumatic experience”. In the context of Atay, it can be said that the ghost makes itself evident especially to those who are *disconnected*.

Oğuz Atay, by writing *The Disconnected*, “broke the literary taboos of the 1970s cultural milieu in Turkey, shattered the narrow frames of discussion about the uses of art, and allowed the Turkish language to find the possibilities of expressing the distress of modern existence” (Ertuğrul 629). As partially outlined before, Atay does his best to parody the ironic elements and absurdities that reside in the collective psychology and national historiography in Turkey in the modernization process. His satirical tone is accomplished through a political and social language that is created out of the terminology, idioms or vernacular

peculiar to Turkish culture. It can be argued that Atay's challenge in *The Disconnected* to tell the story of individuals who are at odds with the collective entity around them is an ambitious and compelling step in the critical atmosphere of the seventies. A military takeover used to occur at the turn of almost every decade. In addition, the country was getting used to a multi-party political system and the conflicting ideologies were in a war-like power struggle. Turkey was still in the transition period. Therefore it can be said that Atay made use of this setting and wrote *The Disconnected* in order to handle these political and cultural circumstances. Furthermore, he had to mind and stress the tensions that grew out of the reform movements and the controversies thereof, and he did so in a very novel and revolutionary style.

Collective Memory and Grown-up Children Devoid of

“The Science of Life”

As for how *The Disconnected* stylistically handles all these changes in collective memory, Berna Moran in *Türk Romanına Eleştirel Bir Bakış II (A Critical Look at the Turkish Novel II)* suggests that Atay adopts a literary style that turns its back on the realism of the nineteenth century; but is neither solely modernist nor postmodernist. It keeps its foot in both camps simultaneously (199). The reason Moran gives for this is the fact that Atay was hugely influenced by Joyce and Nabokov, a modernist and a postmodernist writer respectively. Moran explains that the writers in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries such as M. Proust, H. James and J. Conrad paved the way for a new kind of novel, breaking away from the classic realist novel. Afterwards, J. Joyce, F. Kafka, V. Woolf and

other writers developed this new literary style, modernism, which peaked in the 1920s. Moran further clarifies that these writers mostly concentrated on the individual world itself and the complicated nature of consciousness rather than the community and the outside world. He argues that, having lost their faith in religion, and stressing the unintelligibility of the world, modernist writers took refuge in various forms of art, which was considered to be an alternative reality in itself (Moran 198). After this discussion, Moran explains that in the aftermath of the Second World War, however, a new breakthrough emerged: postmodernism. According to the postmodern writers, he says, the esthetics on which both the realist and the modernist novels were based was inefficient and invalid. This was because the function of the novel was neither to reflect reality itself nor to signify ideas that were accepted as intelligible within the society, as realists endeavored to do. What postmodernists aimed to do was scrutinizing the concept of “fiction” and problematizing this conceptual crisis in the novels they had written--a technique called meta-fiction. Postmodern writers did this by over-using the settled literary conventions consciously and parodying them bitterly (199). Moran keeps stressing that the realist novels’ aim was to make the reader forget the fact that the piece of work they were reading was fictional and to create a sense of suspension of disbelief. On the other hand, postmodern novels undermined this attempt by means of parody and stressed that it *is* fiction. Thus they questioned and blurred the assumed distinctions between reality and fiction, leaving the reader no firm ground to centralize their conception of the novel (199). This is an approach that can constantly be recognized in Atay’s style.

Alper Akçam in “*Tutunamayanlar*’da Karnaval” (“Carnavalesque in *The Disconnected*”) argues that it is a book that incorporates multiple literary styles

“for the purpose of fragmenting, altering and deconstructing what is familiar instead of representing, indicating or signifying” a certain “fact”. Considering this, it can be asserted that *The Disconnected*, to a considerable extent, uses postmodern elements that go hand in hand with a modernist style. In short, with its accumulated layers of discourse and adoption of various incongruous elements together, *The Disconnected* is a meta-fictional rebellion against conventional expressions and realist/didactic literary styles that had predominantly been used in Turkish Literature until the mid-twentieth century. For example, it does not present a certain authorial center to the reader: claims of multiple authorships and manipulation of the original text by other writers are foregrounded throughout the book, which is already fragmented and difficult to comprehend. Atay thereby undermines and subverts any potential claims of reality and any glimpse of coherence that might possibly be attributed to the book. The underlying objective of the fragmented language of Oğuz Atay in *The Disconnected* is that instead of holding an apocalyptic position towards historiography and lamenting the state of fragmentedness. Atay draws attention to the fact that it is productive. That is, he adopts narrative fragmentation in order to point to the cracks in historical accounts and public memory; thereby giving Selim and Turgut the means to create an alternative history regarding the disconnected--a history that is looked down on and unnoticed among more “magnificent” and “glorious” figures and events in official history.

More specifically, the first part of the novel named *Sonun Başlangıcı* [The Beginning of the End] is a piece that includes a foreword by the journalist to whom Turgut has given the manuscripts. This journalist states that “different handwritings were distinctive on the pages having been obviously re-numbered”

due to which “there were incoherencies from place to place”--a detail emphasizing multiple authorship (Atay 17, 19). As for the manipulation of the text, the journalist says that in order to publish the novel, the real names of the characters needed changing and, because some word-play was built upon the names of the real people in Selim’s and Turgut’s lives, he confesses to have made *slight* changes in some parts connected to those names (19). The following part in the novel is called *Yayımlayıcının Açıklaması* [The Explanation of the Publisher]. Here, the publisher of the book makes the matter worse--and the reader more doubtful--by underlining cautiously the suspicions and reservations that all those events accounted throughout the novel *certainly* have nothing to do with the real people, events, or institutions (21-22). Afterwards the publisher notes, “[w]e would like to stress that we are not able to say something certain on the reality of the events accounted in this book which is reportedly based on an event having taken place long ago” and immediately adds that “[i]f one analyzes the characteristics of the people and the petty events they are assumed to have been through, it will easily be realized that they by no means correspond to the people of today’s world” (21). What the publisher problematizes is that the setting, namely the time and the place in the book, as well as the names of the towns and cities--where the events have been claimed to have occurred--have hardly any connection with current people, places or real names. Thus, the publisher accuses the text of anachronism and pure fictionality. By this, it is implied that Atay tries to maneuver and counteract any accusations regarding the political side of the book by allowing the publisher to become his own mouthpiece and making fun of any such claims that the events and characters in the book are not in accordance with the social structure and the profile of people in Turkey. Such forewords and

explanations are calculated to make the reader feel that they are about to enter a fictional world. Nevertheless, it also makes them question the reliability of the purported reality of the other forms of narratives in daily life--such as the narratives reinforcing and feeding collective memory. As for the two main characters in *The Disconnected*, Selim and Turgut, and their relationship with collective memory, it can be said that they initially have different positions against it but similar experiences at the end of the day.

Selim Işık's struggle with collective memory and his attempts to get rid of its effects on him can be seen all throughout the book, especially in his autobiographical "Songs of the Disconnected" titled "Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow". This mock-heroic song is narrated in verse. The exegesis to these songs has been written in prose by Selim himself; but he attributes them to his other close friend, Süleyman Kargı. In one of the explanations to the verses, it is stated that

Selim has always propounded to possess a retentive memory. As his story goes, he remembers whatever he has gone through ever since he was born. He describes the horridness of malaria he got at the age of one as a memorable experience both in his mind--and his spleen. He recounts how they made him drink a full cup of raki without water, and tells his fondness of alcohol might have started those times. (Atay 162)

Immediately after this statement, Selim contradicts himself by pointing out that "[i]n my judgment, Selim recalls the period of his malaria on the basis of the stories his mother used to tell him" (162). This is in line with what Maurice Halbwachs in *On Collective Memory* states on the social aspect of memory. He explains that the "greatest number of memories come back to us when our parents, our friends, or other persons recall them to us... Most of the time, when I remember, it is others who spur me on; their memory comes to the aid of mine and mine relies on theirs" (38). This shows that memory is, as stated earlier,

inherently collective and claims to being exempt from it are nothing other than illusionary assumptions. Although Selim in his adulthood resists being a part of this collective memory, its influence on him while growing up could never be ignored.

Selim is evidently in a constant struggle with collective memory. In order to circumvent its influence on his life, he devises a range of “games” in order not to be integrated into that collective body. As a result, Selim clings to life but as a child-man who has survival methods peculiar to himself. As Nurdan Gürbilek in “Kemalizmin Delisi Oğuz Atay” (“The Madman of Kemalism: Oğuz Atay”) suggests, Selim Işık is an individual who never actually *lived* because of overthinking; who lacks the knowledge on “the science of life,” who, for these reasons, has kept being a child with his own truths in mind (243--emphasis added). Therefore, Selim is a character who does not have a good sense of what exactly life is and what he is supposed to do in order to become a “normal” man.

In his diary that he begins to keep towards his death, he says:

How have I come to be in this situation? Why have they not instructed me how to live? Why did I not revolt against them when they said “that is all from us, from now on you will find the rest out on your own”? How could I be so foolish to embark on the life out there? How did I venture to take a place in the world of regular people? I was not even a human being. How could I dare to be involved in a life that I had never lived? How could they make me go out in public...causing my resistance to be lost in the confusion? They would not know: I resembled a human being in looks. I had been tested. I had been able to maneuver and deceive them. I myself paved the way for my end. It was hardly possible for them to instruct me what to do every second. They deceived me; but I am the guilty one anyway. I am consumed away at an age that is supposed to be the most productive period for humankind. I got tired quickly because I spent every single moment by thinking what I should do. Could I be excused? (Atay 607)

“Learning to live,” it seems, necessitates being part of a certain collective body and leading a life defined and limited by its norms and rules. On the other hand,

Derrida has a slightly different approach to this when he says, “[t]o live, by definition, is not something one learns. Not from oneself, it is not learned from life, taught by life. Only from the other and by death” (17). Considering that Selim commits suicide a few weeks after uttering these words, this can at first be interpreted in line with what Derrida says: Selim might have killed himself in order to learn to live--or in order to end his pain of not being able to live--by means of death. However, Derrida refutes this point as well by saying,

If it--learning to live--remains to be done, it can happen only between life and death. Neither in life nor in death alone. What happens between two, and between all the "two's" one likes, such as between life and death, can only maintain itself with some *ghost*, can only talk with or about some *ghost*...So it would be necessary to learn spirits. Even and especially if this, the spectral, is not. Even and especially if this, which is neither substance, nor essence, nor existence, is never present as such. (17--emphasis added)

Unsurprisingly, the purgatorial position between life and death, as Derrida outlines it, is a situation Selim has always found himself in throughout his life. In other words, Selim's condition has been in-between the thresholds which is why he could perceive the chaos behind the order called life. This condition has taught Selim what “life” is and is not in reality. However, when Selim complains that people around him did not teach him to “live,” he actually means a learning process which covers up the essence of life through myths and constructions, and which would prevent him from being disconnected from the society and dying at a really early age. Nonetheless, resembling a normal human being only in appearance made him a child-man doomed for suicide instead.

Turgut's ordeal with collective memory and order is a lot more problematic. Turgut the bourgeoisie--as Selim calls him--is the one who knows how to live very well. He is a successful and well-off engineer, a loving husband and a father of two. This is why it is painful and hard for him to strip off the

effects of collective memory as well as its limitations and definitions.

Accordingly, he is very indecisive whether to follow his friend's footsteps at the very beginning. This is also due to the fact that he is afraid of losing his grips on sanity--just like Selim did--once he does away with the perceptions of reality he has been used to. That being the case, Turgut has a lot of different conversations and discussions with Selim through inner dialogues in his transformation process:

[Turgut] went back to the L-shaped living room, sat on his comfortable armchair covered with plastics imitated after morocco leather; he pushed the armchair back by pressing a button. You got caught, Turgut, you have revealed yourself. Why, Selim? How is it possible when I was just about to buy a car for twenty five thousand bucks--ten thousand of which would be paid in advance--from the accountant of the company; just as I was going to take up driving lessons and was thinking of the necessity of saving up for a flat... You cannot trick me out of my path, Selim, you cannot pry into my affairs. I know how to retain my composure... If this had occurred to me ten years ago, I might have considered it awhile; I would not be afraid of indeterminate dangers. (Atay 30)

In the face of his friend's suicide letter assigning him some mission shrouded in mystery, Turgut initially thinks that Selim would not have ended his life if he had chosen a danger-free life like that of his and he says "[y]ou could have led a different lifestyle, Selim" (32). According to Turgut, Selim, too, could have been a part of this collective consciousness and what it dictates. If he had, he would be alive now and Turgut would not have to follow him. However, it is Selim's resistance to comply with the "values" of the society around him along with his death that comes to be what sets Turgut in motion and transforms him. This is because Selim's difference and strong influence stems from his ability to see life and society beyond the borders presented to the community by outside powers.

Obviously, Turgut is afraid of a life which is full of "indeterminate dangers". The reason for this is that severing one's ties with social memory and the normality of everyday life means revising one's identity, which is a traumatic

experience itself. What's worse, Selim is not alive and there is nobody Turgut can seek help from even if he happens to set out on a journey into the world of the disconnected. That being the case, Turgut inwardly remonstrates Selim:

You could have informed me about this, Selim. Who would not have given ear to what you said in such a situation? What did you do in your last months? I would have listened to you even if I could not grasp thoroughly what you said...The existence of another person might probably diminish the burden of deadly thoughts you had...What can I stuff this void between us with? How can I learn about you without your existence?...Say something to me, Selim, do not be buttoned up...Speak, tell me that I am bound to read thousands of books, that I am supposed to keep awake at nights, that I must practice every day till the evening, at the end of which I will make quite a little progress...I am ready for everything. (Atay 89-90)

Even after he makes up his mind and begins to probe into Selim's life and his ideas, he reproachfully tells Selim,

You have left innumerable questions in doubt and walked out. You have left me within the cogwheels of this machinery. And I got my jacket caught up in those wheels, by which I have been attached to this order. It is not possible without taking my jacket off. And I have not received instructions to do so. Change out of them all and quit this order. No, Selim, I simply can't: in that case I would be left naked as the day I was born. At that case, I could not find anything to hold on to. Reflections soar to high heaven, but the body is hooked on earth. (307)

Although Turgut's dilemma is obvious in these words, he nevertheless "fails to forget the call of his friend, and he is drawn more and more to the void opened up by the absence of Selim. The pain of loss turns into a desire to understand Selim in his absence," which is a highly difficult and excruciatingly painful task for a man like Turgut (Ertuğrul 634). In other words, Turgut's memory and consciousness that have been shaped by the society and the values of that society is on the brink of dissolution despite his resistance. This journey to the world of the disconnected is a double-edged sword in forging an unexpected and "indeterminate" future for Turgut. Once he enters Selim's world, he will cease to be Turgut *the bourgeois* who has a family and luxurious lifestyle, and his

transformation will inevitably begin. As for the void between Turgut and Selim, between life and death, one can maintain that the more Turgut undergoes a social transformation by questioning every single pre-determined value in the society, the less visible this gap becomes--leaving him at a purgatorial position just like Selim. However, contrary to Selim who almost never learned how to live, Turgut has to *unlearn* what he used to know about life and re-read life abstaining from pre-defined conceptions of it. In this purgatory, of course, he inevitably comes face to face with an entity hovering between life and death--the ghost.

Having mentioned the framework of the characters' relationship with social memory, turning back and asking how all these events in the book started and how the ghost took over the lives of Selim and Turgut is necessary:

The onset of the event was located in Turgut's apartment and dates back to a night in the second half of the twentieth century. Olric was yet nonexistent back then, those times Turgut was not confused at this level. He was sitting and ruminating at home one night. Selim had taken his farewell of this world and passed away on his own accord a couple of days ago by leaving a letter-like thing behind. (Atay 25)

For Turgut, Selim's suicide marks the beginning of events that distance him from what is familiar and call him to seek a world that is uncanny and full of indeterminate dangers. Being aware of this, Turgut can help neither pursuing the facts behind his most-beloved friend's death nor being afraid of losing himself in this chaos:

The first part of the novel articulates Turgut's resistance to the call of his dead friend. What is at stake here is the ego's panic in the face of something that disturbs the enjoyments of life, the fear of losing the sense of security one finds in the world and in the economy of meaning that sustains the daily. This would mean the loss of resistance against the unfamiliar and the uncanny that might overcome one if one leaves the realm of the home and everyday--in short, the realm of ideology. In other words, what is at stake in this resistance is nothing other than the loss of the world and ground as the referential frame in which we can more or less make sense of our lives. The danger, as Turgut senses, is absolute in

hearing the call, since it leads to the shattering of the familiar and opens up the world no longer as the correlations of answers but as a realm of unanswered questions. (Ertuğrul 635)

This realm is called purgatory, somewhere in between, a trauma-like state that is the result of an abrupt change in the normality of everyday life and in what is familiar. This is a position where ghosts coming back from the past haunt one incessantly.

At the beginning of the book, Turgut is seen pondering the suicide note Selim had sent him just before his death, and it is this letter that can be considered as the first ghost figure that Turgut faces in the novel. It is in this letter that Selim's ghost makes itself apparent and haunts Turgut. What is written in the letter is the mission that Turgut is to carry out--although the content of this note is never disclosed openly in the course of the novel. Nevertheless, it seems that it is a call for Turgut to undertake the responsibility of probing into the world of the disconnected, which apparently marks the beginning of a new perspective of life for Turgut. In other words, the invigoration of Turgut is only possible in the wake of the death of Selim followed by the void, loss and grief that come along. This awakening process, indeed, is quite exhausting and challenging for Turgut since he has long been a conformist who led a life dictated by the norms of society, a condition which Selim had abhorred.

The other ghost figure in Turgut's journey is Olric, his imaginary mentor and inner voice. Combined with Turgut's failure to forget his friend's call, the void opened up with the death of Selim and the mission in his suicide letter all contribute to the appearance of Olric. Turgut remembers the days without Olric as such:

Olric was as yet nonexistent back then... The situation was not as lucid, yet in one respect indeterminate as it is today... He was going from bad to

worse. And there was nobody to help Turgut. Olric had not as yet burst into sight at the horizon. He was then assuming to engage in a private speech on his own. He was regarding his chest tightness as an ordinary and everyday pain. (Atay 25, 249)

With the appearance of Olric, Turgut's consciousness gradually diffuses into that of Selim and thus, he can make a distinction between "those days" and "today". Today, though, his situation is both explicit and ambiguous: it is explicit because he has already set out on a journey in which he is determined to get rid of outside impositions of reality and whatever is inscribed to his memory in the community. He has taken steps to stay out of the mechanism of forgetting/remembering that is arbitrarily conducted by the holders of power. At least he is aware of the need to overcome their effects on his identity. On the other hand, his situation is ambiguous now since he cannot become a part of that community without accepting its perceptions of reality. He cannot continue his life as the husband, as the father, as the successful engineer he used to be. After the death of his dear friend, the thick distinctive boundaries between what is real and what is not has disappeared. Instead, Turgut perceives grey areas that are the residence place of ghosts. Therefore, the existence of Olric in his life indicates that his transformation has long taken place and he has made a notable progress despite his resistance at the very beginning.

While recounting Turgut's ordeal in the face of Selim's death, Atay incorporates some parts and characters from *Hamlet*. He sometimes mentions Horatio ["Süleyman Kargı is a comrade...He is much the same to me as Horatio was to Hamlet"], sometimes talks about Hamlet; he even mimics Hamlet's famous soliloquies in some parts of the novel (Atay 114). All in all, first Selim and after his death Turgut can be considered modern versions of Hamlet. They are suffering from a condition in which they have not buried the past. They both are wrestling

with a past that is consistently resurrected by ghosts. The excess of language they use, too, is quite similar to that of Hamlet.

To begin with, like Hamlet, Selim feels the urge to correct the “primal wrong” committed against mankind. He paves the way for a clearance of memory and consciousness--he even dies at the end of this quest because the life and the constructions thereof are too unbearable for Selim to undertake. According to Jale Parla, Selim Işık, as a Hamlet figure, “lives and dies with the pain of not being able to find the language of excess” (221). Selim is a character who is unable to take tangible action in order to show his opposition to the established social order. Likewise, Hamlet is well-known for his inaction. Christopher Prendergast in his article “Derrida's Hamlet” notes that

Nietzsche claimed in *The Birth of Tragedy* that the essential point about Hamlet is not--as in the standard view--that he thinks too much, but that he thinks too well; he is unable to act not because of a contingent psychological infirmity, but because the sheer lucidity of his thinking corrodes the ground of all possible action in a world dominated by an instrumental logic of ends and means. Hamlet, according to Nietzsche, sees into the nature of things. (44-45)

It is this ability to see into the nature of things, and being able to recognize that “the world is out of joint” that leads to Selim’s inaction, too. He has to live as an individual who is estranged from the collective consciousness and this is the very reason why he is haunted by the ghost of the past. Finally, just like Hamlet who is affectionate towards Ophelia but keeps his distance from her because of his mission as well as his alienation from his environment, Selim is in love with Günseli but cannot choose to marry or have a “proper” relationship with her due to the reasons similar to Hamlet’s:

...no we can by no means be alone with you we will not be able to either I am never left alone I will aggrieve you too *ghosts* will always haunt me I will not manage to listen to you as I desire my mind will always catch onto some briar patch and my uneasiness will keep chasing me like a shadow

you cannot bear this burden do not engage in futile expectations if I had seen you when I was thinking of living with a person like you things might have taken us towards a different direction yet there has *accumulated so much darkness* since then that I can no longer make away with it even if I intend to... (Atay 518-19--emphasis added)

Selim is indeed a Hamlet figure in the novel and this is also confirmed by Turgut when he says: “They are looking forward to seeing you, Selim; they are asking for the prince of the disconnected” (320). Just as Hamlet is the prince of Denmark, Selim is the prince of those who are disconnected.

In his search for how Selim theorized his ideas and how he resisted being a part of this collective memory, Turgut finds some manuscripts Selim once had written, one of which was a sort of manifesto called “*Ne Yapmalı?*” [“What to Do?”] in order not to grow vulnerable to collective amnesia and to free oneself from its effects. The style of the first lines of this manifesto resembles Shakespearean prose; specifically Hamlet’s famous soliloquys:

What to do? Had I better content myself with this colorless and odorless existence by internalizing the behaviors and attitudes of those around me with an unconscious indifference or should I rather transform this slothful existence radically just like a person who, unlike others, really desires a radical action much too different from what others ask for? (Atay 93)

This is a quite Hamlet-esque questioning, says Parla (210). For instance, right after the well-known line “to be or not to be”, the words Hamlet utters seem to echo those of Selim:

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep -
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. (3.1.57-63)

As Selim continues his contemplation, he argues that, to this end, one first of all should know oneself:

With regard to the solution to the problem of knowing ourselves, we can make use of the scepticism that Descartes applied to science. We must get down to work by first of all overleaping all of our values. We should always bear in mind the fact that the things that we take as personal values could be the forged features that have been gained through social pressure. (Atay 97)

It is necessary to remember here that Hamlet, during his oath-swearing, was saying similar things: the first condition to remember his father's words was to erase all other records from the table of his memory. Likewise, according to Selim, in order to know one's real self, individuals must begin by doing away with all the "values" that are probably imposed on them by the collective body they exist in. Selim commits suicide before he can carry out his "mission" in this world, but Hamlet--though belatedly--discloses the truth behind his father's death and takes his revenge.

It has already been mentioned that the event that led to Turgut's awakening was his friend's death and the ghost of Selim that began to haunt Turgut first with his suicide letter and his manuscripts. Similarly, Hamlet's awakening had started with the death of King Hamlet and especially with the appearance of his father's ghost. After these events they both start to question the society they live in and the people around them:

In *The Disconnected*, Atay stages the awakening of the subject through an experience of absolute loss incurred by the death of the other. The subject, by undergoing the unbearable pain of separation/absence, emerges as a response to a call to which it can never fully respond, in regard to which it is always late and always responsible. The birth of the subject, then, would be the breaking down of the economy of the everyday, and the opening up of an impossible responsibility to the other. (Ertuğrul 632)

Like Hamlet whose trauma begins with the apparition of his father's ghost, Turgut is at a loss after he gets Selim's letter. He does not know what to do in the face of this death followed by slipping of the grounds he has long clung to and disappearance of clear demarcations between reality and illusion. Firstly, both

Hamlet and Turgut have been reminded by this loss and the events afterwards that every “reality” has its reverse side. Secondly, they have found themselves in a chaotic world lacking meaning and coherency. Like Turgut, “Hamlet's tragedy is that he is arbitrarily chosen...to remedy the irremediable. Hamlet does not just curse the corruption of the world, but also the mission to redeem it” (Prendergast 47). Hamlet’s responsibility to his father’s ghost is on the one hand, and Turgut’s mission inscribed in the letter is on the other. Both of them struggle to fulfill that duty whether they are willing to do that, or not. Turgut, while talking to Selim in his imagination, is told that, “[y]ou have been assigned to this piece of work. There is no possibility of resignation--it is like military service. I am exposing all my life to your feet: sift me through!” (Atay 93) Those who are called by the ghosts to correct or at least recognize the “rotten” order cannot evade this duty. Rather, they are bound to meet their inescapable fate--becoming the haunting site for their ghosts. Turgut, being aware of this, likens himself to Hamlet and says “I am Turgut Özben, the son of the king of Denmark” and afterwards, “I am Hamlet, the prince of Denmark” (265, 285). He knows that his future actions will not be so much different from those of Hamlet. Turgut cannot escape from this destiny, and just like Hamlet who does not take off his black garments after his father’s death, Turgut swears that he will no longer remove his dark clothes (317). What does this being in a constant state of mourning denote, both for Hamlet and for Turgut?

It should be noted that neither Turgut nor Hamlet is able to undergo a proper mourning. By this it is meant that they can never acknowledge the fact that those who are reported to have died have actually ceased to live. Therefore, they end up dealing with their ghosts of a failed mourning, and are haunted by them. Baumgartner explains this by saying that

In normal mourning, Freud says, one internalizes the dead, one takes the dead into oneself and assimilates them. This internalization is an idealization. Whereas in mourning which doesn't develop naturally...that is to say, in mourning that goes wrong, there is no true internalization. There is ...“incorporation.” That is to say, the dead are taken into us but don't become a part of us. They just occupy a particular place in our bodies. They can speak for themselves. They can haunt our body and ventriloquize our speech. So the ghost is enclosed in a crypt which is our body. *We become a sort of graveyard for ghosts*” (“Spectropoetics”-- emphasis added).

For instance, the reason why Gertrude cannot see the ghost of King Hamlet in her closet can be interpreted as her being able to accomplish this internalization and to reach a closure by returning to the normality of everyday life and even getting married. However, neither Hamlet nor Turgut can escape being a graveyard for ghosts whereby “the dead enter the realms of the living” (Ertuğrul 634). They refuse to come to a “closure realized through mourning” and reject returning “to the economy of the living, in which memory, by interiorizing the rupture caused by death and loss, reconnects to itself, comes back to itself” (634-35). In this context, it should be put that Selim might have died, but he has not been buried as far as Turgut is concerned, and still goes on living:

It has not even been a month yet since he died. Maybe he has not passed away. I simply cannot see him, and that is all. Let's just say that he has gone to Africa. To a country far far away. A civil war has broken out; all means of communication have been abolished. The roads are blocked. Those assuming that I will regard all this as wheel of fortune are deceived...I will not stop at the expense of ending up in hell...He started to get a headache: “I am grappling with specters,” he grumbled. (Atay 317)

Apparently, the ghosts of his trauma penetrate into the fractured self of Turgut. But unlike Hamlet, who pretends to lose his mind in order to attain the truth and avenge his father's death, Turgut literally goes out of his senses towards the end of the book. His unaccomplished mourning not only ends in disconnection, but also culminates in schizophrenia.

As for the relationship between Atay's duo and collective amnesia, trauma and history, it can be said that their approach to these concepts is more or less the same. On the one hand, Turgut follows the off-beaten tracks left by Selim and he is led to finish the project that Selim had left halfway through--the writing of the book *The Disconnected*. On the other hand, Selim is a character who almost always falls at odds with pre-defined norms and codes of this world as well as the society he lives in. As a result, as Selim puts it in "The Song of the Disconnected," they come to realize the lack of logic and sense underneath the "reality" imposed by the manipulating dynamics within the community:

We were duped with every word instructed
They said "it is forbidden" "it is illicit," and we believed
By "no entrance" sign we were deceived
This path that is taken, to us, rings false. (Atay 134)

This path of reality that *rings false* in fact operates on people's memory and consciousness beginning from the moment they were born. Their family, friends, relatives and others around are the primary promoters of this shaping process of human beings' understanding of the world. Secondly, they come face to face with the institutions in the community such as schools, where it is claimed that people can learn all about the world and become "educated" and "cultivated" individuals. It might be a place in which ideologically chosen books and selected perception of the world as well as the past is instructed. Actually, what these people and institutions do is give people definitions with regard to the world and, in return, instructed individuals are expected to behave according to those pre-defined norms. Turgut utters his uneasiness regarding this issue by saying:

They ask you for definitions: so as to use the same definitions as a trump card against you. If you lack definitions, this time they do not let you speak at all. They maintain that the one unable to provide definitions merely twaddles...Once they give definitions, everybody falls into the pit that has been dug for them beforehand. (662)

This is a trap and a double-edged sword indeed: either people accept others' definitions and lead a life within the boundaries of those pre-determined codes, or they evade the trap rebelling against collective memory and impositions thereof-- as a result, ending up in a universe where they are disconnected individuals living in the margins of the society. Since growing immune to the delusions within the community takes time, the moment of realization and then the need to challenge them can be characterized by chaos and a crisis of meaning. This is also a challenge to the identity one has cherished up to that point and is followed by trauma and ghosts. In other words, if one is among the disconnected, that person resists the mechanisms of forgetting and remembering (i.e. social amnesia and collective memory), knows about the existence of grey areas and instead of burying those that the system has declared "dead," they remain traumatized and haunted by ghosts. This might necessitate one, just like Selim, to be alienated or distanced from the community for the sake of not being influenced by it. This is the same reason why Turgut leaves his established order--namely his house, work, family by saying, "Is it ever possible for a person to contemplate on anything in such an order? I mean, things that are profound and nice. First handicap is the furniture, then come conditions: central heating, housemaid, kid's room" (557). But distancing himself from all these distractions is not enough for Turgut. The more he uncovers about the true face of the world and the chaos hidden behind the normality of everyday life, the more radical he grows:

As Turgut lets himself be drawn into the world of Selim, as he reads the manuscripts Selim left behind and tracks down his friends in order to understand what happened, he slowly drifts away from the everyday. As he enters Selim's world, as he begins to see how Selim experienced the world, he begins to fall away from the security of everyday meanings. Things lose their solidity, and gradually a sense of solitude grows. Although this solitude is exciting in the sense of a newly found freedom, it also panics him insofar as he senses that this small crack in the edifice will

bring an absolute isolation. Through the dissolution of the everyday and the disintegration of present meanings, a new sense of the world begins to emerge. As Turgut allows himself to feel how Selim felt, he begins to realize there is another “truth” behind the everyday, another way of seeing things, of being touched by the relations. This “other truth” is difficult to express in the hard and worn-out words of the everyday. He needs another syntax, another language to express it. (Ertuğrul 635)

Turgut therefore mentions creating a new language which will give him the means to speak the unspeakable; to express his trauma, the cracks, the gaps and the ghosts thereof: “What I mean is not to recount this-and-that. I have come to an end, Olric. I want to write a new exordium for myself. I want to create a new language. A language to narrate me to myself...[However,] I am not an inheritor of any sort of tradition” (Atay 541).

Selim, too, had previously expressed his ideas on his trouble with language by saying:

I dare say narrating and explaining things will only be possible through changing the meanings of the words. I had not even known straight meanings of the words in those years. After all, I have never been able to know the meanings of the words properly. I have invariably felt the suffocating pressure of words, sentences, and thoughts that fly at one like a spear. (216)

Neither Turgut nor Selim trusts a syntax that precedes them because, like Atay, they are well aware of the fact that language, for ages worn and torn with taboos, traditions and manipulations, has been the prime promoter of hegemony within the society. *The Disconnected* is a novel in which language along with the inability of language in narrating marginal and dissentient stories is thoroughly and radically problematized, and the revolutionary need to create a new kind of language to express them is emphasized in depth.

Adoption of Games and Plays:

Surmounting the Seemingly Insurmountable

*All the world's a stage / And all the men and
women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances / And
one man in his time plays many parts.
As You Like It, Act II, Scene VII*

Shakespeare's protagonist Hamlet, having heard of the command of the ghost, decides to play the director to the tragedians who happened to visit Elsinore. Thereby he makes them his own mouthpiece so as to manipulate the reactions and catch the conscious of Claudius. With the intention of making the king reveal his secret, Hamlet meddlesomely inserts a number of lines into the critical moments of the play to be staged (*The Murder of Gonzago*). Before the performance of the play, he assumes the role of a director, aiming to trap the king through the use of the power of drama. In his awareness of the need for a powerfully staged drama, he gives the players some tactics and the means with which they can capture the conscience of the king by penetrating into the depths of his consciousness (3.2. 1-36). What Hamlet depends on is the power of the play to reveal the things that are hidden in his uncle's memory. Ana Elena Puga in *Memory, Allegory, and Testimony in South American Theater: Upstaging Dictatorship* suggests that

Theatrical performance...has the advantage of being able to retrieve and re-create memory even before its traces have been relegated to an archive. At the moment of performance, aesthetics and politics are intimately linked: language combined with corporal movement and gesture--integrated with sound, lights, and set--allows the actor and spectator to become co-archivists of a psychosocial archive, co-creators of memories that may serve to defy quotidian reality. Thanks to the interplay between performers and spectators, theatre may become...a site that propagates communal and individual memories. (21)

In other words, Hamlet undermines the fabricated story about his father's death, which is imposed and spread by King Claudius. He does this by means of the play in question staged for the sake of making the audience suspicious. As a result, Hamlet has been able to put forward a narrative of counter-history that reflects what might be--and is--the alternative explanation of King Hamlet's death. Moreover, immediately after his trauma, Hamlet starts his games in order to reflect his disappointment and disclose the cloak of secrecy hiding real events. He, for instance, acts as if suffering from madness. He also resorts to word-games in order to stun people and make them believe that he is out of his spirits. By means of this he puts *The Murder of Gonzago*, a play within the play, on stage in order to ensure that his uncle was the murderer, thereby justifying his act of avenging his father. Similarly, both Atay's and Selim's games in the book blur what is accepted as reality by propounding an alternative discourse to it rather than attempting to refute or invalidate it, which is by no means possible. They both do this through literature or literary games.

The concept of game can often be seen in Oğuz Atay's works and this is quite clear from the names of his books such as *Tehlikeli Oyunlar (Dangerous Games)* and *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar (Those Who Live by Games)*. Yıldız Ecevit in *Türk Romanında Postmodernist Açılımlar (Postmodernist Perspectives in the Turkish Novel)* explains Atay's preoccupation with the concept of game and says that in postmodern literature, "everything is a game played at an artistic level. The author dramatizes the ethical / political or historical material" (72). It can be argued that for Atay's main characters, life itself corresponds to a play or game. Therefore, the concept that keeps Selim alive until the age of twenty-five is, unsurprisingly, "game". Moreover, in his discussion of the characteristics of the

postmodern novel, Berna Moran states that this novel form considers art and literature a kind of game; in other words, in the postmodern novel, playing games is consciously foregrounded and the author makes the reader watch how fiction is created like a game through the technique of meta-fiction (199). This surely is for a reason: Atay discloses the mechanisms of fiction through his metafictional style, thereby aiming to show the reader *fiction*, disguised by the dominant powers as *reality*.

The realization that there is another reality hidden behind the one dictated by collective memory and consciousness is not an easy task: it is an ordeal that requires inventing games--just like Hamlet and Selim did--in order to hold on to life for some reason and go on breathing within the community. Accordingly, people can be divided and reduced into two groups: those who live without scrutinizing the realities imposed by the society and the ones whose only means of survival are games. The following statement by Selim while he is talking with Günseli is quite revealing: "I do not know the rules. I am completely unaware of the rules pertaining to life. How can we go ahead with a life, which I could not come through on my own, together?" (Atay 625-626). For example, Selim abhors the idea of getting married since he considers such an institution a threat to the purification of memory from the contamination of community. Even worse, it is a threat to his games. This is obvious when he tells Turgut that "My whole objective in life was play, you know this Turgut. All my life was a game that I wanted to be taken seriously. You got married and spoilt the game" (31). However, when Selim realizes that he cannot continue his games, he ends his life, and Turgut's reply to this is meaningful:

How could I play throughout my whole life? Were you able to endure it? You, too, have spoilt this game with a gruesome fact. In this enormous

world where everybody has a preoccupation, you have been drifted from backwards and forwards, my dear brother... You have invented games for yourself: such games that you would not mind whether others participated in. You judged everybody in these games. You tried me, too, in this while and did me an injustice. (31)

Nuray Küçükler in “Batılılaşmanın Gölgesinde Süregiden İki Olgu:

‘Huzursuzluk’ ve ‘Tutunamamak’” (“Two Phenomena Overshadowed by Westernization: ‘Uneasiness’ and ‘Disconnectedness’”) argues that Selim’s interest in games helps him situate himself away from the value judgment of the bourgeoisie; since literature and art are not attuned to the logic of the bourgeoisie, these make his life more meaningful and lie at the center of Selim’s perception of reality. According to Küçükler, in a Turkey that has undergone the process of westernization and nationalization, bourgeoisie standards of values were accepted as standard values in the community during the 1950s. However for Selim, engaging in games that are fed by literature and art becomes a means to create a point of resistance (“Batılılaşmanın”).

Almost half of the novel consists of the literary games Selim creates because writing is the most important game he devotes his life to. Playing games is a method of escaping pre-defined norms and concepts according to Selim. In addition, his literary games grant him the means to expose the distortion of official history writing. Nonetheless, living with these games and making them an inseparable part of life also means alienation and crisis of identity since refusing to live in line with the perceptions of reality imposed by the society opens gaps and cracks in Selim’s identity. It also means that the games he devises become the sole means of sustaining and enduring life. Towards the end of his life, Selim reportedly gets tired of playing those games, as one of Selim’s friends, Esad, says, “The last time I saw Selim was six months ago...He was walking self-absorbedly

and sadly. He seemed like he was tired of his games. He was tired of taking all the games seriously” (Atay 357-58). For Selim life itself does not have an ultimate meaning, which is in contrast to what grand narratives teach. Therefore--as Shakespeare puts it--human beings are the actors and actresses in a cosmic game. As a result, when he gives up his biggest ambition in life, playing games, he commits suicide.

The first literary game Selim creates is writing biography. In an attempt to deconstruct biographies and demonstrate how a certain portion of the past is heroicized by the dominant classes in the society, Selim buckles down to write Turgut’s uncongenial and dull life story in such a language that is not only exciting but also heroic and sublime. He says, “Let’s write your life history. If nothing, we can contribute to history at least...All biographies of these men are full of mistakes... We will make a breakthrough in this field with you, Turgut...Do you fancy this game?” (Atay 51). After being concerned with what literary style to use in this project, Selim comes to a decision and says:

By the way, our style has been determined: we will be writing in such a style that reflects the life stories of Turkish, Roman and French heroes as well as grand mathematicians and physicists. Exciting parts will resemble cowboy films. Firstly you will recount me your real life story with an uninteresting and colorless locution...and your life story will be bandied around even after I turn into a handful of dust. (52)

Selim undertakes this game quite seriously because according to him, this is a historic mission since it means putting his problem with history into words and problematizing historical accounts of any kind. For example, his ironic style at the beginning of Turgut’s fake biography shows how history can simply be manipulated and distorted: “I will write the life story of one of the founders of the Ancient Holy Roman-Aksaray Empire...with its known and unknown aspects” (52). Turgut’s reaction, though, upon reading Selim’s version of his biography, is

noteworthy: “Distortion! Distortion!...I shall rebut this...Your statement is fictitious. Your work is a freak of nature” (58-59). Obviously, this game denotes that writing history brings along distortion and manipulation--that historiography is never exempt from defacement, subjectivity, and manipulation. On the other hand, it should be noted that Selim’s game cannot be considered as a method to “correct” this situation. Rather, he endeavors to subvert historical narratives’ claim to reflect the reality in the past. He also underlines the fact that nothing pertaining to the past goes without distortion and underlying ideologies.

Selim’s following literary game is writing his own life-history. This is written in the manuscripts Süleyman Kargı--Selim’s other intimate friend--has handed to Turgut:

Süleyman Kargı stood up and went to the bookshelf. He said to Turgut, “They treat people like Selim in this way--they do not push him too far. First, they let him think whatever he wants at his will. They allow him to perceive, experience, feel the world as he likes. They even hail and praise him so that he loses his temper altogether, making him unable to turn back. You know the rest of the story.” He bent down and pulled out a file out of the lower part of the bookshelf; “Nonetheless Selim managed to keep some documents out of their touch. Those presuming that he would disappear without a trace have been deceived. In this world, there were people who heartened and encouraged him. And he, without ruminating over and making plans, endeavored to create a world that belonged to him just by doing what he liked. As a result, he put down these long songs on paper. ‘Write out whatever you like, Selim’ I said. ‘Let no fear overshadow your mind’”...He extended the file to Selim: “At the end of the songs you will see an ‘Exegesis’ written on my behalf. He would not be relieved without inciting me in.” (Atay 112-113)

It should first of all be noted that Selim’s relatively more radical game of writing his autobiography and its reference to history writing is noteworthy. His so-called life story written in verse (also referred as “Selim’s Songs” or “The Song of The Disconnected”) is of great importance because the reason for writing this autobiography is to criticize the selectivity of history and disclose its nature to others:

In his search for Selim after his suicide, Turgut comes across a manuscript that Selim wrote years ago, a fake autobiography, a parody of his own development and life. This is a song about the failure of identity and the resulting drift and dissemination of meaning: “The Song of the Disconnected.” This hilarious parody of autobiography is made up of two parts; the first part is a poem written in different verse styles that tells the story of Selim’s growing up, and the second part is the parody of the scientific/literary scholarship that gives an exegesis of the poem. In this parody of the myth of origin and the tradition of the bildungsroman, the question of identity is articulated in relation to the question of cultural identity. Being born to a culture torn between a failed modernity and an exhausted past, Selim describes his childhood as confused and disoriented. He tells of his aimless wanderings in the ugliness of the city, his lack of guidance, his growing up exposed to two radically different worlds existing side by side without forming any unity, creating only deformations and distortions. (Ertuğrul 638)

Selim, in his own right, desires to get rid of the delusionary effects of history in collective memory and undermine it by writing these songs as he himself says in the exegesis: “He wanted to make away with the deviousness of the history” (Atay 136). That is to say, despite his seemingly loose ties with life, Selim strives to leave a trace on earth--his manuscripts--before he dies. Put differently, he attempts to open up a space within his own peculiar history for himself and other disconnected people and he does so by declaring his independence from official moldings of the past. Besides, the mission Turgut takes over is for the continuation of his ideas which Selim could not take a tangible action beyond his games. His problematization of history is quite apparent in the content of his songs and what’s more, the songs that narrate his autobiography are named “Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow”:

History had hidden all the documents that do not serve its purpose from Selim and those like Selim. The concern that a coherent philosophy of history was compulsory had ended up deliberately putting many true events aside. It could not have been otherwise. No one on earth had the right to snatch Selim away from the past and the future. This, then, had to be paid off...Yesterday, today and tomorrow had to unite together in his life. Selim needed to experience yesterday, today and tomorrow outside of his solitude...The common name for the songs has thus come into the picture. What had really happened yesterday? Having paved the way for

today and tomorrow yesterday had to be laid bare stark. (136)

Selim's playfulness rests not only on what he says in the songs but also on his afterword. Just like the publisher of *The Disconnected* who had attempted to claim that the events and the characters in the book were flights of fantasy at the beginning of the book, Selim uses the same language and says:

People, places, historical and daily events, referred sources, ideas put forward, similies, cities mentioned, theories proved, laws preached in both the songs and the exegesis are all figments of the imagination. Fabrication. If there happens to be anything that resembles places, people or events in real life, it is merely a coincidence and nobody should take it personally. (242)

By seemingly acknowledging that what he has narrated so far is nothing other than fabrication, Selim underlines the potential of his autobiography writing to expose the other side of the events and the so-called realities imposed on people. All in all, it can be asserted that the concept of history and the dynamics thereof are handled insistently by Selim throughout his games. This is because he wants to indicate the fact that history is at the same time a defacement done by the winners and according to their dictations. Every language and style that is to narrate the past is doomed to distort and channel it according to the dominant narratives in the society--which is, for him, an inevitable result.

Literature and Specters of the Past, the Present and the Future

Where better to find an obliquely referential history than in literature, which by virtue of its figurative language constantly exceeds straightforward understanding? (Peterson 13)

Selim Işık, through his biography and autobiography writing mentioned so far, has underlined that history is only a text and a narrative configuration of the past events. By putting mythical elements in his version of the past and with the

headline of his songs, he emphasizes the relationship between the past and the present and even the future. The past is not fixed somewhere in previous times; rather, the events happened in the past continue to haunt the present and will not cease to haunt the future, too. As stated earlier, studies on collective memory would potentially reveal another / alternative / unofficial version of the past that has been eclipsed from the history. That's why Selim, in his aforementioned manifesto called "What to Do?" emphasizes the need for a study of the collective body when he says, "[o]ur country today is in a static social order and it can be maintained that there is hardly any external factor that could push a person into social studies. What are we supposed to do, then?...As far as I am concerned we should immediately enter a period of radical studies" (Atay 98). Therefore, Selim's approach to historical narratives and history per se can be considered as radical as well. His perception of history resides on a frustration and his constant pursuit to deconstruct it is quite apparent throughout the novel. In the exegesis of his songs, he puts this by saying: "History is nothing but distortion. History is a dream that we are having today and it originates in the past reaching toward the future" (231). The phenomenon called "history," then, is a re-interpretation and aggregation of the bygone events in the past through the lenses of the political dynamics in today's world. This is the reason why it can never be exempt from alteration, defacement and manipulation.

Selim satirizes the writing of history as both a national project and a mission to be adopted by the community in the founding years of Turkish Republic. This is because that kind of far-fetched approach to history makes some portion or some historical figures of the past retreat into the background or be ignored completely. The question to be posed here is whether this new version of

history that the Turkish Republic “achieved” has got over the influence of the past and eluded being an integral part of it. Atay responds to this with a provoking scene in the book: the night Turgut remembers Selim’s attempt to write his biography, he dreams about the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamit the Second, who grabbed a slice of history by pioneering the modernization of the Ottoman empire while seeking to exert maximum power over politics; and during whose reign occurred two constitutional eras. Turgut has a quite curious conversation with him:

Turgut was a little ashamed and timorous due to being so close to the Sultan and while he was observing Abdülhamit dumbly, on the other hand he was trying to hearten himself: I am a child of the Republic, I am a child of the Republic. He was feeling like a primary school student: I hold no fears of Abdülhamit...Turgut, out of the blue, asked “Do you think the revolutions we accomplished have no rhyme or reason?” The Sultan replied saying “As far as I am concerned, yes,”...He put his legs under his garment...and continued his words: “I had foreseen all these events aforesaid. I was well aware of the fact that you would not manage to deal with me.” (82-83)

What Abdülhamit utters in this dream is noteworthy indeed: dealing with the past, forgetting it or rooting it out of the collective memory altogether is not possible.

Turkey underwent a revolution and change of political regime with traumatic consequences for most members of the community. This transformation changed common perceptions and habits in the society. Immediately afterwards, a nation-building process took place which required that the nation turn its face towards the West--leaving a big portion of the past behind or ignoring it partially.

Following this, a Turkish Historical Thesis was put forward. It was constituted through sorting out the parts that were functional and that served the purpose of the new ideology. In the meantime, the social memory and collective identity that had been internalized by the community were replaced by new concepts and revolutions that were waiting to be adopted and implemented. People in this

traumatic process found themselves in a chaotic world where meanings of the notions that they were accustomed to for so long lost their solidity. Eventually, they gradually adapted themselves to the new ideology but not completely because the past was there and could not be abolished altogether at once. The ghostly figures belonging to the past continued to urge collective memory to “remember” themselves. In this context, Selim’s attempt in re-writing the past and Turgut’s mission after his best friend’s death have the purpose of disclosing the dynamics that are influential in the building of the nation and grounding the new ideology. Therefore, the rest of Turgut’s dream is quite meaningful:

“Republic must not be so indifferent to this situation” [Turgut] wanted to cry. “It simply cannot turn a blind eye to this!” He extended his hands to Abdülhamit while he was trying to stand up. The lights had dimmed out, he could not see the couch any longer. “You may well ask why I do not interfere with all this although I have founded the Third Republic.” He turned his head towards the new voice he heard. “I am not strong enough,” uttered the voice. The room was lighted up a bit now: Mustafa Kemal was there before Turgut...Having recured his power, Turgut attempted to speak: “How so? Do you not manage all this? How can you not prevent it?” Mustafa Kemal made a gesture showing his desperation. As Turgut was about to walk toward him, he woke up in a sweat. (84)

This striking conversation both with Abdülhamit the Second and Mustafa Kemal denotes that the Turkish Republic cannot evade being haunted by the oppressed and the ignored parts of the past that has been occluded from history. In other words, Turgut’s dream illustrates the clash between the old and the new, and how the current order is bound to be haunted by the previous one.

When it comes to a detailed discussion of “The Song of the Disconnected” in the context of history, it should be noted that the language Selim uses throughout his autobiography imitates such narrative forms as history, epic, theatre, and even sacred texts. Selim does set out with his life story but his narrative digresses to Central Asian Inscriptions, letters written for Jesus,

historical figures such as Hitler, Turkish Divan poets such as Fuzuli, Nedim, Baki and many others. There is no center, no coherency but fragmented narrative at hand. Selim incorporates all these elements into his songs in order not to confound the readers but to make a point: Selim's childhood is only an instrument through which he can express his problem with history and undermine its claims to narrate the past as it is. In other words, writing his autobiography in a playful way provides Selim a chance to confront a past that has been swept under the rug. That he juxtaposes incongruous elements together in this narrative can be explained with his problem with official accounts of history. Put differently, the real problematization of historical narratives can be seen in Selim's autobiography: he has fictionalized his childhood over again. Within this framework, he endeavors to show how the past and identities thereof can be re-created, revised and retold--thereby fictionalized--by means of language. He tries to indicate that the modernist project with the emergence of new Turkish republic and the institutions as well as new ideology thereof have opened up new skirmishes among the society:

The question of identity eventually leads to the question of the meaning of history as an attempt to create a coherent narrative of identity. The "Song of the Disconnected" parodies official history in its desire to create an origin by appropriating the traditional elements into a narrative of modern progress that will guarantee an identity. According to this official version of history, modernity is not a sundering of the traditional but is embedded in tradition itself as a seed; thus, what is happening today is the dialectical progress of that which has been at the origin all along. Cultural schizophrenia is produced and kept in place by this effort to weave the traditional and the modern into a narrative fabric. What the "Song of the Disconnected" reveals by parodying these narratives is the failure of the project of modernity, its inability to build an identity on the exhausted forces of a defeated culture, and the confusion created by the legends of past victories and the reality of the sad and failed present. Thus, "The Song of the Disconnected" is also a legend of exhaustion, fatigue, and death at the cultural/historical level. (Ertuğrul 639-40)

Out of this legend of death rise ghosts and specters of the past that have been created by a culture suffering from chaos. This condition can be argued to stem from the loss of meaning for the present circumstances, which inevitably leads to trauma.

Selim also criticizes those who are attached blindly to their so-called “Turkish roots” and therefore sets out to parody the attempts to base the modern Turkish identity on an origin--an objective held by the Turkish Historical Thesis as well. In the exegesis part of the songs, this point is considered:

I am setting out by talking over the common name of the songs “Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow”. What does Selim mean with the word “Yesterday”? And what interconnects it to “Today” and “Tomorrow”? If you ask me, Selim “the Unique and Turk” does aim to touch upon the question regarding how the Turks put their appearance within the history. “Yesterday” indicates the Turks in Central Asia. “Yesterday” indicates the circumstances of the Turks before they were present in the realm of site civilization. What was their condition like? (Atay 137-38)

This is where Selim starts his artificial account of the origin of Turks and the *cornerstones* of their civilization. The following part is a parody of the definition of Turkishness. With the foundation of the Turkish republic, the aim of creating a new national identity was only possible by defining the codes of a new Turkishness. To this end, discovering the existence of those that are of Turkic origin but having long been spread all over the world was crucial. This might seem, at first glance, like the exploration and recovery of a Turkish identity that had been forgotten and was interrupted during the Ottoman Empire. It can also be considered as refreshment of the collective memory. However, the primary function of these attempts, as Selim puts it through parody, is nothing other than instrumentalizing history in order to come up with a ground on which to base Turkishness and the new republic. In other words, Selim wants to show the illogical and non-scientific nature of the recreation process of Turkish identity.

Selim's parody is notable since his language undermines any claims of elaborate logic behind the accounts of national histories:

It is written in "Kamus'u Berceste-i Türki" ("A Comprehensive Dictionary of Turkish Language"--a fabricated document Atay uses) that: "Turks entirely constituted a tribal society before they migrated to their homeland from Central Asia. They had a societal order that was standardized according to the requirements of a shelter-tent civilization. We can prove the remoteness of this order to the conditions of life today by demonstrating that such words that have become established in our language now as glass, straw mat, tie, (house) rent, cherry, light, table, plate, coffin, music, education, grave, bedstead, word, sentence were unknown to the speakers of this language (that is, Pure-Turkish). That these words cannot be found in Pure-Turkish...helps us draw the following conclusions about the lifestyle of this tribe:

Turks would not look out of the window.

Turks would not sit on straw mats and sweep their concerns under a straw mat.

This habit started with the Ottomans.

Turks never used to wear ties.

Turks disliked lightness/frivolity.

Turks would not pay any house rent...

Turks would not eat cherries.

Turks would not eat their food on a table, or use plates while eating...

Turks were neither encoffined nor entombed...

Turks would not listen to music.

Turks did not get educated at schools.

Turks never expressed their ideas by means of such patterns as words and sentences. (138)

In these provocative lines, Selim criticizes the superficiality and blind acceptance of whatever is present to glorify a nation. He also satirizes straightforward logic and ongoing definitions of Turkishness. After this account of the tribal society of Turkish origin, Selim re-writes the legend of the migration of Turks in Central Asia to Anatolia--a so-called *historical* event that is the fountainhead and at the core of the Turkish Historical Thesis. He does this by firstly noting the unreliability of *concrete* documents and evidence, and says "Western historians obsessively talk about documents; accordingly, I want to publicize a document for you...belonging to the pre-migration period." (183). Soon after posing this big challenge, Selim also states that "Turkish history,

according to a non-scientific classification, is divided into two: recent history and remote history. As a matter of fact, both of these histories are quite distant from us,” emphasizing the fact that either it is recent or remote, history is bound to be distorted to some extent the moment it falls into the language since it goes through the filters of dominant narratives (203). After putting these crucial points forward, Selim begins to narrate *his* version of the Turkish past.

The Turkish Historical Thesis claimed that Turks, being the descendants of inhabitants of Central Asia, had to migrate to other areas and created great civilizations in world history such as Sumerians, Trojans and even Hittites. Selim takes this theory into account and makes fun of the pride in fallacious assumptions regarding the past by stating that “[o]ur essence was constituted and determined in an age that we can call ‘The Remotest History’ which is outside of these two eras (recent history and remote history). No matter how ancient Hittites, Sumerians, Acadians are regarded, they do not have any permanent influence on us” (Atay 203).

Conclusion

Selim’s (and Atay’s) version of Turkish history is in fact a counter-history that aims to transform received ideas concerning the past and leave a question mark in the minds of people--thereby in collective memory. Nevertheless, the tool Selim uses to subvert the claims of history as an impartial reference for the past is not language itself: he has mistrust for language because of its incapacity to represent reality in the past and create alternative discourses thereof. To this end, he wants to consider the issue of history from the vantage point of literature because as

Nancy J. Peterson in *Against Amnesia: Contemporary Women Writers and the Crises of Historical Memory* argues, it is only literature's "intense lyricism [that] compels the reader to listen to [the] painful histories and remember them" (13). This is why literature is an alternative and a better way to put counter-histories into words because it does not make groundless claims to reflect the past as it is. Instead, it provides a plethora of possibilities regarding the past and indicates the fabricated nature of history. In addition, literature creates a resistance point that is required in the face of fragmentation of one's perception of the collective self, memory and history. Nurdan Gürbilek in *Kör Ayna, Kayıp Şark (Blind Mirror, Lost Orient)* provides a similar argument on literature and argues that

As far as I am concerned, literature...is vital since it is powerful enough to cope with both the fragmentation that is an inseparable component of the realm called "Self" and the distress originating in fragmentation; it is crucial because it is able to tell us its story by means of fragmenting...and it is capable of appealing to our fragmented and distressed selves. (13)

Literature is the means through which Atay paves the way for the problematization of official reconfiguration and representation of history. As has been pointed out so far, *The Disconnected* is a novel that is full of counter-arguments considering how a public memory and identity is constructed through history and language adopted during the foundation process of Turkish republic. Atay negates the presumably solid ground on which historical accounts have been established, thereby allowing official history to be questioned. Shaken to its foundations, historiography no more corresponds to a linear and stable narrative of the past. Instead, the past is conceived as a sequence of events that are fragmented and abused. Throughout *The Disconnected*, one comes to the realization that historical references in essence do not signify the past as such. This stems from the novel's (and literature's in general) power to lay the way

open for a multi-layered reading and creating a plethora of alternative discourses
vis-à-vis those of official history.

CHAPTER 4

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD

It has never been possible to get rid of the dead. (Atay 231)

*Foul deeds will rise, though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.
(Shakespeare 1.2.256-57)*

Just before the performance of *The Murder of Gonzago*, in his long soliloquy, Hamlet makes a statement: “For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak” (2.2.546). The victim of the murder, the ghost, will speak out regardless of the agents of the murder. In other words, there is no power to cover up and silence the story of ghosts. However, once they begin to speak, ghosts create confusion and chaos for their subjects. The principal problem here concerns how to tell those stories by means of a language that has been worn and torn for ages, becoming in the process a prime medium of manipulation in the service of hegemony. Bearing this in mind, it is first necessary to consider the events and conditions that make ghosts arise and seek for their stories to be told.

In the exegesis to “The Song of the Disconnected,” Selim comprehensively talks about a dream he once had. In this dream, he stands in the same place with many well-known figures from Turkish and world history such as Abdülhakhamit (a nineteenth-century Turkish poet), Alpaslan (the first Turkish ruler to invade Anatolia), Fuzuli (a sixteenth-century Turkish Divan poet), Namık Kemal (a nineteenth-century Turkish playwright and poet), Hitler and Gorki. They altogether perform a theatrical act in which each historical figure has a part. As Selim recounts: “Through the balcony, I enter the room. Inside the room are the people of a wide range of heights...Abdülhakhamit...stands up and comes close to me and informs me that everyone has learned their parts by heart and I can start

the rehearsal” (Atay 232). Soon after this, everybody begins talking all at once in a tumultuous fashion. Among the chaotic speeches of these major people who have a place in history, Selim as a minor character can hardly find a voice to express his own ideas. Considered from Selim’s point of view, the theatrical act makes no sense: every historical figure seems to utter strange words that are out of context--if there is any context at all. All the fragmented speeches made by the other “actors” seem to do nothing but confuse Selim who is unable to make any connection between them. Therefore he is incapable of situating himself in the conversation--or in their world. As a result, he can do nothing but lapse into almost a complete silence because Selim perceives that language is an insufficient means to say what needs to be said. Besides, these noteworthy historical figures dominate the conversation so much that Selim ends up being overwhelmed by their existence.

In *Hamlet*, in the scene when Rosencrantz and Guildenstern come face to face with Hamlet the first time, their confusion over Hamlet’s indecipherable words is quite like Selim’s desperation among the crowd of people. Even in Shakespeare’s text, both Rosencrantz and Guildenstern convey the feeling of being thrown into a world full of chaotic incidents and unintelligible speeches by Hamlet, out of which they are able to derive almost no definite meaning:

HAMLET... your news is not true. Let me question more in particular. What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?
GUILDENSTERN. Prison, my lord?
HAMLET. Denmark's a prison.
ROSENCRANTZ. Then is the world one.
HAMLET. A goodly one, in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one o'th'worst.
ROSENCRANTZ. We think not so my lord.
HAMLET. Why then 'tis none to you, for there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so. To me it is a prison.

ROSENCRANTZ. Why then your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

HAMLET. O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space...(2.2.229-244)

As a matter of fact, Denmark is more of a prison to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern than it seems to Hamlet because whereas Hamlet finds the chance to circumvent the plots devised by his uncle, neither Rosencrantz nor Guildenstern have the same opportunity to do so. Shocked by the remarks Hamlet makes and perplexed due to his incessant questions, they grow helpless and confess to being sent for by the king:

HAMLET. But in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

ROSENCRANTZ. To visit you my lord, no other occasion.

HAMLET. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks, but I thank you - and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny.

Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me. Come, come. Nay, speak.

GUILDENSTERN. What should we say my lord?

HAMLET. Why, anything but to the purpose. You were sent for - and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

ROSENCRANTZ. To what end my lord?

HAMLET. That you must teach me. But...be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or not...

GUILDENSTERN. My lord, we were sent for. (2.2.256-277)

Hamlet puts them into such a vulnerable position that before they can guard themselves against him, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are so overwhelmed and caught up in the whirl of Hamlet's cross-questioning that they admit their pre-arranged affiliation with the king.

Tom Stoppard's tragicomedy *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* points to this crisis Rosencrantz and Guildenstern undergo amidst the consecutive events taking place in *Hamlet*. Finding themselves thrown into Shakespeare's famous play, among the ghostly presence of such well-known characters as

Hamlet, Gertrude and Claudius, the doomed courtiers' situation is as incomprehensible and chaotic as that of Selim's. Stoppard's duo, like Atay's Selim, cannot abstain from being a part of the realm of the dead, or ghosts. They all lack the linguistic capacity to put forth and verbalize their ordeal with the world. However, what differentiates Selim from Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is that the former is aware that this is only a dream, while Stoppard's duo cannot comprehend whether this is a dream or reality itself:

GUIL. A Chinaman of the T'ang Dynasty--and, by which definition, a philosopher - dreamed he was a butterfly, and from that moment he was never quite sure that he was not a butterfly dreaming it was a Chinese philosopher. (43)

Being Overwhelmed by a Dominating Narrative

*The future belongs to ghosts.
Jacques Derrida, "Ghost Dance"*

Some modern writers, like Atay, find crucial relevance in employing Shakespearean themes or reproducing his plays in a contemporary dramatic work. Benjamin Vonwiller in "The Spectre of Shakespeare in Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*" argues that the purpose of this adoption and reproduction is to tap into "Shakespeare's cultural momentum, and [appropriate] significance from it" (1). Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* adopts just such a "tactic": Stoppard takes Shakespeare as his beginning point, capitalizing on "the reservoir of shared ideas and conventions surrounding him," thereby pushing the reader to become concerned with the "interface between Shakespeare's text and the contemporary components of Stoppard's text" (1-2). By "contemporary components" it can be understood that

Stoppard draws on Shakespeare to respond to a wide range of crises people in the 1960s underwent in a post-war world that is characterized by the loss of meaning and one's primordial conception of transcendental signifiers. Gabriele Scott Robinson in "Plays without Plot: The Theatre of Tom Stoppard" elaborates on how Stoppard handles the shift of paradigms during the 1960s and the crisis of meaning in the psyche of a postmodern society in general and of the European community in particular:

The subjects of Tom Stoppard's theatre are familiar to much of contemporary literature. He writes of the anxiety and confusion of life, of the helplessness of the individual caught up in forces impervious to reason, of the loss of identity and faith. He discusses in philosophical terms the lack of absolute values, the problem of freedom, the uncertainty of all knowledge and perception. Stoppard's world is implausible and irrational and also full of cruelty and pain. His characters are the victims of accidental calamities which threaten and occasionally destroy them. (37)

Thrust into the center of an acclaimed and canonical play like *Hamlet*, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (hereafter Ros and Guil) reflect a postmodern condition of being human in the garments of the Elizabethan era. These two minor characters who actually have no active function or distinctive properties throughout Shakespeare's play are thrown into the center of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. As if he has perceived this, Guil asks, "why us?--anybody would have done. And we have contributed nothing" (Stoppard 67). Being incapable of comprehending their condition and feeling out of context among the other players, they end up finding themselves in a dead end--both figuratively and literally. What Guil utters towards the end of the play is noteworthy: "We've travelled too far, and our momentum has taken over; we move idly towards eternity, without possibility of reprieve or hope of explanation" (87-88).

That Shakespeare's *Hamlet* dominates Stoppard's play from the beginning to the end creates a sense of imprisonment not only for the playwright but also for

the characters, Ros and Guil. The duo cannot escape from the setting they have been thrown into; nor can they find any answers beyond stark obscurity. Guil muses:

Wheels have been set in motion, and they have their own pace, to which we are... condemned. Each move is dictated by the previous one--that is the meaning of order. If we start being arbitrary it'll just be a shambles: at least, let us hope so. Because if we happened, just happened to discover, or even suspect, that our spontaneity was part of their order, we'd know that we were lost. (Stoppard 42-43)

Despite Stoppard's attempts to circumvent the dominating power of *Hamlet* on his play, as Noorbakhsh Hooti and Samaneh Shooshtarian argue in "A Postmodernist Reading of Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*," his duo's struggle to create a meaning and narrative for themselves in their chaotic surrounding yields almost no successful outcome:

In [the play], Stoppard makes advantage of an iconic text as Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, presents his text from the perspective of Shakespeare's two minor characters whose narratives are already "written" while their attempt to break free of the play-within-play...is fruitless. It is Stoppard who plays upon them to represent his own purposes and to demonstrate that *the human experience cannot be fully understood by focusing on the dominant narrative*. (149--emphasis added)

Their situation is quite similar to Selim's because he also admits that he has never known what real freedom is like in a world defined by dominant narratives: "I have been punished throughout my life," he says, "I've always felt like I am doomed to a cage. I've carried this cage...wherever I've been. I've watched the whole world through the grids of it" (Atay 693). In an unintelligible world in which they find themselves without any coherent explanation but seem to be under the spell of some all-encompassing force beyond their will, Ros and Guil can also be considered as ordinary as common men who are required to play many different roles dictated by the society and who hopelessly try to make sense of the situation they face in the ambiguous flow of life. In this sense, the play reflects a

universal condition of being human, and thus placed within the power struggles and communal dictations that characterize social animals.

William F. Thomsen in his review “*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* by Tom Stoppard” underlines the basic message that could be derived from Stoppard’s play:

Among those many who have recognized the profound universality of *Hamlet* stands a young modern British playwright who oddly enough is less concerned with the universality of Hamlet than with the universality of the two insignificant persons of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Tom Stoppard’s insights and observations are profoundly simple. In his hands, the preferably obvious becomes increasingly uncomfortable, hysterically funny, and painfully real: men are born, live and die. (1234)

The story of Ros and Guil and their inability to position themselves and their experience in a constructive narrative stems from the fact that it is Shakespeare’s master text that determines their actions and memories. On the other hand, this situation is not peculiar to the duo. Their unintelligible position in Elsinore has a more universal implication: in the hands of dominant powers--be it a canonical text or established systems of government--and within the narrative written and shaped by them, the condition of being human is full of imposed realities, manipulated conception of identities, unstable memories, traumatized selves and reconfigured accounts of the past.

Master Narratives, Changing Paradigms, Political Turmoil and the Writing of
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead

First premiered at Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 1966, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* is generally considered an existentialist and absurdist play:

The idea for *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* came from Kenneth Ewing, Stoppard's agent, who had long been interested in which of Shakespeare's kings ruled in England when Rosencrantz and Guildenstern arrived on their mission from Claudius. Stoppard developed the idea into a short burlesque Shakespearean pastiche for a young playwrights' colloquium in Berlin in 1964, and then later into the final three act version of 1966. (Vonwiller 3)

This idea of a pastiche paved the way for the uncanny journey of Ros and Guil into a world that is to emphasize their disconnectedness. The play begins with Ros and Guil betting on the toss of coins on their way to Elsinore. As they attempt to determine their direction, they sight some tragedians that are to put on stage the play *The Murder of Gonzago* at the command of Hamlet. Afterwards, they suddenly find themselves in the castle, greeted and welcomed by Gertrude and Claudius. Soon they happen to learn that they have been sent for by the king to "glean what afflicts Hamlet" by means of cross-examination, and also to encourage the prince into worldly pleasures. Nonetheless, with the constant intrusions of the characters from the original play, Ros and Guil grow numb and become unable even to make out what is going on around them, let alone find out why Hamlet is reeling out of control. In the course of the events, the duo is commanded by the king to escort Hamlet to England. When they are on a boat heading to England, pirates attack the ship as in Shakespeare's play, and they are sent to their pre-ordained death with a plot devised by Hamlet. At the end of the play, the last scene of *Hamlet* is acted and an ambassador from England announces that "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead," having been executed as the letter requested.

By writing *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, Stoppard attracts attention to what might have happened beyond the court while Ros and Guil were waiting for their turns and instructions in *Hamlet*. Therefore, whenever *Hamlet's*

instructions read “exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern” the duo enters Stoppard’s play, that is, their supposed offstage. Stoppard hints at this position of his protagonists in the play when The Player, another important figure, says that “every exit [is] an entrance somewhere else” (20). From time to time, though, some fragments from the original play are inserted into Stoppard’s text where the major characters in *Hamlet* appear briefly and then wander off the stage--leaving Ros and Guil more at a loss each time they do so. In this chaotic setting Stoppard creates for them, the duo unsurprisingly cannot alter the way things are, no matter how much they attempt to. This is because, as Guil speculates, they are “now within un-, sub-, or supernatural forces,” that is, the master text of Shakespeare (Stoppard 11). Another explanation is that the political and social circumstances under which Tom Stoppard wrote this play has such an effect on the main characters that even Ros and Guil themselves discern that offstage, they are far away from the security and a definite meaning of the world onstage.

The 1960s, during which Tom Stoppard wrote his play *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, witnessed turbulent years almost all over the world, especially in Europe and in the United States. In a post-war world under the threat of a nuclear war emerged a wide range of equal rights movements such as civil rights, feminist, and gay rights. Fuelled by the Cold War psychology driving conflicts between countries supporting or fighting against communism or capitalism, the conflicts of interests came to a head during The United States’ involvement in the Vietnam War, leading to a wide-scale anti-Vietnam War campaigns. Many Americans questioned the morality of sending thousands of people to their death at the hands of the state. They thought that the U.S. did not care about the independence of Vietnam but, rather, sought to take its place in the

struggle for power in world politics. As John Merriman in *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Present* argues, people “protested against American involvement in the Vietnamese civil war, where, despite government claims of a...struggle against communism, the United States seemed to be supporting a corrupt political regime against determined nationalists, albeit Communists” (1353). At the heart of anti-war movement was the idea of questioning authority and challenging political power, thus influencing the makers of policy by demanding new, radical, and even subversive rights through a show of opposition. Merriman gives a brief outline of the events that took place in the aftermath of the Second World War, specifically those that occurred during the late 1960s:

After almost two decades of growing prosperity...domestic political conflict erupted in Europe...and the United States in 1968...Many ‘baby boomers’ born after the war saw their revolt as one of an entire generation against its elders. They blamed them for a world that seemed unresponsive to demands for social justice and change on behalf of the underprivileged and the oppressed. Many felt alienated... from materialistic, industrial, bureaucratic society. (Merriman 1351)

Stoppard constructed *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* against this socio-political background. He created two characters who are passively caught up in the power struggles around them and who also suffer from a paradigm shift in their micro-cosmos--that is, having had minor roles in a canonical master text, they are now transformed into major characters of a play that gives them a central, albeit powerless, voice.

John Freeman in “Holding up the Mirror to Mind's Nature: Reading ‘Rosencrantz’ Beyond Absurdity” states that “[i]f we examine the mid-1960s from the perspective of...theories about paradigm shift, we can begin to see [*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*] as one of several concurrent responses

to a sense of crisis and change”; these responses yield productive results because “‘crisis often proliferates new discoveries' and reformulations of accepted modes of perception” (23). The “paradigm shift” that Freeman denotes are the changes in the world concerning the economic, political and social transformation and mobilization of the masses. As if to emphasize these transformations in the society in which he lives, Stoppard makes one of the characters in the play, the Player, continuously remark “times being what they are...” (16, 17, 19).

As a result of the questioning of the legitimacy of sovereign power and its actions in the name of the people it is responsible for, a proliferation of alternative perspectives within the society occurred. The transformation of acknowledged norms that once appeared to explain the world was the outcome of changing societal dynamics, and Stoppard’s text, along with his characters, are inevitably affected by the current political upheavals. In other words, it could be posited that *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* was affected by this worldwide effective paradigm shift and societal transformation, and that the rewriting of Hamlet mimics this shift and transformation.

Taking into account the international scope of the transformation during the 1960s and its effects on *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, Freeman draws a parallel between Stoppardian and Shakespearean political and social circumstances:

Shakespeare's play provides Stoppard a larger ‘plot’ linking the dislocations of his own era with those occurring in the late sixteenth century. Shakespeare, like Stoppard, wrote at a time of paradigm shift, a time in which fundamental reconceptualizations of reality and people's place in it were occurring. (20)

As can be seen, Stoppard dovetails the late Renaissance with his own period in his play because “the Renaissance's 'recognition of the discontinuous nature of human

identity' and its 'clash of paradigms' [are the] themes particularly relevant to twentieth-century concerns” (Freeman 21). Taking into account that Stoppard wrote *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* during a time in which the linearity of the previous paradigms no longer sufficiently applied to the “new, multimodal experiences of reality,” its similarity to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* becomes even more visible (22). However, it needs emphasizing that even though the social and political paradigm shifts were alike, Shakespeare provides his reader a relatively secure world in which there are still transcendental signifiers to hold on to, or a more meaningful surrounding to feel at ease. On the other hand, the alteration of the perspectives in the social and political realm in the 1960s resulted in the questioning of authority on a wide scale, resisting its dictations and revolting against it. The world was transformed into a place where previous conceptions of truth and reality were replaced by alternative explanations, definitions, meanings and narratives. Stoppard uses this political background and reconstructs *Hamlet* by manipulating the cracks thereof, and “creating patterns of interference with Shakespeare's text” (23). By this means, Stoppard points to the strategies of governing classes in a society, and how they make use of the cracks in historiography and public memory, especially during and after political and social paradigm shifts.

From Periphery to Center: Trauma and Chaos

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead manifests “the culture's movement away from the linear text to new, more complex modes of conceptualizing the text” (Freeman 23). Stoppard labors to “negotiate a sense of dislocation in which ‘the

social order, character, language, are all shown in a state of disrepair” and what the reader witnesses throughout his play is “the role-playing of individuals cut adrift from the history they had assumed to be the origin of their private significance” (20). At this point, it should be noted that Selim, though a fictional character, assumes a similar role to that of Stoppard: he aims to cut his ties with official writings of history because he does not trust its linear accounts, and he writes an alternative history about those who, like Ros and Guil, are disconnected. While Ros and Guil have no sense of history or personal past in the first place, let alone an urge to get rid of its effects on them, Selim desires to expose the sense of dislocation created by official historical accounts. Being already stripped of such concepts as past, history, or origin, Guil dramatizes this with the question: “Has it ever happened to you that all of a sudden and for no reason at all you haven't the faintest idea how to spell the word – ‘wife’ - or ‘house’ - because when you write it down you just can't remember ever having seen those letters in that order before?” (Stoppard 27). Stoppard’s 1960s England and Atay’s 1970s Turkey, like Shakespeare’s Renaissance England, are periods “caught up in 'the exhilaration and fearfulness of living inside a gap in history, when the paradigms that structured the past seem facile and new paradigms uncertain” (Freeman 21).

Another point that is noteworthy in the context of both *The Disconnected* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* is that they skillfully shift the focus of the reader from major characters to minor ones, whether historically, socially or literarily. Atay occasionally puts Selim and Turgut side by side with many important figures in history: he sometimes makes Selim talk with Jesus Christ, lets Turgut assume the role of Hamlet, or have conversations with critical figures such as Abdülhamit the Sultan and Kemal Atatürk. In all these encounters, the

leading role and focus belong to either Selim or Turgut, not the other way round as expected. Similarly, Stoppard's play is the portrayal of little or marginal men at the center of a canonical play with many well-known characters. It should be noted here that Ros and Guil are such "petty" characters for some directors of *Hamlet* that their parts are even omitted altogether to save time for more "critical" issues. Considering this, Stoppard seems to intentionally and dramatically locate the focus away from the court and royal characters to the world of two ordinary men (and minor characters) with whom, in a modern context, the reader can empathize more. Joseph Hynes in "Tom Stoppard's Lighted March," notes Ros and Guil "appear only seven times in *Hamlet*. Stoppard upends Shakespeare by putting these walk-ons at center stage, from which they are virtually never absent. The effect created is that *Hamlet* appears to be going on in the wings of Stoppard's play and intrudes only seven times on [*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*]" (644). It is they, rather than Hamlet himself, who are emphasized and put into the center due to the fact that they are figures who appropriately reflect the spirit of the late-twentieth century which is generally represented as "halting and inarticulate" (Vonwiller 6). This relocation of importance from the nobility to (relatively) common man reflects the political context of the 1960s. Stoppard's attempt, again, resembles that of Selim because he, too, aimed to write the story of disconnected individuals as an alternative to historical narratives that consist of mainstream accounts of glorious figures from history and their accomplishments. More specifically, this shift from the major characters to minor characters can be described as a deconstructive and de-centering approach.

The past is constructed selectively and it is internalized by the society through the mechanisms of remembering and forgetting. Thus, the construction of

the current collective memory resides in the stories constituted by means of the narratives of the past--history. Indeed, history is the story regarding the past. The only difference between them is the assertion that history recounts the real events that once occurred in a specific time span. However, the narrative called history is never exempt from the manipulations of sovereign powers and their world view. As a result of this narrative, a certain conception of communal identity is achieved and taken for granted within a given society.

On the other hand, sudden or uncanny changes such as revolutions, reinterpretation of history/identity, or emergence of a portion of the past that has long been repressed are threats to social stability, and they inescapably open up gaps and cracks in society's conception of itself and its roots. This is followed by a rupture in collective memory and identity. At the end of this process, social memory becomes open to manipulation because on this shattered ground, chaos prevails and it takes its tolls on social trauma and collective amnesia. In the course of social transformations or mobilizations, what often poses a critical danger is the chaos they bring about and the trauma the members of a given community undergo. This is because in a traumatic event, as Jenny Edkins in *Trauma and the Memory of Politics* asserts, we can "no longer be who we were, and the social context is not what we assumed it to be. It is not all-powerful, it does not have all the answers: in fact, its answers are flawed" (Edkins 8). This is a realm where ghosts swarm and then haunt individuals who are disconnected both literally and figuratively. Put differently, dislocated identities that suffer from social transformations become graveyards for ghosts. Erosion of values that society once clung to puts social order as well as language, identity and history in a state of despair. Radical configurations of reality and how people are located vis-à-vis this

new perspective gives way to individuals' severing almost all ties with history they previously relied on to establish their origins and "noteworthy" existence. While the new paradigm's multi-dimensional definition of reality invalidates the linearity of the previous system, a weird sense of living in a void without any coherent system to hold on to takes place. In this new political and social landscape, every single individual seems to sway from side to side in a deep void just like any entity detached from a center. Old order promises no profoundness or reliability; but the new order is full of uncertainty and, of course, ghosts.

There are two possible options for individuals undergoing this chaotic situation: the first alternative is for the state to manipulate it in such a way that community suffering from the void and uncertainty surrenders what the power holders dictate for the sake of security and so-called coherency of official accounts. Thereby, for example, historical narratives are interpreted according to the benefits of dominant political classes, and presented to the society as unchangeable and ultimate accounts of the past. As a result, the reconfiguration of memory, which has been rendered vulnerable and unstable in this process, is realized. The other result for some members of the society is to question the authority and resist its indoctrination, finally end up dealing with ghosts arising out of the cracks of the same narratives.

The trauma Ros and Guil have been through, then, is the one stemming from a sharp transition from the margin to the center. They are two characters that have been made to resurrect in a new context after being executed in *Hamlet*. For this very reason, they suffer from amnesia and the past which, as a referent, has long gone under erasure. To them, there is no past--therefore no present or future as well. Put differently, they are deeply traumatized because one of the grounds

for trauma is an abrupt assault on social life as it has been known and understood that far. Abnormal events occur and, what is worse, social life loses its predictability and mundane concepts and habits become defamiliarized. Under these circumstances, boundaries between order and chaos, good and bad, life and death become porous and vague. This is a process that stems from the fact that time is “out of joint”. Therefore, this is a haunting site for ghosts and their unexpected haunting.

Edkins illustrates how state--or dominant authority--reasserts its power after traumatic events in the society:

In the aftermath of a war or catastrophe comes the reckoning. The dead and the missing are listed, families grieve and comfort each other, and memorials are erected. If it is a war that has been won, commemoration endorses those in power...Private grief is overlaid by national mourning and blunted--or eased--by stories of service and duty. The authorities that had the power to conscript citizens and send them to their deaths now write their obituaries...What the state attempts...is a normalization or medicalization of survivors...The aim is recovery, or the reinsertion of survivors, into structures of power. (Edkins 1, 9)

Erasing trauma and the causes of it, thereby letting memory be re-integrated into the conformism of collective memory only serves the consolidation of the authority. This choreographing of new dynamics in society after wars, revolutions and social transformations functions to such an extent that there is, as Edkins states, no language for it:

Abuse by the state, the fatherland, like abuse by the father within the family, cannot be spoken in language, since language comes from and belongs to the family and the community. Survivors of political abuse in the contemporary west have something compelling to say, but it is something that is unsayable in the vocabulary of the powerful, and it is dangerous to the political institutions in place... Communication takes place in language and language itself is social and political, not individual. Relations of power are produced through and reflected in language. (Edkins 7)

In his rewriting of *Hamlet*, Stoppard uses a postmodern discourse to inscribe this impossibility of putting the stories of the repressed and the disconnected through language. In doing so, he reflects the distress of the paradigm shift in the 1960s, and the crisis of modern existence thereof.

Exhaustion of Language, Crisis of Identity and Loss of Memory

Noorbakhsh Hooti and Samaneh Shooshtarian maintain that although both modern and postmodern tendencies are traceable in Stoppard's dramatic achievements, some vivid postmodernist features in his controversial play are the examples of postmodernism in theatre (147). Thus, Stoppard weaves his pastiche with a plethora of references to the crisis in the collective memory and society's changing perceptions. For this reason, like Oğuz Atay, Stoppard recounts the story of two characters whose disintegration of identity, feelings of displacement, and inability to create an intelligible historical narrative culminates in estrangement from the collective entity surrounding them as well as the language it adopts.

In *The Disconnected*, Turgut suffers from what Derrida calls *différance*, which is a notion in postmodern criticism that means wrestling with gaps, thresholds, traces, porous and evasive meanings in language and which is a handicap for the one who aims to come to *closure*--an ultimate meaning or a transcendental signified--through language. "I discern an enormous chaos and ambiguity," Turgut says, "The previous definitions I had given to my experiences seem to be invalidated gradually. [On the other hand] I am not able to re-define the current words either" (Atay 417). Similarly, Ros and Guil experience a deferral of any specific meaning that could be derived from their surrounding and

from the words other characters in *Hamlet* utter. Hooti explains that, starting off and dying in this incomprehensible world, Ros and Guil,

two useless characters in Shakespeare's tragedy, are in search of their identities and their past in a modern sense, completely unaware that past and all its ideals are gone with the wind, and a new postmodernist atmosphere has pervaded the air. In this way, the play resists any specific interpretations. (161)

The reason for this, argues Hooti, is that “Stoppard never provides his reader or spectator with a definite, logocentric text with a decidable meaning” (151). This is particularly true in the case of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, which does not lend itself to a definite interpretation due to the deferral of meaning language presents. As to Ros and Guil, they incessantly use repetitive expressions full of silences and pauses to deal with their exhaustion with language. Their inability to express the lack of any definite surrounding or meaning pertaining to what they experience is best reflected through nothing but empty words:

GUIL. Well...
ROS. Quite...
GUIL. Well, well.
ROS. Quite, quite...(Pause.) Etcetera. (Stoppard 63)

Silences hidden behind the repetition of words also mark the gaps both in their memory and the past. In *The Disconnected*, too, the exhaustion witnessed in language results in Selim's resorting to a strategy similar to that of Ros and Guil. “Gaps come about out of nowhere,” says Selim, “I am struggling to fill them in with empty tautologies” (453). Likewise, lack of any determinate meaning and the inability to reach a closure via language not only give way to ontologically unstable identities, but also put the duo in a vicious circle at the end of which they are able to make no headway:

ROS. What was the last thing I said before we wandered off?
GUIL. When was that?
ROS (*helplessly*). I can't remember.

GUIL (*leaping up*). What a shambles! We're just not getting anywhere.
(Stoppard 77)

Reinforcing the ambiguity and impossibility of hermeneutical closure, thereby specific interpretation, is a minimalism that characterizes *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. The fragmented language and narrative result in minimalism which obstructs the progress of events because the characters that use this language are exhausted by the limitations of it. In *The Disconnected*, Selim's aspiration to create a new language stems from a similar concern: that language restricts what people can and cannot think of and put forward.

Minimalism, argues Hooti, is "particularly concerned with the reduction of the self and consciousness" in which case "the production of a text is an attempt to hold the self together, an attempt that fails because of the necessity of using language which is the cause of fragmentation in the first place" (157). At the base of Ros and Guil's misunderstanding of each other is the exhaustion and fragmentation of the language they use:

GUIL. You can't not-be on a boat
ROS. I've frequently not been on boats.
GUIL. No, no, no--what you've been is not on boats.
ROS. I wish I was dead. (Stoppard 78)

It should be noted that their exchange of words is also quite funny. However, at the heart of the theatre of the absurd lies an inevitable desperation residing underneath its humor. This black humor, which goes hand in hand with the absurdity and comic futility of language, expresses human beings' experience in the world. Language becomes slippery and devious, a distortive means of defining this cosmic setting and experience thereof. Therefore, silence or the utterance of one-syllable words--often meaningless--in Stoppard's play is quite common. This

is a minimalist tool which “often appears to be the only response to the inability to express either reality or the self as meaningful unities” (Hooti 158).

At this point, it is important to note the difference between Shakespeare and Stoppard in their approach to language comprehensively. This potentially sheds light on why Ros and Guil are at a loss between two languages onstage and offstage--Shakespearean and Stoppardian respectively--throughout the play. Dan Nguyen in “Transformation of *Hamlet* to *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*” points out the function of the language shift between two plays:

Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* has been transformed by Stoppard...in order to present Elizabethan values of fate, death and appearance vs. reality that can be associated with contemporary perceptions of these ideas, emphasising the intricacies of modern life. The shift in focus away from royalty in *Hamlet* towards the common individual in [*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*] reflects society’s changing attitudes...In order to achieve this, Stoppard transforms the form and language of *Hamlet* as well, in order to reflect modern society and its values (1).

The most visible distinction between these two languages is that the one in *Hamlet* has a purpose of creating and conveying meaning. For instance, Polonius’ comment on Hamlet’s agile use of language, “How pregnant sometimes his replies are!” is noteworthy because it denotes that Hamlet’s words bear many possible implications even during his lunacy (2.2.203-204). For Polonius, language can be claimed to be a transcendent signifier which is supposed to bring truths into the surface through words. On the other hand, the language used especially by Ros and Guil blurs whatever could possibly be taken for granted as ultimate truth:

Stoppard’s exploration of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern’s stage life and off-stage lives is a means to question the purpose of modern existence. “On-stage” Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have a very defined purpose, yet “off-stage”, for much of [the play] they lack direction. By associating with a modern audience, Stoppard has created a text reflective of a new era in which certainties and beliefs of the Elizabethan period have eroded, resulting in Stoppard’s effective slants on the classical *Hamlet*’s values and attitudes. (Nguyen 3)

As stated elsewhere, the language Stoppard's Ros and Guil speak offstage is fragmented and full of silent moments and seemingly useless repetitions vis-à-vis the language they adopt onstage. That is the very reason why they feel relatively more instructed and confident when they are acting their parts in *Hamlet*. In other words, when Ros and Guil go from offstage to onstage or vice versa, a transformation in their perspectives is inevitable due to the shift in language:

They must confine their feelings within the boundaries of words; instead, [once they enter offstage] they are simply goofing around, like two kids throwing a ball back and forth. They pun off each other's words without much intention of moving their dialogue toward a set purpose. In these parts of the play, Stoppard, consciously, mocks language for its failure to express what Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are thinking, for words cannot exactly capture their thought. (Hooti 158)

Indeed, it is notably obvious, as Vonwiller points out, that the moment they step “outside the boundaries of [the] script, as soon as the Shakespearean cast has exited, they revert to their previous apprehension and trepidation” (15). For instance, during the initial instructions of Claudius and Gertrude on Hamlet's transformation, Ros and Guil are quite assured of their position and speech vis-à-vis the other characters:

GERTRUDE. Good (*fractional suspense*) gentlemen...(They both bow.)
He hath much talked of you,
And sure I am, two men there is not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expand your time with us awhile
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits the king's remembrance.
ROS. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have on us,
Put your dread pleasure more into command
Than to entreaty.
GUIL. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves in the full bent
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded. (Stoppard 26)

Following Gertrude and Claudius' disappearance from the stage, however, Ros finds himself at a loss, crying:

ROS. I want to go home.

GUIL. Don't let them confuse you.

ROS. I'm out of my step here. (Stoppard 27)

A shift from Elizabethan language to modern diction is quite distinctive throughout the play and it, again, highlights the impossibility of coming to a closure through language in the modern world. As Vonwiller explains,

It is not without significant irony that Stoppard's appropriation and reproduction of scenes from *Hamlet* creates an effect where the poetic language of Shakespeare's characters makes them appear to be moving purposefully toward a tragic climax, whereas the modern colloquialism of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern shows them to be mired in inaction. (6)

Lack of a language that consists of unified and comprehensible signification system between Ros and Guil as well as their poor insight into their surroundings drift them to a dead end, both figuratively and literally. As Ros senses it: "over my step over my head body!- I tell you it's all stopping to a death, it's boding to a depth, stepping to a head, it's all heading to a dead stop" (Stoppard 27). This reflects their failure to seize control of their actions, thoughts and memories due to their mistrust in language in a postmodern world. While language in *Hamlet* could be regarded as an "empowering means of determining one's fate"; in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, "it often seems like an impotent tool, best suited for idle speculation" (Hooti 159). The following exchange of words illustrates this:

GUIL. Hm?

ROS. Yes?

GUIL. What?

ROS. I thought you ...

GUIL. No.

ROS. Ah. (*Pause*) (Stoppard 40)

On the other hand, viewed as a whole, it can be maintained that failure of language in referring to a transcendental signified might be wielded as a potential

and influential tool so as to undermine the debilitating effects of language on the characters. Coming to the realization of the fact that language is not a fixed signification mechanism might open the way for subversion and deconstruction thereof. Seen in this light, it can be claimed that unlike Selim who manages to create an alternative form of narrative in language as a means of dealing with the impotency thereof, what Ros and Guil can ultimately achieve is to point to the porousness and the exhaustion of language. However, it is Stoppard who is much like Selim in this sense: he writes the alternative story of the disconnected characters under the pressure and the dominating power of a master text, *Hamlet*, in order to underline both the changing paradigms in the world and, as a result, the impotency of language.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, in this context, reflects the post-war and postmodern condition of two characters who are at odds with their surrounding due to the shift of focus they experienced and whose traumatic condition results in a desperate struggle to hold on to the few shreds of reality reported to them by the other characters in *Hamlet*. In an incomprehensible and illogical surrounding, what makes their condition infinitely worse is their incapability of making sense of their identity and current situation owing to the fact that they have almost no memory of a personal history to connect them to the present. Guil puts their condition and exasperation into the following words: “We cross our bridges when we come to them and burn them behind us, with nothing to show our progress except a memory of the smell of smoke, and a presumption that once our eyes watered” (Stoppard 43). John Fleming in *Stoppard’s Theatre: Finding Order Amid Chaos* discusses the contingent problems of memory and social uncertainty:

Interwoven through [the play] are the recurrent issues of the nature of personal identity as well as the unreliability or variability of human memory and perspective. Cumulatively, Stoppard's work has been concerned with the social, moral, metaphysical, and personal condition of being human in an uncertain world. (2)

Selim, too, realizes that his identity and memory are threatened by the order in the world. Selim is unable to accommodate himself to the world, along with its instructions regarding how to be a decent man and how to adapt to the rules of the collective life. Selim admits this: "I do not know, even at this age, how to spit, smoke, wipe my face on a towel, hold objects like a man... Why the hell have I been living in such a world?" (626). Upon posing the question, he explains the reason for his cynical position against life with the following words: "Because I've never known what will happen to me even one moment later. After all, I haven't expected to reach that moment anyway. Eventually, I have been in a state of panic all the time" (631). On the other hand, neither Ros nor Guil has a sense of a unique identity or memory. The only thing they are aware of is that there is an ocean of questions to be answered and nobody around them has the means, or willingness, to answer them.

In *The Disconnected*, when Turgut begins to change and questions the world thoroughly and critically, he expostulates about the ambiguity of life in its essence by saying that "[t]hey make it difficult for us to listen to and believe wholeheartedly. One approaches every single word skeptically and cynically. Afterwards, what is real and what is fiction are inevitably intermingled... Nothing is left for us to hold on to any more. We end up being disconnected" (254). Turgut's situation is related to Selim's distrust in the linear conceptions of "reality" and explanation of the world and his cynical approach to the accepted norms of perception imposed on and by the society. Selim's resistance to them is

“contagious” and makes Turgut grow immune to the standard norms and accounts of reality. While Turgut is able, with the aid of his deceased friend, to see the unintelligibility of the world after stripping himself of the collective rationalizations of it, Ros and Guil lack such a comrade and guide as Selim. Thus, although the duo finds themselves in the same world of obscure definitions and dictations, they are unable to see into the fabricated nature of the stories that other characters recount about who they are and what their purpose is. As a result, their identity is constructed upon the stories of others and they have no other alternative than accept them, thereby strolling around Elsinore with unstable and vague identities.

The identities of Selim and Turgut blend in the course *The Disconnected*: the more Turgut finds out about the chaos underneath the seemingly meaningful order of the world, the less ties he maintains with his established conceptions on life. As a result, he comes closer to his friend’s deeper understanding of what is presented to people and what the reality is. Similarly, Ros and Guil have inseparable and vague identities but their identity is shaped simultaneously in the first place. This could, then, be the reason why even they themselves cannot tell apart which of them is Guildenstern or Rosencrantz. When they bump into the troupe of tragedians in the forest, for instance, Ros’ attempt to introduce themselves to the players also registers as absurd, underlining the ambiguity of their identities:

ROS. My name is Guildenstern, and this is Rosencrantz.
(GUIL confers briefly with him.) (Without embarrassment.)
I’m sorry - his name's Guildenstern, and I'm Rosencrantz. (16)

The other characters as well have difficulty addressing them with their names; therefore they end up becoming confused as in the following example:

HAMLET. My excellent good friends! How dost thou Guildenstern?
(*Coming downstage with an arm raised to ROS, GUIL meanwhile bowing to no greeting. HAMLET corrects himself. Still to ROS.*) Ah Rosencrantz! (*They laugh good naturedly at the mistake...*) Good lads, how do you both? (37-38)

As a result, Ros and Guil suffer continuously from the elusiveness of a stable identity. At the same time, they are instinctively scared of this ambiguity probably because of the fact that this might denote and even underline their insignificance, which is an inevitable outcome of surrendering and trusting the narratives of others and trying to build a conception of the self accordingly.

Ros and Guil are surrounded by a world that yields merely obscurity not only in terms of their identity but also about their memories. Cut off, to a considerable extent, from “the storage and retrieval functions” that help people become a part of collective memory and makes sense of the ongoing events around them, Ros and Guil lack the stability of consciousness and unavoidably suffer from amnesia (Freeman 27). Pondering on death, for instance, Ros says “There must have been one, a moment, in childhood when it first occurred to you that you don't go on forever. It must have been shattering--stamped into one's memory. And yet I can't remember it. It never occurred to me at all” (Stoppard 51). This condition results in their failure, as Freeman suggests, to

‘knit together a set of experiences in spite of intrusions or gaps, or to relate the current episode to a stored narrative’...The two characters are particularly unable to achieve any sense of continuity from their experiences; their lives are episodic, for they never have full access to the stored narrative that would give their lives continuity. (27)

Similarly, Turgut realizes some gaps in his memory. However, this is not such a negative condition for him because only by this way can he get rid of the previous teachings of dominant narratives that once shaped his identity and memory. On the other hand, the same situation is a complete failure for Ros and Guil because,

contrary to Turgut, they have never had a stored narrative to link their experiences and give meaning to them.

The fragmented identities and amnesiac selves of Ros and Guil make them doomed to a vicious circle full of gaps, repetitions, forgetting and uncertainty. Confirming this, Ros underlines the fact that his “mind remains a blank” (Stoppard 78). The chaos of their obscure situation is unnerving; yet, “they will not relinquish the hope of finding knowledge and certainty; so they speculate about chance and fate, wondering whether the chaos they perceive is part of a larger pattern or just a ‘shambles’ (Robinson 38). Though their questionings and language games seem to have the potential to save them from the unintelligibility of their situation, they simply cannot do it because of their inability to remember and their lack of retentiveness and comprehension. For instance, in Act Two, Ros and Guil see the tragedians rehearse the play they will perform on Hamlet’s request. Whereas they watch themselves as two spies acted by two other tragedians on stage, and despite the players’ identical outfits to theirs, they are not able to perceive their predetermined destiny out of the play:

(The whole mime has been fluid and continuous but now ROS moves forward and brings it to a pause. What brings ROS forward is the fact that under their cloaks the two SPIES are wearing coats identical to those worn by ROS and GUIL, whose coats are now covered by their cloaks. ROS approaches "his" SPY doubtfully. He does not quite understand why the coats are familiar. ROS stands close, touches the coat, thoughtfully....)

ROS. Well, if it isn't--! No, wait a minute, don't tell me-it's a long time since-where was it? Ah, this is taking me back to-when was it? I know you, don't I? I never forget a face- *(he looks into the SPY'S face)* not that I know yours that is. For a moment I thought- no, I don't know you, do I? Yes, I'm afraid you're quite wrong. You must have mistaken me for someone else.

(GUIL meanwhile has approached the other SPY, brow creased in thought.)

PLAYER *(to GUIL)*. Are you familiar with this play?

GUIL. No. (60)

The interpretation for this situation is that they simply cannot awaken to the interconnectedness of the events happening around them. They also find it hard to follow and comprehend the flow of actions. This is due to the fact that, having been left to their own devices in Stoppard's play, they are condemned to this situation from the very beginning. They are both bound to take everything "on trust"; the more they try to build sensible connection between themselves and the actions taking place around, the more hopeless and helpless they turn out. But ironically enough, they attempt to create an illusion that at least they are getting somewhere (Stoppard 88).

Once they are out of the domain of *Hamlet*, they cannot comprehend their situation by themselves and tend to believe in the scraps of information full of gaps and fabrications. Therefore they willingly surrender to the manipulations of any dominating discourse:

GUI. The truth is, we value your company, for want of any other. We have been left so much to our own devices--after a while one welcomes the uncertainty of being left to other people's.

PLAYER. Uncertainty is the normal state. You're nobody special. (*He makes to leave again. GUI loses his cool.*)

GUI. But for God's sake what are we supposed to *do*?

PLAYER. Relax. Respond. That's what people do. You can't go through life questioning your situation at every turn.

GUI: But we don't know what's going on, or what to do with ourselves. We don't know how to *act*.

PLAYER: Act natural. You know why you're here at least.

GUI: We only know what we're told, and that's little enough. And for all we know it isn't even true.

PLAYER: For all anyone knows, nothing is. Everything has to be taken on trust; truth is only that which is taken to be true. It's the currency of living. There may be nothing behind it, but it doesn't make any difference so long as it is honoured. One acts on assumptions. What do you assume? (47-48)

Ros replies to this question in a subsequent conversation by saying "I'm assuming nothing" and later, he protests "We act on scraps of information... sifting half-remembered directions that we can hardly separate from instinct" (62, 74).

Despite their potential, neither Ros nor Guil seems to be fully able to transcend the boundaries drawn by Shakespeare. That is because what they base their fragmented identity on is Shakespeare's narrative in which they have already been killed. In other words, they set out their journey like new-born babies who cannot fully grasp what is going on around and who build memory and identity according to the bits and pieces of information that the community instructs them:

ROS....We're his *friends*.

GUIL. How do you know?

ROS. From our young days brought up with him.

GUIL. You've only got their word for it.

ROS. But that's what we depend on. (79)

The result of the experience of both Atay's and Stoppard's characters with a rupture in memory is more or less the same: Turgut as well as the duo feel insecure in this world of unanswered questions and their fragmented memory triggers this feeling even more.

So far as dominant narratives or classes exert their power over memory and identity, an individual inevitably finds oneself in an ambiguous world where what is real and what is imposed as "real" can hardly be differentiated. "I am so screwed up deep inside" confesses Selim, "that I am unable to weed out whatever is false and artificial" (453). This is the same situation Turgut finds himself in as a result of his journey and it is the reason why he endeavors to create a new syntax to express his own experience. Language, rather than reflecting a pure reality out there--as it may claim to do--potentially constitutes a "reality" that continually dictates its own limitations. Consequently, its restrictions are imposed on individuals who are bound to communicate via the given language within a society. Language, therefore, is a powerful tool shaping social memory. This is why, for instance, individual or social traumas cannot be articulated through the

language people use because it tries to stabilize the memory of a traumatic experience, thereby making it lose its first-hand meaning. “A man has at his disposal only words,” says Stephen M. Halloran in “Language and the Absurd,” “yet his experience tells him that these poor tokens of reason cannot *say* what needs to be said” (98). Therefore all they can do is turn around *logos* in a vicious circle without attaining any *constructive* act out of it at the end of the day. Extracting any specific meaning from such a world devoid of the tools to express human experience in its immediacy and fullness is, then, barely possible.

It is ghosts that remind people of the confines of language. Therefore, ghosts pose danger for the accounts given out by dominant political systems: since trauma victims are prone to forget whatever they have been through, ghosts are vital mediums for them to remember. As if to exemplify this, the words Horatio utters immediately after witnessing the presence of the ghost is noteworthy: “This bodes some strange eruption to our state” (1.1.69). The events taking place in the aftermath of the Second World War and the upcoming worldwide shifts of paradigms outlined above should be considered from this point of view. Some people chose to support their state at the expense of the misdeeds it performed. They let their memory be shaped and reintegrated into social memory by the mechanisms of remembering and forgetting. However, those who opted for the alternative path took the leading role in demonstrations and questionings against their government, at the end of which becoming themselves the haunting site for ghosts.

Alternative Narratives through Ghosts of Literature

Ghosts are the embodiments of the past in the present. They blur the binary oppositions and open up thresholds thereof. There begins the challenging mission of enduring evasiveness of language which itself does not suffice to explain trauma and amnesia pertaining to the past. Thus, the ghost rebels against the linear narratives of history. Especially in literature, ghost figures are capable of putting forward alternative accounts to official versions of history as well as to the grand narratives that engender them, because they spring from a mistrust in the accounts of the hegemonic power, namely the state. Ghosts possess the power to deconstruct imposed “realities”. They remind people of the other possible faces of the world they experience and alternative narratives concerning it. They also mark the gaps in collective memory and history.

Stoppard’s play is a ghost story in its own right and it is an alternative account of the past. This being the case, it haunts the modern reader because *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* marks and fills in the gaps and cracks in *Hamlet*. The play puts forward an alternative narrative for Ros and Guil and lets them acquire an identity. Though they cannot transcend their roles and fate in *Hamlet*, the reader is at least given the opportunity to consider *Hamlet* through the lenses of the two unfortunate Elizabethans. Hence, another dimension of the events as well as a new perspective thereof are indicated throughout Stoppard’s play. This is an attempt that can be interpreted as a narrative that is counter to the dominating one. This is why both Ros and Guil are comfortable with ghosts because it is the power of their ghostly situation that enables them to rebel against the boundaries and find other possibilities within *Hamlet*. As Vonwiller argues:

The reactions of Ros and Guil to this abnormal, if not paranormal, sequence differ from Hamlet's to the apparition of his murdered father. For Hamlet the event is deeply disturbing. The ghost is a strange, terrifying, and ominous figure. But the violation of the laws of probability in the run of heads in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* does not alarm the characters in the same way. Though it creates anxieties, there is a sense that things have always been this way. (7)

As it turns out, even though they cannot free themselves of the collective memory, their previous death which is considered "the ultimate negative" has had traumatic impact on their present situation amid this chaos. Hence, the only means they can open up a space for themselves and catch a glimpse of the other side of reality, though limited, is by means of wandering at the threshold of language and facing up to the ghosts arising from there. The other characters in the play, specifically Hamlet, Claudius, and Gertrude, can then be labeled as ghosts coming from their past and haunting them. This is to help them re-constitute their memories so as to remind them their past--to which Ros and Guil fail to respond. Incapable of acting ["we don't know how to act"], they are passively acted upon throughout the play (48). At the onset of his journey to the world of the disconnected, Turgut's contemplation on the community is similar to the duo:

How come so many people make up their minds and simultaneously set out on a journey? How come they can decide so quickly? Our process of decision-making lasted so long, though. I would not mind at all if there were a few people; but how can hundreds or thousands of people get on the bus and reach their destination without hesitation or confusion?...This is an incomprehensible order. I do not know where to go, to begin with... They are acquainted with a wide range of things inside out, Olric; they know many different things... From whom and when have they acquired so much knowledge? (567)

Turgut does not know how to locate his existence within such a crowd, and Guil's words echo Turgut when he says: "But we don't know what's going on, or what to do with ourselves" (48). All in all, considering Atay's and Stoppard's characters, it can be maintained that they hardly have any power to intercept their fate that

has been written and ordained by a dominant power. Ros and Guil are passive in this chaotic world of theirs and with comings and goings of the characters in *Hamlet*. What they can only do is withstand it furiously but in desperation. Moreover, neither Ros nor Guil--as spectral entities--are able to create a sound alternative narrative that is influential enough to allow them to step out of collective memory as the alternative narratives provided by the ghosts of King Hamlet or Selim Işık. The only way they are able to keep their distance from collective memory is through games--a strategy which is in line with that of Selim Işık.

In the context of *The Disconnected*, games are introduced by Selim and they represent a resistance towards the official historical accounts of the past and dominant narratives that aim to mold collective memory. Similarly, for the protagonists of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, playing games is vital. Rather than simply helping them pass the time, it is a means for them not to stand face to face with the graveness of their situation as well as to thwart their thoughts off the amnesia they undergo. Their games consist of either flipping coins or playful verbal bantering of words idly back and forth, or playing guess which hand the coin is in, or role-playing the parts of Hamlet and the English King, and of each other. Questions are posed for their own sake; they are not meant to be answered but they merely prevent Ros and Guil from remaining silent. When Ros and Guil are engaged in their games, they momentarily stand outside the shaping effects of collective memory and even the governing laws in the universe:

Two ELIZABETHANS passing time in a place without any visible character. They are well-dressed - hats, cloaks, sticks and all. Each of them has a large leather money bag. Guildenstern's bag is nearly empty. Rosencrantz's bag is nearly full. The reason being: they are betting on the toss of a coin, in the following manner: Guildenstern...takes a coin out of his bag, spins it, letting it fall. Rosencrantz...studies it, announces it as

"heads" (as it happens) and puts it into his own bag. Then they repeat the process. They have apparently been doing it for some time. The run of "heads" is impossible, yet ROS betrays no surprise at all--he feels none. However he is nice enough to feel a little embarrassed at taking so much money off his friend. Let that be his character note. GUIL is well alive to the oddity of it. He is not worried about the money, but he is worried by the implications; aware but not going to panic about it - his character note. (Stoppard 7)

They cannot ignore the weirdness of their surrounding and circumstances; however, playing games allows them to become comfortable with the fact that they are now within un-, sub-, or supernatural forces.

In another part of the play, Ros and Guil devise a plan and practice cross examining Hamlet in order to glean what afflicts him. They do so by asking each other empty questions and replying in the same fashion:

ROS. We could play at questions.
GUIL. What good would that do?
ROS. Practice!
GUIL. Statement! one-love.
ROS. Cheating!
GUIL. How?
ROS. I hadn't started yet.
GUIL. Statement. Two-love
ROS. Are you counting that?
GUIL. What?
ROS. Are you counting that?
GUIL. Foul! No repetitions Three-love First game to...
ROS. I'm not going to play if you're going to be like that.
GUIL. Whose serve?
ROS. Hah? (Stoppard 30-31)

As a result, although they seem unable to go beyond playing around, they do manage to create a realm of limited resistance via language, and the games they adopt constitute a sound part of it:

Language games are indeed the social bond which holds society together, and social interaction [is characterized] primarily in terms of making a move in a game, playing a role and taking a part in various discrete language games....This kind of...practice of language game is completely reviewed by Stoppard in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. Although they struggle with narrative legitimation, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are rather good at all forms of games, many of them

linguistic. (Hooti 156)

Nevertheless, Ros and Guil are limited by Shakespeare's master text and their games which can potentially yield a sort of resistance are perpetually undermined within this grand narrative. In other words, "[t]hough games and play dominate the text, they are games that Ros and Guil must inevitably lose," a similar fate to that of Selim Işık because although he had thought that his games opened up a space for him to resist the norms of the society, Selim ended up committing suicide and, inevitably, losing the game (Vonwiller 2).

On the other hand, the Player and the other tragedians in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* are strategic figures and are intentionally put to the foreground by Stoppard in order to make a comparison between those who hold on to life by coming to terms with the dictations of society and those who are disconnected. Throughout the play, the Player appears much more secure and hard-headed than the duo. For instance, not being able to register their own identities or significance properly, Ros and Guil become much more confused and even a bit irritated when they hear the Player hail them as "fellow artists":

PLAYER. ...I recognised you at once -

ROS. And who are we?

PLAYER. - as fellow artists.

ROS. I thought we were gentlemen.

PLAYER. For some of us it is performance, for others, patronage. They are two sides of the same coin, or, let us say, being as there are so many of us, the same side of two coins. (16)

The Player, who is a dominant character and who is well aware of what is in fact going on throughout the play, does not distinguish between reality and fiction. By uttering these words, he attracts attention to the threshold opened up with the deconstruction of assumedly opposite concepts--in this case, being a gentleman or a fellow artist do not differ from each other. In the incomprehensible and

featureless world where Ros and Guil struggle to survive, there seems to be no clear-cut distinction between traditional dichotomies, giving way to ambiguity and elusiveness of specific meaning. It is only the Player who makes the most of his situation. That is, rather than agonizing over life being a play “written” and directed by some other dominant narratives, he blithely gives himself in to the fact that “There's a design at work in all art...Events must play themselves out to aesthetic, moral and logical conclusion” (57). Robinson delineates the features of the Player:

The absurdity of life does not pain him; he refuses to be baffled or to suffer, maintaining a posture of cynical detachment, content that circumstances are beyond his control “ever so slightly.” He behaves as if he had an insight into the absurd forces which control their destinies, and Guildenstern looks to him for advice. But his superiority and air of menace are only assumed and, in contrast to the appealing vulnerability of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, the Player, forever unmoved, is a somewhat sinister figure. (Robinson 39)

Taking this into account, it could be argued that the Player is a typical conformist—a man for all seasons who can modify his approach vis-à-vis the predominant political powers and according to the requirements of it.

Contrary to Ros and Guil, the Player is conscious of the fact that the entire world is a stage and they are merely players. As Vonwiller puts it, “The Player has unusual acumen regarding Shakespeare. He is not wholly a Shakespearean character, but differs from Ros and Guil in that he knows what is going on and seems perfectly aware of the nature of their context” (11). The Player is always “acting,” as he suggests:

GUIL. Well... aren't you going to change into costume?

PLAYER. I never change out, sir.

GUIL. Always in character.

PLAYER. That's it. (*Pause.*)

GUIL. Aren't you going to - come *on*?

PLAYER. I *am* on.

GUIL. But if you *are* on, you can't *come* on. *Can* you?

PLAYER. *I start on.* (Stoppard 24)

These words ironically describe the true nature of the situation Ros and Guil find themselves in. That is to say, “being aware of it or not, ever since their life was written down by Shakespeare, they have never been out of their costume” and have always been in character (Chen 373). As a result, although Ros and Guil cannot move further because of the confines of the stage, the Player’s awareness seems to give him an ability to move about without being restricted and prevented:

GUIL. Where are you going?

PLAYER. *I can come and go as I please.*

GUIL. You're evidently a man who knows his way around.

PLAYER. I've been here before.

GUIL. We're still finding our feet.

PLAYER. I should concentrate on not losing your heads.

GUIL. Do you speak from knowledge?

PLAYER. Precedent.

GUIL. You've been here before.

PLAYER. *And I know which way the wind is blowing.* (Stoppard 47-- emphasis added)

Nevertheless, living in tune with Shakespearean narrative and coming to terms with being “always in character” does not mean that the Player can control his fate. On the contrary, he admits that they “have no control” either and they are as well “tied down to a language” (18, 56). The following conversation illustrates this point further:

PLAYER.... There's a design at work in all art surely you know that? Events must play themselves out to aesthetic, moral and logical conclusions.

GUIL. And what's that, in this case?

PLAYER. It never varies-we aim at the point where everyone who is marked for death dies.

GUIL. Marked?

PLAYER. Between "just desserts" and "tragic irony" we are given quite a lot of scope for our particular talent. Generally speaking, things have gone about as far as they can possibly go when things have got about as bad as they reasonably get. (*He switches on a smile.*)

GUIL. Who decides?

PLAYER (*switching off his smile*). Decides? It is *written*... We're tragedians, you see. We follow directions--there is no *choice* involved. (57-58)

It is clear from these lines that what confines Ros and Guil as well as the tragedians to a world--the logic behind which is beyond their grasp--is nothing other than the prison house of language. Although coming to terms with it might provide a relief for the Player, neither Ros nor Guil is cut out for such a confrontation because they assume that they are involved in a reality, not a play. For example, the scene where The Player is assumedly stabbed by Guildenstern and feigns death is noteworthy in this aspect. He attempts to show the actor that death is the only reality one can cling to; it is more than merely an illusion. Guil puts this forward by saying,

But no one gets up after *death*--there is no applause--there is only silence and some second-hand clothes, and that's *–death*...No... no... not for us, not like that. Dying is not romantic, and death is not a game which will soon be over... Death is not anything ... death is not... It's the absence of presence, nothing more ... the endless time of never coming back ... a gap you can't see, and when the wind blows through it, it makes no sound...(Stoppard 89-90)

After Guil's assault on the Player, both Ros and Guil suppose that they are witnessing a man's passing away. As a matter of fact, however, they are watching a performance. After a while, the other tragedians begin to applaud joyfully and the duo understands that they have been tricked by the Player. As can be understood here, the purpose of Guil in killing the Player is to come into contact with the only reality which he is sure of. Nonetheless the Player manages to make them believe that he was dead a minute ago. All in all, the more they ask for consistency and reality, the more frustrated they get all the while. Their experience and any accessible reality thereof, if any, is the one that cannot be comprehended by relying on the explanations of outside forces. Trusting others'

dictations is the reason why they find themselves in a void and without even a little reality to get a handle on.

Conclusion

Just like Oğuz Atay and his fictional character Selim Işık who create, through literature, a counter-history whose objective is to question the teachings and policies of holders of power concerning the past and the current strategies they follow, and aim to go beyond the ordinary perceptions of reality by the community they live in--namely by collective memory, Tom Stoppard undertakes a similar strategy in his re-writing of *Hamlet*. Amidst the political turmoil and paradigm shifts in the 1960s he offers an alternative account of two minor characters in Shakespeare's play and he weaves their story in such a way that his version of the play reflects a postmodern disbelief in master narratives. Stoppard's text is a refreshed account of a canonical play that does not replicate the official historical accounts of the past and by not doing so, symbolizes a form of rebellion against the present. His work acknowledges the victims of modernity who disappeared from the historical record because they were eliminated by those holding enough power to do so. In creating two spectral figures called Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and by manipulating the cracks in *Hamlet*, Stoppard gives voice to the repressed stories of the disconnected. His re-writing illustrates the fact that the past will return in spectral guise because there is something in collective memory which has not been dealt with appropriately in the past. There are, indeed, alternative stories to be revealed. The medium Atay and Selim use to subvert the claims of history as an objective account of the past

is not language itself but the vantage point of literature whose figurative language makes the reader give ear to the stories other than those written and imposed by the dominant powers in the society. Similarly, Stoppard is aware that literature can create a space for the victimized and the disconnected, providing a plethora of alternative accounts regarding them. Literature, therefore, grants such writers a point of resistance that proves necessary for the one who is to rebel against ordinary perceptions of history, collective memory and identity.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

*And if all others accepted the lie which the Party imposed--if all records told the same tale--then the lie passed into history and became truth. 'Who controls the past,' ran the Party slogan, 'controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.' And yet the past, though of its nature alterable, never had been altered. Whatever was true now was true from everlasting to everlasting. It was quite simple. All that was needed was an unending series of victories over your own memory. 'Reality control', they called it: in Newspeak, 'doublethink'.
George Orwell, 1984*

Memory, rather than being reserved to individual domains, is inherently social. The process of dissolving individual memory into a collective one requires remembering and forgetting of certain events in the past. This interaction creates a porous domain, one in which political projects fill in the cracks of the exchange between memories. Stated differently, it is through the manipulation of collective memory that holders of power can shape the past, the present and the future in a certain community. The path to govern the masses and their memory, then, combines with such strategies as concealment, incitement to forgetting, and the alienation of the society from their own past by means of de-historicizing and de-identification. "Official history" thus appropriates the past. As Fikret Başkaya posits in his foreword entitled "Neden Resmi Tarih" ["Why Official History?"] to the book *Resmi Tarih Tartışmaları-2* [*Arguments over Official History-2*] posits, the history societies take for granted as the objective account of the past is devised and prepared upon the demands of people in power (9). It is an ideological fabrication that has been constructed retrospectively. In the case that there is no past that potentially serves the purposes at hand, the past is reinvented from within time again and again. This means that history as a discipline is always in the

process of becoming and being revised; it is restructured according to the conditions of the present. Official accounts of the past ignore alternative stories in the name of consistency, serving the purpose of dominant classes in the society. This is the means through which people's memories are put under control.

At this point, ghosts that are born out of collective traumas are highly crucial, especially in literature, since they shed light on the alternative reality behind what is merely pronounced "dead". While official history aims to refashion the past according to the political agenda of certain governments in the present, literary accounts of the past become indicative of whatever is obfuscated, and generate a resistance point by establishing an alternative account. This is required because, otherwise, official history encompasses the minds and memories of people, and it makes individuals internalize the belief that the only possible reality is the one it presents to people.

For this reason, dominant classes need to prevent discussion of and speculation on official history that is based on fabrication and depredation. This is why, for example, certain literary works are censored. Only this way can the past be re-fictionalized and memory recreated in a way that is congenial to the political needs and requirements of power, also ensuring that ideas will not be contested in the future. Governing classes thus not only guarantee their privileged status within the society but also stop the masses from questioning their authority. Once the task of social engineering takes place and the society has undergone the desired amnesia, those in power prove their "innocence" of the crimes, the massacres in the past. What gives the game away, however, is the presence of ghosts of the past because, as Başkaya maintains:

While it is possible to ignore and whitewash the past, it is in reality by no means feasible to annihilate it altogether. This is why the truth that is

aimed to be eliminated and passed over by official history perseveringly claims its place in today's agenda after all that time as if avenging this cover up. (Başkaya 14)

Stories that are to achieve a counter history come to the surface, through literary texts, in spectral form because "the past never ceases to survive up to the present and it is not deaf or dumb. It goes--and will go--ahead with hearing and verbalizing whatever is taking place" (Başkaya 14). This survival of the past is expressed in the words of Hamlet thus: "For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak" (2.2.546).

Contravening official history through literature and, as a result, coming up with a counter-history does not mean that the latter accounts for the true events in the past--this would be a claim as farfetched as the former's promises. Nevertheless, recounting the stories of those who are marginal and "disconnected" is of vital significance in that it is only by this means that their stories can be verbalized and thereby remembered. "Without an exception," says Başkaya, "the version of history taught at schools is the one that has been written by not the losers but the winners; not the masses but the commanders, kings, sultans, emperors, great leaders" (8). Therefore, both Atay and Stoppard use the tools of the powerful and appropriate them in order to dismantle whatever official history takes for granted. The past itself is already impossible to represent and access in its pure form; therefore official history is subverted in both literary texts and turned into alternative accounts and representations of the past. Atay and Stoppard row against the political current subordinated by official history because they provide alternative stories scribed from the perspectives of the defeated, the underdog, the underprivileged--the disconnected. Nonetheless, the underprivileged are not given the role of the winner or vice versa in either of these

works. The disconnected are still losers and the others still maintain their triumph. In Stoppard's play, for instance, when the Player asks him what kind of plays he prefers, Ros replies that he wants a good story, "with a beginning, middle and end" (Stoppard 58). However, their story is far from developing--they start the play in the middle of nowhere and end it in the same chaotic world, still asking the question: "Who are we?" (89). Therefore, rather than granting its marginalized characters the position of the winner at the end of the work, a literary text that has the quality of a counter-history is produced by granting the historically weak figure a voice through which to speak up. As a result, a realm for resistance and opposition is opened.

Literature is the means through which Atay and Stoppard pave the way for the questioning of official reconfiguration and representation of history. *The Disconnected* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* are works that are replete with references to the ways in which public memory and identity are constructed through history and language adopted by master narratives. Atay and Stoppard aim to negate the presumably solid ground on which historical accounts have been established. For both writers historiography, shaken to its foundations, no more corresponds to a linear and stable narrative of the past. Instead, the past is conceived as a sequence of events that are fragmented and abused. This stems from literature's power to lay the way open for a multi-layered reading and the creation of a plethora of alternative discourses vis-à-vis those of official history.

Selim and Turgut as well as Ros and Guil have been presented a limited freedom within a language of *différance*. They are torn between what is presented to them as the past, and their own quests for truth. Therefore, the ghosts as well as

their games provide a scope of resistance for them. However, just as neither Ros nor Guil can step out of the framework Shakespeare determined for them, Selim Işık cannot free himself completely from the dominant narratives within the society despite the plays that give him a chance to create a counter-history and open up a space for the disconnected. In other words, the two courtiers--Ros and Guil--and the other duo--Selim and Turgut--try to make sense of their situation in this chaotic world and consciously or unconsciously create an alternative narrative to the official version of the past. Like Ros and Guil, Selim is also dead from the very beginning. His death was “written” as well. Opting to stay out of, or at least distance oneself from, collective memory and consciousness denotes swaying from one place to another rootlessly and this is a position remote from life and closer to death. Nonetheless, the characters sometimes seem to have different experiences vis-à-vis the ghosts because in the case of Selim and Turgut, they seem to be suffering from the visitation of the specters. On the other hand, both Ros and Guil seem to be *waiting for* an apparition like savior.

*Traitors hoist by their own petard?
-or victims of the gods?
-we shall never know!
(Stoppard 60)*

APPENDIX: TRANSLATIONS

The translations of the texts and articles by Oğuz Atay, Gökçen Başaran İnce, Jale Parla, Berna Moran, Alper Akçam, Nurdan Gürbilek, Yıldız Ecevit, Nuray Küçükler, Fikret Başkaya and Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar are my own. The original Turkish from which the English translations are made are the following:

Page: 19

Geçmiş temsilleri kolektif hafızada kültürel ve sosyal yapıntılar (*artefact*) aracılığıyla demirlenir. Bu temsillerin mecraı, bireyin ait olduğu sosyal gruplar olabildiği gibi, kitle iletişim araçları, ders kitapları, müzeler, bayraklar, anıtlar, anma törenleri vb. geçmişin sabitlendiği ve kendini hatırlattığı alanlar da olabilir. Ritüeller de geçmişi şimdiye bağlamanın ve grubun kimliğini pekiştirmenin önemli araçlarından. Tekrara dayalı performatif nitelikleriyle, hafızayı diri tutma gibi bir işleve sahiptirler...politik ve güncel sorunlar arttıkça, toplumsal hafıza krizi derinleşmekte; kriz dönemleri kimlik sorunlarını açığa çıkardıkça, hafıza siyaseti artmakta, kimliğin meşruiyetini tesis için nirengi noktası olarak geçmiş seçilmektedir... Buna göre kimlik tanımlarken, kolektif hafıza grup üyelerine kim olduklarını, nereden gelip nereye gittiklerini söyleyen öyküler sunar. Bu öyküler, genelde iç grubu yüceltirken, dış grubu ötekileştirir. Başarılar öne çıkarılır, etik dışı, olumsuz eylemler, hatalar ise örtülür. Böylece özsaygı korunmaya çalışılır. Mevcut norm ve kriterlere uygun bir geçmişin seçimi, andaki eylemleri de haklı gösterir. (İnce).

Page: 38-39

Nurdan Gürbilek'in de saptadığı gibi...Anlatıcı "sürekli yer değiştirir; önce bir değere dayanıp bir başkasını alaya alır, hemen ardından bir başkasına yaslanıp onunla alay edebilir." Anlatıcı böyle sürekli yer değiştirince okura tutunacağı bir zemin bırakmaz. Altını oyduğu her dil, söylem, fikir, duygu ve ilişkiyle okuru sürekli başka açılardan okumaya zorlar. (Parla)

Page: 39

Turgut Özben'in kitap boyunca yaptığı iş okumaktır. Selim'i kaybettikten sonra onunla ilgili her şeyi okumaya azmeden Turgut, bir sürü eksik metinle boğuşur. Boğuştuğu bu metinlerin tamamlanmamış bileşkesi elimizdeki *Tutunamayanlar* metnini oluşturur. (Parla)

Page: 40

Eski şapkalarımız, ayakkabılarımız, elbiselerimiz gün geçtikçe bizden bir parça olmazlar mı? Onları sık sık değiştirmek isteyişimiz de bu yüzden değil midir? Yeni bir elbise giyen adam az çok benliğinin dışına çıkmışa benzer: Kendinden uzaklaşmak, ona bir değişikliğin arasından bakmak ihtiyacı, yahut "Ben artık bir başkasıyım!" diyebilmek saadeti. (Tanpınar)

Tarihin aldaticılığından kurtulmak istiyordu. (Atay)

Tarih bir tahriften ibarettir. (Atay)

Page: 43-44

Öztürkçe konuşan bir Olric: seni gülünç buluyorum. (Atay)

Page: 44

“Okulda ilk öğrendiğim gerçeklerden biri de babamın...beni yanlışlıkla mektep yerine okula gönderdiği oldu. Önümüze alfabe adında anlaşılmaz bir kitap koydular. Babam, ona da elifba dedi. Okulla babamı uzlaştırmaya imkân yoktu. (Atay)

Page: 45

Tarih, yurt bilgisi, coğrafya... her şey bizden çıkmıştır ve gene bize dönecektir. (Atay)

Page: 47

Batılı tarihçiler, durmadan belgelerden bahsederler. Ben de size...bir belgeyi açıklamak istiyorum...Düzgen Silik adlı...bir gencin binlerce yıl önce tuttuğu bir günlükten parçalar almakla yetiniyorum. (Atay)

“Yedi Işık,” Orta Asya’dan Anadolu’ya gelmekle, tarihimize gerçek damgasını vurmuştur...yedi gencin Çin’den göç ederek bugünkü Sivasdolaylarına yerleşmesi tarihimiz için bir dönüm noktası olmuştur...Orta Asya’danÇin’e kaçan Orkan ve altı arkadaşı, sonunda Çin’den de ayrılmak zorunda kalmışlar ve Anadolu’ya gelerek biraz da oraları aydınlatmaya karar vermişlerdi. (Atay)

Page: 49

Avrupalıların en büyük meziyeti, pratik yönlerinin kuvvetli oluşu ve Türklerin, Arapların ve Çinlilerin birçok buluşunu kendilerine mal ederek kullanılır hale getirmeleridir. Bu ve bunun gibi bir çok medeni harekete önyak olan Doğulular ise bazı küçük yetersizlikler yüzünden, öncülüğü, Batıya kaptırmışlardır. (Atay)

Önce, neden Batı kültürünü alıp soysuzlaştırdığımızı sanıyoruz? Batı, bizim kültürümüzü alıp soysuzlaştırmış olmasın? Tanzimatla birlikte başlayan “Garplılaşma” hareketleri, bir kültürün kötü bir biçimde kopya edilmesi mi demekti? Yoksa, biz, aslında gene atalarımızdan miras kalan bir medeniyete mi dönüyorduk? (Atay)

...biz, yeni uygarlığımızın asıllarını teşkil eden bütün kurumları, akımları ve düşünceleri yeni bir biçime sokarken bir keşmekeş ve bilmezlik içinde değildik; kökü ta iki bin yıl öncesine dayanan ve her noktası akıllara durgunluk verecek bir biçimde hesaplanmış olan bir bilimselliği sürdürüyorduk. Yoksa ayakta kalabilir miydik? (Atay)

Page: 52

Tutunamayanlar 19. yüzyıl gerçekliğine sırtını dönmüş, bir ayağı modernistlerde bir ayağı post-modern bir roman. Böyle olmasının başlıca nedeni de sanırım Atay’ın James Joyce gibi modernist bir yazarla, Nabokov gibi post-modernist bir yazardan çok etkilenmiş olması. (Moran)

Page: 52-53

...19. yüzyıl sonlarında ve 20. yüzyıl başlarında M. Proust, H. James ve J. Conrad gibi yazarlar klasik gerçekçi roman anlayışına uymayan değişik bir romanın yolunu açtılar. Sonradan, 20. Yüzyılda yazdığı için “modern” sıfatını alan ama eski anlayışı sürdüren yazarlardan ayırmak amacıyla “modernist” diye anılan J. Joyce, F. Kafka, V. Woolf...ve daha birçokları bu yeni romanı geliştirdiler ve 1920’lerde doruğuna ulaştırdılar. (Moran)

Page: 53

...bu yazarlar dış dünyaya, topluma değil insanın iç dünyasına, bilincin karmaşıklığına eğildiler...Çoğu Tanrı’ya, dine inancını yitirmiş, yaşamı ve dünyayı anlamsız bulan modernistler, bu anlamsızlıktan kurtulmak için sanata sığınmakta buldular çareyi. Örüntüye, yapıya, mitosa yaslanan sanatın kendisi ahenkli, alternatif bir gerçeklik sayıldı. (Moran)

Ne ki İkinci Dünya Savaşı’ndan sonra 1950’lerde Fransa, 1960’larda Amerika ve İngiltere ve daha sonra İtalya, Almanya, Latin Amerika yeni bir gelişmeye sahne oldular. Post-modern dediğimiz...bu çağdaş roman akımı, 19. yüzyıl gerçekçi romanının da, modernist romanın da dayandığı estetiği yetersiz ve geçersiz bulur. Post-modernistlere göre romanın işlevi 19. yüzyıl gerçekçilerinin sandığı gibi insan, dünya ve toplum hakkında göstergesel bir anlamı olan görüşler bildirmek, gerçekliği yansıtmak değildir...[Postmodern yazarların] dikkat çeken ortak özelliklerinden biri bu yazarların “kurmaca” kavramını kurcalamaları ve bu kuramsal sorunu yazdıkları romanların konusu haline getirme eğilimleri. Başka bir deyişle, post-modernist yapıtlar üst-kurmaca...özelliğine sahiptirler. Ancak bu

işlevlerini roman türünün yerleşmiş konvansiyonlarını bilinçli olarak vurgulamak ya da parodisini yapmak suretiyle yerine getirirler. (Moran)

Gerçekçi roman okura, bir kurmaca yapıtı olduğunu unutturmaya ve okurda, gerçek olaylar içindeymiş duygusunu uyandıрмаğa çalışır... Post-modern yazarlar ise, tersine, romanın uydurma olduğu olgusunun altını çizer ve gerçekçi romanın parodisini yaparak, anlatı öğeleri arasında oyunlar kurarak gerçeklikle kurmaca arasında varsayılan bağları sorgularlar. (Moran)

Page: 54

Tutunamayanlar, bir şeyi temsile, göstermeye, işaret etmeye değil, dağıtmaya, savurmaya, değiştirmeye doğru yola çıkmıştır. (Akçam)

Yeniden sayılandırıldığı belli olan sayfalarda değişik el yazıları göze çarpıyordu. (Atay)

Page: 55

Ayrı kişiler tarafından kaleme alınmış olması nedeniyle yer yer tutarsızlıklar vardı. (Atay)

Yıllar önce meydana geldiği ileri sürülen bir olaya dayanan bu kitabın gerçekliği hakkında kesin bir söz söyleyemeyeceğimizi belirtmek isteriz... Ayrıca, kişilerin karakterleri ve başlarından geçtiği söylenen küçük maceralar incelenirse, bunların, günümüzün insanlarına uymadığı kolayca farkedilecektir. (Atay)

Page: 56

Selim, her zaman, hafızasının çok kuvvetli olduğunu ileri sürmüştür.

Anlattıklarına bakılırsa, doğduğundan beri başına gelenlerin hepsini hatırlıyor. Bir buçuk yaşında geçirdiği sıtmanın dehşetini, kafasında -ve dalağında- unutmadığı bir yaşantı olarak ifade ederdi. Hastalığına iyi gelmesi için, bir fincan dolusu rakıyı nasıl susuz içirdiklerini anlatır ve içkiye düşkünlüğünün belki o zaman başladığını söylerdi. (Atay)

Bana kalırsa, Selim, sıtmaya tutulduğu devreyi, annesinin anlattığı hikâyelere dayanarak hatırlıyor. (Atay)

Page: 57

Tutunamayanlar'da Selim Işık, *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*'da Hikmet Benol, düşünmekten yaşamaya fırsat bulamamış, “hayat bilgisi”nden yoksun, bu yüzden de zihnindeki doğrularla birlikte evde kalmış, çocuk kalmış kişilerdir. (Gürbilek)

Bu duruma nasıl geldim? Neden bana yaşamasını öğretmediler? Neden bana, bizden bu kadar gerisini sen bulup çıkaracaksın dedikleri zaman isyan etmedim? Hayata atılmak gibi bir çılgınlığı nasıl yaptım? İnsanların dünyasına atılmayı nasıl göze aldım? Ben insan değildim ki. Yaşamadığım bir hayatın içine nasıl atıldım? Beni nasıl gürültüye getirip de bu soğuk bakışlı mimar gibi insanların karşısına çıkardılar? Onlar da bilemezdi: görünüşümle insana benziyordum. Denemelerden geçmiştim. Onları aldatmayı başardım. Sonumu kendim hazırladım. Her an ne yapacağımı söyleyemezlerdi bana. Beni aldattılar; gene de suçluyum. İnsanların

en verimli olduđu çağda tükendim. Her anı, ne yapmam gerektiğini düşünerek geçirdiğim için çabuk yoruldu. Bana müsaade. (Atay)

Page: 59

L. biçimi salona döndü, maroken taklidi plastikle kaplı rahat koltuğuna oturdu; bir düğmeye basarak koltuğu geriye itti. Yakalandın Turgut, kendini eleverdin.

Neden, Selim? Nasıl olur, tam şirketin muhasebecisinden onbinpeşin yirmibeşbine bir araba almak üzereyken, tam direksiyon kursuna başlayacakken, tam bir kat parası biriktirmenin gerekliliğini düşünürken... beni kandıramazsın Selim, işime burnunu sokamazsın. Ben, soğukkanlılığımı korumasını bilirim. Sen söylemez miydin ‘utanmadan, duygusuzluğumla öğündüğümü’. On yıl önce olsaydı, belki biraz daha düşünürdüm; belirsiz tehlikelerden korkmazdım. (Atay)

Page: 59

Başka türlü bir yaşantın olabilirdi Selim. (Atay)

Page: 60

Bana anlatabilirdin Selim. Böyle bir durumda kim dinlemezdi ki seni? Ne yaptın son aylarda? Anlamasam da dinlerdim seni...Ölümçül düşüncelerini hafifletirdi bir insanın varlığı belki. ...Aramızdaki boşluğu nasıl doldurmalıyım? Sen olmadan seni nasıl öğrenmeliyim?...Selim! Öyle durma hiç konuşmadan... Söyle, de ki: bin tane kitap okumak gerek. Geceleri de uykusuz kalınacak. Her gün durmadan koşulacak, akşama kadar; sonunda epsilon kadar küçük bir fayda temin edilecek... razıyım. (Atay)

Birçok meseleyi askıda bırakıp gittin. Beni bıraktın bu makinenin çarkları arasında. Ben de dişlilere ceketimi kaptırdım.Eteğimin ucundan bağlandım bu düzene. Ceketini çıkarmadan olmaz. Ceket çıkarma talimatı da verilmedi daha. Çıkar üstündekileri, kurtul bu düzenden. Olmaz Selim: çırılçıplak kalırım sonra. Tutunacak bir yer bulamam sonra. Düşünceler göklere yükseliyor, fakat vücut toprağa bağlı. (Atay)

Page: 61

Olay, XX. yüzyılın ikinci yarısında, bir gece, Turgut'un evinde başlamıştı. O zamanlar daha Olric yoktu, daha o zamanlar Turgut'un kafası bu kadar karışık değildi. Bir gece yarısı evinde oturmuş düşünüyordu. Selim, arkasından...mektuba benzer bir şey bırakarak, bu dünyadan birkaç gün önce kendi isteğiyle ayrılıp gitmişti. (Atay)

Page: 62-63

O zamanlar, henüz, Olric yoktu...Henüz durum, bugünkü gibi açık ve seçik, bir bakıma da belirsiz değildi...Durum kötüye gidiyordu. Turgut'a yardım edecek kimse yoktu. Henüz Olric ufukta görünmemişti. Kendi kendine konuştuğunu sanıyordu daha. Henüz basit bir ağrı sanıyordu göğsündeki sıkışmayı. (Atay)

Page: 63

Süleyman Kargı dosttur...Hamlet için Horatio neyse öyleydi bana. (Atay)

Page: 64

Olsa olsa bu arayış, aşkınlığın dilini bulamamış olmanın acısını yansıtır. Selim Işık bu acıyla ölür. (Parla)

Page: 64-65

...hayır kalamadık kalamayız ben hiçbir zaman yalnız kalamam seni de üzeceğim hayaletler beni daima rahatsız edecek seni istediğim gibi dinleyemeyeceğim daima aklım bir çalıya takılacak huzursuzluğum beni bir gölge gibi takip edecek bu yükü taşıyamazsın boşuna çırpınma senin gibi bir insanla birlikte yaşamayı ilk düşündüğüm zaman görseydim seni belki başka türlü olurdu oysa o zamandan beri o kadar karanlıklar yığıldı ki istesem de atamıyorum...(Atay)

Page: 65

Onlar seni istiyorlar Selim: tutunamayanlar prensini istiyorlar. (Atay)

Ne yapmalı? Bugüne kadar sürdürdüğüm gibi, çevremdeki kişilerin davranış ve tutumlarını bilinçsiz bir aldırmaçlıkla benimseyerek bu renksiz, kokusuz varlıkla yetinmeli mi; yoksa, başkalarından farklı olan, başkalarının istediğinden çok farklı, köklü bir eylem isteyen gerçek bir insan gibi bu miskin varlığı kökten değiştirmeli mi? (Atay)

Page: 66

Kendini tanıma sorununun çözümünde, Descartes'ın bilime uyguladığı kuşkuculuğu kullanabiliriz. Bütün değerlerimizi önce yok sayarak işe

başlamalıyız. Kişisel değer saydığımız şeylerin, toplumun baskısıyla edinilmiş sahte nitelikler olabileceğini de hiçbir zaman akıldan çıkarmamalıyız. (Atay)

Page: 67

Bu işe tayin edildiniz. İstifası yoktur askerlik gibi. Bütün hayatımı ayaklarının altına seriyorum: incele beni! (Atay)

Page: 68

Daha öleli bir ay bile olmadı. Belki de ölmedi. Onu göremiyorum; o kadar. Diyelimki Afrika'ya gitti. Uzak bir ülkeye. Ülkede bir iç savaşvar; bütün haber alma imkânları ortadan kalkmış. Yollarkapanmış. Bütün bunları hayatın cilvesi diye kabul edeceğimisananlar aldanıyorlar... Sonunda ceheneme bile gitmek olsa, durmayacağım... Başı ağrımaya başladı: “Hayallerle boğuşuyorum,” diye söylendi. (Atay)

Page: 69

Bize öğretilen her söze kandık
“Yasaktır” “Memnudur” dendi, inandık
Hep “Girilmez” levhasına aldandık
Bu tutulan, yanlış yol gelir bize (Atay)

Page: 69

Tanımlar istiyorlar sizden: sonradan aynı tanımlarla canınıza okumak için. Tanımlarınız yoksa, bu sefer konuşturuyorlar sizi. Tanımlar veremeyen insan

saçmalar, diyorlar... Tanımları verince de herkes, daha önce kendisi için kazılmış olan çukura düşüyor. (Atay)

Page: 70

Böyle bir düzen içinde insan düşünebilir mi? Büyük ve güzel şeyleri demek istiyorum. Önce eşya engel oluyor, sonra şartlar: kalorifer, hizmetçi, çocuk odası. (Atay)

Page: 71

Ben anlatmak, filan falan demek istemiyorum. Sonum geldi Olric. Kendime yeni bir önsöz yazmak istiyorum. Yeni bir dil yaratmak istiyorum. Beni kendime anlatacak bir dil...Hiçbir geleneğin mirasçısı değilim. (Atay)

Benim için anlatmak, açıklamak, ancak kelimelerin anlamını değiştirmekle mümkün olacak galiba. Ben o yıllarda kelimelerin anlamlarını doğru dürüst bilmiyordum bile. Zaten hiçbir zaman kelimelerin anlamını doğru dürüst bilemedim. Her zaman kelimelerin, cümlelerin, insanın üstüne bir mızrak gibi saldıran düşüncelerin bunaltıcı baskısını duydum. (Atay)

Page: 73

Her şey sanatsal düzlemde oynanan bir oyundur. Yazar, etik/siyasal ya da tarihsel malzemeyi oyunlaştırır. (Ecevit)

Page: 74

Post-modern romanın bir özelliđi de sanatı bir tür oyun olarak görmesidir...post-modern romanda, oyun oynama bilinçli bir şekil alır ve yazar, kurgulama eylemini, okura, bir oyun gibi seyrettirir. (Moran)

Kuralları bilmiyorum. Yaşama kurallarından habersizim. Tek başıma beceremediđim bir yaşantıyı, birlikte nasıl sürdürürüz? (Atay)

Benim bütün işim oyundu, bunu biliyorsun Turgut. Hayatım, ciddiye alınmasını istediđim bir oyundu. Sen evlendin ve oyunu bozdun. (Atay)

Page: 74-75

Bütün hayatımca nasıl oynayabilirdim? Sen de dayanabildin mi? Sen de ürkütücü bir gerçekle bozdun bu oyunu. Herkesin belirli bir işle uğraştığı bu kocaman dünyada yalnız başına oradan oraya sürüklendin canım kardeşim benim...Kendine oyunlar buldun: başkalarının katılıp katılmadığına aldırmadığın oyunlar. Herkesi yargıladın bu oyunlarda. Bu arada beni de yargıladın,bana da haksızlık ettin. (Atay)

Page: 75

Selim'in oyunlarla olan iyi ilişkisi O'nun burjuva sınıfının değer yargılarından uzak bir yere konumlanmasına yardım etmektedir. Edebiyat ve sanat burjuva mantığına uymadığı için bunlar Selim'e göre yaşama anlam veren şeylerdir. Yukarıda bahsi geçen "Batılılaş(tır)ma" ve "Uluslaş(tır) ma" süreçlerinden geçerek 1950'lerde kendi sınıflı toplumunu oluşturmuş Türkiye için burjuva

sınıfının değer yargıları artık oldukça önemli bir yerde durmaktadır. Selim ve O'nun serüveni peşindeki Turgut içinse bu değer yargılarının ve sahte yaşamın karşısında bir direnç noktası yaratmak "Tutunamamak" olmakta yatar. Bu direnç noktası Selim'in öyküsünde sanat ve mitosla olmaktadır. (Küçükler)

Page: 75-76

Son defa altı ay kadar önce gördüm onu...Dalgın ve üzüntülü yürüyordu. Oyunlarından yorulmuş görünüyordu. Bütün oyunları ciddiye almaktan yorulmuştu. (Atay)

Page: 76

“Gel, senin bir tercümei halini yazalım. Kimseye yararlı olmasa da tarihe hizmetimiz dokunur...Bütün bu adamların biyografileri yanlışlarla dolu...Biz seninle yeni bir çığır açacağız bu konuda Turgut...Bu oyuna heves duyuyor musun?” (Atay)

Üslubumuz da belli oldu bu arada. Tarihi Türk, Roma ve Fransız kahramanlarıyla büyük matematikçi ve fizikçilerin hayat hikâyeleri tarzında yazacağız. Heyecanlı sahneler de kovboy filmlerini andıracak. Sen, önce bana, o tatsız ve sıkıcı anlatışınlahayat-ı hakikiyeni nakledersin... Ve ben, bir avuç toz olduktan sonra bile, senin destanın ağızlarda dolaşacak...” (Atay)

“Eski Mukaddes Roma-Aksaray İmparatorluğunun kurucularından...Dragut’un hayatını yazacağım bilinen ve bilinmeyen taraflarıyla.” (Atay)

Page: 77

“Tahrif! Tahrif!”...tekzip ederim. Beyanınız hilaf-ı hakikattir. Mahsulünüz garibe-
i hilkattır. (Atay)

Süleyman Kargı yerinden kalktı, kütüphanenin yanına gitti. Turgut’a dönerek:
“Selim gibilerine işte böyle yaparlar,” dedi. “Birdenbire yüklenmezler üstüne.
Önce bırakırlar istediği gibi düşünsün her şeyi. Dünyayı dilediği gibi anlamasına,
yaşamasına, hissetmesine izin verirler. Hatta alkışlarlar, överler onu. Büsbütün
çileden çıksın da geri dönemesin diye. Sonrasını biliyorsun işte.” Eğildi,
kütüphanenin alt gözünden bir dosya çıkardı; “Fakat Selim, bazı evrakını
kaçırmayı başardı onlardan. Hiçbir iz bırakmadan kaybolacağını
sananlar aldandılar. Ona cesaret verecek insanlar da vardı dünyada. Ve o, uzun
boylu düşünmeden, hesaba kitaba kaçmadan, öylesine, içinden geldiği gibi,
dünyasını kurmaya çalıştı; bu uzun şarkıları yazdı. ‘İstedğini yaz Selim,’ dedim.
‘Hiçbir korku aklını gölgelemesin... Dosyayı Turgut’a uzattı: “Sonunda bir de,
benim ağzımdan yazılmış ‘Açıklamalar’ var. Beni karıştırmadan içi rahat etmedi.”
(Atay)

Page: 78

Tarihin aldaticılığından kurtulmak istiyordu. (Atay)

Page: 78-79

Tarih, işine gelmeyen bütün belgeleri, Selim ve Selim gibilerden gizlemişti.
Tutarlı bir tarih felsefesinin zorunlu olduğu endişesi, birçok gerçeğin, bile bile bir
yana bırakılması sonucunu doğurmuştu. Başka türlü olamazdı. Selim’i, geçmişten

ve gelecekte ayırmaya kimsenin hakkı yoktu. Bunun hesabı sorulmalıydı...Dün, bugün ve yarın, onun yaşantısıyla birleşmeliydi. Dünü, bugünü, yarını yalnızlığının dışında yaşamalıydı Selim... Şarkıların ortak adı böylece çıktı ortaya. Dün, gerçekten ne olmuştu? Bugün ve yarını hazırlayan dünü, bütün çıplaklığıyla ortaya çıkartmak gerekiyordu. (Atay)

Page: 79

Gerek şarkılarda, gerek açıklamalarda sözü geçen insanlar, yerler, tarihî ve günlük olaylar, gösterilen kaynaklar, ileri sürülen düşünceler, yapılan benzetmeler, anlatılan şehirler, ispat edilen nazariyeler, vazedilen kanunlar tamamen hayal mahsulüdür. Uydurmadır. Bunların içinde gerçek hayattaki yerlere, insanlara ve olaylara benzeyenler varsa, tesadüften ibarettir ve kimsenin üzerine alınmaması gerekir. (Atay)

Page: 80

Ülkemiz, bugün için durgun bir toplum düzeni içindedir ve insanı toplumsal çalışmalara itecek bir dış etkenin yok olduğu söylenebilir. Peki ne yapalım o halde? ...Bence hemen köklü bir çalışma dönemine girelim. (Atay)

Tarih bir tahriften ibarettir. Tarih, geçmişten geleceğe uzanan ve bugün gördüğümüz bir rüyadır. (Atay)

Page: 81

Turgut, Sultan'a bu kadar yakın olmaktan biraz mahçup ve ürkek,konuşmadan Abdülhamit'i seyrediyor, bir yandan dakendine cesaret vermeye çalışıyordu: ben

Cumhuriyet çocuğuyum, ben Cumhuriyet çocuğuyum. Bir ilkokul öğrencisi gibi hissediyordu kendini: neden korkacakmışım Abdülhamit'ten?...Turgut:
“Yaptığımız bütün devrimlerin aslı yok mu dersiniz?” diye sordu birdenbire.
Sultan...“Bana kalırsa yok,” dedi...Ayaklarını altına topladı...sözlerine devam etti:
“Ben, bütün olacakları evvelden görmüştüm. Benimle başa çıkamayacağınızı biliyordum. (Atay)

Page: 82

“Cumhuriyet, bu duruma bu kadar kayıtsız kalamaz.” diye haykırmak istedi.
“Bunlara göz yumamaz!” Yerinden kalkmaya çalışarak Abdülhamit'e doğru uzattı ellerini. Oda kararmıştı, divanı göremiyordu artık. “Üçüncü Cumhuriyeti de kurduğum halde, bunlara nedenmi engel olmuyorum?” Duyduğu bu yeni sese çevirdi başını. “Gücüm yetmiyor,” dedi ses. Oda biraz aydınlandı: Turgut'un karşısında Mustafa Kemal duruyordu... Turgut, bütün gücünü toplayarak konuşmaya çalıştı: “Nasıl olur? Siz idare etmiyor musunuz? Nasıl engel olamazsınız?” Mustafa Kemal, çaresizliğini gösteren bir hareket yaptı. Turgut, ona doğru ilerlerken ter içinde uyandı. (Atay)

Page: 84

Şarkıların ortak adı olan “Dün Bugün Yarın”ı ele alarak işe başlıyorum. Selim, “Dün” kelimesiyle ne demek istiyor? “Bugün” ve “Yarın”a onu bağlayan nedir? Bana göre, “Tek ve Türk”...olan Selim, elbette Türklerin tarih içinde nasıl yer aldığı meselesine değinmek istiyor. “Dün,” yani Orta Asya'daki Türkler. Dün, yani Orta Asya'daki Türklerin site medeniyetindeki yerlerini almadan önceki durumları. Bu durum nasıldı? (Atay)

Bu konuda başvurduğum “Kamus-u Berceste-i Türki” şunları yazıyor:

“Türkler, Orta Asya’dan anavatana göç etmeden önce,bütünüyle bir kabile hayatı yaşıyorlardı. Çadır medeniyetinin gereklerine göre kurulmuş bir toplum düzenleri vardı. Bu düzenin, bugünkü hayat şartlarından ne kadar uzak olduğunu,artık dilimize yerleşmiş olan, cam, hasır, kravat,kira (ev kirası), kiraz, hafif, masa, tabak, tabut, müzik, tahsil, mezar, karyola, kelime, cümle gibi kelimelerin bu dilde bilinmemesiyle (Öztürk dili demek istiyor) kanıtlayabiliriz. Bu kelimelerin, Türkçe’nin eksik bir kolu olan Öztürkçe’de bulunmaması, bizi aşağıdaki sonuçlara vardiıyor bu kabilenin yaşayışı hakkında:

Türkler camdan dışarı bakmazdı.

Türkler hasır üstünde oturmaz ve meseleleri hasıraltı etmezlerdi. Bu âdet, Osmanlılarla başlamıştır.

Türkler kravat takmazdı.

Türkler hafiflikten hoşlanmazdı.

Türkler ev kirası vermezdi. Ev kirası, Türklerin iptidai komünizmden, toprak burjuvazisine geçmeleriyle başlamıştı.

Türkler kiraz yemezdi.

Türkler yemeklerini masada yemez, yerken tabak kullanmazlardı.Yemek ortadan yenirdi.

Türkler öldükleri zaman tabuta konmaz ve mezara girmezdi.

Eski Türklerin böyle bir âdeti yoktu.

Türkler müzik dinlemezdi.

Türkler mektepte tahsil etmezdi.

Türkler düşüncelerini, kelime ve cümle gibi kalıplar içinde ifade etmezlerdi.”

(Atay)

Page: 85

Batılı tarihçiler, durmadan belgelerden bahsederler. Bende size, büyük göçten çok önce[ye ait] bir belgeyi açıklamak istiyorum. (Atay)

Page: 85-86

Türk Tarihi, bilimsel olmayan bir tasnife göre, ikiye ayrılır: yakın tarihimiz, uzak tarihimiz. Aslında, bu iki tarihimizde bize uzak kalmaktadır. (Atay)

Page: 86

Bizim öz yapımız, bu iki dönemde dışında kalan ve “En Uzak Tarihimiz” diyebileceğimiz bir çağda tayin edilmiştir. Her ne kadar Etiler, Sümerler, Akadlar daha eski sayılırlarsa da, onların bizim için kalıcı özellikleri yoktur. (Atay)

Page: 87

...bence edebiyat...”Ben” denen alanın vazgeçilmez bileşeni olan bölünmüşlükle, bölünmüşlüğün yol açtığı sıkıntıyla baş etme gücü olduğu için; hikayesini bize bölünerek de anlatabildiği için; hepimizin bölünmüş, endişeli yanına seslenebildiği için önemlidir. (Gürbilek)

Page: 89

Ölülerin temizlenmesi hiçbir zaman tam bitirilemedi. (Atay)

Page: 89-90

Balkondan içeriye giriyorum. Odada, çeşitli seviyelerde...insanlar bulunuyor.

Abdülhakhamit ...ayağa kalkarak bana yaklaşıyor; herkesinrolünü ezberlediğini ve provaya başlayabileceğimi söylüyor. (Atay)

Page: 94

Bütün hayatımca cezalıydım: durmadan bir kafesiniçinde dolaştım. Gittiğim her yere...bu kafesi taşıdım. Bütün dünyayı parmaklıklarınarasından seyrettim. (Atay)

Page: 106

Büyük bir karışıklık ve belirsizlik seziyorum. Yaşantılarıma verdiğim eski anlamlar, birer birer kaçıyor. Yeni anlamlar veremiyorum kelimelere. (Atay)

Page: 107

Boşluklar oluyor. Bunları boş sözlerle doldurmaya çalışıyorum. (Atay)

Page: 113

Erkekler gibi tükürmesini, sigara içmesini, havluyayüzümü silmesini, eşyayı tutmasını bilmiyorum bu yaşımda...Ne işim var bu dünyada benim? (Atay)

Çünkü ben, bir an sonra ne olacağımı bilmiyordum.Bir an sonraya

ulaşabileceğime güvenmiyordum.Sürekli bir panik içindeydim. (Atay)

İnanarak dinlememizi güçleştiriyorlar. İnsan her sözü kuşkuyla karşılıyor artık.

Gerçekle düş birbirine karışıyor...Tutunacak bir dalımız kalmıyor.

Tutunamıyoruz.” (Atay)

Page: 118

...içim o kadar karışmış ki sahtelikleri ayıklayıp temizleyemiyorum. (Atay)

Page: 121

Bu kadar insan nasıl oluyor da aynı yere gitmek üzere anlaşıp bir araya geliyorlar, yola çıkıyorlar? Ne çabuk karar veriyorlar? Bizim karar vermemiz ne kadar uzun sürdü oysa. Bir iki kişi olsa neyse: yüzlerce binlerce kişi nasıl şaşırmadan doğru otobüslere binip istedikleri yere gidiyorlar?...Anlaşılmaz bir düzen bu. Ben nereye gideceğimi bilemiyorum mesela. ...Çok şeyler biliyorlar Olric, çok farklı şeyler biliyorlar...Kimden ne zaman öğrendiler bu kadar bilgiyi? (Atay)

Page: 130

...bize miras kalan tarih 'gerçek tarih' değil, aracın direksiyonundakilerin 'uygun ve gerekli gördüğü' *ısmarlama üzerine üretilmiş bir tarihtir*. (Başkaya)

Page: 131-132

İradi olarak geçmişini yok saymak mümkündür ama *geçmişini yok etmek mümkün değildir*. Resmi tarihin yok saydığı, yok etmek için onca çaba harcadığı *gerçeklerin* aradan önce zaman geçmesine rağmen, öcünü alırcasına ve inatla gündemdeki yerini alması bu yüzdendir. (Başkaya)

Page: 132

Geçmiş, bugünkü zamanda bizde var olmaya, bizimle yaşamaya devam ediyor. Tarih *sağır ve dilsiz* değildir, duyup söylemeye devam ediyor ve edecek... (Başkaya)

Okullarda okutulan tarih her zaman 'kaybedenlerin' deęil kazananların, kitlelerin deęil komutanların, kralların, padişahların, imparatorların, ulu önderlerin yazdıkları, yazdırdıkları tarihtir. (Başkaya)

REFERENCES

- Akçam, Alper. "Tutunamayanlar'da Karnaval." *Ayrıntı Edebiyat, Sanat, Kültür Dergisi*. (Şubat 2006). 09 June 2012.
<http://www.ayrinti.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=890&Itemid=199>
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and the Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2006.
- Atay, Oğuz. *Tutunamayanlar*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2011.
- Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*. Trans. Annette Lavers. New York: Noonday Press, 1972.
- Başkaya, Fikret. "Neden Resmi Tarih?" *Resmi Tarih Tartışmaları -2*. Ankara: Türkiye ve Ortadoğu Forumu Vakfı Özgür Üniversite Kitaplığı, 2006. 1-12.
- Baumgartner, Brad. "The Spectropoetics of Trauma: Ghosts, Language, and the Wound in *Nightwood*." *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture*. (2011). 20 May 2012.
<<http://reconstruction.eserver.org/111/Baumgartner.shtml>>
- Bell, Duncan. "Introduction." *Memory, Trauma and World Politics: Reflections on the Relationship between Past and Present*. Ed. Duncan Bell. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. 1-29.
- Caruth, Cathy. "Recapturing the Past: Introduction." *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Ed. Cathy Caruth. London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1995. 151-157.

- Chen, Hongwei. “*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: from Stage Script to Screen Presentation.*” *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, Vol. 1, No. 4. (July 2010). 25 March 2012. 370-377.
<ojs.academypublisher.cim/index.php/jltr/article/view/0104370377/1965>
- Coffin, Judith G. and Robert C. Stacey. *Western Civilizations*. Vol: 15. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2005.
- Colmeiro, José. “A Nation of Ghosts?: Haunting, Historical Memory and Forgetting in Post-Franco Spain.” *Electronic Journal of Theory of Literature and Comparative Literature*. (January 2011). 24 March 2012. 17-34.
<http://www.452f.com/pdf/numero04/colmeiro/04_452f_mono_colmeiro_indiv.pdf>
- Davis, Colin. “Hauntology, Spectres and Phantoms.” *French Studies*. Vol. LIX, No. 3 (2005). 31 March 2012. 373–379.
<fs.oxfordjournals.org/content/59/3/373.extract>
- Derrida, Jacques. *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. Trans: Peggy Kamuf. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- DiMatteo, Anthony. “The Trauma of Empire in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture.” *College Literature*. Vol. 35, No. 1 (Winter, 2008). 19 March 2012. 175-197. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25115483>>.
- Ecevit, Yıldız. *Türk Romanında Postmodernist Açılımlar*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001.
- Edkins, Jenny. *Trauma and the Memory of Politics*. UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

- Ertuğrul, Suna. "Belated Modernity and Modernity as Belatedness in *Tutunamayanlar.*" *The South Atlantic Quarterly*. Duke University Press, 102:2/3, (Spring/Summer 2003). 14 November 2012. 629-645.
- Ertürk, Nergis. *Grammatology and Literary Modernity in Turkey*. UK: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Fleming, John. *Stoppard's Theatre: Finding Order amid Chaos*. Ed. Thomas F. Staley. The USA: University of Texas Press, 2001.
- Freeman, John. "Holding up the Mirror to Mind's Nature: Reading 'Rosencrantz' Beyond Absurdity." *The Modern Language Review*. Vol. 91, No. 1 (Jan., 1996). 08 January 2013. 20-39. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3733994>>
- Gonzalez, José M. "Spanish Literature and the Recovery of Historical Memory." *European Review*. Vol. 17, No. 1. (2009). 08 October 2011. 177-185. <digital.csic.es/bitstream/10261/24972/1/European_Review.pdf>
- Gronold, Daniela. *Identity Matters: Different Conceptualisations of Belonging from the Perspective of Young Slovenes*. Germany: Waxman Verlag GmbH Minster, 2010.
- Gürbilek, Nurdan. "Kemalizmin Delisi Oğuz Atay." *Defter*, No: 14. (July-November 1990). 24 January 2013. 241-254. <epigraf.fisek.com.tr/?num=116>
- . *Kör Ayna, Kayıp Şark*. Istanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2004.
- Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Ed. Lewis A. Coser. London: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." *Framework*. No: 36. (1996). 23 February 2012. 222-237. <http://www.unipa.it/~michele.cometa/hall_cultural_identity.pdf>

- Hanioglu, M. Şükrü. *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*. UK: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Haverkamp, Anselm. "The Ghost of History: Hamlet and the Politics of Paternity." *Law and Literature*. Vol. 18, No. 2 (Summer 2006). 19 March 2012. 171-198. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/lal.2006.18.2.171>>
- Hooti, Noorbakhsh, Samaneh Shooshtarian. "A Postmodernist Reading of Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*". *Studies in Literature and Language*. Vol.2, No.1, (2011). 17 May 2012. 147-162. <<http://cscanada.net/index.php/sll/article/view/j.sll.1923156320110201.006/1481>>
- Huysen, Andreas. "Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia." *Public Culture*. Vol. 12, No. 1, (Winter 2000). 26 February 2012. 21-38. <<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/pc/summary/v012/12.1huysen.html>>
- Hynes, Joseph. "Tom Stoppard's Lighted March." *The Virginia Quarterly Review*. (Autumn1995) 26 February 2012. 642-655. <www.vqronline.org/articles/1995/autumn/hynes-tom-stoppards-lighted/>
- İnce, Gökçen Başaran. "Kutlu Doğum Haftası Açılımı: CHP'nin Toplumsal Hafıza ile İmtihanı." *Birikim*. (02.05.2010). 25 November 2011. <<http://www.birikimdergisi.com/birikim/makale.aspx?mid=630>>
- Jacoby, Russell. *Social Amnesia: A Critique of Contemporary Psychology*. The USA: Transaction Publishers, 1975.
- Kaya, İbrahim. *Social Theory and Later Modernities: The Turkish Experience*. UK: Liverpool University Press, 2004.

- Küçükler, Nuray. “Batılılaşmanın Gölgesinde Süregiden İki Olgu: ‘Huzursuzluk’ ve ‘Tutunamamak’.” 25 April 2012.
<<http://flag.blackened.net/kara/research/bati/bati.doc>>
- Melley, Timothy. “Postmodern Amnesia: Trauma and Forgetting in Tim O'Brien's ‘In the Lake of the Woods.’” *Contemporary Literature*. Vol. 44, No. 1 (Spring, 2003) 12 July 2011. 106-131.
<<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1209064>>
- Moran, Berna. *Türk Romanına Eleştirel Bir Bakış II*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006.
- Merriman, John. *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Present*. New York: W.W. Norton Company, 1996.
- Neal ,Arthur G. *National Trauma and Collective Memory: Major Events in the American Century*. New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.,1998.
- Nguyen, Dan. “Transformation of Hamlet to Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead.” 1-3. <www.kewpid.net/notes/eng_paper2_modulea.pdf>
- Parla, Jale. *Don Kişot'tan Bugüne Roman*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003.
- Peterson, Nancy J. *Against Amnesia: Contemporary Women Writers and the Crises of Historical Memory*. The USA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.
- Prendergast, Christopher. “Derrida's Hamlet”. *SubStance*, Vol. 34, No. 1, Issue 106 (2005) 26 March 2012. 44-47. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3685614>>
- Puga, Ana Elena. *Memory, Allegory, and Testimony in South American Theater: Upstaging Dictatorship*. New York: Routledge 2008.

- Rigney, Ann and Astrid Erll. "Literature and The Production of Cultural Memory: Introduction." *European Journal of English Studies*. Vol: 10, No: 2. (2 August 2006). 01 May 2012. 111-115.
<<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13825570600753394>>
- Robinson, Gabriele Scott. "Plays without Plot: The Theatre of Tom Stoppard" *Educational Theatre Journal*. Vol. 29, No. 1 (Mar., 1977). 08 January 2013. 37-48. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3206500>>
- Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet: Prince of Denmark*. Ed: Philip Edwards. UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Stoppard, Tom. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. London: Faber and Faber, 1968.
- Stratigoula, Pantouvaki. "The Role of Collective Memory in National Identities Shaping." The Euro-Mediterranean Student Research Multi-Conference - Unity and Diversity of Euro-Mediterranean Identities (Conference Paper). (9 June 2009). 05 March 2012.
<http://www.emuni.si/Files/Denis/Conferences/EMUNI_ReS/2009/Proceeding/Aristotle/Pantouvaki.pdf>
- Sword, Helen. *Ghostwriting Modernism*. USA: Cornell University Press, 2002.
- Sullivan, Garrett A. *Memory and Forgetting in English Renaissance Drama: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Webster*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Tanpınar, Ahmet Hamdi. *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü*. İstanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 1992.

- Thomsen, William F. "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead by Tom Stoppard". Review. *The English Journal*, Vol. 57, No. 8 (Nov., 1968), 08 January 2013. 1234-1236. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/812507>>
- Thwaites, Tony. *Reading Freud: Psychoanalysis as Cultural Theory*. London: SAGE, 2007.
- Vonwiller, Benjamin. "The Spectre of Shakespeare in Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*." *Sydney Studies* Vol. 24 (1998). 08 March 2012. 1-20. <<http://ojs-prod.library.usyd.edu.au/index.php/SSE/article/view/530/502>>
- Wise, Christopher. "Deconstruction and Zionism: Jacques Derrida's 'Specters of Marx'" *Diacritics*. Vol. 31, No. 1 (Spring, 2001). 31 March 2012. 55-72. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1566315>>.
- Zürcher, Erik J. *Turkey: A Modern History*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2004.