NARRATIVE STRATEGY IN KEMAL TAHIR’S *DEVLET ANA*

Kemal Tahir’in Devlet Ana’daki Anlatı Stratejisi

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Abstract

This work studies the narrative strategy of Kemal Tahir based on his the most popular historical novel *Devlet Ana* by using narratology as a metalanguage and indicates the way in which the author moves his readers to accept his ideological messages. Since the present study discusses particularly the way in which the aspect of narration is organised in *Devlet Ana*, firstly, the plot of the novel is analysed; secondly, the most important narrative participant in the narrative communication, so-called narrator, is examined.

Key Words: Kemal Tahir, Devlet Ana, narrative, narratology, plot, narrator.
Introduction

Kemal Tahir (Demir) (b.1910 - d.1973) is one of the leading novelists in modern Turkish literature. He was a socialist, and used the medium of the novel to communicate many ideas about the world and about what it means to be human. His novels are both entertaining and intellectually stimulating.

I have chosen Devlet Ana (Mother State) (1967) to analyse his narrative strategy. For this purpose, I will use the second edition of Devlet Ana (Bilgi Yayını, 1969). No doubt authors have certain habitual practices, and what is true of one novel is likely to be true of other novels by the same author. However, this is not entirely so. An author’s habits may vary at different times of his/her career; s/he may vary his/her procedure according to the demands of his/her subject. Therefore, in this study, discussions will not be restricted to Devlet Ana, since it is necessary to utilise information from the other novels of the author in question in order to understand his narrative strategy. Devlet Ana is about the foundation of the Ottoman Empire and the most widely known and criticised novel of the author. After being published in 1967, as Uturgauri (1989: 105) points out, Devlet Ana caused much controversy in the press, and there were many discussions and many publications on it during the first four years after its publication. I have found more than thirty articles on Devlet Ana alone. Also, some periodicals such as Dost (Ocak-1968) published special issues and special sections about the novel and its author, and some panels, such as the one organised by Mehmet Seyda (1969), were assembled. Whereas several critics such as Tahir Alangu (1967), Hulusi Dosdoğru (1974: 388), and Ismet Bozdağ (1968: 12-13) claim that Devlet Ana is the first real Turkish novel and has a special importance in the history of the Turkish novel, some critics such as Tahsin Yücel (1970), Murat Belge (1994: 162-167), Semih Gümüş (1999), Oktay Akbal (1968a,b), and Ferit Edgü (1968a,b) do not even accept the work as a novel. Halit Refiğ (1971: 78) also does not see Devlet Ana as a classical novel but as ‘a book of wisdom’ that can only be seen in the Oriental literature tradition. However, for him, this is not a question of deficiency in the novel but rather of superiority. According to Tanık Büğra (24.4.1973), on the other hand, Devlet Ana is a false interpretation, and has some deficiencies and historical gaps. However, these do not prevent it from being technically ‘a first-class novel’.

Turkish readers in the 1960s, who, whether influenced by Westernisation that was

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\[1\] According to Kemal Tahir, socialism is the best model for the Turkish society. For more detail see Kemal Tahir (1992: 364), Kemal Tahir (1989a: 231, 238, 241), Selahattin Hilav (1995: 75-102), Hilmi Yavuz (1996a: 65-79), Mustafa Miyasojka (1998: 32-33). However, it should be noted that he cannot be classified along the stereotypical intellectual lines of ‘the left’ or ‘the right’.

\[2\] It is worth noting that after Devlet Ana, Kemal Tahir has been popularly nicknamed ‘the writer of the Ottoman state’.
heavily criticised by Kemal Tahir or not, are to be regarded as the first readers of Devlet Ana, which praises the Ottoman society above the society of the West. Thus, the important point to be kept in mind with regard to Devlet Ana is that it originated from and functioned within such a socio-historic context. In this way, Devlet Ana differs from many other novels. Its primary aim was not to be a ‘pure’ artistic text or ‘light’ reading. In terms of Jakobson’s (1961) communication model, its primary aim can thus be described as conative and not poetic. It was written primarily in order to provoke a certain response from its readers. Kemal Tahir explains his aim in writing this novel as follows:  

You see, there is a huge slackness in society... There is a lack of confidence, anxiety, and a weltering in despair amongst the people! I will try to expunge this despair and give confidence to society, and try to blow a new breath into the spirits with my new novel. That is why I chose the first years of the foundation of the Ottoman State as my subject. (İsmet Bozdağ, 1980: 103)

We are searching for the precious essence in our history, which will praise our people and our nation in the future... Devlet Ana which narrates what happened 600 years ago was written with the hope that it will enlighten the events of today, in one sense, of the future. (Kemal Tahir, 1990: 39-40)

In sum, this novel is structured in such a way as to show the positive features of the Ottoman Turkish society so that the confidence of Turkish people themselves against the West might be strengthened and deepened. This purpose should be kept in mind - even in a narratological analysis - in order to facilitate a reading of the text that might be termed adequate in terms of the structure and the (self-)stated purpose of the text.

1. The plot of Devlet Ana

Rimmon-Kenan (1983: 13-20) prefers not to use the term plot, as she regards it as too vague for critical usage. Instead, she prefers to speak of “surface narrative structure”, singling out time and causality – two of the aspects also mentioned by Culpepper (1983: 79-84) – as two main principles in the combination of events into sequences, and of sequences into story. However, three more principles, which may be employed in the combination of sequences into story, should be added: space, character and internal relationship(s) between sequences (contrast and similarity).

In the following discussion, the term “plot” will be used to refer to the dynamic pattern of the interpretative ordering (Brooks, 1984: 25) of the surface structure of Devlet

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1 His scheme for the functional classification of language is based on a systematic theory of language, and distinguishes six functions (referential, emotive, conative, phatic, poetic, metalinguistic), each corresponding to one essential aspect of the discourse situation.

4 See also ‘Kemal Tahir’e 5 Sord, Kemal Tahir’den 5 Cevap’, Kitaplar Arasında 1:1 (1968), 5.

5 For a detailed discussion of various approaches to the plot of Devlet Ana, see Gülendam (1999a).

6 This is easily demonstrated by comparing Culpepper’s theoretical discussion of plot with that of R. L. Caseiro (1979: 3-26).
These relationships between the events can usually be described in terms of one or more of the following principles: time, causality, space, character and internal relationships.

Devlet Ana is divided into four sections: I. Kancık Vuruş (Treachery Blow), II. Uyandırılan Işık (The Awakened Light), III. Dost Çelmesi (The Friend's Deception), and IV. Derin Geçit (Deep Passage). The plot of Devlet Ana may be summarised as the superiority of the Ottoman society in all aspects to the Western society, in other words, a comparison between the good/positive side and the bad/negative side. The plot of Devlet Ana unfolds in the following way:

In Section I, Notús Gladyüs, a knight of the St. John order, comes to and settles in an inn, Issızhan, that belongs to a Greek family, Mavro and his sister Liya, and this is separated from Söğüt, the capital of the newly-founded Ottoman frontier, by a vast swamp. There he meets two of his friends (Uranha, the Turcople captain, and Monk Benito) and the most famous Turkish poet in that era, Yunus Emre, and a slave, Kurt Ali. In this part, there are long conversations among them, especially between Notús Gladyüs and Mavro. These dialogues, namely in the first part of the novel, form the setting (atmosphere) of the novel. Through these conversations, the social, political, economical, and geographical settings of the novel are given and an economical, social and moral comparison is made between the East and the West.

During the night of his stay, around morning time, Notús Gladyüs tries to rape the lady of the inn, Liya, but he fails. The next day, with his two friends, the knight goes to the monk's cave. There they prepare themselves for a journey through the swamp while Kamagan Dervish, a Mongolian priest, spies on them. They cross the swamp with the monk's help, reach Dönmezköy (a village, where the Christian community, who took refuge in the Ottomans, live on the outskirts of Söğüt) and there they kill the trainer of Ertuğrul Beg's horses, Demircan, the beloved of Liya, and also rape and kill Liya who happens to be there with her lover. They also steal horses and take Liya's body with them.

However, this number increased in its later editions. For instance, the 9th edition, which was published by Tekin Yayınları in 1989, is divided into six parts. It is a common convention in many novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to divide the novel into virtually self-contained sections. According to A. A. Mendilow (1952: 269), "this practice derived from the structure of the epic and was further supported by publication in instalments in journals and magazines."

In Devlet Ana, every section has sub-sections. During this process, it seems that a certain purpose was followed, because the novel, interestingly, is divided into 6 sections and every section has 3 sub-sections. This structure reminds us of the influence of Turkish folk literature on the novel. This also shows how carefully he planned his novel.

At first, Kemal Tahir intended to give this name ('Derin Geçit') as a title to the novel. However, after the opposition of some of his friends, such as Metin Eksan, Halit Refiğ and Ali Dilber, he changed his mind and decided to call it as 'Devlet Ana'. For this long and exhausting process see Refiğ (2000: 109-112).
and escape to Karacahisar –another settlement near Söğüt.

Section II begins with a traditional initiation ceremony of the ‘akhī’ (or ‘futuwwatīyya’)^9 organisation, which played an effective role during the foundation of the Ottoman Empire with the other three groups -Ghaziyyan-1 Rûm, Abûlîm-1 Rûm, and Bajîyyan-1 Rûm- according to some historians. However, when it is over we find out –to our amazement- that this is a children’s game, rather than an actual ceremony. This is an excellent display of Kemal Tahir’s narrative strategy. He employs the same technique in another of his works, Göl İnsanları (The People of the Lake) (1958: 103-108), a compilation of four short stories. One critic, Murat Belge (1994: 164), claims that this scene is totally irrelevant to the development of the novel, for there is no functionalism in making children play ‘akhīṣm’. For him, this ceremony has no place in the novel. This could be debated, because there is one character who later becomes ‘an individual’ in the novel, Kerim, whose development could not be understood if this scene were neglected. Moreover, as Berna Moran (1991: 162) points out, this scene has other important functions and implications: to give information about ‘akhīṣm’ and to show the state of morality in Söğüt.

When the trainer’s dog that was wounded by Uranha’s arrow arrives at Söğüt, Kerim, the brother of Demircan, and his friend Orhan Beg, the son of Osman Beg, go to Dönmezköy in order to find the carcass of a wolf, which they think the dog has killed. However, they find the corpse of Demircan instead. Thereupon, the Ottomans immediately gather. While the meeting is still in progress, they learn that Ertuğrul Beg has just died. At this meeting, in spite of his uncle Dundar Alp’s opposition, Osman Beg is chosen as the new leader of Söğüt. After burying his father, Osman Beg and Kerim go to İtburnu, where Sheikh Edebâlı –their religious leader- lives, to take his advice and to talk matters over with him, and come back to Söğüt for another meeting. In this meeting, they must decide whether to start a war or not. While the meeting is taking place a Byzantine prince, Filatyos, (the brother of the ruler of the Karacahisar frontier) comes to Söğüt. He brings along Mavro and accuses Demircan of forcing Liya to become a Muslim, and of raping her, and then killing her. He wants to use Mavro as a witness, but Mavro refuses to do so and takes refuge in the Ottomans in spite of Filatyos. Osman persuades him by saying that there has been a misunderstanding on their part and further

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^9 There are many publications about this organisation. For example, see Abdülkâı Gölpanlî (1949-1950); Şinasi İlhan (1928); İlhan Tanu (1947); Franz Taeschner (1964); Neşet Çâşatay (1974); Sabahâtîn Gullûhî (1977).

adds that these are the evil works of enemies, who desire to sow the seeds of enmity between the two frontiers – one Greek and the other Muslim. Mavro is not given back to the prince and is adopted by Bacibey (Devlet Hatun or Devlet Ana), mother of Kerim and Demircan.

In the beginning of Section III, while Kaplan Çavuş, the father of Aslıhan (Kerim’s lover), tries to train Kerim and Mavro as warriors in order to take revenge on the killers of their brother and sister, his poet friend, Yunus Emre, brings good news to Osman Beg in Söğüt about Sheikh Edebali’s daughter, Balkız: Edebali has accepted Osman’s proposal (his first attempt was not accepted by Edebali) to marry Balkız. Osman decides to send for a second time his friend, Alişar Beg, the ruler of Eskişehir, to Edebali to ask for the hand of Balkız. However, Alişar asks her hand for himself, but does not get a positive reply from her father upon which he decides to kidnap her. He hires Knight Notüs Gladyüs and Uranha for this purpose, but they fail to kidnap her. Then the enemies of the Ottomans, Filatyos, Notüs Gladyüs, Uranha, Alişar Beg, and Çudaroğlu – a Mongolian robber – lay traps for Osman Beg when he goes to visit a friend of his, Nurettin Beg, in a neighbouring Muslim settlement. Again the Ottomans are triumphant. Alişar is killed by Osman Beg. After the incident, Osman Beg firstly goes to Edebali to inform him about the situation and with her father’s permission he marries Balkız.

In Section IV, it becomes clear to Mavro that these traps and attacks have been planned and executed by the knight, his two friends, and some other enemies, who are settled in this region, such as Christian princes (‘tekfurs’). Meanwhile, Orhan Beg saves the daughter of the prince of Yarhisar, Lotüs, from drowning, and falls in love with her. Another attempt to attack the Ottoman caravan fails, because Osman Beg receives information about it from a slave, Kurt Ali, and has taken precautions. After that, Kerim enters the monk’s cave and finds out for certain that Monk Benito is one of the enemies of Ottomans who organised the attacks against them. However, Kerim falls into a trap that had been prepared by Monk Benito and is wounded. Eventually all chances of preserving peace are gone forever. The prince of Yarhisar is persuaded by the enemies of the Ottomans to allow his daughter Lotüs, to marry the prince of Bilecik, and Osman Beg is invited to the wedding in order to trap him. He learns about this trap from his spies and takes precautions again and beats all of them and conquers all the surrounding territories, including Bilecik, and this puts an end to enemy attacks. In the meantime, Kerim and Mavro chase their foes, the knight and the Turkish captain, all the way to the inn, Issizhan – and there they kill them. In the end, Kerim goes back to his books and becomes a mullah in Turkish ‘molla’) not a warrior in spite of the wishes of his mother. In other words, he becomes an ‘individual’.

The next aspect to be discussed is the question of which principles of combination
are used in the structuring and development of the plot of *Devlet Ana*. As mentioned above, in the theoretical discussion, the following five basic principles that may be used in the translation of events into sequences and of sequences into plots, were: time, causality, space, character and internal relationships (such as contrast and similarity).

In the development of the plot of *Devlet Ana* all of these principles of combination are used, but it is clear that not all are used to the same extent. A close analysis of the development of the plot throughout the parts reveals that *internal relationships*, *causality*, and *character* are used as the most important principles in the combination of different sequences of events to form a plot. By means of these three principles smaller narrative units are integrated to form part of a coherent whole. This happens in the following way:

*Internal relationship(s) between sequences* is used as the most important principle in combining different sequences, as a pattern of contrast can be detected in most of the sequences of events that are narrated. This ‘underlying’ pattern is the conflict between the East (the positive side) and the West (the negative side). The author of *Devlet Ana*, as mentioned before, tries to prove that Anatolian people are different from and superior to Western people. He organises events in order to show people’s reactions to the same event. For instance, he puts a slave, Kurt Ali, in his novel just to compare the perspectives of the two sides on slaves and the problem of slavery. This pattern is used over and over again in combining events into sequences. Thus, cohesion is created between all the individual sequences in which the same pattern is used. The main reason for beginning the second section of the novel with the initiation ceremony of the ‘*akhī*’ organization is also related to this pattern. In the first section of the novel, the author shows us the immorality of Western people by using Knight Notüs Gladyüs and Monk Benito. In order to make a comparison between the morality of Western people and the morality of the people of Söğüt, he uses this ceremony. In section IV, for the same purpose, the author also uses the immorality of the people of Bilecik (the Byzantines) (*Devlet Ana*: 557-566).

As a result of the frequent use of the principle of contrast, *Devlet Ana* sometimes displays a static dimension: the features of the Anatolian people (the East) and the reaction of Western people, which are especially represented by Knight Notüs Gladyüs, to them and the opposing values of the two groups are made clear from the outset. As a matter of fact, for Kemal Tahir, every plot, whether in a novel or in a film, should be based on a certain and obvious conflict that highlights two opposite sides—good and bad. Kemal Tahir often emphasises this narrative strategy, which reminds us of folk literature\textsuperscript{11}, in his notes:

Unless one can assure that there is an open conflict and sides of this conflict are clarified,

\textsuperscript{11}See Gülendam (1999a: 20-21).
unless all events are shared between the two sides in conflict and the story is taken to the climax, to the finale, one cannot talk about the existence of a subject for the cinema, let alone its perfection. (Kemal Tahir, 1990: 214).

Only after the main conflict and the two opposing sides involved in this conflict become obviously apparent, one is able to talk about technique, style, and setting. (Kemal Tahir, 1990: 217).

If the topic, namely the conflict, and the sides that take part in this conflict are chosen correctly, the conflict gains the desired impression and density spontaneously on its own, towards the end. (Kemal Tahir, 1990: 218).

The reason for the main conflict and the characteristics of the opposite sides, which will lead to this conflict, are emphasised by the conversations between Mavro, Notüs Gladysus, and Yunus Emre in the first part of Devlet Ana. After this detailed introductory part, the main conflict that occurs between the Ottomans and their enemies begins. Meanwhile, the reader encounters an essential element of the adventure novels: a struggle between those who want to complete a mission in a certain time and those who do not want to let them reach their target. As a matter of fact, many of his novels, especially after Devlet Ana, contain elements of the newspaper\(^{12}\), detective story\(^{13}\), and popular adventure novel. In his novel, he also widely applied the device typical in adventure literature of joining contrasting elements such as villains and heroes. And, indeed, one might ask why he used the narrative technique of the adventure novel in his narrative strategy. There are several reasons. First of all, with its central interest in plot, the adventure novel was a brilliant solution to a basic problem of Kemal Tahir’s creative poetics. He created models of gripping narrative interest, and by doing so satisfied his main requirement in the area of novelistic technique. He knew that his concept of the novel, which was very wide and embraced all spheres of thought—tragedy, philosophy, sociology, economics, and history—had to be interesting externally because of its great internal complexity in order to hold the reader’s interest. He understood that the difficult path for the reader through the labyrinth of theories, characters, and human relations in one book had to be made easier by the liveliness and interest of the plot. In order to

\(^{12}\) This feature is very obvious in Völ Ayrımı (Cross-Roads) (1977) in which some of the main characters are journalists. It also should not be forgotten that, like the majority of important writers, he himself worked many years as a journalist.

\(^{13}\) He, especially, uses the structure of the detective story, which is divided into three types—whodunit, thriller, and suspense—by Todorov (1977), in his Kurt Kanunu (The Wolf’s Law) (1969). Berna Moran (1991: 141-157) successfully analyses the structure of this novel in accordance with Todorov’s classification. It should not also be forgotten that after his release from the prison in 1950, under a dozen pseudonyms such as Bedri Eser, Nurettin Demir, Ismail Kemalettin (this is his real first name), Kör Duman, Samim Aşkın, Ali Geznil, F. M. İkinci, and Celâl Dağlar, Kemal Tahir busily produced or translated a great number of detective stories and adventure novels, which were serialised in various popular dailies. For more detail, see İz (1978), Çelik (1974), and Doğduğun (1974: 443-450).
Narrative Strategy In Kemal Tahir’s Devlet Ana

According to Kemal Tahir (1989a: 56; Seyda, 1969: 42), his type of Turkish novel should reflect ‘the spirit of the Turk’ (’Türk ruhu’ or ’Türk dehası’\(^\text{14}\)) and this génic spirit should also inform the narrative structure of the novel. So, it could be said that one of the reasons for creating such scenarios in Devlet Ana is that the society it described was semi-nomadic. The same way, as I will mention later, could also be argued that one of the reasons for including such long dialogues in the novel is that the people targeted are dominated by an oral culture.

On the other hand, the principle of causality is also used as a principle in combining the sequences of events in Devlet Ana into a plot. At the beginning of the novel, this principle is demonstrated in the attempts to spoil the peace in the region, and this is seen as a reaction against the Turcomans who constitute a strong community in the region. In the plot of Devlet Ana, the events are narrated in detail. They are linked to one another tightly and are set up successively, as in detective novels.

In addition to the aforementioned aspect of Devlet Ana, there is another important element, which is worth mentioning here: chiasmatic coherence of the events. Briefly, chiasmus is a rhetorical term to describe a construction involving the repetition of words or elements in reverse order (ABC: C'B'A') (K. Wales, 1989: 62). When we look at Devlet Ana as a whole narration, it will be seen that the story begins with the arrival of the knight and his friend, Uranha, at Issızhan where they plan to steal Ertuğrul’s warhorses and spoil the peaceful atmosphere of the region. The knight, who never turns his back to anyone for his fear of being killed from behind, is also vehemently afraid of standing next to the edge of the cliff, and Uranha killed Kerim’s brother, Demircan, and Mavro’s sister, Liya (A). Interestingly enough, at the end of novel, both the knight and Uranha are killed by Kerim and Mavro in Issızhan. Furthermore, the knight died falling over the edge of that cliff which he had likened to hell at the beginning of the novel (A').

At the second stage, we come across another important chiasmus structure in Devlet Ana. Here the sequence of events revolve around their (the knight and Uranha) plans to steal Ertuğrul’s horses in order to earn money by selling them and prepare a good future for themselves in the region. They even dreamed of establishing a principedom in the region. For this purpose, they cross the swamp following the instructions of Monk Benito (B). Curiously, the second half of this pair is in stark contrast to their initial plan. Here, their life is in chaos. This time they pass through the swamp again in order to save their souls from death. The money (gold) they made is stolen by their guide Pervane Subaşı. Symbolically speaking, the guide misleads them, and their hope of securing their future in

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the region, through the establishment of a principedom fades and disappears below the muddy surface of swamp (B').

The author highlights another stark contrast between Söğüt (Ottoman principality) and Bilecik (Byzantium principality) at stage three in our chiasmus structure. Briefly, the narration begins with a traditional initiation ceremony of the ‘akhi’ organization. This represents the morality of Turcomans, the people of the East. They place enormous importance on the preservation of virtue and morality in society (C). On the other hand, the second half of this part introduces us to the people who live in Bilecik (the West). The major characteristic of Western people portrayed by the novel is the corruption in their moral lives. They are depicted as people who chase after money, satisfy their sexual desires and so forth (C'). So the contrast created between the East and the West symbolises the virtues of the Turcomans and the degenerated life of the Byzantines in Anatolia.

This structural unity can be best shown in the following chiasmus scheme:

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          A
         /   \
        /     \
       B       C
      /       /  \
     D       E   \E'
    /       /    \
   E'      D'      \C'
  /       /        \
 B'      C'         \A
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The author not only deals with laymen and leaders' moral lives, but also examines the lives of the religious leaders in their communities. In his usual style, the author presents two different personalities for the East and the West. As a representative of the East, Sheikh Edebâli is an honest, powerful, pure and religious person. In addition, his dervish lodge, which is surrounded by the trees and vineyards, is described metaphorically as paradise (D). However, the cave where Monk Benito lives is dark and dirty, like his clothes. In contrast to Edebâli’s dervish lodge, this is situated in the middle of a barren hill in front of the swamp. There is no tree, house or planted area around it. It seems that the author is making a metaphorical connection between hell and the cave of Benito (D').

Whereas Section Three shows the Turks and the Byzantines, the last chiasmatic structure portrays the contrast between two Turkish principalities (‘beyliks’), Söğüt and 148
Narrative Strategy In Kemal Tahir’s Devlet Ana

Eskişehir. The main figures of this part are Alişar Beg, Hophop Cadi, Osman Beg, and Akçakoca. The beg of Eskişehir, Alişar, and his adviser, Hophop Cadi, are shown making secret plans to harm or deceive their subjects ('reaya'). Moreover, both Alişar and Hophop Cadi are corrupt and are portrayed running after women (E). However, the other Turcomans, Osman Beg and Akçakoca, are presented as honest and self-sacrificing people who work on behalf of their subjects. In contrast to Alişar’s corrupt life, Osman Beg is introduced as a morally perfect man, especially in his sexual life. By the same token, his adviser Akçakoca, is a very kind person who always helps the people without expecting anything in return (E'). Like the comparison between Söğüt and Bilecik, the comparison between Söğüt and Eskişehir shows the moral and administrative superiority of Söğüt (Ottomans). Clearly, by this comparison, the author wants to show why the Ottomans alone established such a powerful empire rather than other Turcoman beyliks in Anatolia.

This chiasmatic construction describes the several elements in Devlet Ana in reverse order, which confirms the internal structural unity of the novel. For this reason, it is not plausible to accept the comment made by Tahsin Yücel regarding the effective relation among the different factors in the novel. According to Yücel (1983: 101), many elements in Devlet Ana are brought together randomly and serve to complete part of the narration rather than the whole text. Therefore, there is no internal coherence or well-organised structure in Devlet Ana. However, Berna Moran (1991: 174-5) claims that from beginning to end the novel shows internal coherence and, therefore, the novel is carefully structured.

Character is also used as a principle in combining sequences of events in the novel —yet not to same extent as the two principles discussed above. The author of Devlet Ana organizes some of the sequences of events in order to present Kerim’s development as one of the most important characters of the novel. In order to present this process, as Moran (1991: 161-166) explains in detail, the author utilizes myths and the structure of romance stories. The story of Kerim, with its three stages [departure - initiation (or examination) - return] is similar to the structures of romances, epics and myths.

15 Even these two examples are enough to prove that the events of Devlet Ana are not organised accidentally and in this respect the novel is very successful. When Kerim appears in the novel, he is reading a book at the ceremony of ‘akhī’ institution. At the end of the novel, he is presented again reading the book. Secondly, after the death of Kerim’s brother, Kerim was forced by his mother using his father’s whip to become a warrior. At the end, we come across a similar scene. This time, however, Kerim uses the whip to threaten his mother to become a mullah.

16 For detailed information about these stages, see J. Campbell (1971). Furthermore, the author of Devlet Ana also uses another theme of romance: ‘Barren Country’ or ‘Shortage’ (J. L. Weston, 1957: 56). At the beginning of Devlet Ana, the situation in Söğüt is not cheerful, then comes the action part that creates a situation in contrast to the beginning of the story. Briefly, the situation in Söğüt at the beginning of story is one of shortage, but later on the situation becomes one of abundance. Change from shortage to
At the beginning Kerim wants to become a mullah, but his mother Bacibey does not want this. With Ertuğrul Beg's persuasion, at last, she allows him to become a mullah. After the death of his brother, Demircan, Kerim is forced by his mother to become a warrior. His mother burns his books and breaks his musical instrument. Then she gives him his brother’s warrior dress and sword. Thus, Kerim decides to be a warrior unwillingly. After that, he is known as Kerim Can instead of Kerim Çelebi. This is the first stage (departure) in the story.

In the second stage (initiation or examination), Kerim has to be tested and has to die symbolically. For this reason, he enters the monk’s cave (which is called ‘the inn of the monster’) and there he finds valuable books and treasures as well as the monk’s secrets. After this event, he proves his bravery and is praised by the people, including his beloved Aslıhan; and he is given the valuable books as reward for his heroic action. This shows that he passed the test successfully. In addition to this, having killed his brother’s killer, he proves himself totally.

The final stage (return) represents revival (returning to his individuality) of Kerim. After returning to Söğüt, he hangs up his sword, and then starts to read his books. Meanwhile, his mother comes in, and takes the whip, which is a symbol of the power, in order to force him to throw out the books and take to the sword. However, this time, Kerim takes the whip from his mother’s hand and forces her to calm down and commands her to go to kitchen in order to prepare food. This indicates that he has become an individual.

Although time and space are also used in the combination of sequences, they are abundance is provided by the actions in the mid-part of the story. The reason for using this trope of change is again to introduce specific forms used for epic, legend, and folktale. As is known, these forms derived from the myths, which narrate what happens during rites of abundance, which are held to fend off the danger of shortages before spring. People believed that if they defeated the dark powers represented by the shortages, then abundance would return. These forms of myths are used in Western literature in the narration of some charming stories, though the forms are disguised in modern literature. Nonetheless, Yaşar Kemal, Orhan Kemal, Kemal Bilgèsar and Kemal Tahir used these forms very clearly. And, in these novels, there is a clear effort to try to use the oral type of the narration to revive these styles (Moran, 1991: 36-56, 78-93, 158-180).

Besides, the device of shortage-abundance, we also come across another form used by myths that the rescue of the beloved or wife of the hero. Since woman represents productivity and fecundity, she is the symbol of abundance. In some myths, her kidnapping in the winter represents the weakness or dying of the earth, the rescue of her in the spring represents the richness and vitality of the earth. In Devlet Ana, the beloved of Osman Beg, Balkız, is also loved by Alişar Beg. Alişar Beg tries to kidnap her, but the men of Osman Beg arrive in time to save her. By the same token, Harizanos, the Yardıwar prince, forces his daughter, Lotüs, to marry Rumanos, the prince of Bilecik. However, Lotüs loves Osman, therefore she is locked in a room of the top of the castle. When the Turks defeat them, she is rescued from the castle and then she marries Osman. Even Mavro’s effort to rescue his (beloved) horse from Karacahisar can be considered in the same context.
Narrative Strategy In Kemal Tahir’s Devlet Ana

less important for the overall structuring of the novel. In the plot of Devlet Ana, the sequences of the events are linked by means of chronological relationships. The function of the chronological framework is to provide a broad outline within which the dynamic interaction between Ottomans and their enemies is presented. The principle of space is mainly employed in describing the characters and making a comparison between Eastern people and Westerners. There is a great difference between the spatial settings, where the Westerners or the enemies of Ottomans live and those in which the Ottomans live. Whereas the enemies of the Ottomans (especially Mongols and Westerners) are shown presented in dirty and dark places, such as caves and swamps, the Ottomans are generally presented in clean and well-lighted places, such as Bacibey’s green, cool, and cheerful garden.

In the novel, the author manipulates his reader in such a way as to nurture particular opinions. For this purpose, he establishes a close relationship with the reader. This relationship should be kept in mind during our narratological analysis and also all future narratological/rhetorical studies about this author’s novels. As mentioned before, for the purpose of this study I shall assume that the relationship between author and reader in Devlet Ana can be described broadly in terms of a process whereby the author guides the reader to accept a particular perspective on the Ottomans.

2. The narrator in Devlet Ana

The narrator of Devlet Ana can be classified as follows:

* With regard to the narrative level and extent of participation in the story, the narrator is to be classified as extra-heterodiegetic narrator. He is, like all the other narrators of the author’s novels, extra-diegetic narrators, as he always functions on superior narrative levels and is heterodiegetic narrator, as he is never presented as being one of the characters within the narrative. It is the higher narratorial authority in relation to the stories they narrate that confers on them the quality, which has often been called ‘omniscience’. This narrator tends to be apparent in the narration; and with his explanations, interpretations, and judgements he wants to say we are here. ‘Omniscience’ is perhaps an exaggerated term for him, but his characteristics are relevant:
  familiarity, in principle, with the characters’ innermost thoughts and feelings; knowledge of past, present and future; presence in locations where characters are supposed to be unaccompanied; and knowledge of what happens in several places at the same time. (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983: 95).

  In other words, his narrative vision is both panchronic and ubiquitous. (O’Neill, 1994: 62).

  So, while narrating he knows everything related with events and characters that take place in those events. The narrator of Devlet Ana, for example, seems to know
everything about Osman Beg when talking about him:

Osman Beg was never seen to be angry or swearing at anyone since he had become a man.

(Devlet Ana: 373)

On the other hand, although the narrator of Devlet Ana rarely speaks of people who are in different places at the same time (i.e. the scene on page 450, which reflects the conversation between Orhan and Lotüs, firstly is presented through two characters (Mavro and Kerim), who are placed at the same stage with Orhan and Lotüs, but separated from them; limited focalisations; and this is presented through the narrator’s eyes), he mostly narrates just an event instead of narrating all events that occur in different places at the same time, and leaves the other(s) to the character(s) who lived that event(s). This is the most prominent feature of Kemal Tahir’s narrative strategy in his novels: most of the events are narrated by characters, called character-narrators (homodiegetic narrators). This method is the best way of reducing the narrator’s overtness to a minimum: scenic representation is used as the dominant technique and this brings ‘mimesis’ to the foreground. By using dialogues between the characters, he is able to give many summaries, flashbacks (analepsis) and descriptions. For instance, in the first chapter of the novel, historical, political, social, and economical settings of the region are given through the dialogues between Mavro and Knight Notüs Gladyüs instead of being given by the narrator. Whenever the events that occurred in the past are to be narrated or summarised, the author gives this role to the characters rather than to the narrator. These narrator-characters narrate an incident that happened in the past or give information to the other characters that listen. In this way, as Berna Moran (1991: 177) points out, the author sets a ‘theatre stage’ that gives him both a narrator to present his story and the use of scenic representation [in Plato’s (1963: 638) word, ‘mimesis’] is more fascinating for the reader as a mode by which to draw his/her own conclusions from what s/he ‘sees’ and ‘hears’. Pir Derviş, Ermeni (Armenian) Toros and Kel Derviş narrate at great length to Kerim and others gathered in Bacibey’s house the raid of Karacahisar (Devlet Ana: 485-503) is the best example in Devlet Ana for this. Briefly, as in epics, Kemal Tahir presents many events through witnesses in his novels. However, when characters are narrating an event, in order to save it from being monotonous, the author changes these character-narrators by dialogue and interference. It should be stressed that instead of describing an

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18 As a matter of fact, as is emphasised by critics such as Fethi Naci (1994: 144-147), Hüllü Yavuz (1966: 74-75), Orhan Pamuk (1997: 173-183), and Atilla İlhan (1997: 64), in Kemal Tahir’s novels many commentaries that he wishes to make on social habits and customs and information are presented through the speeches of the characters.
Narrative Strategy in Kemal Tahir's Devlet Ana

event itself, the narration of it by a character is presented, giving it a different scenic representation. In other words, the narrator does not narrate the story, but rather, he presents the narration of the story by the ones who lived it. As stated above, this method has an excessive reliance on direct speech and conversation, and this can be seen throughout Devlet Ana and is one of the most important techniques that Kemal Tahir uses in his narrative strategies. Therefore, as will be seen later, this method reduces the perceptibility of the extra-heterodiegetic narrator in the novel. In this method, the character-narrator does not narrate his/her story to us but to the other characters that listen to him/her. In other words, his/her narratee on the stage is not us as readers (called as ‘heterodiegetic narratees’) but homodiegetic narratee(s). We, as the real readers, are just the audience for the character-narrators. This method reminds us of Turkish traditional narratives, especially the popular forms of theatrical entertainment such as meddah (story-teller)\(^\text{19}\) and ortaoyunu\(^\text{20}\) (improvised comedy or theatrical representation with a central stage). For instance, Kel Dervişh obviously uses the style of meddah when narrating Cimi’s (The Stingy) story by using the language of the Dede Korkut stories (Moran, 1991: 159; Gülendam, 1999a) in the novel. The stereotyped expressions of the meddah or minstrel style are often used by him:

Hello, O the servants of God... Hello, O pure-hearted people! Hello, O beautiful sisters!

\(^{19}\) According to Kemal Tahir, Turkish novelists should use Turkish traditional narratives as main sources in their novels:

The style of the meddah stories and folk story tradition, which are the most important sources of our storytelling tradition, must be analysed in detail. (Kemal Tahir, 1990: 102)

First of all, where did the novel come from in the West? From fairy tales and folk tales? Okay! I have fairy tales and folk tales as well. This means that I have the base on which I can place my novel. (Bozdağ, 1980: 141).

He proposed his own version of the realist novel as being based on the values and realities of Turkish society. For him, therefore, every nation’s novels have to be written according to its own national artistic taste. Kemal Tahir, while saying that he is searching for a narrative style appropriate for Turkish people instead of imitating Western novel showing Western people, recognised this as a methodological problem. Is it, however, only the necessity of finding a model to suit his human material that forces him towards this search? I think as a result of his Marxist understanding, the categorical imperative for uprising cannot be compromised. Believing that the classical Western novel was developed by bourgeois society and the structure of Turkish society and historical development is different, Kemal Tahir searched for ways of using the methods of the bourgeois novel to form narratives for and about his own people. For this reason, he based his novels on traditional narratives. For detailed analysis of the meddah tradition and its influences on the first Turkish novels, see Ahmet Ö. Evin (1983: 29-38), Fuad Köşmür (1966: 361-412), Pertev Nailı Boratav (1946: 90-92).

\(^{20}\) Interestingly, apart from the names of some traditional narratives that have had a great influence on the novel, such as the Dede Korkut stories (pp. 207, 452, etc.), Kahile and Demne (p. 605), Kabusname (p. 605), Felekname (p. 605), Siyasetname (pp. 605, 610), and the story of Karem and Aslı (p. 465), the narrator of Devlet Ana uses this term —although this term was not known at that time— when he describes Mavro’s position in a scene:

Mavro was comfortable as if he was at a wedding party and watching ortaoyunu. (Devlet Ana: 363).
O, the sons of Adam and the servants of God... About what do we speak to you now? [...] Let us talk about Cimri... (Devlet Ana: 427-428).

Bayhoca also uses the same stereotyped expressions when he narrates a story about the creation of the horse:

About what do we speak to you now? ... Let us talk about our poor father Adam. (Devlet Ana: 406).

It is obvious that Kemal Tahir is influenced by and benefits from this tradition very much in his narrative technique. With the help of this method, Kemal Tahir is able to show characters' individual specialties and to produce humour to curb monotony. As a result the reader does not get bored while reading this long novel. In addition to the extra-heterodiegetic narrator (external narrator), who is at primary narrative level, there are some character-narrators (homodiegetic narrators) who take roles to present the story. Therefore, it is obvious that Devlet Ana has both a far and a near universe that can be reached not directly but via the witnesses and humorous interpretation of the characters. As readers, we learn about events from the characters as they narrate them. In other words, together with reader, the external narrator witnesses not only the events themselves but also the events narrated by the characters. The character-narrator (homodiegetic narrator) just considers the narration. This means that there is more than one narrator in the same narrative and more than one narration level. The conversations of the characters that contain the events that happened to them as if they are on a stage is not the story itself but the narration of it. As a result, the narration of these conversations (dialogues) is a narration of the narration. This shows that there is a third level. This triple structure involves the story, the narration and the narrative (text):

1st level >> narrative (text) >> Ottoman society and Kerim
2nd level >> narration >> conversation of the three people who took part in the raid
3rd level >> story >> the capture of Karacahisar

The narrator knows the past and present very well. He mentions a future event just once. After falling into Monk Benito's trap in his dark cave, the narrator foretells the future situation of Kerim as follows:

Later, although he forced himself a lot, he was not able to remember how he put out the torch and put it in its place. (Devlet Ana: 462).

The narrator sees into the minds and hearts of their characters. For instance, while Hophop Cadi, who saved Alişar Beg from financial troubles by cheating, was thinking about his illegal jobs between page 276 and page 281, the author shows these events to us.

21 Similar expressions can be seen in the medieval romances. For instance, one of the medieval romances, Havelok, starts as follows:

Listen, O people, men, women, and girls, today I am going to tell you Havelok's story. (Loomis, 1974: 288).
without any narratorical intervention except just once:

-At this point of his thoughts, Hophop Cadi bent his finger and struck on wood- (Devlet Ana: 280).

The narrator of Devlet Ana even knows the minds and hearts of the characters better than they themselves. I will give three examples from the novel:

-He (Kerim) was trying to gain time without being aware of that-(Devlet Ana: 622).

He (Kerim) opened KELİLE and DİME at random and then, without knowing what he was doing he slowly sat down on the sofa. (Devlet Ana: 630).

After entering the swamp, neither were aware that they were trying to postpone the fight as far as possible, in plain Turkish, they were mortally afraid of fighting with sword against these fellows (Devlet Ana: 607).

* In terms of the degree of perceptibility within the narrative, the narrator is classified as being perceptible.

In Devlet Ana the presence of the narrator is indicated by means of the following techniques:

a. Rhythm

To show that there is a narrator, one can take into consideration an aspect of the handling of “time”: rhythm. It has been observed by many narratologists that the story is presented in a certain rhythm. Thus, some events are told scenically, others at a slow pace, while others are related at a rapid pace. This rhythm is made clear by the narrator at the level of the text through his choice of verb-forms and time-indicators like ‘once’, ‘regularly’, etc. In short, analysis of rhythm is one reliable way to detect a narrator. In this sense, one of the most important elements in rhythm is the summary of events.

In Devlet Ana, summary is not common. The summaries in Devlet Ana, which they are mostly used in order not to repeat above-mentioned events or situations, cover a short time:

The Black Monk cut short the details about the Knight Notus Gladyus’ shooting of Demircan with an arrow when he went to steal the horses, and he launched into a narration of the Liya incident. He was going into detail and dragging it out as if he were with them. (Devlet Ana: 550).

He made him say: ‘There is no God but He, and Muhammad is the messenger of God’!.. Then, he made him repeat the principles and beliefs of Islam. (Devlet Ana: 390).

The descriptions of settings and the identification and definition of the characters are also related to the ‘matter of time’. They are pause. This means that the narrator stops the story while continuing the narration (or, in other words, ‘discourse’) by giving descriptions of settings or of characters, which I will mention below.

Arrangement of story-events (order) is also an important narrative device, one of the most pressing as the narrator sets out to tell his tale. This rearrangement is a much
more visible sign of manipulation by the narrator than other features, such as summary and pause, in this novel. Whereas summary and pause (and even indirect speech which I will examine later) do not seriously disturb the illusion that the story is being played out before our eyes (though they remind us that it is not being played out of its own accord), meddling with the chronology is an abrupt reminder that we do not have firsthand access to the story but depend on the narrator to supply us with reports of the incidents as and when he will.

*Devlet Ana* is, like in folklore, faithful to the chronology of story-events; its discourse tells the events in exactly the order in which they occur in the story. However, it has been observed that the author is selective in the ordering of the events, which occur simultaneously. The return of Kaplan Çavuş from Konya is the best illustration of this. The chronological order of this event can be shown as follows:

A: Aslıhan, the daughter of Kaplan Çavuş, and Kerim are talking about the time of Kaplan Çavuş’s return from Konya in Bağcibey’s house.

B: The arrival of Kaplan Çavuş at Osman Beg’s house.

C: Kaplan Çavuş sends Şirin Kız to Aslıhan in order to inform her of his arrival.

D: The message of Kaplan Çavuş is conveyed by Şirin Kız to Aslıhan.

However, in the novel these events are presented in the following order:

A-D-B-C.

What is (are) the rhetorical purpose(s) behind this selection? At first glance it seems that the author had no special purpose for this rearrangement. However, if we examine the text closely, it will be seen that the author’s rearrangement is deliberate. There are several reasons for doing this. First of all, the author achieves continuity of the narration. This also shows that the narrator of the novel is not intrusive. If he cuts the conversation between Kerim and Aslıhan in order to present the arrival of Kaplan Çavuş, the romantic atmosphere created between these two will be damaged. This also shows that the author pays great attention to the relationship between characters. Apart from this important reason, there are also others such as to excite the readers’ curiosity, by creating a dramatic scene, and to present their inner lives in order to help their characterisation.

In *Devlet Ana* the present time is dominant. Flashbacks in *Devlet Ana* are used at just story level (in characters’ speeches), either in order to express the identities of the characters or in order to give historical background information and also to give an ideological message by mentioning certain historical events [i.e. the incident of Cimri (The Stingy)] to the reader. In their conversations, however, the characters of *Devlet Ana* often talk about the past in small flashbacks and the reader sometimes finds difficulty to establish a relationship between developing (present) events and those past events that are mentioned by characters. This situation arises both from not understanding the
relationship being established between the past and the present and from the frequency of this coming and going between them.

Some of these flashbacks in the story level of Devlet Ana (especially those which describe people) are done by the narrator. On the other hand, some of them - events that are not mentioned by the narrator because of their simultaneous nature - are done by the characters who took part in them and are given from their perspectives. That is, the time is used to get clear identities of the characters and to create atmosphere.

b. Description of setting

This is a relatively minimal sign of the narrator’s presence. As known, in a play or a film, this kind of description would be shown directly. In narrative fiction, on the other hand, it has to be described in the language of a narrator. In Devlet Ana, as mentioned before, the settings play important roles. Therefore, the narrator either directly (through their own eyes) or indirectly (through the eyes of one of the characters) gives descriptions of the settings in which the characters live:

The terrace (‘sayvan’) was like a balcony. The precipice dropped sharply hundreds of meters down ending in a water-filled crevice, like a large well, which reflected the clouds above. The pit below reminded one of an abyss opened up to the skies of Hell, as if it had been cracked open by an earthquake. (Devlet Ana: 11-12).

Monk Benito’s cave, which he boasted to have chosen over worldly gains, was right in the middle of a barren hill. When seen from a distance, its wide mouth made the hill looks like the baldhead of a toothless giant yawning with its jaws clattering. (Devlet Ana: 68).

[…] the swamp was like a clever enemy who liked to terrorize… (Devlet Ana: 595).

In the first example of extracts from Devlet Ana, the scene is presented through the knight’s eyes, but the words belong to the narrator. On the other hand, in the second and third examples that extract from Devlet Ana, the monk’s cave and the swamp are both seen through the narrator’s eyes and described by his words.

What is interesting to note is that Kemal Tahir (1990: 405) claims that the following extract (depiction of the environment, Akşehir) that Küçük Ağa (The Little Agha), which is Tarık Buğra’s (b.1918-d.1994) best known novel, starts with is irrelevant to the story, as it occurs in the novel:

Akşehir: 1919

At first, the top of Tekke Brook darkened, then, lightning began to flash and in a short time, the rain started. Rivers appeared on both sides of the streets of the town leading towards the east. The sky seemed to drop everything it held. Akşehir was welcoming the

Interestingly, in the notes, in which Kemal Tahir analyses Küçük Ağa, he makes some major mistakes about the novel. For example, he several times writes Kırsal instead of Akşehir, and also writes Kör Salih (Blind Salih) instead of Çolak Salih (One-armed Salih) who is one of the main characters in the novel.
spring of 1919, the spring after the great collapse: A barely-formed expectation was waiting for the spring against penunleasiness, poverty, and hunger. It was difficult to find a man brave enough even to name this expectation. After all, however, they would not feel cold anymore; at least they would get rid of the cold weather. And cold weather was as destructive as hunger for elderly and children. It was unbearable to suffer from cold with hunger. There were only women, the elderly and children left in the town.

Only they had been working in the shops, vineyards, gardens and fields for four years, and the output therefore was decreasing.

Every house has become a big eye and was staring at the roads for months: Every house was expecting someone, a betrothed, a husband, a son, an elder brother ("ağa"), or an uncle…

Some were expected to come from hospital, some from their dispersed platoon, and some from captivity. How they were going to come? In what form and in what spirit they were going to come? Nobody was thinking about this or even daring to think about it; knowing the possibility of their arrival was enough. And besides they had to come, it was inevitable. Otherwise, glamorous Akşehir would become a tomb closing onto it. It was very close to happening.

The rain was bucketing down, and the streets were flooded with water. The stream had already overflowed and reached the thresholds of the houses. There was nothing to be done for anyone. Women were gathering in the houses while the white-bearded men were in the coffee shops. They were keeping silent for hours in these gatherings. It seemed that there was a deeper meaning to this collective silence instead the silence of separate individuals. Maybe, the end of the world would be waited for like this.

However, there was also a part of the town that did not change, in contrast it is even entirely revived: Non-Muslim Ward. […] (Küçük Ağ: 5-6)

I, however, totally disagree with him, because this depiction of Akşehir, where the story will take place, is made in order to reflect on the terrible situation of Anatolia in such an historical circumstance. In other words, this description does not stand apart, stylistically and contextually, from the rest of the novel, on the contrary, it fully evokes the memory of an era and displays the entire socio-economic picture of Anatolia after the First World War (and consequently, before the Turkish War of Independence). It conveys the esprit du temps. Furthermore, after this description, that also describes the great expectation of the people of Akşehir, the people, who are expected, come to town such as Çolak Salih, who is –as indicated in the description- returning to his mother and his betrothed from his dismissed army as a wounded soldier. Here, unlike the early Turkish novels such as Namık Kemal’s İntibağ (Evin, 1983: 161, 189), the environment is not just depicted in terms of the physical surroundings, but in terms of the social and historical milieu. In other words, he depicts the actual environment in concrete terms rather than impressionistically. So, contrary to what Kemal Tahir had claimed, it is functional within the context of the plot. Moreover, this short description is more functional than Kemal Tahir’s long introductory part (58 pages) of Yedi Çınar Yaylasi (The Sevenplains Plateau) (1958) that is presented through Gavur Ali’s (Infidel Ali) eyes and contains many
elements from traditional narratives such as meddah and tales.

With regard to the setting, the story of *Devlet Ana* starts in a small place, Issızhan, but the spatial setting of the novel widens throughout the novel. However, towards the end of the novel it becomes narrower again, and the story finishes at the house of Bacibey:

Issızhan – the swamp – Soğut - ... - The Castle of Bilecik – the swamp – Issızhan – the house of Bacibey.

As known, there is also social aspect to the setting. This is mostly presented by the characters’ speeches in *Devlet Ana*. In order to give information about the social atmosphere of the region, where the story of the novel occurs, the author uses the characters -especially, Mavro (pp. 13-59), Yunus Emre (pp. 51-54), Osman Beg (pp. 179-188), Alişar (pp. 264-268), Hophop Cadi (pp. 270-281), and Kaplan Çavuş (pp. 474-481).

c. Definition and identification of character:

Whereas an identification of a character implies only the narrator’s prior knowledge about him/her, definition also suggest an abstraction, generalisation or a summing up on the part of the narrator, as well as a desire to present such labelling as authoritative characterisation in this novel.

These are how external narrator defines the characters in the novel:

The Knight was short and fat, but stocky. His bushy hair that reached his shoulders resembled the bristled mane of beasts of prey. (*Devlet Ana*: 10).

Çudar’s body was short and chubby. At first glance he looked like a skin full of melted fat with a head, arms and legs looked haphazardly attached to it. (*Devlet Ana*: 251).

With regard to identifying a character, the narrator of *Devlet Ana* provides some additional information on the character at the very beginning of his/her appearance in the text. Regarding characterisation, although the omniscient narrator of *Devlet Ana* has a predilection for scene and consequently allows his people to speak and act for themselves, from time to time he describes and explains them to the reader in his own voice:

Knight Notüs Gladyüs, who since his childhood suffered from the fear of heights and when he dreamt of cliffs, woke up snarling like an animal being slaughtered, and who could not get rid of this for days. (*Devlet Ana*: 11).

Such statements also imply an assumption that reader does not share this knowledge, an assumption that characterises one of the narrator’s roles, i.e. to communicate to others what they do not know.

d. Report of Speech:

Just as the events of the story come to us only through the narrator’s fashioning of his discourse out of the material of the story, so an act of speech might pass through the
same filtering process and be conveyed to us in other than its original form. In the novel, when the narrator informs us of spoken words without availing himself of direct speech, he is manipulating the story and leaving his marks on the text. When he reports the occurrence of a speech act, we are apparently seeing the event entirely from his perspective. However, the representation of speech in the novel, as Rimmon-Kenan (1983: 106-116) points out, ranges from purely diegetic to purely mimetic: 1. Diegetic summary (DS), 2. Summary, less 'purely' diegetic (S), 3. Indirect content paraphrase (or: Indirect discourse) (ID), 4. Indirect discourse, mimetic to some degree (ID), 5. Free indirect discourse (FID), 6. Direct discourse (DD), 7. Free direct discourse (FDD).

I will illustrate this issue by the following diagram:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrator apparently</th>
<th>Cline of 'interference' in report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in total control of report</td>
<td>DS S ID FID DD FDD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in partial control of report</td>
<td>Narrator apparently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not in control of report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Diegetic summary: The narrator barely reports that a speech act occurred without giving any specification of what was said or how it was said. The narrator chooses to regard the speaking as "one event among others" (Genette, 1980: 170) and ignores the locution and mentions only the illocution of the speech act.

The characters' words play a very large role in Devlet Ana, whose subject matter would suggest a heavy reliance on action, and frequently a speech or a conversation is integral to the scene as the narrator conceives it, and is sometimes the only reason for including a scene in the discourse at all. But when the words are irrelevant and a directly quoted speech would distract from the flow of the scene, the narrator informs us only of the intended meaning of the speech, that the character swore or commanded or praised. As Toolan (1988: 122) points out, such narratorial speech-summarizing is useful in reporting unimportant conversation, where a verbatim account seems aesthetically undesirable – or for referring a second time to a conversation that has been previously presented to the reader more fully.

In other words, the narrative report of speech act is one of a battery of summaries that the

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23 This diagram is borrowed from Leech and Short (1981: 324) with a small modification.
24 For a summary of speech act theory and an explanation of the terms illocution, locution, and perlocution, see Chatman (1978: 161-166), and Iser (1978: 54-62).
narrator has in store to keep the action flowing continuously without going into detail.

Diegetic summaries can be rarely seen in *Devlet Ana*:
- Knight Notüs Gladyüs [...] swore gnashing his teeth. (*Devlet Ana*: 66).
- Knight Notüs Gladyüs [...] swore through his teeth. \(^{25}\) (*Devlet Ana*: 64).

2. Summary, less ‘purely’ diegetic: The narrator not only mentions but also summarises a speech event in that he names the topics of conversations.

This kind of summary also can be rarely seen in *Devlet Ana*:
- The travelling poet Yunus [...] recited a few folk poems about life, death, love, destiny, the hereafter and mysticism. (*Devlet Ana*: 55).

3. Indirect content paraphrase (or: Indirect discourse): The narrator paraphrases the content of a speech event, ignoring the style or form of the supposed ‘original’ utterance. This type of speech act also can be rarely seen in *Devlet Ana*:
- Monk Benito said last night that Mavro and Liya were really brother and sister. (*Devlet Ana*: 65).

4. Indirect discourse, mimetic to some degree: By this type of indirect discourse, the narrator creates the illusion of ‘preserving’ or ‘reproducing’ aspects of the style of an utterance, above and beyond the mere reporting of its content:
- Benito advised his friends, who would be returning riding their horses on their own, that they should remember the signs, which he put where they passed, and even try to put their own signs. (*Devlet Ana*: 75).
- He cheerfully said that he gave the opium, which he travelled a long way for and spent a large amount of money on, to the local dervishes without charging them a penny. (*Devlet Ana*: 73).

5. Free indirect discourse: The form which falls grammatically and mimetically intermediate between direct discourse (DD) and indirect discourse (ID) is called free indirect discourse (FID), as its name implies, and is normally thought of as a freer version of an ostensibly indirect form. In McHale’s words (1978: 252), FID

resembles ID in person and tense, while it resembles DD in not being strictly subordinate to a ‘higher’ verb of saying/thinking, and in deictic elements, the word-order of questions, and the admissibility of various DD features.

This form is used often in the novel. Especially, when the author wants to present his characters’ inner thoughts and wishes to make a psychological analysis, this is his favourite form.

He (Notüs Gladyüs) understood that Ertuğrul, who settled on the frontier of Bithynia

\(^{25}\) Kemal Tahir often uses this feature of the knight as a leitmotif in *Devlet Ana* (i.e., p. 13, 60, etc.). Actually, Kemal Tahir uses certain features as a leitmotif for his characters in the novel. For instance, apart from the leitmotif of the knight, Orhan scratches a mole that is located behind his right ear as a leitmotif for thinking in *Devlet Ana* (i.e., pp. 108, 305).
benefiting from the laziness of the Greeks, had no secure base. As it was not very difficult to remove this ninety-year-old bedridden Turcoman from his place with help of some Christian princes ('tekfurs'), likewise it would be very easy to settle himself in the place Ertuğrul emptied. The first step was the dukedom of Gladys-Üniküs and the second Bithynia princedom. He had already planned how he would persuade the Christian princes to vassalage. In order to achieve this goal, a few hundred Catalan and Turcople warriors would be enough. (Devlet Ana: 12-13).

As can be understood easily from the example given above, one of the attractive features of free indirect discourse (FID) is that readers are not consciously aware of its operation. The readers may think of it as a sort of fore-grounded narrative, neither pure narrative nor pure character-expression.

The author of Devlet Ana is also often fond of running interior monologue and FID together. For example, he uses it when he wants to give Uranha’s opinions about Knight Notüs Gladys: This poor man was half-mad, but like all mad people he thought of himself as one of the wisest, cunning and most powerful men in the world. Having known the St. John knights closely, Uranha believed that all westerners were like this man. “Look at this Monk Benito from Genoa, he is also totally insane... In this dirty cave a pig would not live, let alone a human being. (Devlet Ana: 69).

6. Direct discourse: Narrator quotes a monologue or a dialogue. Direct discourse (DD) consists of the actual words of the character, including verbal and non-verbal markers of emotion, indicators of the interactive features of exchange, indications of accent, dialect and personal style; the proposition involved in what the character said; and usually a reporting clause which tells the reader who spoke the words and (sometimes) how they were spoken. This reporting clause indicates the presence of the narrator. In other words, direct discourse has two features, which show evidence of the narrator’s presence, namely the quotation marks and the introductory reporting clause.

Looking at the animals, Orhan Beg spoke as if he were whispering:
- The saddle of my Karaduman (The Black smoke) ... Be quick ... I said the saddle Mavro; come on Kerim Can, you go get its cap and its bit and bring them here. (Devlet Ana: 352).

As can be seen from the example, the conversational interaction between the characters is frequently supplemented by the narrator’s comments. In Devlet Ana the indications of the narrator’s presence fade away. Except for a few introductory words before or after quoting the direct words of the characters, in many parts of the novel there are no textual signs that indicate the narrator’s presence that I will mention it when I deal with FDS below.

As known, the great advantage of using direct speech presentation in a novel is that it reduces the reader’s awareness of the narrator and so allows apparently ‘direct’ contact with the characters. Devlet Ana is a good example of this. DD does make the whole event seem ‘closer’ to the reader than a report of it would have done. In every section of Devlet
Narrative Strategy In Kemal Tahir’s Devlet Ana

In Kemal Tahir’s Devlet Ana, physical events are mixed with long verbal speech acts to develop a plot with a highly dramatic quality. As in dramatic pieces (theatre), the events and the characters are revived by the dialogue in Devlet Ana. Thus, the author is able to present life to the reader without the intervention of the narrator. The reader finds himself where the events take place rather than putting himself in the place of the narrator. Here the reader has a chance to come into contact with events and characters. It is as if he were following the directions on the theatre stage. Then the existence of the narrator, who provides explanations, disappears during the dialogue section. The events and opinions and emotions of the characters reach the reader from the mouths of the characters directly.

The conversation carried on by the characters, the lexicon they select, and the life style they adopt give some clues about their characters and the conditions where they live. This type of conversation not only gives information about the event itself but also further information about what kind of events will occur. The first-hand information provided by the characters gives us a better opportunity to understand the plot. The author kills two birds with one stone: having used these dialogues he establishes reality in the fiction, and at the same time he achieves tension in the work. The tension created by the dialogue in the narrative gives an opportunity to the reader to attach himself to heroes and observe them closely, and enables him (the reader) to enter their world and associate himself with them, so that he understands the problem.

Having made much use of dialogue, Kemal Tahir creates the plot of the narration. What is going on in the novel, how the events develop, the emotional world of the characters, the relationship among them come to the reader directly through these conversations. Sometimes there are descriptions, which are generally short and free from interpretations, and bear some features of the scenarios used in drama.

Conversation (dialogue) is of central importance, both stylistically and thematically in Tahir’s novels. As a result of that, the characters have long conversations and sometimes beat about the bush and babble. They also sometimes tell stories like a meddah or a qissakhwan (‘kissahan’). 369 pages of 618 pages of the novel, in other words 52% of it, contain dialogues between two or more characters. Needless to say, this style is also very common in his other novels.

In his novels, description takes up a very

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26 For example, Fethi Naci (1981: 280) gives an account of one of his novels, Büyük Mal (The Great Merchandise), in terms of dialogues. According to his account, 420 pages of 560 pages, namely 75% of the novel, are dialogues. Almost every critic points out this feature in his novels; even one of them, Ceyhan Atuf Kanu (1973), describes his novels as ‘a long conversation’.

In his novels, the characters mostly speak with the accent of middle Anatolia, especially Çorum and Çankırı. It should be kept in mind that he spent many years in prison in Çorum and Çankırı. This is a reflection of his inclination to make the Turkish novel native. His emphasis on the regional spoken language in the novel brings vitality to the construction of the novel. The novelist uses this style in order to impress the
small part of the text, but dialogues and actions make up the larger part of the text. Moreover, it could easily be said that the main narrators of his novels are the characters in them. It should be noted that the obvious and dominant feature of his narrative strategy is theatricality. His characters live as long as they speak. In other words, one of the important reasons for the great stress he placed on dialogue (DD and FDD, which I will deal with later in this section) is to bring the reader closer together with the characters and the events in the novel. Furthermore, his presentation of the events from the different points of view of the characters, instead of using the narrator’s focalisation is the most important technique, which Kemal Tahir mostly prefers (Kemal Tahir’den Fatma İrfan’a Mektuplar, 1979: 174, 340). Like Ahmet Mithat and Gogol, Kemal Tahir says that he wants to speak to the reader. Although Kemal Tahir believes that this is the most attractive thing in the novel, he is fully aware of the danger of intervention, which affects the novel negatively (Kemal Tahir’den Fatma İrfan’a Mektuplar, 1979: 242, 245, 272).

7. Free direct discourse: Either or both direct discourse’s conventional orthographic cues (namely, the quotation marks and introductory reporting clause) can be removed. This is the typical form of first-person interior monologue and the narrator is totally non-perceptible in this form. The characters apparently speak to us more immediately without the narrator as an intermediary. Kemal Tahir is fond of omitting just the reporting clause. For example, he uses this choice to portray the quick to and fro of the conversation between the slave Kurt Ali and Knight Notüs Gladyüs:

- Where are you from?
  - From Menteş Principality.
- What do you do?
  - I am a warrior captain in Beg’s ship...
- Who captured you?
  - The Rhodians...
- Were you attacked?
  - No! [...]
- Were you taken unaware, then?
  - No! [...]
- When did it happen?
  - Two years ago...
- Have you been an oarsman all that time?
  - No! [...]
- Are you going to take three thousands florins in cash?

reader with the realism of his narration. He adopts the method of ‘showing’ rather than the descriptive narrative. He is anxious ‘to present life in its natural course’. Thus, he is consistent in delivering his characters’ speeches in their local language from 1939 onwards when he wrote his first novel, Sağdere, unaware that his American contemporaries, Steinbeck and Hemingway were doing a similar thing. It is also worth noting that Nazım Hikmet (1975: 391) praised this style (using dialogues in order to present the story) of Kemal Tahir.
Narrative Strategy In Kemal Tahir’s Devlet Ana

-No! One silk carpet… one war-horse, and for his wife two rolls of silk cloth …
- How much of this have you collected? When does your leave finish?
- With the exception of the horse I collected all of them with your prayer, Sir… The money for the horse is ready, but unfortunately I was not be able to find an appropriate horse… (Devlet Ana: 43-45)

In fact, this is only a portion of some seventy-three lines of free direct speech between the initial narrative sentence and the next one.

In some FDS in Devlet Ana, without the introductory clauses specifying which character says what, it becomes difficult to remember which character is which - and in some cases there is even a third character who joins the conversation-, so that confusion is gradually produced in the reader’s mind and even in the mind of some critics who have misunderstood the author’s intentions. Kemal Tahir, as mentioned above, devotes many pages to dialogue and that is one of the influences of oral literature on his works, which can be seen in his many novels - with the exception of Sağrđere, Esir Şehrin İnsanları (People of the Enslaved City) (1956), Esir Şehrin Mahpusu (The Prisoner of the Enslaved City) (1961), and Yorgun Savaşı. Therefore, the reader sometimes has difficulty in following the speakers in the novel, even some critics have. For instance, Taner Timur, who has mostly criticised Kemal Tahir’s novels in terms of their contents, confuses the order of speakers in a dialogue scene once. As a result of it, he attributes Osman Beg’s words to Sheik Edebâli (Timur, 1991: 203). In addition to him, the Russian researcher, Svetlana Uturgauri, attributes Yunus Emre’s words to another character of the novel, Kaplan Çavuş (Uturgauri, 1989: 111). One of the leading literary critics in Turkey, Gürsel Aytaç, also makes a mistake in this issue. When she mentions the conversation scene that occurs between Bayhoca and Mavro, she wrongly thought that this dialogue occurred between Kerim and Mavro (Aytaç, 1990: 178). 27

e. Translation of words used by a character:
The first step was the Dukedom of Gladius-Uniküs*, and the second Bithynia princedom. (Devlet Ana: 13).

In this example, a footnote is used for giving information on this word and to translate this word into Turkish:

*In Latin: a Unique Sword 28

The same situation can be seen on page 59:

He roared ‘Gratias Deo’*

27 On the other hand, the narrator of Devlet Ana also makes mistake about the names of the characters. During the conquest of Bilecik, he mentions Ememi Toros (p. 565). However, this character should be Kerim, instead of Ememi Toros. Because, as Kerim says (p. 577), Ememi Toros is not there at that time; he is at Kozguner. This might be a printing error, but it continues following editions of the novel.

28 Tahsin Yücel (1983: 98-99) criticises his translations from Latin into Turkish and his way of writing them.
In this example, the meaning of the word that is underlined is again given by a footnote:

*Thank God - in Latin.

These automatically drew attention to the presence of the narrator reflecting on his own narration. Using a footnote is a common feature in Kemal Tahir's narratives. Apart from his novels, he also uses this narrative strategy in his short stories in Göl İnsanları. He uses footnote in his narratives for two reasons:

a) To translate foreign or local words or expressions: This type is the more common one and can be seen in nearly all of his works.

b) To explain his opinions: This type only can be seen in his uncompleted novels, such as Bir Müliyet Kalesi (A Castle of Proprietorship) (1977), (i.e. pp. 20, 127, 129, 198, 358, 359). However, in his completed works, he injects his ideas into the text by using a narrator or characters' conversations. Therefore, these works do not contain this type of footnote. As can easily be seen in the following example, however, this technique does not reduce his intrusiveness:

c) Kamil Beg was somewhat confused because he did not know that the word 'slander' was used for 'theft’. (Esir Şehrin Mahpusu, 1961: 17).

f. Reports of what characters did not think or say

In the novel, the narrator relates things of which the characters are either unconscious or which they deliberately conceal. So, the narrator is clearly seen as an independent source of information. The following examples, which are extracted from Devlet Ana, report what characters did not say:

Before he said 'May you remain blind you miserable Turcoman', his mind was completely mixed up by hearing the sound of the drum. (Devlet Ana: 378).

He thought of saying 'The girl is ready… What if we go and take her… (Devlet Ana: 516-517).

g. Commentary on the story

A statement that explains or evaluates often does more than highlight the narrator; it reminds us explicitly that narrative is an act of communication between the narrator and the narratee.

One form of commentary in the novels in question is interpretation. In an interpretation, the narrator takes stock of a situation and infers the reason for an action from what he knows about the characters, the world of the story, or human nature.

In Devlet Ana, the interpretations are generally done by the characters. For instance, Notüs Gladyüs makes an interpretation about Monk Benito that gives us information about both the monk and the knight himself when they are in the swamp:

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30 He does not use footnotes in his Esir Şehrin Mahpusu and Esir Şehrin İnsanları (1956).
Unless he were really an enemy of the whole of humanity—in other words, being an enemy of himself, nobody could mix this much with a part of nature that has totally lost its meaning. (Devlet Ana: 73).

However, the omniscient narrator himself also makes interpretation about the characters’ behaviour in the novel:

Orhan was deep in thought. Since he heard that Monk Benito and two foreigners were involved in the situation, an unexplainable anxiety had gripped his heart. This was the kind of anxiety, which creatures that eat each other feel when they met. (Devlet Ana: 507).

As seen from the above examples, these kinds of interpretations provide information not only about their direct object but also about the interpreters. On the other hand, the comments, which the narrator of Devlet Ana makes on cases, persons and situations, are certainly not so ideological.

Judgments are perhaps more revealing of the narrator’s moral stand. In Devlet Ana, the narrator constantly explains motives, describes interior states, and makes judgments. Like bravery and kindness, cowardice and wickedness, according to some, are relatives. (Devlet Ana: 74).

From time to time, the characters also make judgments and these judgments show the narrator’s ideological stand as well. Here, he intends to emphasise Orhan’s (in a sense, the Turcomans) ability for leadership:

Mavro very much appreciated Orhan Beg’s bravery. Taking the lead, and ruling over people was not easy. (Devlet Ana: 544).

The third type of commentary is generalisation. It is not restricted to a specific character, event, or situation but extends the significance of the particular case in a way that supposedly applies to a group, a society or humanity at large. The narrator of Devlet Ana often uses it—especially for the characters and to describe human nature:

Alışar Beg, like the most of the sons of Adam, loved praise, in addition he thought of himself as the cleverest and the bravest in the world. (Devlet Ana: 277-8).

Like all elderly person, he was afraid that wrongdoings and inexperience would be done after him. (Devlet Ana: 125).

I add explanation as a fourth type here. An explanation requires the knowledge of a certain fact of which the narrator is only now apprising us; on occasion the fact might already be known to some (a name, a piece of traditional lore, etc.), but more often the narrator is supplying us with new information, whether out of the past or from the present scene.

In Devlet Ana, apart from explaining the meaning of some Latin words as footnotes, which I dealt with above, the narrator, who in fact in many cases chooses to let the actions and the characters speak for themselves, also makes explanations either in order to give information about some historical cases or to explain the cause of or purpose of some actions. For example, the characters’ first appearances in Devlet Ana are
accompanied by an introduction that is a kind of explanation. In the first of the following examples, the narrator of Devlet Ana makes an explanation that is, in fact, not so much to inform as to promote a richer and clearer understanding of the immediate context. As for second example, the narrator explains the cause of the action:

Evening had fallen upon Söğüt, the winter quarters of Ertnürl, the beg of Bithynian frontier, which was described by Arab authors travelling in the region as the 'land of willows,' or, as the Byzantines called it, 'Tebizon.' (Devlet Ana: 116).

Lotüs could not understand the question since she was lost in Balkız's beauty. (Devlet Ana: 428).

h. Commentary on the narration:

There is no commentary on the narration in Devlet Ana. However, this kind of commentary can be found in Kemal Tahir’s uncompleted novels that were published after his death. Although these do not show his narrative strategy, because of being concentrated on showing the process of writing, I shall give some examples from Bir Mükiyet Kalesi:

After that, there happened a few events, which are not directly related to this story, and these will be recorded briefly (Bir Mükiyet Kalesi: 116).

(An important character who would help the story greatly was almost forgotten...) (Bir Mükiyet Kalesi: 118).

 […] as mentioned above […] (Bir Mükiyet Kalesi: 358).

Such commentary has historically been attacked as being intrusive, digressive, or didactic, as telling rather than showing, or as destroying the illusion of reality by reminding us that we are reading a novel.

To sum up, in comparison many novels, such as Tarık Buğra’s Osmanık (Little Osman) (1983) that is also about the foundation of the Ottoman Empire, the presence of the narrator of Devlet Ana is less perceptible. As mentioned above, the use of scenic representation (‘mimesis’ or ‘showing’) provides this feature. I suggest that rather than considering mimesis and diegesis as two mutually exclusive categories, it is productive to think of them as representing a continuum with minimal narrator colouring at one end and maximal narrator colouring at the other.

I give two examples from these novels. Whereas the first one, which belongs to Osmanık, includes maximal narrator colouring, the second one, which is taken from Devlet Ana, is a good example for minimal narrator colouring:

i. “Alışık knew very well what Osman wanted and where he wanted to go. It reached Söğüt as quickly as possible without being spurred. The ezan was being recited for the yatsı (time about two hours after sunset) prayer. The rain was heavy. The temperature had dropped, which indicated that there would be snow very soon. Osman went to his father’s house directly, took his horse in tow, knocked at the door like a courier. He told his mother, who called from inside ‘Who is it?’, what had happened to him without giving her any chance to speak. He finished,
Narrative Strategy In Kemal Tahir’s Devlet Ana

- ‘Speak to my father and ask for Malhatun’s hand.’

After Osman, Ede Balı was unable to smile. He loved his children, but his love for Malhatun was extreme. [...] He was ready to sacrifice his life for her. He thought of Osman all the night. (Osmancık: 64).

ii. “- She is my elder sister, what can I do for you?
- Is your older sister deaf? - He waited a while- I asked her name but she pretended not to hear. ‘Can the borders of Ertuğrul be seen from here?’ I asked, but she disappeared without responding.
- Please forgive her, she does not like to talk, her name is Liya.
- What does it mean?
- Lilly.
- Lilly, he grinned showing his teeth- she has not been named suitably. She should be named properly. Why did your father not say ‘clotted cream’? (Devlet Ana: 10).

* With regard to the reliability of the narrator of Devlet Ana, as the extra-heterodiegetic narrator, he is reliable.

It should be stressed that, the narrator of Devlet Ana stresses the reliability of that which has been narrated by using his own commentary to express the feeling, which an episode awakens in him:

“...because, in the world of the 1290s, death was more common than being alive.” (Devlet Ana: 198)31

31 Interestingly, the same judgment is repeated by Edebali on another occasion:

Well, it is not the time for looking for a dead person... (Devlet Ana: 387).

Furthermore, this sentence reminds one of Ahmet Mithat, who uses his narrators as instructors with the intention of directing his reader. As a matter of fact, Kemal Tahir himself admits Ahmet Mithat’s influence on him while answering the question, “Is it still necessary to be a sort of Ahmet Mithat?” with “Well, sometimes it is.” (Seyda, 1969: 5). However, he does not totally accept Ahmet Mithat’s narrative style. He (1990: 151) criticizes him in that his narrators are obtrusive and intrusive. In Ahmet Mithat’s works, as Ahmet Ö. Evin (1983: 55) asserts, the message is not couched in the form of a novel but rather protrudes from it in the form of asides. His insistence in addressing the reader, which well suited his purpose, was a habit derived from the meddah tradition; while the asides served an explanatory role in the latter, in the fiction of Ahmet Mithat, they provided the means for direct commentary.

He is free not only to inform readers of the ideas and emotions within the minds of his characters but also of his own. The characteristic mark of his narrators is the presence of authorial intrusions and generalizations about life, manners, and morals, which may or may not be explicitly related to the story at hand. Thus, for example, in Yeniçeriler (Janissaries) (1871) and Hasan Mellah (Sailor Hasan) (1875 [1874]), he has interpolated his essays as separate chapters within the body of works, and hence they are easily detachable. The narrator and his narratee are explicitly present in his novels. One can find such direct addresses to the narratee (or ‘reader’) as in:

Let me tell you some words about what every heart and every mind think. (Yeniçeriler: 92-93).

Do you keep that in your mind while we were writing about the adventures of Sailor Hasan in Morocco, in the Fourth Book, before this one, where this poor child was and which situation he was in? (Hasan Mellah: 217).

On the other hand, Kemal Tahir prefers to put his many comments into the mouth of one of his protagonists. This is, of course, a kind of theatricality, one that stems from an excessive reliance on direct speech and conversation, which is at work throughout his many novels, such as Büyük Mal and Devlet Ana. All the commentaries, which Kemal Tahir wishes to make on social habits, political situations, and customs, are presented through the speech of one of the characters. This is also the way that the author of Devlet Ana...
In fact, this feature of narrator is not common in Kemal Tahir’s novels, which were published when he was alive. However, in some of his uncompleted novels, which were published after his death, one can easily see this feature of the narrator. The narrators of Damağası (The Agha of the Prison) (1977), Namusçular (For the Sake of Honour) (1974), Bir Mülkiyet Kalesi (1977) and Karılar Koğuşu (The Women’s Ward) (1974) try to stress the reliability of that which has been narrated. I will just give two examples from Damağası:

It is difficult to believe that in Çorum prison, one day, a watch which was intentionally dropped on the floor and was broken was the cause of all these events that you will read below. Yet, we, as a realistic writer, will record the truth as we saw it and leave the sceptics with their suspicions. (Damağası: 9).

The first feeling, which a stranger who is taken down to the prison’s dungeon feels, is – there is no lie about this feeling, because the writer of this story was imprisoned here for exactly fifteen days- being lost without returning to the earth’s surface ever again. (Damağası: 27).

Thus, these narrators are fulfilling what Genette (1980: 256) calls the “function of attestation”—also called the “testimonial function,” as they indicate the source of their information. Genette (1980: 256) describes this function as follows:

This is the one accounting for the part the narrator as such takes in the story he tells, the relationship he maintains with it—an affective relationship, of course, but equally a moral or intellectual one. It may take the form of a simple attestation, as when the narrator indicates the source of his information, or the degree of precision of his memories, or the feeling which one or another episode awakens in him.

It is intended to be a powerful way of convincing the reader to believe in the reliability of what has been narrated. 33

suggests and conveys ideas or information to the reader. This method can be called “injection of information or ideas into the text”. Hilmi Yavuz (1996a: 74–75) and Orhan Pamuk (1997: 173–183) agree that, unlike Ahmet Mithat, Kemal Tahir successfully injects his ideas and information into conversations in his novels. One can see this narrative strategy in Ahmet Mithat’s works, but in very few cases. Evin (1983: 55) gives an example of this rare situation from one of his stories, “Gençlik” in which the protagonist is made to say:

In our country girls are not given a chance to marry the men they love and wish to marry. Their fathers take as sons-in-law whomever they choose. If a girl is perceived to show affection to a man, she is said to be brazenly unchaste.

Genette (1980: 255–259) distinguishes the following five functions that a narrator may fulfil: narrative function, directing function, communication function, testimonial function (function of attestation), and ideological function.

33 Here I do not want to discuss the controversial issues such as ‘what is the reality in the novel?’ or ‘does a novelist has to follow the historical facts?’, because they are irrelevant with a narratological analysis. However, I just want to indicate that a novelist can change historical facts in his/her novel. So, trying to convince the implied reader the truthfulness of what is narrated in the novel does not fit the mentality of the fictional narratives, because it is very obvious that the realities of the novel are absolutely different from historical facts. As a matter of fact, Kemal Tahir was a novelist, not an historian.
However, it also finally should be noted that in Devlet Ana, when the author uses some of the characters as narrator and focaliser, the reliability of the novel is sometimes damaged. For example, the opinion of Kerim, who is chosen by the author as one of his spokesmen through him to communicate the author’s ideas, about the wedding of Osman and Balkız is beyond the actual capacity of a 16-year-old young man. It is very obvious that, in this situation, the author of the novel stresses that what made this principality a state was not just Osman Beg as a leader, but the whole society, even its young members, contributed to this because of their broad-mindedness.

On the other hand, it should be also noted that the humorous styles of some character-narrators’ speeches also affected negatively the reliability of Devlet Ana. Their language and their attitudes caused this effect on the reader. The speeches of Kel Dervish, Ermeni Toros, and Bayhoca can be given as examples of this issue. However, although they never talk about serious matters in the novel, their conversations and speeches make a contribution to the humorous atmosphere of the novel. The important messages, which also reflect the ideology of the author, are given through the speeches of the more serious and reliable characters, such as Kerim, Osman Beg, and Mavro. Therefore, the reliability of the novel is not damaged irreparably.

Conclusion

From what I have discussed in this paper, it is clear that the main purposes of Kemal Tahir is to convey an ideological perspective to reader. In Devlet Ana, the most important observation with regard to the interaction between the author and the reader is that this process is dominated by an emphasis on the ideological perspective, namely that Eastern people be considered as different and better (superior) than Western people from every aspect. This due to the moral superiority of the East as opposed to the depravity of the West. Kemal Tahir’s novels—especially those that belong to his second period (after Devlet Ana)—can be categorised in the didacticist-realist movement that can be exemplified by the work of Ahmet Mithat between 1875 and 1893.

The interaction between the author and the reader in the novel is not only aimed at guiding the readers deeper into faith themselves against the West, but also at guiding the reader into understanding how Ottoman people acted in accordance with the values that they had had.

In order to achieve this purpose, the textual strategies are dominated by various attempts to convey this perspective.

34 In Mehmet Seyda’s Türk Romanı (1969: 18), Sabahattin Selek also mentions the same deficiency of the novel.
35 Kemal Tahir is not totally anti-Western. He, as Köksal (1996: 41) points out, tends “to perceive two Wests: the imperialist West and the rational West (which reached the peak of contemporary civilization).” Thus he does “not monolithically adopt or reject things western as do the republican and Islamist ideologies respectively.”

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Narrative Strategy In Kemal Tahir’s Devlet Ana


