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GOTHIC IMAGES IN ELİF KARAKAŞ'S WORK *LANETLİ GENLER* (THE CURSED GENES, 1995)

ABSTRACT

Before gothic first emerged as an important fiction genre in literature in the eighteenth century, it was predominantly used in architecture in the Medieval Period, and in fine arts in the following centuries. Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) is considered as the earliest gothic fiction example in English Literature. Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar is considered as one of the pioneers of gothic fiction in Turkish Literature. Ali Rıza Seyfi Bey is another remarkable Turkish novelist who used gothic elements in his work *Drakula İstanbul'da* (*Dracula in Istanbul*, 1930). The influence of gothic fiction and its elements cannot be adequately felt in the twentieth and twenty-first-century Turkish Literature. When the gothic genre is mentioned, primarily the literary works produced in Western literature comes to mind. In this context, *Lanetli Genler* (*Cursed Genes*, 1995) written by Elif Karakaş in 1995 appears as a significant novel with gothic elements in Turkish Literature in the twentieth century. In this study, after giving some brief information about the definition of gothic as a term and its emergence in some visual arts, some brief information about the emergence of gothic fiction in English Literature and the influence of gothic fiction in Turkish Literature will be given. The main aim of this study is to focus on the effects of gothic fiction in Elif Karakaş's novel *Lanetli Genler*, after briefly mentioning the early influences of gothic images in Turkish literature. *Lanetli Genler* will be studied with the reader response method, and in this work, some gothic images, such as loneliness, colours, pessimism, fear, identity conflict, pain, gloomy settings, revenge, curse, murder and some supernatural characters, such as vampire, ghosts and ghoul will be examined.

Keywords: Gothic fiction, Elif Karakaş, gothic elements, horror, murder, curse

ELİF KARAKAŞ'IN LANETLİ GENLER (1995) ADLI ESERİNDE GOTİK İMGELER

ÖZET

Gotik, on sekizinci yüzyılda edebiyatta önemli bir kurgu türü olarak ortaya çıkmasından önce, Orta Çağ'da ağırlıklı olarak mimaride, sonraki yüzyıllarda ise güzel sanatlarda kullanılmıştır. Horace Walpole'un *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), adlı eseri İngiliz Edebiyatı'nın en eski gotik kurgu örneği olarak kabul edilmektedir. Türk Edebiyatı'nda Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, gotik romanın öncülerindedir. Ali Rıza Seyfi Bey, *Drakula İstanbul'da* (1930) adlı eserinde gotik unsurları kullanan bir diğer önemli Türk romancıdır. Gotik kurgu ve unsurlarının etkisi yirminci ve yirmi birinci yüzyıl Türk Edebiyatında yeterince hissedilmemektedir. Gotik tür denince akla öncelikle Batı edebiyatında üretilen edebi eserler gelmektedir. Bu bağlamda, Elif Karakaş'ın 1995 yılında yazdığı *Lanetli Genler* (1995), yirminci yüzyılda Türk Edebiyatı'nda gotik unsurlarla önemli ölçüde kullanıldığı bir roman olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada, gotik kavramının bir terim olarak açıklanması ve bazı görsel sanatlarda ortaya çıkışı hakkında kısa bilgiler verildikten sonra, İngiliz Edebiyatı'nda gotik kurgunun ortaya çıkışı ve gotik kurgunun Türk Edebiyatı'na etkisi hakkında kısa bilgiler verilecektir. Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, Gotik imgelerin Türk Edebiyatı'nda erken dönem etkilerinden kısaca bahsettikten sonra, Elif Karakaş'ın *Lanetli Genler* romanındaki gotik kurgunun etkilerine odaklanmaktır. *Lanetli Genler*, okur odaklı eleştirel yöntem ile incelenecek ve bu çalışmada yalnızlık, renkler, karamsarlık, korku, kimlik çatışması, acı, kasvetli ortamlar, intikam, lanet, cinayet ve hayaletler, gulyabani ve vampir gibi bazı doğüstü karakterler incelenecek.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gotik kurgu, Elif Karakaş, gotik unsurlar, korku, cinayet, lanet

1. INTRODUCTION

Before dealing with gothic literature in English Literature and its influences in Turkish Literature, it would be useful to give some brief information about the meaning of gothic as a term and its early use in medieval architecture and fine arts, because the influence of gothic architecture and fine arts is significantly felt in gothic literature and contains horror elements.

Gothic style was first used in architecture, then its influence was dramatically felt in some visual arts, such as sculpture and painting. Afterwards, some important novelists, such as Ann Radcliffe, Horace Walpole, Mary Shelley, Bram Stoker and Robert Louis Stevenson used some gothic elements in their works, and gothic became an important literary tradition. Nowadays, some significant influences of gothic style can be even seen in many modernist and post-modernist works.

As a term, gothic is an adjective form of Goth referring to a Germanic tribe who lived in Gotland region in the southern part of Scandinavia (Yıldız, 2015, p. 247; Arargüç, 2016, p. 246). It is believed that the Goths were barbarian and nomadic tribes from Scandinavia who did not develop any architectural forms (Gozzoli, 1982, p. 4). They were notable for their barbaric raids, and they did not even esteem any artistic works (Beksaç, 1996, p. 116).

Gothic in architecture started in the middle of the twelfth century, and it survived until the second half of the fifteenth century. Among the most outstanding features of Gothic architecture, pointed roofs, towers rising to the sky, and giant-sized cathedrals can be specified. With these characteristics, cathedrals do not seem to have been built by humans, but by gods and thus they do not belong to the earth as Scott states as follows:

“The gothic architecture is a religious understanding of art that gives the impression that the church is the door to Heaven, thanks to its splendid exterior with its spiky roof and towers rising to reach the sky, and the light which is accepted as the symbol of the light of God seeping through the huge windows replacing the stone walls” (Scott, 2003, p. 121).

The earliest Gothic church was the Abbey Church of St. Denis, which is located seven miles north of Paris (Scott, 2003, p. 12). This new architectural style spread abruptly in other European countries. Scott states that in Sweden, construction activities of Uppsala Cathedral started in the 1230s. In Germany, cathedrals in the gothic style started to be constructed in Strasburg and Cologne in 1240 and 1248, respectively (Scott, 2003, p. 15). However, other proficient classical examples of gothic architecture can be seen in the Ile de France region of France (Gozzoli, 1982, p. 4). In the buildings in this region, the dome-shaped structures, which were used in Rome, were replaced by pointed structures, and lower number and smaller windows were replaced by multi-coloured windows. Gothic cathedrals had wider naves, more luminous environments and lighter places (MEB, 2011, p. 7).

According to Gozzoli, all of the gothic cathedrals and churches were built to glorify God’s sublimity and spreading Christianity as well as making bishops and wealthy merchants in big cities amazed by the large cathedrals that rose above all the other buildings and structures, and these gothic buildings could be easily seen from a distance (Gozzoli, 1982, p. 4). Going up to the sky led the medieval man to build each cathedral higher and more magnificent than the previous one. On the other hand, the cathedrals also influenced the general designs of the medieval cities, because the cities having such outstanding cathedrals began to be restructured around these cathedrals.

Apart from architecture, the influence of gothic style could be highly seen in sculpture and art. The artists and sculptors tried to concrete some abstract religious teachings in their arts and sculptures in the early periods of Christianity. Therefore, it is possible to see sculptures and paintings representing the gothic style on the cathedral or church walls. “One of the most important works is the sculpture in the Baptistery of Florence. Ghiberti’s door made by casting technique many of his subjects on ten boards on the Bible and the Torah the event is described” (Karacan, Şele & Söyleci, 2010, p. 113).

According to Gozzoli, Chartes Cathedral is an example showing the close relationship between architecture and sculpture, indicating the characteristics of the time with its narrow and long shapes. (Gozzoli, 1982, p. 29). Though sculptures in the gothic style were attached to the buildings at the beginning, they were gradually dispatched from buildings and became independent.

The gothic was not so popular in the field of paintings as it was in the decorations of the sculptures. On the other hand, the painters of the period did not break with the architecture of the period and reflected it in the painting. Madonna Rose Bower (1440) is known as the most concrete examples of Stefan Lochner's style contributing to gothic in painting as it reflects the gothic features (Gozzoli, 1982). One of the most important painters of the period, Salvator Rosa clearly reflects the frightening feeling by using the creepy characters that are accepted as gothic and drawing the place darkly and splendidly. As Şan states:

“Witches, crones, poets, suicides, ugly creatures, dead, victims, counterfeiters, knights, corpses, skeletons ... Figures that work with ambition in pursuit of their bad intentions and their theatrical stance as if they were on stage. Salvator Rosa is loaded with all the qualities of gothic art with this painting. This scene is dark, haunted, sinister” (Şan, 2015).

In addition to the churches and the cathedrals, there are many other decorations made with the art of painting, especially in the middle-class houses, as Gozzoli mentions:

“Painting was used extensively on non-religious subjects and this type of decoration was used in the rooms of the castles, in the houses of the middle class and the official buildings, because it was much cheaper to cover the walls of the rooms with fresco than to cover them with carpets” (Gozzoli, 1982, p. 54).

It can be understood from these examples that gothic was first used in architecture and later in sculptor and painting. The purpose of using the Gothic style so effectively in architecture and fine arts is that it reflects some elements such as sublime, supernatural and fear effectively. “Thus, in the latter decades of the eighteenth-century the principal application of the term “Gothic” was, as it still is, in the field of architecture but alongside this usage, it started to be applied to literary works” (Raškauskienė, 2009, p.12). The effects of Gothic style on architecture and fine arts will be seen in literature in later periods.

2. THE EMERGENCE OF GOTHIC GENRE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) can be regarded as the earliest Gothic work. This fiction brought a new literary tradition which became significantly popular in the following centuries. Walpole writes 'a gothic story' but remains undecided about publishing it since it is a different story from other genres of the period:

“In the preface to the first edition of The Castle of Otranto, Walpole states that he found and translated a manuscript written in Italian in the library of a Catholic family who had formerly lived in the north of England, and thus the story may have been a figment of his imagination” (Arargüç, 2016, p. 250).

The gothic is a new tradition in fiction which was invented by Horace Walpole, and the rules of this genre were determined by Horace Walpole himself in his work *The Castle of Otranto* in 1764. With this work, Walpole profoundly influenced not only the novel genre, but also the production of many short stories, poetry, and even the movies. Walpole created a totally new genre with using some important gothic elements, which will be an important focus of this study.

When the question related to the most distinguishing image of gothic fiction is posed, more frequently the answer to this question will be the image of an abandoned castle. Therefore, the image of an isolated castle is an important factor in creating a mysterious and gloomy atmosphere. Uğur states that in the novels and stories, isolated places are used as the isolated environment brings with its helplessness, making it inevitable to confront evil, the frightening (2019, p. 341).

As the title of the novel suggests, the influence of the medieval gothic architecture can be considerably felt in this work. The medieval gothic architectural structure created a magical and scary mood and atmosphere in the novel. Walpole uses this gloomy and scary atmosphere since mystery and tension are among the most important elements in gothic fiction. After the publication of *The Castle of Otranto* in 1764, gothic style cathedrals, citadels, churches, uncanny houses, cemeteries, castles and towers started to appear in the literature.

Apart from the atmosphere of the medieval buildings, the authors featured some characters with supernatural powers, such as ominous vampires, giants, witches, devils, spirits, ghosts, goblins,

magicians, sorcerers and scary creatures to add horror and suspense to this gloomy atmosphere. Corpses, skeletons, chains, torture chambers, ghosts, superstitions, curses, bloody murders, black souls, revenge are the most common elements used in gothic fiction (Scognamillo, 1994, p. 27; Soyşekerçi, 2019).

Thoughtful and oppressed women characters who are threatened by a cruel man, or forced to marry men they do not like or in distress is another important image in the gothic fiction. These women characters suffer a lot especially they are left alone without any guardians. Other important elements in a gothic fiction are mystery, magic, miracles, prophecies, oddities, talisman, fear, horror, grief, anguish, anxiety, despair, madness, terror, misery, thunder, anger, darkness and shadow. With his work, Horace Walpole pioneered some important writers such as Ann Radcliffe, Mary Shelley, Bram Stoker, Robert Louis Stevenson and Edgar Allan Poe, and gothic fiction reached its universal peak with Edgar Allan Poe, who wrote *The Fall of House of Usher* and *The Pit and The Pentulum*, a leading example of Gothic literature (Scognamillo, 1994, p. 53).

3. THE EMERGENCE OF GOTHIC FICTION IN TURKISH LITERATURE

Although Turkish people loved to read and hear about the fearful stories a lot, there were very few works in this field until the end of the nineteenth century (Türkmenoğlu, 2018, pp. 176-183), and at least nearly a century had to pass until it first appeared in Turkish Literature. When the Turkish horror novels in the 1990s are closely examined, the great influence of Western Literature can be seen. Since the general figures, places and subjects of the horror novels were first set in the West, it will not be inappropriate to state that their examples in Turkish literature emulated them (Uğur, 2019, p. 339). Gothic began to show its effects in Turkish Literature with the works of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar. Gürpınar's aim in creating such stories was not to write a gothic work exactly. He aimed to give moral lessons by bringing scientific explanations against the superstitions of the people. However, he contributed a lot to the gothic genre in terms of features he used some gothic images in some of his novels, such as *Gulyabani (The Bogey)*, 1915), *Cadı (The Witch)*, 1912) and *Mezarından Kalkan Şehit (The Resurrection of Martyr from his Grave)*, 1928).

According to Yumuşak, while ghosts and vampire characters are frequently used in Western Literatures, gulyabani (the bogey), the resurrection of martyrs and ghosts were dominantly used in Turkish Literature (Yumuşak, 2013, p. 136). Therefore, it can be said that such foreign figures like ghouls, magicians or vampires will be replaced by these domestic horrific characters in these thrillers. Thus, it is not surprising that common and culturally entrenched horror figures such as djinn, the bogey, ghosts and witches appear in these novels (Uğur, 2019, p. 340).

Mezarından Kalkan Şehit is about Şevki who goes from city to village and enters a mansion that is suspected by the villagers as being a cursed mansion. Every Friday, the resurrection of a martyr from his grave and his speaking to his grandmother is a frightening element. The author adds the elements of horrific places to the novel throughout the novel like a grave which has gothic connotations. After Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, Ali Rıza Seyfi wrote *Dracula İstanbul'da (Dracula in Istanbul)* in 1939. Seyfi was highly influenced by Bram Stoker's work *Dracula*. Seyfi's novel provided the reflections of some features, such as Dracula and vampire in Turkish Literature. His use of characters that are not very appropriate for Turkish culture contributed to the diversity in creating characters in Turkish Literature. Another author contributing to gothic fiction is Kerime Nadir with her novel *Dehşet Gecesi (Night of Horror)*, 1958).

4. ELİF KARAKAŞ'S NOVEL, LANETLİ GENLER (THE CURSED GENES, 1995)

Elif Karakaş studied at the department of business administration at Texas University in the USA after she graduated from Boğaziçi University. *Sevgiye Zaman Var (There is Time for Love)*, 1994) is her first novel, and then she wrote her second novel *Lanetli Genler (The Cursed Genes)*, 1995), as an example of the gothic genre. As the title of the work, *Lanetli Genler (The Cursed Genes)*, 1995) suggests, the novel is about a character who can see a dead relative and talk to him, in which the curse is expressed through lineages.

There are three different narrators in the work. The first of these three narrators is the murderer Theodore, who lived 200 years ago and only comes to the stage with his letters. Writing letters to his own killer personality, Theodore describes his coolness in all the murders he committed, as well as his

fear of his homicide personality. Although he is afraid of this personality, he continues to commit murders, because he thinks that the personality will leave him and he will be left alone. Therefore, he is in an inner personality conflict.

Elisabete is the second narrator in the novel. Elisabethe is betrayed when her beloved Ahmet, for whom she has made all kinds of sacrifices, marries someone else. Then, the novel continues with the mentally depressed Elisabethe's finding and reading the letters of his murderer grandfather Theodore. The events are not limited to this, but she starts to see her deceased grandfather's ghost. Having his grandfather's cursed genes, Elisabethe cannot bear to see his lover Ahmet with someone else and kills him. Later, she is not satisfied with killing Ahmet. She continues her homicides by killing Ahmet's wife and mother, influenced by the speeches of the ghost of her killer grandfather. After all these events, Elisabethe goes to a psychologist and confesses all that happened to the psychologist Nazlı. Since psychologist Nazlı thinks Elisabethe needs treatment, she reports Elisabethe to the police. However, it would not be what she thought and by the court's decision, Elisabethe was executed. Years later, the story of Elisabethe is filmed.

The third narrator is the leading actor in the novel is Selma. As she reads and plays Elisabethe's life, she begins to feel herself very close to the character. After a while, she begins to compare Elisabethe's experiences with her own experiences and to integrate Elisabethe's with her own loneliness. To avenge Elisabethe, Selma finds the psychologist Nazlı and kidnaps her son. But Selma, who flames with vengeance, finds and kills the psychologist's secretary and the secretary's mother. The psychologist saves her child with the help of the police. After a long time, the psychologist's son arrives with a paper and tells his mother that the paper was given to him by a man in a cane hat. The novel ends with the following sentences written on the paper: "Remember, nothing that looks real is real, the reality is what is written in your brain" (Karakas, 1995, s. 227).

4.1. The Image of Gloomy Settings of Time and Places in Lanetli Genler

In gothic fiction, dark and gloomy settings of time and place are particularly used to arouse fear and terror in the readers to emphasize a sense of wonder and curiosity. The weather conditions used in the Gothic novels are often used to provide tension in order to make the horrible events described in the novel be more impressive or to indicate that the event is about to happen. Such a gloomy setting of time is created by the author in the novel, in Theodore's description of the night when he goes to kill an old woman named Anne as follows:

"...There was a silence at night. You wanted to chat with your victims as you always did. You knocked at the door with great ease like a friend!... You knew nobody around there could hear you. The house of this woman who lived alone was in a fairly secluded place. A perfect prey, a perfect location" (p .23)

Another gloomy setting of time is created when Elisabethe starts to read his murderer grandfather Theodore's letters in order to intensify the suspense in the novel as follows: "Elisabethe spent the whole night reading the letters of her grandfather Theodore... The house was ice-like and there was a heavy snow outside" (p. 43). Similarly, when Selma decides to kidnap psychologist Naz's son, Karakas this time uses the weather not the time. The bad weather condition helps her to intensify fear and terror.

"...Meanwhile, it was raining, she couldn't deny that she was on a really lucky day today. Increasing the intensity of the rain was in favor of Selma... There was half an hour for the kid to leave school. Meanwhile, lightning flashed and the rain was coming down in buckets outside" (pp. 72-73).

The bad weather condition is used in another part of the novel to create a gloomy and horrifying atmosphere when Elisabethe decides to kill Ahmet: "She decided to watch the heavy blizzard outside until the film began" (p. 57). Like Shakespeare did in his tragedies, sometimes the image of gloomy weather can be used to mention the foreshadowing for the terrible future actions. With these gloomy weather conditions, the readers will anticipate that horrifying events will happen soon because of the implications in the novel. After Elisabethe plays her role as Selma on the stage, Selma decides on taking Elisabethe's revenge when she goes to her room. During this time the weather was depicted as follows:

“It was raining cats and dogs. The weather was as dark as pitch. First, occasional lightning bolts lit the sky, then everything plunged into darkness again same as before” (p. 65).

Karakaş does not only create a dark and gloomy setting of time or bad weather conditions, but she also continues to create dark and gloomy settings of place in her work when she describes Sevgi’s house. She uses such a terrifying atmosphere to double the excitement in the murder scene as follows:

“After a few seconds later, Selma was in a small room full of antiques... Her eyes caught on the pictures inside the brown, old, partially dyed buffet. The pictures were just as old as the cupboard and the furniture in the room” (p. 36).

After killing Ahmet, Elisabethe takes his body to the grave. In the novel, many details are given in order to explain the cemetery more effectively: “Elizabeth was now all alone in the completely dark cemetery. The rain was not coming down hard and it started to rain lightly. The voices of dogs howling in the distance were accompanying with the sound of the wind” (p. 104). Psychologist Naz tells the police about the murders committed by Elisabethe. Elisabethe is tried and sentenced to death. Naz is brought to court as a witness. Here Karakaş depicts a Gothic-style courthouse as follows:

“They were finally in front of the court building. The black-colored old stone building looked so nasty to Naz that she felt as if she had been in front of the horrible witch’s house where Hansel and Gretel were imprisoned” (p. 219).

4.2. The Image of the Sense of Loneliness, Alienation and Isolation in Elif Karakaş’s Novel, *Lanetli Genler (The Cursed Genes, 1995)*

The sense of loneliness, alienation and isolation are among the most important gothic images in the gothic fiction. Similar to this characteristic of gothic fiction, some characters do not have any familial ties and have to live isolated and asocial life in *Lanetli Genler*. These characters suffer from a series of inner conflicts and psychological crises because of their loneliness.

Selma is all alone like other woman character Elisabethe in the novel. When Selma undertakes Elisabethe’s role on the stage, she finds Elisabethe’s life very close to her own life and starts to embrace hers. She identifies herself with Elisabethe, and does not feel alone anymore as she states as follows: “She always wanted to be together with Elizabeth a lot, and she wanted to be able to relive her in her own body and to be able to share her terrible loneliness with her” (p. 26).

Loneliness makes things worse for the characters. In fact, the author criticizes the alienation in the society from one another by showing Selma’s alienation in the society: “Nobody saw her when she entered the apartment. She could say the same about his car. In these big cities, even the people living in the same apartment did not know one another! ..” (p. 37).

Another woman character in the novel, Elisabethe’s crisis drove her into solitude. She compares her loneliness to her grandfather Theodore’s loneliness and depression, who lived 200 years ago: “She hated herself, but she also felt pity for herself. She was all alone... Yes, alone in the endless darkness, just like Theodore” (p. 51).

The fact that Ahmet’s exploitation of Elisabethe for his materialistic interests and leaving her alone caused her to feel very depressed. When Elisabethe even plans to kill Ahmet, Elisabethe notices extensive separation between herself and the people around her:

“There was a strange pain in her. Everyone on the street seemed to be happy, everyone was loved, and everyone had friends! However, she was all alone! Alone, helpless, excluded, pushed, exploited, used ... She hated, even feared solitude” (p. 57). Selma always feels lonely, like Elisabethe and Theodore. She cannot even make friends at her working place:

“Nobody wanted to be her friends, nobody liked her. She did not like anyone anyway. When the movie was finished, everyone would go somewhere in groups, and Selma would return to her home alone. She was used to living so. She did not expect anyone to be nice to her, she did not expect to make friends with anyone” (p. 66).

Although Elisabethe tries to forget her own loneliness and solitude, and wants to be a part of their lives, she falls short of her goals after each falls into sleep:

“Whereas the nights seemed to be too long for her!... She watched the lights fading away in all of the houses slowly and the people sinking themselves into their sweet dreams. Lastly, the old woman in the opposite her house used to sleep. Elisabethe used to watch that woman in order to escape from her loneliness; but when she slept, she would be left alone in the darkness!...” (p. 106).

In gothic works, a special emphasis is given to the feeling of loneliness, alienation and isolation. Loneliness is especially used in gothic fiction, because the sense of loneliness causes people to have enmity towards the people, as they have been isolated from their social atmosphere by these people on purpose. In such an alienated situation, these people tend to commit crimes and they can easily commit crimes without any hesitations. People who are always prone to commit crimes are the ones who are excluded by other people. Similarly, in this novel, some characters, such as Selma, Elisabethe and Theodore have been ostracized by society, although they wanted to be a part of it. Selma, Elisabethe and Theodore have not been accepted by the society, and thus they became enemies to them and tended to take revenge on the people they were excluded from.

4.3. The Image of Supernatural Characters in the Novel

Supernatural characters, such as ghosts, vampires, ghouls and witches, etc. are integral parts of gothic fiction. These supernatural characters occupy an important place in these works. The frequent appearances of Theodore's ghost, who died centuries ago, is an important reflection of gothic character in the novel. The author's purpose in using Theodore's ghost is to give the reader fear through a mysterious character, a phenomenon cannot be explained logically. In describing the ghost, Elisabethe states: “There was a strange smile on her face; she said “Theodore” looking at the window. My God, you are here, you live!... she was so excited that his heart was beating hysterically!...” (p. 51).

Selma is excited to become Elisabethe and to transform into the character of Elisabethe, and eventually, Elisabethe's spirit enters into Selma's body:

“... you step forward and act out your own life! Just be careful; No one should understand that you are Elisabethe or we'll be in real trouble! Then she rested her head on the wheel and closed her eyes. She waited for a minute or two for Elisabethe to take over her body (p. 97).

When Elisabethe drives the car to bury Ahmet's body after killing him, the murderer Theodore, who died 200 years ago, suddenly appears in the rearview mirror. The appearance of a dead person to any character is an image of the Gothic Roman style: “She looked at the rear seat in the rearview mirror, Theodore was waving to her in the mirror” (p. 103).

4.4. The Use of Colours as Symbols

The colors used in Gothic novels are black, white and red, which are mostly death-evoking colors; however, the color that describes the past life is yellow. The use of black and red colors, in particular, has various connotations. While black evokes darkness, evil, death, mystery and doubt, red evokes blood, revenge and hell. In the novel, Selma uses the nickname Tülay to take Elisabethe's revenge from Naz. Selma goes to psychologist Naz for psychological examination. Naz's use of red nail polish and red lipstick increases the severity of Selma's revenge: “...She had done a masterful makeup to her big brown eyes. Red lipstick, red nail polish...It was like Selma come on and kill me” (p. 14). Red lipstick and nail polish give the reader the clues that Elisabethe's avenger will be taken by Selma. The red colour is the symbol of revenge, blood and death. Similar, while committing the murders, Theodore chose the clothes with black and red colours which have gothic connotations. Like Theodore, Selma wants to be like Theodore, so she chooses a special costume with the same colours before committing the crimes:

“...Anyway, I wore black pants, black shirt, black jacket, black gloves and white shoes. What a wonderful clothing style! I came across my eyes in the mirror and they were terrible. My eyes were red, obviously red in the inside” (p. 21).

As it is known, red evokes brutality and blood in the gothic fiction. In this part of the novel, Selma seems to polish her cheeks and lips with her own blood instead of wearing makeup.

After Elisabethe kills Ahmet wildly, she wants to savage Ahmet's dead body with an axe and bury him, so she chooses special costumes and colours to perform this action:

“She wore a black overcoat. She covered her face and her head. There was no way anyone would know her in these clothes. The black headcover had come down to her eyebrows. She put two sacks on two separate black suitcases” (pp. 101-102).

As can be understood from these examples, the author uses black and red, which are the colours that symbolise fear, death, darkness, anger and revenge. In this way, by using symbolic colours, the author aims to create a gloomy setting, which is a feature of gothic fiction. In many parts of the novel, the writer tries to give the elements of fear and suspense, which are the major aims of gothic fiction, by using symbols related to similar colours.

4.5. The Image of Suffering and the Sense of Revenge in the Novel

Baytimur states that the act of suffering has some psychological roots in its origin, and the person who has jealous type personality starts to feel hostile towards his or her loved one or the opponent when s/he has the possibility of losing his or her loved one. Therefore, s/he vilifies her/himself feeling that and he or she starts to lose his or her self-esteem by feeling that s/he is worse than useless. (Baytimur, 2019, p.66). Similarly, Elisabethe loses her self respect after she sees her beloved with someone else, and she is described as a suffering person in the novel as follows: “Elizabeth's beautiful peaceful days lasted six months. Until a cold December day, she learns the sad truth!... Ahmet wanted to get married, but with someone else” (p. 11).

As a result, Elisabethe, as a suffering person desires to see others having the same emotions. From this moment on, she is filled with a feeling of revenge. Revenge is another element used in gothic fiction. In gothic fiction, for certain reasons, such as murder, deception, etc., revenge is the primary purpose for the characters. Selma, who plays the role of Elisabethe, wants to avenge Elisabethe under the influence of her role: “Everyone, whom poor Elisabethe trusted in, betrayed her. Wasn't that the psychologist who revealed the murders? But, Selma knew everything; she would never fall into such a trap. ... She was determined to take Elisabethe's revenge...” (p. 11).

When she finds out that Ahmet does not want him, she feels lonely and deceived. Having inherited the genes of his murderous grandfather Theodore, who lived 200 years ago, Elisabethe soon begins to see Theodore, and her sense of revenge increases:

“I know what you feel, you have my blood, you look like me and you need me... Theodore comes to the desk with quick steps, hitting him with his fist and shouted “You're going to kill her! This is the only solution. You will take your revenge. You will kill the girl who deceived Ahmet!” (p. 52).

This sense of revenge causes her to lose her human qualities and the elements of tension in the novel are triggered: “It was as if Elisabethe had gone, instead, a wild animal had come. She licked the blood scattered to her face with her tongue: “You created this wild animal!” (p. 100).

4.6. The Image of Curse

The factor of a curse is one of the most common elements that can be seen in gothic fiction. With a curse, the characters in the novel are influenced, and revenge, greed and murder follow the factor of a curse. Elisabethe's frustration with the genes from his grandfather reveals the curse in *Lanetli Genler*:

“The frustration and the deep wounds in her soul triggered the ambush of her genes. Elisabethe tried to save herself from the cold breath of genetics and she began to go to a psychologist” (p. 11).

Teodore feels Elisabethe's anger and resentment against Ahmet. He tells him to kill Ahmet and his girlfriend with her killer genes and get her revenge: “You own my genes: the genes of a skilled killer!” (p. 52).

4.7. Inner Conflicts and Psychological Problems

Gothic novels are formed by the combination of fear and curiosity with personality conflicts and mystical events. This is why Gothic literature often focuses on the psychological experiences, the pain and the emotion of its characters. Elisabethe's reading her murderer grandfather Theodore Roneir's letters, who lived centuries ago and reflecting his grandfather's psychological mood and conflicts in these letters can be accepted as one of the important gothic images in the novel. She expresses that she has multiple personalities with the following statement: "I can go crazy with my current personality. This is the problem; I don't know how many personalities there are inside me... I need to get out of my present self-right now" (p. 7).

Personality disorder, on the other hand, is a mental health disorder that affects the way you think and feel about yourself and others and causes problems in everyday life. They include issues with self-esteem, difficulty managing emotions and behaviors, and an unbalanced relationship pattern. This personality disorder, on the other hand, can be associated with the mood that Elisabethe shows when reading her grandfather's letters:

"In the darkness she had a laugh, a scream from her throat. This annoying, inner-sneering laughter caressed something deep in her soul, she increased the severity of her laughter. She was laughing all over herself. She had incredible grief from her laughter in the darkness with her ugly screams and then suddenly she started crying, her facial muscles were moving from a fast mood to another" (p. 8).

Looking for somebody who could share her own feelings, Selma finds another model apart from Elisabethe: Hitler. She felt herself close to Hitler and likened herself to him, because he was also hated and isolated by many other people:

"...the walls of the bedroom were covered with the paintings of Hitler. She used to collect Hitler's pictures from all the newspapers and magazines. It was her most enjoyable hobby. The other indispensable hobby of Sema was that she had collected the news about the murder, which she had read from the newspapers" (p. 94).

Then, gothic literature frequently focuses on the psychological experiences of its characters, considering the suffering, emotions, and feeling

Then, gothic literature frequently focuses on the psychological experiences of its characters, considering the suffering, emotions, and

Suddenly changing emotions in the novel are the signs of psychological problems. In the first part of the novel, Elisabethe shows these changes as she reads his grandfather Theodore's letters:

"In the darkness she had a laugh, a scream from her throat. This annoying, inner-sneering laughter caressed something deep in her soul, she increased the severity of her laughter. She was laughing all over herself. She had an incredible grief from her laughter in the darkness with her ugly screams and then suddenly, she started crying, her facial muscles were moving from a fast mood to another" (p. 8).

4.8. Murder

In Gothic novels, murder appears in two different ways: murder for revenge and curse, and for pleasure. In both, the authors tell the readers this fear in detail in order to make their readers feel it. In the novel, Theodore goes to kill Anne for pleasure at midnight, which is told in detail as follows:

"While holding the woman's shoulder with his left hand, he took out his awful hand and that horrific shiny big knife from the inside pocket of the coat. The woman didn't even have time to scream when her neck was cut" (p. 24).

In gothic novels, there are not only the murders of the people but also the murders of animals are also relevant. Theodore is a character who lives in a personality conflict. As he challenges his inner killer soul, it turns out how psychologically sick he actually is:

“I didn’t wear my special costumes, but I still threw myself out in the street at midnight and killed a cat. I could even kill a person, but my logic was overwhelmed, and I was content with an animal with the concern that the murders could have revealed me” (p. 45)

Elisabethe cannot bear Ahmet’s cheating her, so she makes plans with Theodore to kill him:

“She passed behind Ahmet’s with quick steps, she stabbed the knife she took out of her bag into the man’s neck! Ahmet could not understand what happened, he didn’t even yell. He just looked down upon Elisabethe as he fell to the ground” (p. 63).

When Elisabethe killed Ahmet, her sense of revenge did not vanish exactly. She also kills Ahmet’s wife, Çiğdem with the thought that the inheritance would go down to Ahmet’s wife:

“Her hand went into the pocket of her coat. She had no intention of furthering this murder. She was tired of the injustices. It was the best to have justice in their own way. She stabbed the knife she drew from the inside pocket of her coat into the woman’s chest, turning on her feet” (p. 142).

At the beginning of the novel, it is seen that Selma, who works for psychologist Naz, does not like Sevgi. Later, Selma kills Sevgi and her mother for pleasure, as Theodore did:

“Firstly, she grabbed the wooden handle of the knife in the pocket of her coat. Then turning on her feet she stabbed at the old woman’s heart. Damn, she was screaming, but not dying. She pulled the knife; twice, three times until the sound ended...”

She went into Sevgi’s bedroom. Taking advantage of her drowsiness, she leaned over her before she got up out of the bed, and had the opportunity to understand what had happened. While she was stabbing the knife at the heart, she shouted: “It is me! Tülay. In other words, the devil” (p. 158)!

5. CONCLUSION

The gothic style first appeared in architecture in France with the giant cathedrals that had pointed roots rising towards the sky, later made its presence felt in the sculptures on the church walls and in the paintings of Stefan Lchner, Salator Rosa etc., and later spread all Europe. Gothic in literature started in the eighteenth century with Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto*. As can be understood from the title of the novel, cathedrals, castles, churches, mysterious houses, cemeteries and towers are used as places. Besides the mysterious atmosphere of medieval castles, Horace Walpole enhances the gothic genre by adding supernatural characters, such as vampires, witches, demons, spirits, ghosts and scary creatures to add horror and tension to this gloomy atmosphere.

Some writers such as Ann Radcliffe, Mary Shelley, Bram Stoker, Robert Louis Stevenson and Edgar Allan Poe followed Horace Walpole in gothic fiction in literature. Gothic, which was popular in Europe, became popular in Turkish Literature many years later. Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar can be considered as the pioneer of the gothic genre in Turkish Literature. *Mezarından Kalkan Şehit, Gulyabani, Cadı* are novels contributed to gothic fiction genre in Turkish Literature. The other works that contributed to the development of this genre are Ali Rıza Seyfi Bey’s *Dracula İstanbul’da* and Kerime Nadir’s *Dehşet Gecesi*. Gothic literature, which was not popular until the 1990s in Turkish Literature, was revived with Elif Karakaş’s book *Lanetli Genler* (Cursed Genes). In this study, the gothic images of the novel were examined, and as a result of the study, the most important gothic images, such as colors that show loneliness, pessimism and fear, personality conflict, pain, gloomy places and weather, sense of revenge, presence of supernatural characters (vampire, ghost, ghoul), curse and murder were studied in *Lanetli Genler*.

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