

## **A COUP (MAY 27, 1960) - A NOVEL: THE STAR RESISTING THE DARKNESS**

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Ramis KARABULUT\*

**ÖZ:** Romancı ve hikâyeci Sevinç Çokum Türkiye'nin son 150 yıllık tarihi sürecinde yaşanan büyük sosyal ve siyasal hadiseleri kronolojik bir sıra takip ederek romanlarına konu etmiştir. Bu bağlamda yazar 27 Mayıs 1960 darbesini Karanlığa Direnen Yıldız adlı romanında tahlilci bir gözle romanlaştırmıştır. Bir askeri darbenin toplumun zemini, gerçekleştirilmesi, toplum üzerindeki etkileri, sonrasında yaşananlar sanatçı duyarlılık ile birleştirilerek ortaya konmuştur. Bu incelemede yazarın Karanlığa Direnen Yıldız adlı romanının belirgin nitelikleri tespit edilip yapısı, muhtevası ve üslubu bakımından ele alınmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Askerî Darbe, Sevinç Çokum, Karanlığa Direnen Yıldız, 27 Mayıs

### **Bir Darbe (27 Mayıs 1960) – Bir Roman: Karanlığa Direnen Yıldız**

**ABSTRACT:** In her novels novelist and storyteller Sevinç Çokum has mentioned the big social and political events that took place in the last 150 years of Turkey following a chronological order. In this context, the author analyses the May 27, 1960 military coup in The Star Resisting the Darkness. Societal background, implementation, impacts on the society and the events afterwards of a military coup are demonstrated with an artistic style and sensitivity. In this study, the characteristic features of the novel have been determined and discussed regarding the structure, content and style.

**Keywords:** Military Coup, Sevinç Çokum, The Star Resisting the Darkness, May 27

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\* Ömer Halisdemir Üni. Fen-Edebiyat Fak. Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Böl.  
rkarabulut611@hotmail.com *Gönderim Tarihi: 14.10.2017 Kabul Tarihi: 17.11.2017*

### Sevinç Çokum and the Star Resisting the Darkness

Blending her observations with feelings, Sevinç Çokum<sup>1</sup> has made us read the historical, political, and social events that have taken place in the last 150 years in Turkey through the eyes of a novelist with effective narration. Çokum has given voice to the sufferings of people who live in a land that has been left in the aftermath of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in *Bizim Diyar* (1978) and felt the grief of the Crimean Turkish in *Hilal Görününce* (1984). In *Ağustos Başağı* (1989), she describes the harsh conditions of the National Struggle within the framework of a naïve love story that takes place in *Söğüt*. Amid changing socioeconomic conditions, she narrates in *Çırpıntılar* (1991) stories of “labor migration” and the tragedy of emigrants within the framework of the disintegration of a family moving to Australia (Enginün 2001: 358–359). Her novel *The Star Resisting the Darkness* (*Karanlığa Direnen Yıldız*)<sup>2</sup> (2014) covers various aspects of the May 27, 1960 military coup, which is among the most important political events in Turkey<sup>3</sup>.

An examination of the life and work of Çokum will illustrate that her approaches to life and history of Turkish society have a nationalistic view. In Ali İhsan Kolcu’s book, titled *Cumhuriyet Edebiyatı II*, he discussed her in the “Nationalist-Turkic Trends” group. Çokum is interested in the problems of Turks outside and inside Turkey, and she has been read with interest (Kolcu 2008: 345).

### Structure

The subject of *The Star Resisting the Darkness* is briefly summarized as follows. The story of the work consists of two interrelated chain stories. As we understand in the frame story (outer story), the novelist is

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<sup>1</sup> For detailed information about the life and works of Sevinç see Enginün 2001: 358-359; Ercilasun 2013: 149-151; Kolcu 2008: 349-355; Karabulut 2006: 107-116; *Türk Dünyası Edebiyatçıları Ansiklopedisi* (The Encyclopedia of the Turkish World Authors) C. 3: 76-77.

<sup>2</sup> For a different analysis about the novel see Kolcu 2008: 349-355, Ercilasun 2013: 149-151. Also *Karanlığa Direnen Yıldız* is analysed by Ülkü Ayşe Oğuzhan Börekçi regarding the profession of journalism and Sevinç Çokum’s attitude towards various professional groups and supporters of coup is discussed. For detailed information about this topic see Oğuzhan Börekçi 2013: 1913-1932.

<sup>3</sup> In this paper, the novel used is the October 2014 edition of *Kapı Yayınları*. The literary text has been examined using the method in *Anlatma Esasına Bağlı Edebi Metinlerin Tahlili* by Prof. Dr. Şerif Aktaş.

“I,” that is, the experiences and observations experienced 34 years ago by the first-person narrator constitute the main story of the novel. In the frame story, the first-person narrator lives in an apartment flat in “new road,” now called as Vatan Caddesi (name of a street in İstanbul), which was zoned for housing under the instruction of the Democratic Party. In this apartment flat, she lives with her mother, two older sisters, and father, who reads, interprets, and archives the columns of the intellectuals of that period such as Peyami Safa<sup>4</sup>. Hüsniye, a pythoness, often stops by this house in almost every chapter of the novel and tells the fortunes of the narrator’s sisters. After depicting herself and her experiences at the beginning of every chapter, the narrator turns to the world of Feridun Ağabey (elder brother). Feridun is a young man living in one of the neighboring apartments and is observed by the narrator through the window or balcony. The author’s observations about Feridun and his family constitute the main story (inner story) of the novel. Through the date “1994–96 İstanbul,” which is revealed in the outer part of the novel, the author reports the date when she finished the work. The subject of the main story is composed of the chain of events observed by the narrator I, and then she leaves the first-person narration to the storyteller. All of these events, which take place in her neighborhood, consist of the experiences of Feridun before and after the military coup on May 27, 1960. In fact, the entire novel is framed by this military coup and its results. Feridun’s family is a member of the Democratic Party. From their old neighborhood, they have moved to a boulevard currently known as Vatan Caddesi, or “new road” at that time; the latter neighborhood is part of a new town planning started by the Democratic Party in İstanbul from 1956 to 1957. Feridun lives with his father Enis Bey and mother Gülzade Hanım. Enis Bey’s brother Sebati Bey, a professor of economics at the university, his wife sculptor Sibel, and their son Cihangir also live in the same apartment. Sibel’s sister İncenaz and her husband Major Kaya, and Major Kaya’s cousin Asaf, a journalist, and his wife Tülin also live in this apartment. Apartment dwellers are extremely intimate as they have familial relationship and meet frequently to have dinner and drink alcohol. The main topic of these meetings is the conflict among the Democratic Party, Republican People’s Party, and military coup. After the coup, the family moves out of the apartment and both political disputes between Enis Bey’s family and other residents of the apartment and the novel end.

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<sup>4</sup> For detailed information on Peyami Safa’s literary and artistic sides before and after the coup and the negative experiences he had undergone in the press, see Ayvazoğlu 1998: 451–492.

**Plot:** As regards structure, *The Star Resisting the Darkness* is written using a technique called post-modern or new novel. This novel comprises an outer part (frame story) and an inner part (main story), consisting of ten and eight chapters, respectively; the inner part is placed inside the outer part. The frame story consists of parts at the beginning of both the novel and the main story and at the end of the novel, where the author does not hide her identity and reveals herself. The parts at the beginning and end of the novel indicate the period when the work is written (actual time); meanwhile, apart from the parts belonging to the narrator I at the beginning of the eight section, the main story describes the events from 1959 to 1961 (past). In each chapter of the frame story, which is placed on the top portion of each of the eight sections that are told by the narrator I, the author shifts to the main story without putting any partitioning or sign of a transition. In such transitioning in each part, the first-person narrator states a sentence related to the novel's name and message as a sort of code. These sentences are the ones ending in exclamatory expressions, such as "...my nation," or phrases with an emphasis on the concept of "nation." It is as if the meaning of *The Star Resisting the Darkness* is hidden in these sentences (pp. 12, 43, 73, 104, 149, 186, 231, 280). In the parts at the beginning of the main story that consist the frame story, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes is addressed as "Bey" (Sir) by the narrator I, a high school girl. She meets and greets a simit seller on the street and, occasionally, comes across Feridun and his family. The observations on the latter are the bases for these chapters. The main purpose is to lead the reader to Feridun and the main story and put forward the arguments on the coup. In this way, the author prepares the background for the main story.

The main story (inner story) is composed of eight chapters. By placing the protagonist Feridun in the center, various aspects of the May 27, 1960 military coup is discussed.

**Part I:** The name of this chapter is "Red Sentence." It is referred to the statement of "honor killing" written by Peyami Safa in one of his articles. It starts with Doctor Enis Bey's entrustment of Feridun to Veysel Ağabey to be raised as a writer. Feridun enters into an environment, which has hosted Nurettin Topçu, İsmail Hami Danişmend, Ali Faud Başgil, Nihad Sami Banarlı, Mehmet Kaplan, Peyami Safa, İbrahim Kafesoğlu, Necip Fazıl, Osman Yüksel Serdengeçti, and other writers valued by nationalist and conservative circles. However, apart from Feridun's family, the people with whom he meets at the apartment in the evenings are supporters of the coup and the Republican People's Party. Therefore, Enis Bey and Feridun have frequent political discussions with the other residents of the apartment.

**Part II:** The bases of this chapter comprise the survival of Prime Minister Adnan Menderes from a plane crash in London, debates on NATO and CENTO, Feridun's attempt to write a novel, pro-coup apartment residents, Ece's suicide attempt, İncenaz's seductive behaviors, Feridun's close relations with the Turkic publications and nationalist conservative intellectuals, a discussion on love between journalist Asaf and Feridun, military officers, university lecturers, members of the Republican People's Party, and militants.

**Part III:** The mood of the coup constitutes the basis of this part. The issues described in this section are Bey-Pasha discussion, the university's critique, public criticism of the populist, deterioration of Feridun-Ece relationship, protests against the government, support of military members to demonstrators, anti-government people's complaints on Europe, and burning of the draft of Feridun's novel in the fire.

**Part IV:** The main issues discussed in this chapter are the Democratic Party's newly launched development movement, changes in social life and human behaviors and mentality, İncenaz's songs sung during dinners, actualization of the coup, support of the local and foreign press to the coup, exile of nationalist officers within the junta, praise of the revolutionaries by the press, launching of a donation campaign for the coup government, supporters of the Democratic Party being insulted extremely and tried unfairly in a court, faith struggle, revolutionary winds, and debates on fundamentalism.

**Part V:** We see that the concepts of coup, freedom, and revolution are discussed here. It is also established that there is no justification for the coup, executions are open to discussion, and a number of businessmen change their sides and behave as pro-coup. The establishment of new political parties (Justice Party, New Turkey Party, Turkey Workers and Farmers Party, and Pro-homeland [Memleketçi] Party, among others), and report and arrest of Enis Bey are all depicted in this section.

**Part VI:** The main issues here are Adnan Menderes' love of the masses; the socio-psychological reasons why broad masses are not against the coup; the breakup of Feridun and Ece; the detention of Enis Bey by one of the distant relatives Hayrettin Pasha; spying, insult, and betrayal among closest friends; splitting of people owing to politics; disappearance of people's proximity to each other; preparations for the new constitution; and the spread of socialist tendencies.

**Part VII:** This chapter consists of the events in the fall of 1961. The main topics include the execution of Prime Minister Adnan Menderes on September 17, 1961; the sorrow of the opponents and celebration and demonstrations of the supporters of the coup over Menderes's execution; criticism of army and İsmet İnönü; impact of the executions on people; disappearance of Feridun's love for İncenaz who he compares with the heroine Periveş of Arabası Sevdası; Ece's engagement with Feridun's cousin Cangür; cooperation of socialists and capitalists when necessary; and a discussion of the Justice Party and the Republican People's Party.

**Part VIII:** The final part of the main story covers the transfer of Feridun and his family to a new apartment, as they wish to be away from the family and relatives owing to political disputes; new elections after the coup; the ambition of the Republican People's Party to establish a government and the party's disrespect to the public; Ali Fuad Başgil's encounters; nation supporters; and adherence to the pasha as a tradition that has been practiced since the late Ottoman period's establishment of the coalition government. The main story of the novel ends with Feridun learning that the person who has reported his father is his own uncle.

**Perspective and the Narrator:** In the first and last parts of the frame story, we see the presence and view of the first-person narrator in her adulthood. In parts which can be called as the second portion of the frame story, which is placed in the early part of the eight chapters of the main story, narrator I reflects her impressions as a 17-year-old girl with the experience and perspective of that age. The transition from these parts to the main story is perhaps the greatest achievements of the novelist in fiction techniques. This is because, while passing to the main story at the beginning of each section, the first-person narrator leaves the word skillfully to a third-person narrator with a divine perspective, without making the reader aware of the transition. The fiction of the novel can be demonstrated better in the following table:

As seen in the table, the story of *The Star Resisting the Darkness* consists of the discussions of people gathering in an apartment owing to their kinship and in the printing house and newspaper offices in Bab-ı Ali during the events in the May 27, 1960 military coup. In fact, *The Star Resisting the Darkness* is a novel where discussion of ideas between people is outstanding and action is rare. It is not true to mention an event based on intrigue and action in the classic sense. There is a military coup, and the execution of Adnan Menderes and his two friends after the coup is learned from the press.

FRAME STORY (OUTER STORY) AND ITS CHAPTERS										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Narrator	I	I (first-person narrator)								I
Time	1994	1959–1961								1996
Place		New Road (Vatan Caddesi), Apartment – Summer house								
MAIN STORY (INNER STORY)										
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	
Narrator		S/he (third-person narrator)								
Time		1959–1961								
Place		New Road (Vatan Caddesi), Apartment – Summer house, Publishing house								

In this sense, the main story of the novel is the discussion and evaluation of this situation reflected in the press by the residents of the apartment and visitors of the Veysel Ağabey's printing house. Hence, the military coup is the background of the novel and constitutes the agenda of the people; and the events consist of the discussion of this agenda among people. We can talk about four small events in the main story:

1. Feridun's father, Doctor Enis Bey, is reported to junta members as anti-coup by his own brother, Professor Sebati Bey. Feridun learns of the betrayer at the end of the novel from Major Kaya. This crisis is also the main issue of the novel. It also shows how the coup leads to an unravelling of the integrity of society.

2. As a result of jealousy Feridun assaults journalist Asaf and then İncenaz starts to keep away from Feridun. This circumstance causes the nationalist and conservative young Feridun to fall out love with the young woman İncenaz. The author highlights that certain members of the Turkish youth tend to adhere to the national and spiritual values from now on, in contrast with spendthrift characters that fall in love with a beautiful woman (Bihruz Bey of Araba Sevdası) in the novels of Tanzimat (the political reforms made in the Ottoman Empire in 1839) and the Constitutional Era.

3. The novel depicts Feridun's engagement with a daughter of a ship owner, a supporter of the Democratic Party who eventually joins the pro-

coup Republican People's Party after the coup. After the breakup of this relationship, Ece engages with Feridun's cousin Cangür. The author emphasizes that big investors do not respect any moral value for they focus on material interests. This emphasis is a kind of critique of capitalism.

4. After Enis Bey is released from the detention, he wants to stay away from the people who have reported him; consequently, the family moves out of the apartment. This phenomenon is important as it shows that the coup causes separation and confrontation among family members in Turkish society. Perhaps, this is the most important message of the novel.

The novel emphasizes that a violent man can report his brother, resulting to an ideological confrontation in society. Moreover, men such as journalist Asaf, who accuses Adnan Menderes and his friends of immorality, do not hesitate having an affair with the wives of their cousins. This particular issue highlights that pro-coup people who have so-called morals are not actually honest. Another example is Ece, who breakups with Feridun and then engages with his cousin, has no moral value when it comes to wealth and commerce. All these issues serve as a sharp critique of capitalism.

**People:** We deem it best to examine the people in the two main topics. We will examine the people of frame and main story in separate titles.

**People of the Frame Story:** I, the first-person narrator (Sevinç Çöküm): She has recently moved from an older neighborhood and started to live on the fourth floor of one of the apartments, which began to appear at the edge of the new road, with her father, mother, and two older sisters. The author makes Feridun the protagonists of the novel whom she observes in the neighborhood and calls as Feridun Ağabey from time to time. The narrator (I) shows up at the beginning of each chapter. After talking about various reflections of the coup and effects of the events on herself, she addresses to the Turkish nation and mentions Feridun. At this point, she disappears quietly from the scene and leaves the place to the divine omniscient narrator who knows precisely what happens and will happen in Feridun's life. The narrator's two sisters and mother are mentioned only when fortune teller Hüsniye comes to their home. However, in the frame story the father is mentioned as a man, who is an artisan and member of Democratic Party and wears sometimes a cap and a tie, and reads and archives the columns of Peyami Safa. Narrator (I) emphasizes that she is also a poet and writes poems (p. 39). Even the name of the novel comes from the verse "as if a star resisting the darkness" of one of her poems (p. 270).



In the frame story, we learn the reason why the narrator (author) did not write the novel immediately after the May 27, 1960 military coup and has written 34 years later. In addition, with the note “1994–96” at the end of the frame story in the last part of the novel, we learn the period during which the novel is written. As the author was born in 1943 and began writing the novel in 1994, we can assume that she is a 17-year-old high school girl in 1960.

Narrator (I) calls Feridun as brother and, at times, watches him from the balcony and windows. Through these tips, we can assume that the author knows this family quite well.

Pythoness and peddler Hüsniye and the simit seller are the two remarkable characters of the frame story. Pythoness Hüsniye promotes vitality and color to the stable process of the story talking about the future with the jargon of the place she belongs. She breaks the monotony. “*Well I have nothing in my mouth since morning judy, bring summat of a bite yonder and there will be feast in mey newington.*” (p. 41).

The author introduces to her readers the simit seller through the following sentences: “I had known the simit seller. There was a small but significant role of him somewhere in the history. As his cap is often inclined to his face, now I cannot remember but can only guess that face. He is a man with clipped moustache, thirty-five-year old, small eyes, scorched skin and dropped shoulders” (p. 13). The narrator mentions the simit seller at the beginning of nearly each chapter, similar to a nostalgic presence with Hüsniye. The commitment of the simit seller to Adnan Menderes and the national and spiritual values of Turkish society are emphasized; his place in the novel as a personality explaining why Menderes won all elections entered with an overwhelming majority in the Turkish political life.

People of the Main Story: With Feridun in the center of the novel, the people of the main story can be separated into pro-coup and anti-coup, as shown in the following table: Feridun, the central person in the main story, demonstrates an ever-changing personality until the end of the story. The ideological discussions among people who meet at the printing house and the ones living in an apartment have affected his change. Even though Feridun does not have a clear political opinion at the beginning of the inner story, he adopts a nationalist and conservative personality at the end of the main story.

Feridun		
	I. Group	II. Group
Apartment Summer ho- use	<i>Opponents of the coup (supporters of the Democratic Party, nationalists and conservatives)</i>  Feridun Doktor Enis Bey Gülzade Hanım	<i>Proponents of the coup (suppor- ters of the Republican People's Party and other left-wing par- ties)</i> Gürcan Professor Sebati Bey (uncle) Sculptor Sibel (aunt) Major Kaya İncenaz Journalist Asaf Tülin Ece
Printing house and its surro- unding	Veysel Ağabey, Özhan, Ümit, Ferda, Peyami Safa	Anıl Nadiroğlu

In this novel, Çokum considers Feridun and the crowds of people in his life at the individual and psychological plane rather than the social one. For this purpose, the author often uses the concept of “human” as a “leit motive” in the analyses and reflections on the military coup. The concept of human is always stressed when it comes to the analyses of Feridun and others. In this context, we encounter certain remarkable lines, as follows:

“Even though we cannot manage to become a nationalistic society, we are not an individualistic society based on pragmatism. According to Peyami Bey, businessman has begun to represent the ideal human type in the entire Anglo-Saxon world since the invention of steam engine. As an Anglo-Saxon thinking pragmatist philosophy gives the information to the command of the benefits, regards the concept of interest instead of the concept of truth and it has been working with utmost capacity in order to change the eternal meaning of heroism for one hundred and fifty years.

This philosophy had not captured us yet, but our society was not in the hands and under the command of idealistic people.” (p. 150).

Feridun is an unemployed young man who has returned from the army. He writes articles for a literary magazine and is eager for literature. Respecting to improve this ability, his father Enis Bey introduces and consigns him to Veysel Ağabey, the owner of a printing house, who is from the nationalist circle. Enis Bey states that “this is the beginning of a long way through which you can improve yourself” (p. 16), and introduces him to the environment of which he is becoming a part and expresses his desire for him to raise a master-apprentice relationship. The author introduces Feridun to us at the beginning of the work as follows:

“A beautiful mother from İstanbul, a doctor father carrying inaccessibility in the neighborhood and a child with bright shoes from the tales...All tender-mindedness of Feridun inherited from the mother, Servet-i Fünun generation sadness inherited from the mother... However, a significant essay writing skill was hidden behind this half smiling face. Even though Enis Bey wanted his son to be a doctor, he said nothing to his choice of literature and never underestimated his attempts to publish a magazine resulting in frustration. On the contrary, all these efforts were interpreted as steps to prepare the people of tomorrow’s key locations.

*And I think he took him to Veysel Ağabey thinking all of these. A man who is childish alongside the blue hydrangeas and univalent orange balsams in the garden wall... A mood of Osman Bey’s saint veterans on his square bony face (p. 15).*

As can be understood from these sentences, Enis Bey, one of the members of the Democratic Party that became prominent in the 1950s, wishes his son to become a combatant (alperen) who is faithful to national cultural values fed from springs of Anadolu saint veterans. Feridun starts to improve himself at Veysel Ağabey’s printing house, along with and sharing the same worldview as Özhan, Ümit, and Ferda. At the printing house, he has the opportunity to join the ranks of famous writers and intellectuals of the time such as Peyami Safa, Necip Fazıl, Osman Yüksel, Mehmet Kaplan, Mümtaz Turhan, Prof. Dr. Ayhan Songar, Nurettin Topçu, Ali Fuat Başgil, and Mahir İz.

However, Feridun’s new environment and the other residents of the apartment, where he and his family live, hold completely opposite views of the world. The other residents of the apartment are anti-Democratic Party, and nearly all are supporters of the Republican People’s Party or far-

left parties. They are also pro-coup, who are members of various professional groups supporting the May 27, 1960 military coup. For example, Feridun's uncle Professor Sebati Bey, sculptor Sibel, journalist Asaf, and Major Kaya are representatives of pro-coup members of the universities, art circles, media, and military, respectively. We can also add Kaya's seductive wife İncenaz, Asaf's characteristically immature wife Tülin, Feridun's former fiancée hedonistic Ece, his cousin Cangür, a member of the Labour Party, and Anıl Nadiroğlu, a member of the Communist Party of Turkey and owner of a publishing house, as representatives of the environment to which they belong. Thus, the author has analyzed both nationalist conservatives and pro-coup leftists in the process of coup through various types in her novel. The heroes of the coup who are always seen as a silhouette in the background should not be forgotten. Prime Minister Adnan Menderes who was executed after the coup is mentioned as Bey throughout the novel. Opposite him are real historical people such as İsmet İnönü as "Chief Pasha" and Chief of General Staff Cemal Gürsel as "Pasha from Erzurum."

When we analyze the novel in this perspective, it can be said that certain people are actually in a heated debate in certain places and times. If it is considered in terms of the elements of a novel, it is observed that the people are prominent but the place, time, and plot are kept in the background. That is why *The Star Resisting the Darkness* is a novel that is extremely convenient for theatre or cinema techniques.

It is also seen that there is a tight bond between the characters and the environment to which they belong, considering the relationship between places and people's worldviews.

All people in the novel are rarely visible outside the places observed by the narrator or Feridun. For example, we do not see Major Kaya or journalist Asaf at their workplaces. We always see them in the apartment during the time they are with Feridun.

**Time:** The time of the frame story is equivalent to the actual time when the novel is written. As regards tips given by the author, we know that the frame story is absolutely between the years of 1994 and 1996 (p. 303). However, by mentioning the time of the main story at the beginning of each chapter in the frame story, the author reveals her memories and observations when she was 16 to 17 years old as if traveling back in time. Following the clues, such as month and seasons, given in these chapters, it can be deduced that 1959, the year preceding the coup, is referred. Thus, it is clear that the frame story describes a period between 1959 and 1996. In

this sense, the work has the characteristics of a memoir novel. It is also possible to determine the time of the main story easily. The story begins in 1959 and finishes on a day in autumn immediately after the execution of Adnan Menderes on September 17, 1961 (p. 302). In this way, the author has depicted a two-and-half- to three-year period in the past of the main story. Among the remarkable clues in the main story is that residents of the apartment live in their flat in Vatan Caddesi in winter, but they spent their summer in summer houses in Kadıköy.

**Place:** In this novel, among the mostly emphasized elements after people is place, as the subject matter of the novel consists of relationships among people in a certain place and environment. We can talk about three main places in the novel. Vatan Caddesi, put into service during the period of Adnan Menderes, is referred throughout the novel as “new road.” This is the broadest and open venue of the novel. The flats of the narrator and Feridun are along this street. It is meaningful to call this street as Adnan Menderes Boulevard today. In nearly all parts of the work, this street and the simit seller on this street are mentioned. This street also witnesses the demonstration before the coup and the passage of military vehicles during the coup. The author introduces the place and environment where she lives as follows:

*Removing one end of the old neighborhood and opening of a new road, refreshing light fell on the aged part of the city. Brides and circumcision boys and lovers passed the street, funerals, students and buses passed, and the coups... (s. 11).*

This is an open place in the novel where the masses and social life are reflected.

The narrator indicates that they move from their old quarters to the fourth floor of an apartment in the upper neighborhood near the new road. (p. 10). Thus, the author also draws attention to the socioeconomic changes and zoning in İstanbul in the 1950s. Feridun, the protagonist of the main story, and his family also live in an apartment nearby. This apartment is a place where individuals gather with their family; people of different ideologies live together. The relatives living in the apartment come together most evenings as in the old mansions. However, Feridun is quite alone in this crowd as no one understands him except his father. The place where Feridun is happy is at Veysel Ağabey’s printing house and in this circle, as the people who understand him are there. This environment introduces us to the realm of the press during that period and helps us to recognize the nationalist and conservative environment of the anti-coup Feridun.

When place and people are in question, we can say that Çöküm uses a portrayal and analysis technique from the outside to the inside. We observe the depiction of place from neighborhoods into the houses and depiction of people from the outside to the inside. In this way, we can see how she deals with people and place without alienating human from place in the following sentences:

*Then, he would see that a great world was hidden there when he stopped by that small home. On one of the walls of his room, a framed Anatolian map reflecting his Anatolia love, on the other a huge colourful Kaaba picture...In a sense, it was an expression of enthusiasm of being a man of the people. Other rooms were shining with simple decorations, marbled and illuminated verses unique for the Muslim home. And Veysel Ağabey brings his ideas to maturity and light in this simplicity.*

**Content:** Before anything else, analyzing the name of the novel can express the gist and the main idea of the novel clearly. The noun “star” in the adjective phrase “The Star Resisting the Darkness” reminds us of a line from the National Anthem when we read all of the novel: “It is my nation’s star, It is going to glow.” Hence, “the star” in the title symbolizes the Turkish Nation. As a result, the adjective phrase “resisting the darkness” is the adjective of nation, regarding the coup as the “darkness.” In addition, the phrase “My Nation, ” which the author repeats in every chapter of the frame story verifies our view in this respect. Thus, it is possible to figure out the gist and the main idea of the novel. The Turkish nation has always resisted dark desires such as military coups. This darkness will be enlightened as long as young people such as Feridun exist. We see that İstanbul’s people and societies of different backgrounds and various ideologies and supporters of these ideologies, ranging from nationalists to communists and from hedonists to pragmatists, have been analyzed. For example, the lives of the people living in Feridun’s building are not led by national culture but foreign ideologies. With this, the author leads the audience to the conclusion that ideologies lead the community life. The words of Veysel Ağabey, who is the reflective center of the novel, express this as follows:

*I say that the crowds will follow whoever obtains that mass because that mass has not woken with its soul. Villagers demand water and roads. They woke in that way. If they had woken with their souls, the so-called revolution would have been complete, without any deficiency (s. 36).*

The novelist argues the concept of love with respect to man-women relationship to show the cultural and ideological differences of those who are in favor of and against the coup.

Feridun's view of love is nationalistic; Fizuli's poems are often referred as regards his understanding of love (p. 59). However, Baudelaire's poems are the reference as regards understanding of love of pro-coup journalist Asaf (p. 62). It is observed that personal conflicts are rare in the novel; the disagreements are not related to the character but to the ideology they support. Another matter presented is that snob Ece, the daughter of a rich man, actually reminds the reader Seniha of the character in Yakup Kadri's *Kıralık Konak* with her lifestyle. Herewith, the author criticizes the vanity fair with which Turkish society has been familiar since the Tanzimat (the political reforms made in the Ottoman Empire in 1839) period. The seductive woman İncenaz is associated with Periveş, the seductive and reveler woman in *Araba Sevdası*, and referred to the morally corrupted part of society. Another matter at issue in the novel is religion. We understand that from the following words of Veysel Ağabey:

*There is a war between the believers and disbelievers in this country. This is the reason for the coup. It is not seen but emerges when thought deeply. Coveted with another dress, appears in a different form* (p. 122).

Another matter at question in the work are the concepts of "nation" and "folk." These issues are on the agenda throughout the work. Raki tables and smoking widely in these environments are remarkable throughout the work. Even the brands of cigarettes are presented to the readers' attention. Feridun smokes Bafra (a Turkish brand of cigarette), whereas Ece, Gürcan, and other coup supporters smoke luxury foreign cigarettes. Thus, the author attracts attention to the fondness of rich populist people to luxury consumer goods and nationalist people's preference for domestic goods, depicting a contrast between the two social classes. The corrupted side of the press during the coup period is depicted through the discussions between Feridun and Asaf throughout the novel. Adnan Menderes, Celal Bayar, and the other two ministers, who are later executed, are brought to the agenda. In contrast to their noble behaviors, the concept of "Pasha" is debated starting from Mustafa Reşit Pashas, who have consistently used the power of the state in the westernization process, to Cemal Gürsel. The attention is drawn to the struggle between people who are elected democratically and the ones who come to power out the blue with the title of pasha. Perhaps, this is the most important issue of this novel. Among the issues mentioned several times are the jets and helicopters hovering over

and tanks and armored vehicles passing through Vatan Caddesi. This is similar to the bad experience of Turkey on July 15, 2016. To analyze this incident as regards content, *The Star Resisting the Darkness* must be fully examined in terms of intertextuality, as the author produces a wide range of text. She referred to various texts from the Göktürk scriptures to Baudelaire's poetry and from the Bible to the Koran. We can say that the novel is intense and meaningful in terms of knowledge and culture.

**Style:** Çokum portrays the May 27, 1960 military coup, which has been debated in Turkey for years, with a meticulous and eloquent style and a skillful use of Turkish language, employing a broad and strong language that ranges from street language of Hüsniye the pythoness to the poetic language of Fuzuli and Ahmet Haşim. Aside from the use of such language, she also uses a fantastic language for the characters. In the novel, Çokum often uses triple dot and ellipsis in her short sentences in addition to many inverted sentences. What she says in the novel confirms what we say here:

*Then, February came...The February of 1959...When we heard about the plane crash, my elder sister, who remembered the fortune-telling of Hüsniye. Hüsniye's fortune-telling has come true. Hüsniye mentioned about Government Office. About an important person... (p. 42).*

We can see that, in certain sentences, the author never uses predicate, which we think is a kind of style itself. These are not ordinary and familiar sentences with respect to grammar.

*With a wild view like the old times (p. 76).*

*In a way that I want to see something interesting and something that can change my life (p. 100).*

We can easily say that Çokum uses artistic and poetic statements frequently such as "The path used to weep in old times." This is deemed traditionally artistic.

### **Conclusion**

The metaphors of "the darkness" and "the star" that represent the concepts of "the people" and "the nation" respectively are the core of the novel. These metaphors are used intentionally to bring about contrast and conflict. Through these contrast and conflict, a critique of "pro-coup mentality" that ignores the law in Turkey since the period of Tanzimat (the political reforms made in the Ottoman Empire in 1839) is done. Therefore, the author artistically discusses the phenomenon of "military coup" that



has deeply affected the Turkish community recently and provides basis for the social criticism.

Considering the work as a whole, we can state the main idea as follows: The certain people who consider the Turkish society as “common people” endeavor to put Turkey into “the darkness” through the coups. On the contrary, anti-coup community (the star) who consider the Turkish society as “the nation” shows continuous resistance against this attitude.

In conclusion, compared with her previous novels, Çokum uses a different kind of plot and style in *The Star Resisting the Darkness*. She analyses the May 27, 1960 military coup, which is one of the most important events in the recent history of Turkey, in great detail and in many respects with the eyes of an artist who experienced what happened then first-hand. This masterpiece is one of the most remarkable works of modern literature in the recent epoch with its subject, strong plot, and style.

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