IDEOLOGY, INTELLECTUALS AND THE GENERATION OF ‘68 IN THE
TRILOGY OF ADALET AGAOGLU: LYING DOWN TO DIE, A WEDDING
PARTY and NO...

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

I analyzed Adalet Agaoglu's three novels, *Lying Down to Die*, *A Wedding Party* and *Nô* using Louis Althusser's ideology theory and Edward Said's writings about the intellectual as the theoretical base. I explored the roles of ideology, intellectuals and the generation of '68 both in Agaoglu's novels and in Turkish society. She considers not placing humans in their deserved place to be the most important problem both in the case of the official ideology and the generation of '68. In this context, she ascribes to the intellectuals the role of conscience of the human race, with the function of helping human beings live the way they deserve.
Dedicated to the father of Şeyda...
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INTRODUCTION

Adalet Agaoglu (b.1929) is one of the most prolific writers of modern Turkey. Although she writes plays and short stories, she is best known for her novels. She has a unique point of view on Turkey’s social issues. Her literature can help explain various Turkish historical phenomena in a distinct way. Her distinguishing feature is the way she uses literary techniques. Although her writing is well known and has received a positive reception, there are few academic studies of her works in either Turkish or English. This thesis seeks to partially rectify this lack and to explore the history of the ideology through a literary case study.

I will explore Adalet Agaoglu’s trilogy, Lying Down to Die, A Wedding Party and No... Agaoglu takes recent Turkish history, ideology, intellectual and other social problems of Turkish society as her novels’ topics. I use Western theories to explain a Turkish case through literary texts. There are some limitations arising from the method that I use. First, there is ethnocentrism in the theories, and secondly I use mainly literary texts to explain historical phenomenon.

Using Western theories to explain a Turkish case poses some dangers. The theories that I use are to a certain degree culturally centered and "flow from ideological assumptions and worldviews" (Jusdanis 1991, 9). One of the differences between some Western countries and Turkey is that Turkey did not have a class society for the time in question nor did it follow the same route to nationhood that Western countries did.

In order to minimize mistakes that might emerge due to using foreign theories, I explain the unique sides of Turkey and try to use relatively applicable theories. Turkey did not have a class society for the time in question, therefore, I use Louis Althusser's theory to explain the ideology in Turkish society. His theory focuses on precapitalist, ancient times and the middle ages, as opposed to, say, Marx's theory of class society or Adorno's reification theory, which talk about modern times.

As for the literary texts, I use them in conjunction with their historical contexts. At first it may seem more appropriate to use historical texts to explore historical and political themes. However, historical texts do not give us the experience of literary texts. Through a literary text, we can see the feelings and values of individuals and social choices in their own contexts. On top of everything, a literary text "puts the ideology into contradiction, describes the limits and absences which marks its relation to history" (Eagleton 1995, 93). Although the stance of the creator of the literary text is important, through literary text, we can make our own conclusions, as opposed to reading the ready conclusions in other sciences.

In Turkish society there was a conflict between the State and society, this conflict can be seen between the Eastern culture and the Western culture too. The official
ideology offered "a unified society without class, without privilege, *imtiyazsiz sinifsız kaynasmış bir kitle*. However how much it became successful in doing this is a controversial issue.

Aysel and her position in the trilogy represent her attitude towards the official ideology and the present values of the society. The society that she lives in "a sphere of constant circulation, in which all ideas are marketable, all values are transmutable, all professions reduced to the pursuit of easy money and quick success (Said 1996, 19).

This thesis consists of four chapters. In the first chapter, I give general descriptions of ideology by various philosophers and academicians and apply these definitions to the Turkish case, giving an outline of the main premises and process of the official ideology.

The second chapter, How the Ideology Works, explores the ways the ideology worked in Turkish society, especially between 1938 and 1968, making use of Althusser’s ideology theory.

The third chapter, Intellectuals, describes the type of intellectual that Agaoglu idealizes in these three novels. In Agaoglu’s novels, intellectuals are usually the main characters. In this chapter, mainly I use Edward Said’s intellectual theory on the premise that he knows the East as well as the West.

The last chapter, A Generation Between Coups, gives the reflections of the generation of 68 of Turkey in two novels, *Lying Down to Die* and *A Wedding Party*. 1968 is the date that indicates the separation between the official ideology and the
Turkish left. Ağaoğlu is the inventor of coup novels. This is another reason for writing this chapter.
CHAPTER 1

IDEOLOGY

Literally, ideology means "the science of ideas." There is no single, universal
definition of ideology since it has a wide range of meanings and is used in different
senses by different people. The concept of ideology was first invented and used by the
philosophers of French Enlightenment, particularly Destut de Tracy.

The following definitions from Eagleton help us in understanding ideology.
There are contradictions and overlaps among the definitions. This is not because of the
inadequacies of the definitions but because ideologies genuinely have these kinds of
contradictions and overlaps.

a) the process of production of meanings, signs and values in social life.
b) a body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group or social class.
c) ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power.
d) false ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power.
e) systematically distorted communication.
f) the system of ideas which offers a position for a subject.
g) forms of thought motivated by social interest (Eagleton, 1994, 1)
Ideology can have negative and positive connotations or it can be neutral. Napoleon, for example, used it in a negative sense. He attacked the principles of the Enlightenment by calling them ideologies. This pejorative sense continues in Marx’ and Engel’s works. To them, ideology is an upside-down version of reality: “If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside down as in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life process as the inversion of objection the retina does from their physical life process” (Williams 1987, 155). In Marx’ and Lenin’s works, ideology is generally considered “illusion, false consciousness, unreality and upside down reality” (Williams 1987, 156). Although he comes from Marxist tradition, one of the most important thinkers who does not take ideology as false consciousness or illusion is Althusser.

According to Althusser, one might talk about false or true descriptions, thoughts and representations. Yet ideology represents the way a person lives in relation to society, which is not a question of truth or falsehood. For Althusser, ideology is a system that considers and constructs people as subjects. Ideology “expresses a will, a hope, or a nostalgia rather than describing a reality” ( Eagleton 1994, 19).

Ideology works primarily at the level of the unconscious; its function is to constitute people as historical subjects equipped for certain tasks in society. It does this by drawing us into an imaginary relation with the social order, which persuades us that we and it are centered on, and indispensable to one another. Ideology is not thereby false, since, first of all, this relation is more a matter of unconscious feelings and images than of falsifiable propositions, and secondly, all of this goes on within certain material
practices and institutions -- ideological state apparatuses-- which are indubitably real (Eagleton 1994, 14).

For Gramsci, ideology is one of the elements that is covered by hegemony. By ideology, "the ruling classes secure the consent of their subordinates to be ruled; and ideology is certainly a part of this process" (Eagleton 1994, 14).

For Adorno, ideology is "identity thinking, erasing difference and otherness at the level of the mind as remorselessly as commodity exchange does at the level of the material" (Eagleton 1994, 14).

For Lukacs and Lucien Godman "ideology is a genetic affair, its truth to be located in the historical class or situation from which it springs" (Eagleton 1994, 15).

There are a few words that play key parts in the discussions of ideologies: reality, truth, and illusion.... What the truth or reality or illusion is can change from person to person. There is no single truth accepted by everybody. There is an interesting example in this regard. Marx and Hegel defined the opposite of ideologies as "seeing the truth as it is." Kenneth Minogue, a conservative academician, also considers the opposite of ideology "to see things as they really are" (Eagleton 1998, 15).

These two definitions are very similar, but what Minogue understands from reality is very different from Marx and Hegel. He accuses the left wing of having ideology, which is something other than truth.

Another problem is that nobody calls himself ideological since he believes that what he lives is truth. Of course, this is very much true for the negative connotation of ideology.
In the Turkish context, there are a couple of words for ideology such as *ilm-i swari aklı, meşfeure* and *sulu*. The three of them have positive connotations. Ideology as an English or French word also exists in Turkish, but it has rather a negative meaning.

The word ideology was taken from the West, in particular France and used in Turkey in the 19th century, a time in which intellectuals were looking for a new state policy for the Ottoman Empire. Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924) uses the word ideology in his book called *Türklesmek, İslamlasmak, Müsürlasmak, (Turkification, Islamization and Modernization)*. Yusuf Akcura (1876-1924) also uses it for Ottomanism, Pan Turkism and Islamism in his *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset (Three Way of Policy)*.

**KEMALISM**

Kemalism has various names such as “the official ideology”, Atatürkism, nationalism, and Atatürkist nationalism” (Sclić 1987, 155). Here, I will use the ideology and the official ideology to indicate all these terms. Kemalism fits a couple of the definitions that I mentioned earlier. Kemalism is a process of production of meanings, signs and values in Turkish social life after 1923. 1923 was the of the founding of the Turkish Republic and the beginning of its intensive reforms. Generally, Kemalism is considered to have been established as an ideology after 1938, but if we take that process to be an intensive form of Westernization attempts we need to go back a little farther into Ottoman times.
In Ottoman social life, values, meanings and signs were taken mostly from
religion. Muslim, non-Muslim, Christian and Jewish were basic categories among the
people. Even in geography, this categorization was valid. There were the land of Islam
(diyar-i Islam) and the land of non-Islam (diyar-i kufri).

After the Republic, the value sources became ideology, national values, language,
race (being Turkish), modernism or Westernism. The basic categories became
nationalist, anti-nationalist, Turkish, non-Turkish etc. Kemalism also fits the definition
of "ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power." There was one dominant
political power in Turkey until the multi-party era (1946) and reforms were made by this
power. Under one-party rule, the policies of the Republican People's Party (RPP) were
obligatory for Turkish subjects.

The ideology legitimized the policies of the state: Turkey's communication with
the West and repudiation of "Medieval superstitions" to become a modern state. The
ruling elite tried to realize this aim and legitimate themselves by the ideology. In this
context, we need to mention the Kadro movement in Turkey in light of the ideology.²

Kadro is a movement and the name of a journal, which was established under the
direction of Mustafa Kemal. This journal and its authors (Yakup Kadri, Va-Nu and
others) were supposed to produce a theoretical base for what had been done and what was
going to be done. This attempt lasted very briefly and the journal was closed.

² On this issue following sources might be useful: Ertan, Temucin. Kadrocular ve Kadro Hareketi:
Gorüntüler, Yorumlar, Degерlendirmeler. (Kadro and Kadro Movement: Opinions, Receptions,
Interpretations). (Ankara: Kultur Bakanlığı, 1994); Merdan Yanardag. Türk Siyaset Tarihimindaki Kadro
Hareketi (Kadro Movement in Turkish Political Life). (Istanbul: Yalcin, 1988)
The most important source, which gives us the idea of what the official ideology is, is the six main principles of the Republican People’s Party. These principles are Republicanism (Cumhuriyetcilik), Revolutionism (Devrimcilik), Eiatism (Devletcilik), Populism (Halkcilik), Nationalism (Milliyetcilik), and Secularism (Laiklik). There were/are never-ending discussions on what these six words mean. Some of them are much more controversial than the others. Secularism, for example, has been defined in a couple of ways in different times. In early Republican times, several actions were taken to realize this principle such as Swiss Civil code supplanted the Islamic law and religious brotherhoods were closed down. Some of them, Republicanism, for example, could not be realized for a long time no matter what definitions were used. Some of them stayed ambiguous such as Revolutionism and Nationalism.

Although there is an ambiguity about the principals of the ideology, the main, underlying idea was to become a modern, Western state. However, the ideology did not provide enough theory regarding details. For the revolutions in Turkish social life between 1923 and 1938, we can easily say that there was not enough of a theoretical base. In other words, the ideology did not provide an adequate theoretical base for what had been done.

As an ideology, Kemalism has been effective from 1923 to today in different degrees in different forms. Its roots go back to 19th-century Westernization attempts. In this context, it’s appropriate to say that it fits very well with Lukacs and Goldmann’s definition of ideology, that is, “it springs from a historical situation.” It would be true to say that there is a continuity between Ottoman modernizers and the modernizers of
Modern Turkey. The Westernization that began in the 18th century took its most intensive form in the first years of the Republic. After 1923, the idea, the ideal of the ruling class was to become a modern country. This idea existed before the new Republic. In military terms, it was obvious that the West was superior to the empire. The attempts to modernize the army provide a significant example. In time, the Ottoman intellectuals came to believe in the superiority of the West in cultural areas also.

Ziya Pasha, a leading Ottoman poet and politician, wrote, 

"I passed through the land of infidels, I saw cities and mansions:
I wandered in the realm of Islam, I saw nothing but ruins" (Lewis 1975, 124).

Not much later, Sinasi, an Ottoman poet and journalist, shows a believer's zeal by calling Mustafa Resit Pasha, the representative of Westernization attempts, "the prophet of civilization" (Sevuk 1942, 33).

After 1923, the ideal was to achieve the level of contemporary Western civilization (muasir medeniyet sevleri). To Gokalp, we were five hundred years late and "we shall leap five hundred years and never cease to advance" (Bozdogan 1997, 26).

To Mustafa Kemal, the crucial issue was to follow contemporary Western civilization. "It is futile to try to resist the thunderous advance of civilization, for it has no pity on those who are ignorant and rebellious. The sublime force of civilization pierces mountains, crosses the skies, enlightens and explores everything from the smallest particle of dust to stars.... When faced with this, those nations who try to follow the superstitions of the Middle Ages are condemned to be destroyed or at least to become enslaved and debased" (Bozdogan 1997, 26).
As is understood from the above lines, there was one way to go and at the end of this road "Mustafa Kemal had envisioned for Turkey an organized, well articulated, linear process of modernization through which the whole nation was going to move simultaneously and with uniform experience. At the end of this process, there would emerge a militantly secular, ethnically homogenous republic well on its way to catching up with the civilized nations of the West" (Bozdogan 1997, 17).

In the first ten years of the Republic, there were many important changes in the structure of the society. Westernization had begun during the Ottoman Empire, but there was some debate about how it should be; some argued that cultural, religious values should be preserved and Western technology should be appropriated (Islamists such as Mehmet Akif, Sait Halim Pasha); the others were saying that we should adapt everything from the West. The typical example of this position among literary authors is Tevfik Fikret.

In the first years of the Republic, a lot of reforms were undertaken: "the abolition of the sultanate, the abolition of the caliphate, the abolition of the office of the Seyyulislam, the abolition of the ministry of Religious affairs and pious Foundations, the abolition of the shariat courts, the abolition of the medreses, the interdiction of religious brotherhoods, the passage of a law outlawing the fez, the adoption of Gregorian calendar, the adoption of the Swiss Civil code, the adoption of European numerals, the change from Arabic to Latin script, the deletion of the second article of the constitution which stated Islam to be the state religion, the granting of political rights to women, the creation of the Turkish language society, the elimination of words of Arabic and Persian origin,
the adoption of the metric system, the adoption of family names, the change of weekly holiday" (Schick 1987, 223).

In conclusion, for nearly a century, Kemalism and the concepts grouped around it such as Westernization, nationalism and modernization have been in the center of political and social discussions in Turkey. The political positions have been determined in terms of Kemalism and it has been continued to be a measuring stick in different degrees in various institutions and social classes of Turkey. In the following chapter, I will analyze how Kemalism developed in Turkish society between 1938 and 1968 based mainly on Lying Down to Die.
CHAPTER 2

HOW THE IDEOLOGY WORKS

Ideology is a process rather than a one day event. Its effects and results can be seen over a long time period. The effects and results of reforms have been seen in individuals, institutions and the whole society. In this chapter, I will explore this process by looking at *Lying Down to Die* (*Olmeye Yarnak*, 1973) a novel by Agaoglu from the perspective of *Ideological State Apparatuses* (1971) by Louis Althusser.

The first novel of Agaoglu, *Lying Down to Die* is a story of the first generation of the Republic. In this novel, we see the family relationships, friendships, educations, conflicts, dreams and disappointments of the first generation. At the beginning of the novel, we see Aysel, the main character, in a hotel room where she has decided to die. In the following chapters, by means of flashbacks we go to her childhood, to a school ceremony and other parts of her life or her generation’s life. These comings and goings continue until the end of the novel. Most of the characters in the novel are from a small Anatolian town, who later live in different parts of the country in various positions. In one sense, we see the Republic’s first generation growing up. The main character in the novel is a 40 year-old, married, associate professor Aysel. The whole novel takes place
during an hour and twenty seven minutes but by using the technique of flashback the author takes us to the 1930s so that we can trace the background of Aysel and others. Aysel was born in 1929 in a small town; she goes to school and gets her education from an idealist schoolteacher (Dundar Ogutmen). Her family moves to Ankara and she starts to attend high school there. She goes to the university, which is very difficult for someone in her circumstances in terms of family and environment. In spite of all kinds of difficulties, she reads a lot of books and becomes a successful student. After she finishes college, she marries Omer, who is teaching at a university. She is a well educated, happy, "privileged female intellectual woman" of Turkey.

She believes in Kemalism and arranges her life according to its requirements. She is, so to speak, a devout believer in the ideology, so much so that she gets married in front of a bust of Ataturk. She even finishes one of her letters by citing one of the well-known maxims of Kemalism, which is "Happy is the person who can call himself a Turk" (Ne mutlu Türküm diyene).

Abandoning the Ideology

It is not true that every authority or power is oppressive or does not have the capacity to realize its aims, but it's true that people or some people will only support a power, an authority if there is something in it for them. If the authority or the power in question makes its subjects believe that it is going to do what it is supposed to do, they put up with various kinds of difficulties. Otherwise, they will question, try to turn it in the right direction or eventually rebel against it. Here, I am not in the position of
questioning whether the ideology was capable of doing what it offered; this is beyond the subject of this thesis. What I will do is to follow Aysel’s and her friend’s attitudes towards the ideology and how it was received by them.

As I mentioned earlier, Aysel was a devout believer in the ideology, but down the road, she starts to question her life, her environment and what she believes in. Later on, the author calls this in her other writings a “moment of enlightenment,” when Aysel starts to question what she has believed so far. At this point, we see Aysel having decided to die in a hotel room. Mostly through her memory, we see the reasons why she came to this point. In Aysel’s recent past, we see her almost as a skeptic. I use this term in a general sense. She questions everything and tries to find a new meaning or meaning in life. In a conversation between her and her student Engin with whom she is having an affair just a couple of days before her decision, she says “I do not even know myself, how can I help you in knowing yourself?” (Agaoglu 1980, 371).

In this situation, she is not a firm believer of the ideology anymore. She loses her ideas and beliefs. This is an enlightenment, but at the same time, this is a disappointment, too. She loses her whole past. The following lines give us a clear idea of her dilemma: “Oh my Dündar teachers, oh my newspapers, highschool’s, dads, older brothers, soldiers who sometimes look American, sometimes German, the child-faced People Houses, my mottoes like “one Turk is worth the whole world,” anthems, statues, German sisters-in-law, and Tout va bien Madams la Marquise’s songs... Is that to love your country? To love your country, your ethnicity more than you do yourself? To
love... Loving is knowing.... All I know is how to recite aphorisms" (Agaoglu 1980, 268).

These are signs showing that Aysel is giving up her ideology. There is a break in her values, feelings, and thoughts, which were connecting her to life.

The prominent critic Fethi Naci expressed a peculiar opinion, which is later criticized by Agaoglu, about the reason why she decides to die. Fethi Naci explains that she decides to die because of the stress of menopause (Naci 1976, 17,18). To me, she falls into a vacuum brought about by her abandonment of the ideology, in a psychological state Althusser calls "wickedness." The following lines from Althusser explain Aysel's position very well. "An individual believes in God or duty [in this case this is ideology] or justice etc. This belief derives (for everyone, i.e. for all those who live in an ideological representation of ideology, which reduces ideology to ideas by definition with a spiritual existence) from the ideas of the individual concerned, i.e. from him as a subject with a consciousness which contains the ideas of his belief. Throughout this schema we observe that the ideological representation of ideology is itself forced to recognize that every subject endowed with a consciousness and believing in the ideas that his consciousness inspires in him and freely accepts, must therefore inscribe his own ideas as a free subject in the actions of his material practice. If he does not do so, 'that's wicked!'" (Althusser 1971, 168).

In the novel, we see that most of the members of the young generation, at least Aysel and her close friends, Ali, Aydin, Behire, take the ideology as the only source or authority that they should be responsible to. Their measuring stick is the ideology and its
criteria. Aysel, for example, is not interested in anyone or anything which is not concerned with bringing the country to the level of modern nations. When she was in high school, she classified people as Western or non-Western or more Western or less Western instead of the society’s present classifications. Ali, who is one of the students of the idealist Dundar, thinks the same way. Ali lives in a hotel and works for the hotel in exchange for his room there. When Ali notices that the owner of the hotel he lives in and works for is doing illegal things, he is ashamed and feels responsible to the ideology.

Aysel believes in the ideology and does what it requires. The ideology becomes a system of belief for her. Once she begins to doubt the ideology, she can no longer act accordingly or once she “does not do what [s]he ought to as a function of what [s]he believes” the ideology forces her to act according to her ideas, which are constructed by the ideology itself. And when she does not do so, she falls into a situation which is called by Althusser “wickedness.”

Aysel wants to see the results of what she did, wants to see the truth, which for the most part contradicts the ideology. “If nothing has been achieved in 30 years, there certainly has to be a revolt. This nothingness has to be experienced. One has to fall into a vacuum. And this falling has to reveal its true face. You cannot live as if this falling is not happening. You cannot watch the stars from where you have fallen down. One cannot remain hanging between an injection of right-wing idealism and an Oscar Wilde pedantary. One needs to be rooted somewhere, and look around from there” (Agaoglu 1980, 38).
We can see an ideology in a society’s concrete institutions. When we say Marxism, fascism or Jacobinism, we think of their actual applications and their institutions. We can trace them through their applications, through their concrete forms. Ideology has a theoretical aspect, too, and its applications from theory into practice “do not come by the grace of God” (Althusser 1971, 250).

In order to exist, in order to continue its existence, every social formation must prepare an atmosphere where it can continue to exist, to grow and to realize its goals. It needs institutions, settings. Althusser calls these institutions Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA’s).

In the Turkish case, as I mentioned when describing Kemalism in chapter I, the discussion about what the ideology of the state should be ended with the decision to become a Republic. But the new human type and the new society could not be created in one night or in Althusser’s words, ‘by the grace of God.’

In the novel, Lying Down to Die, the author shows the ways that ideology works in Turkish society. The apparatuses of education, family, the legal system and cultural apparatuses give concrete manifestations of the ideology.

Schools: As the Source of Civilization

Education is one of the most important tools in ruling and creating a new society. From colonialism to democracy every ideology or system tries to use it. To Althusser, “ideology acts or functions in such a way that it recruits subjects among the individuals
or transforms the individuals into subjects by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation or hailing” (Althusser 1971, 174).

The best place for this ‘hailing or interpellation’ is schools. Children go to school at their most impressionable ages from six or seven to thirteen or fifteen. It is the place where values, feelings and norms are constituted. Another important aspect of the education is the fact that it is obligatory. In the course of the novel, we see Aydin as a typical example of an educated person, forcing Aysel to become a modern girl. What Aydin understands to be modern is Western. This so-called open mindedness of Aydin is product of his Galatasaray education, a French school in Istanbul, where he learns the rules of good manners, where he learns that girls should mix with boys (Agaoglu 1973, 40). One day as Aysel thinks about Aydin she says, “Galatasaray education has its rules, too” (Agaoglu 1980, 110).

Rituals

Rituals are very important in terms of the functioning of ideologies. It is especially important for Althusser, who considers ideology to be something which is more unconscious than conscious, as something which is more a question of ritual practice than conscious doctrine.

Subjects are made through rituals. Althusser explains this fact by bringing an example from Pascal. He quotes Pascal. “Kneel down, move your lips and you will believe” is a good example of the effects of rituals on human life. If a subject goes through rituals, even if at the beginning he does not believe in or approve of the system of
belief, after a while, the person in question starts to believe in the ideology or the belief system. This is due to ideology being related to unconscious rather than conscious processes.

In the novel, while struggling with the ideology, a lot of ritualistic things flush through Aysel’s mind. National songs, poems, epigrams, aphorisms, whatever she repeated or memorized in her school years. The national songs that Aysel memorized and recited in primary school, a time in which her consciousness was not yet mature, are always active in Aysel’s life. As a matter of fact, the following lines indicate an unconscious situation: “oh my songs… Loving is knowing. The best thing I know is how to sing national songs” (Agaoglu 1980, 268).

The first flashback takes place in a primary school. The schoolteacher Dundar is an idealist. He believes in what he has been told and tries to instill the same beliefs in his students and the citizens of the town. He sees himself as the true representative of Western civilization. He teaches the children “how to wash their faces, how to dress, how to comb their hair and how to speak appropriately” (Agaoglu 1973, 54). When we read this we think of Dundar as a teacher of handicapped students but he is not. He teaches of doing these things to normal children in a “modern way.”

For an example, he curls his hair with an iron pincers, he begs his superintendent weeping to allow dancing in the school ceremony, he reads Ulus1 (the Nation, a newspaper which was the mouthpiece of the government policy) and considers this an

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1 Ulus, formerly Hukumvet-i Milliyet, was founded in Ankara in 1920 by Ataturk. This paper was considered the official organ of the Republican People’s Party (RPP). Faliq Rifki Atay, Nurullah Atac and Yasar Nabi Nayir wrote for it. It continued to be the mouthpiece of RPP until the seventies.
important privilege. He tries to do whatever will please the State and even more. He conducted two Western-style dances, rondo and polka, in a school ceremony. He considers this a necessity of civilization.

The family apparatus

We see the family in this novel as a passive subject. That is, instead of the family changing the society, the ideology changes the family. In the 1930s and 1940s, Aysel’s family is middle class and conservative. When they move to the city, they undergo many changes. There is a big difference between the two generations of the family, between the parents and children. However, the difference between family members cannot be explained by the generation gap alone. There is a big difference between father and mother, brother and sister. Although Aysel and her brother Ilhan get similar educations and are raised in a similar environment, their points of view are very different. In this difference, ideology has a very important effect. Aysel becomes a Kemalist by following the dictum of the ideology, whereas Ilhan does not believe in what he was told in school and chooses a heretical path. Eventually he becomes a fascist.

In this novel, we see how ideology works in creating and destroying values in the family. Lying Down to Die has an autobiographical aspect. The following lines describe Aysel’s situation as well as łągaoğlu’s. "The New Republic faced Westernization after having rejected being an Easternness for very understandable reasons. It was unavoidable that a cultural conflict would be expected, but this one was quite different from the generational one which is in a sense natural to societies. Our fathers, grandfathers were
merged in eastern, mystical values. It was impossible to deny those values, to internalize a new way of life, to become Western in 24 hours. We were expected to have values which were very different from the values rooted deep in the history of the society. Our values were even the exact opposite of society’s values. Actually, in my country the Westernization movement that began in the mid 19th century with the Tanzimat Decree became an official ideology applied in all superstructural institutions. I grew up between Eastern and Western cultures, which are very foreign to one another. I had a different set of values at home, in school, in social life. In this case, the conflict, as is obvious from what I have said, is between the State and society, not the classes” (Asgoğlu 1993, 27-28).

The legal apparatuses

One of the most important and ready-to-use apparatuses of a state or an ideology in power is the legal system. An ideology uses it to confirm its legality, to secure its future and to destroy the obstacles that it confronts. In Lying Down to Die, we see how the ideology uses the legal system to make the subjects obey the state. In the school ceremony, at the very beginning of the book, some parents do not want their children to dance in the Western manner. The children’s dancing embarrasses the parents, but honors the schoolteachers. The parents did not want their children to participate in dancing. However, the school uses the laws to secure the children’s participation. The laws are used to punish those who are against the revolutions in any sense.

As another example, Aysel’s father does not want her to participate in a graduation ceremony, yet the Kaymakam, the head official of the town, tells him that his
opposition to the graduation ceremony is against the reforms. The Kaymakam threatens to have his shop closed if he continues to resist Aysel’s participation.

The cultural ISAs

After the Republic, the ideology took the place of religion and had to create the cement holding society together. This cement could be race, language, history or a common ideal. These concepts also had to be created or facilitated. In this process ideology uses lots of cultural tools to create a new human type and a new society. We can say that after education, the most important tools are cultural tools.

Canons of the ideology

Canon is a word which goes back to the Bible, “a norm, a standard, or rule seeking to determine and measure other entities” (Jusdanis 1991, 55), but in a general sense, a canon is the ins of a culture, the books or the texts that are acceptable and appreciated in a field of study or in a culture. What criteria are used to create the canon who created it, how it is considered by society and by individuals are important as well as what the canon is and how it operates. A canon consists of selected texts and these texts can serve a certain ideology or different ideologies at different times. There is an interesting example of canon formation in the history of Nazım Hikmet’s (1902-1963) poetry. During the early years of the Republic his poems were banned as communist, but in the 1990s, the director of the national movement party, which was known for its ultra nationalist program, recited poems by Nazım Hikmet at a party congress and used them for his purpose.
Canon has a very important place in creating a new world. It becomes more important at a time in which everything is redefined, and a new world is constructed. The early years of the Republic were such a time.

In this novel, alternate ideologies each have a canon through which people construct alternate identities. In an environment in which people re-define themselves, the old definitions are rejected and the canons become very important as an anchor for the new identities. History was being remade from the beginning. Dundar reads Ulus, the mouthpiece of the ideology; Ilhan reads ultranationalist publications like Kizilelma, Bozkurt, Ergenekon and Dogu in addition to the works of Yahya Kemal, who at the time is considered to be a right wing poet.

The canon that Aysel reads includes Nazim Hikmet, Shakespeare and Nurullah Atac (1916-1975), accepted as the most modern literary critic of the time (Agaoglu, 1980, 226). Ilhan’s friend Oguz, who has fascist inclinations, suggests that Aysel read Esircibasi by Resat Ekrem Kocu and that she not read Shakespeare.

There are the ins in a canon, but there are also outs in a canon. To Ilhan and his friends, Nazim Hikmet is out of the canon. Erturk is punished because he reads a book out of the canon, Strait is the Gate by Andre Gide. The school officials warned him that he could be expelled from the military school and he contemplated suicide.

In conclusion, in terms of intelligence and early environment, there is not much difference between Ilhan and Aysel, he becomes a fascist because he reads Kizilelma, Bozkurt and Ergenekon, and the she becomes a leftist because she reads Nazim Hikmet.
and Nurullah Atac. These are, of course, not the only reasons, but apparently, strong, formative influences.

**Westernization, or an Orchestra in Every Village**

One of the major aims of the ideology is to make Turkey a modern, civilized country on the Western model. I won’t discuss the Westernization-modernization problematic here. I will only explore how the ideology plays a part in it.

In Turkey, to be modern was/is considered to be Western. For this reason, anything from the West had an important priority and was indispensable for modernization. This understanding has sometimes lead to comical results. Some people even prepared cookbooks for the modern Turkish man, and people were banned from speaking loudly in public so as not to bother tourists. As an example from the novel, a violin instructor says, “we have an orchestra in the capital city today. Once we have an orchestra in each of our provinces, then we will have attained Western civilization. Every village should have one”⁴(Agaoglu 1980, 130).

In Aysel’s primary school, on the 15th anniversary of the new republic, the school administration organizes a ceremony. For this ceremony, they plan different activities. Through the thoughts of the superintendent we follow the superficial side of Turkish modernization: “the chorus is O.K., shows are good, Ergenekon [national legend] is great, polka is wonderful … They [the government] want us to open a window to the West. Well… the judge’s daughter is going to play violin. In dance, boys are going to

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⁴ Simdi baskanınizde bir orkestra var. Ama ne zaman ki her vilayetimize bir orkestra olur, iste o zaman Batı uygarlığına erişiriz. Hatta her köyumuze bir orkestra.”

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embrace girls, they are going to hold each other by the hand, yes, a bigger window is going to open to the West, but the whole town rebelled, they even wanted to take their children out of the school" (Agaoglu 1980, 9).

Language

_Lying Down to Die_ also shows us the turbulence in language during this transitional period. It shows the difference between the old language and the new one and how the language was used by members of the ruling elite. The old language carries an entire system of meanings. All values are expressed through language. "Language is one of the most potent tools of cultural control. Language provides the words by which reality may be constituted. Its system of values -- its suppositions, its geography, its concept of history, of difference, its myriad gradation of distinction -- become the system upon which social, economic and political discourses are grounded" (Ashcroft 1996, 238).

To Change the Signified, Change the Signifier

The Turkish language was filled with many words which were negative toward Westerners and Western Civilization, a civilization that was the enemy of the Turks for 800 years. In the 19th century the Turks decided to adopt Western civilization, which was a process that went hand in hand with admiration and imitation of the West. Bernard Lewis mentions the memoirs of European military experts (Lewis 1975, 103). They came to Istanbul to educate the Ottoman soldiers and the soldiers did not salute the experts. Women and children made fun of them by calling them _gavur_, which is the
word for infidel in Turkish. There continue to be quite a few words or expressions in
Turkish deprecating Westerners, such as "Frenq", literally "French" but the word for
"European"and syphilis. "Gavar parasi ile bes para etmez" was an expression meaning:
"It does not cost five cents even with Western money."

The Islamic aura an important reason for changing the script and the language.
Through the "old" language, people could better communicate with Islam. The old
language facilitated Islamic communication providing a common ground for Muslim
subjects.

What I am trying to come to is the fact that Turkey could not take or even want
Western civilization with the old language, a language full of words negative towards
Western civilization and non-Islamic civilizations in general.

If we analyze the Language Revolution, the Sun Language Theory and the
purification project of Turkish from the perspective of Saussure theory, they definitely
make a lot of sense, although today some consider them "totally contrived and devoid of
scientific merit" (Schick 1987, 123). Stuart Hall’s reading of Saussure provides useful
insights into the Language Revolution. Saussurean linguistics suggests that "... In order
to speak, in order to say something new, we must first place ourselves within the existing
relations of language. To say something new is, first of all, to displace all the old things --
that the words mean-- to fight an entire system of meaning" (Hall 1989, 13).

The originators of the language reform, knowingly or unknowingly, by changing
the script and language created a self and an other. Having done this, it was easy to reject
the Ottoman past, because it is always easier to reject the other than to reject oneself.
Secondly, the originators of the language reform changed the language in order to change people’s view of reality. A prominent poet of the Tanzimat calls Mustafa Reisit Pasha ‘the prophet of civilization’ (medeniyet rastulos), although Malmut II was called the infdel sultan (gevur podisahi) for the very same reason.

In addition to change in meaning in Republican period, change took place in fonts too. The originators of the language reform changed signifiers in order to clear the burden on the signified due to the “language.”

Adalet Agaoglu, in Lying Down to Die, is well aware of both these historical facts and the theoretical aspect of the issue that is presented through the language of the novel. I will explore just the first one.

Dundar uses a different language, different from the standard Turkish of the time. According to Ayse’s father, Salim Efendi, “Dundar’s words are flawless, as if they were taken from a book, they do not look real” (Agaoglu 1980, 51). This is from Aydin’s diary, in fact the novelist gives us Aydin mostly through his diary. In this diary, we see lots of French words. The French effect is not only in his words but also in his ideas. He sees the world through French eyes, he sees French as the true representation of civilization. This is another example of language’s effect on individuals, and how the ideology uses language as a tool.

I mentioned that Ayse couldn’t find what she hoped for in the ideology. What she believed and what she has done do not harmonize well. This is true for some of her friends, too. In particular, Aydin lives a life that is almost contrary to what both Ayse and Aydin once imagined, when they were idealists, when they imagined they would
work with all their power to make the country modern. Ayse1 questions his way of living
along with her own.

Aydin works for the Foreign Ministry but does nothing but shop for his guests.
Later he resigns and establishes a publishing house. Ayse1 shows her concern in the
following lines: "There must be something that we can ask, and there must be something
that we can question if we come to a point where there is nothing but a few left-wing
publications, and a lot of touching of women's legs under the table, if we live only for fun
after so many good intentions, after believing we should become good people for the sake
of the country" (Agaoglu 1980, 333).

Why does Ayse1 decide to die, or abandon the ideology. What were her hopes
and her disappointments? What Ayse1 believed in, what the ideology offered was "a
unified society without class, without privilege, imtiyasit, siniflis kaynasmis bir kule.

One of the things that make Ayse1 become disillusioned and disenchanted with
the ideology is the attitude of intellectuals and the Republican élite towards the peasants
and the poor. According to the ideology, "The peasants are the masters of the nation."
As a true believer of the ideology, Ayse1 accepts this, yet she sees that in reality things do
not work that way. In the Ulus newspaper, which is the unofficial voice of the ideology,
a columnist in his essay titled "The Workers and the Peasants of Ankara" says, "there is
a heart-breaking scene in Ankara's modern, civilized facade: the miserable-looking
peasants and workers who appear towards evenings in the streets of Ankara. The worst
possibility is that a foreigner looking at these people might think that all Turkish peasants are this poor and miserable" (Agaoglu 1980, 256).

The second reason for Aysel’s decision is the distribution of wealth. In the time period covered by the novel (1938-1968) Turkish society had a great deal of economic trouble. The most serious trouble was the economic crisis during World War II. In this period, not every part of the society suffered from the economic problems. It is true that some people could not find bread to eat, yet some others were at ease. Some people who worked for the government and the press were able to buy Parisian cosmetics. When Aysel saw this contradiction, she could not find a plausible explanation, an explanation that could prevent her from questioning the ideology. Aysel asks her high school teacher about this problem in a symbolic way, but her teacher makes fun of her saying that she is too young to deal with these kinds of issues.

The third cause of Aysel’s questioning is the behaviors of the authorities. In the novel, Engin, a student of Aysel, represents the second generation of the Republic. Aysel sees in him the raw youth of the Republic and she feels responsible toward him. She tries to understand him and sometimes wants to be appreciated by him. Most probably, Aysel sees him as a product of the ideology; that is to say, the things that Engin has experienced or still is experiencing are the results of Aysel’s ideology. She says “O.K. we made Engin happy, but what we will do for peasants if they want a couple of oxen instead of talk” (Agaoglu 1980, 123).

5"Ankara'nın köylü ve isçileri хаstlıklı bir manière "Ankara’ının çok modern ve meşerli manzaraси içinde gâle eza veren bir nokta var: Aksam saatlerinde kâfile haftinde buvara rastlanan işel ve köylülerin kıyafet perşembiği. En kuşu ihtiyat, bu kâfilelere bakarak bir âşık olmut Turk köylüsündüz derece yükselt ve zavallı sanabilir."
There is an interesting episode in Engin’s childhood, which affects both Engin and Aysel very much. The kaymakam, the head of the town where Engin was born, audaciously puts Engin up for adoption in order to show people of the town how sincerely he cares for them. In doing this, the kaymakam’s aim is just to show off. The kaymakam is the type of person who uses, or more accurately, misuses the ideology and the representations of the ideology for his own benefit. He governs a small town which lacks electricity, roads, water so on; however he wants to set up one bust of Atatürk and fifteen busts of İnönü, the second president of Turkey. He calls the members of the municipality for meetings and makes important decisions, but once these decisions are published in Ulus newspaper, he is not interested in the decisions anymore. He supposedly tries to make the country a modern country, but instead of providing “water, electricity, roads for the town,” he arranges dancing parties. The ironic part is the fact that he is supported and appreciated by his superiors as a hardworking, civilized man (Agaoglu 1980, 240).

The fourth cause is Aysel’s experience living abroad in France. When Aysel was in college, she obtained a scholarship to study in France for one year. There she meets Alain, a French boy, who reads Sartre and thinks over social issues. Aysel admires him since she sees in Alain most of the things that she always wanted to see in a Turkish boy. They discuss issues and they go to conferences together. During this period, Aysel “finds things meaningful,” seylerde anlam verir. Alain sees Aysel as a human being, not exclusively as a female. Aysel is very sensitive to this issue since Aydin and her Turkish friends see her as a female, a creature in which the sexual side is the dominant and the
most important one. These lines reflect her concern: "No matter what happens, even if the most important thing happens, Aydin won't forget the fact that I am a woman. He is not able to think that I am a human being among other human beings" (Agasoglu 1980, 349).
CHAPTER 3

THE INTELLECTUAL

Who are the intellectuals? What makes a person an intellectual? Are they a God-gifted group or are they the members of a special occupation? There are different definitions of intellectual. To Gramsci, “all men are intellectuals, but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals.” He classifies intellectuals as organic and traditional according to their performance of the intellectual function in society. Traditional intellectuals are those “who continue to do the same thing from generation to generation” such as teachers, priests and administrators. Organic intellectuals are those “who are directly connected to classes or enterprises” such as advertising or public relation experts. (Gramsci 1971, 9).

An earlier definition of intellectual, which is at the extreme end of Gramsci’s definition, belongs to Julien Benda: “Intellectuals are a tiny band of super-gifted and morally endowed philosopher-kings who constitute the conscience of mankind. In one sense, intellectuals are those who say: 'My kingdom is not of this world'” (Said 1996, 5). To Edward Said, “the intellectual is an individual with a specific role in society that can not be reduced simply to being a faceless professional, a component member of a
class just going about her/his business. The intellectual is an individual endowed with a faculty for representing, embodying, articulating a message, a view, an attitude, philosophy or opinion to, as well as for, a public.” (Said 1996, 11)

Most of the definitions of intellectual are selfDefinitions. Every definition naturally has definer’s ideas. The theories on intellectual are mainly Western oriented. The producers of these theories emerged from their own historical backgrounds and social conditions. There are certain differences between Western societies, that is West European communities and North America, and Turkish society.

In the Turkish case, there are a few words for the intellectual, such as ‘aydın’, a newly produced Turkish word, someone who has been enlightened; entellektuel, from the English; and munevver, an older word from the Arabic root light, someone who has been enlightened. These words are being used in Turkish interchangeably, but each has a different connotation.6 Entellektuel, for example, has a Western, modern connotation whereas munevver has an Islamic connotation.7 The difference between an Ottoman intellectual and the modern intellectual makes this issue more complex. Both terms refer to someone who has been enlightened with a light, but the meaning of light, i.e. knowledge, is very different in each word. Basically there are two sources for knowledge: reason and religion, akıl ve nakıl. For an Ottoman intellectual, the source of

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6 On this issue, the following sources might be useful: Sabahattin Sen, Türk Aydıni, [Turkish Intellectual]. (Istanbul: Baglam,1996); Yalçın Kucuk, Aydın Uzerine Tesirler [Theories on Intellectual]. (Istanbul: Tekin, 1984)

7 Serif Nardin claims that the word aydın does not give all the relations and differences between intellectual, intellectuals, intelligentsia, literati and the like (Sen 1996, 265).
all light is God. In the 19th century, most of the intellectuals refused the religion as their source. This issue is open to discussion. Another difference between the West and Turkey is that some Western countries have a democratic tradition. The theoreticians of the intellectuals speak and produce their theories within this tradition. The things that Western societies experienced in this regard a long time ago are very new to Turkish society. Although Turkey became a multiparty democracy in 1950, it still has problems in terms of processing and democratizing all its institutions.

I will discuss the intellectual in terms of what an intellectual does rather than who they are or the epistemological problems surrounding the concept of the intellectual. The eye-catching point in Gramsci’s, Benda and Said’s definitions of the intellectual is that they give great importance to intellectual’s mission or action. For Gramsci, what makes an intellectual an intellectual is “his function”, “[organic intellectuals are] always on the move, on the make” (Said 1996, 4); for Benda “his role on the constitution of the conscience of mankind”; for Said, “a specific role.”

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpinar (1901-1962), one of the leading novelist and literary historians of modern Turkey, defines the intellectual this way: “There is no doubt that life belongs to the whole society, but its responsibilities belong to the intellectuals. We, all of us, face the problems of life according to our share, determined by fate and chance. However, the intellectuals are going to be responsible in front of history” (Sen 1996, 265). To Agaoglu, “intellectuals are those who are not satisfied with the given, who are responsible for themselves, their history and their age, who are critical, therefore, open-
minded, those who, in the way of change, can cooperate with the others, creative, those who know how to share” (Sen 1996, 224).

In the Turkish case, as in most other modern cases, the intellectuals have always been very important. Although revolutions are made by power, their existence cannot last a very long time without the approval or support of intellectuals. Especially in an era in which power has a lot to do with knowledge and knowledge can easily be transformed into power, the role of the intellectuals or the potential of the intellectuals becomes very important. As Zygmunt Bauman puts it, “intellectuals are not bound by localized communal traditions. They are together with their knowledge, extraterritorial. This gives them the right, the duty to validate (or invalidate) beliefs which may be held in various sections of society” (Bauman 1987, 5). Intellectuals are capable of greater objectivity and it is their duty to validate or invalidate the beliefs or systems. In Ottoman times, although we are talking about a 600-year period when we say Ottoman times, intellectuals were also very important. Even in the last years of the Empire we see how the power tried to get their approval especially in Westernization process. Towards the end of the empire, three main political movements, Turkism, Westernism, and Islamism were created and developed by the intellectuals. 

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8 Victoria R. Holbrook has an interesting insight in this issue. She claims that even Seyh Galip’s poetry was used for Westernization process. Victoria R. Holbrook, The Unreadable Shores of Love. (Austin: University of Texas, 1990)

In the republican era, the role of the intellectuals continued to be very important in different dimensions. One of the reasons why Turkism or nationalism was/is a leading ideology in late Ottoman and post-Ottoman times is the fact that quite a few intellectuals who came to Turkey from Russia were members of Turkish minorities and naturally disseminated their ideas in their new country. Yusuf Akcura, Ahmet Agaoglu, Huseyinzade Ali and Cevad Fehmi Baskurt can be counted in this category.

In Agaoglu’s novels, particularly the trilogy *Lying Down to Die, A Wedding Party* and *No...* we see various intellectuals in the positions of university member, artist and student. These three novels constitute a series. The same characters are followed through the three novels. We follow Aysel and her environment from 1938 to 2000.10 With Aysel, we see the development of Turkish history, the death of Ataturk, World War II, military coups and ‘68 events. By doing this Agaoglu draws the panorama of Turkish society.

Here, I will focus mainly on Aysel as an intellectual. What we get from the three novels is that Agaoglu presents Aysel an ideal intellectual. With ideal, I do not mean perfect or flawless, but rather approved and admired.

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10 To me, *No...* is a negative utopia, so to speak. It can be interpreted in other ways, but the fictive structure of the novel and some elements made me think this way. For example, in a reward ceremony, a member of the reward committee addresses Aysel this way: “That’s great! You are entering the year two thousand healthy and energetic.” (Agaoglu 1087, 12) It does not make any sense to address someone who lives in the 1980s this way. I also felt this at another point in the novel. “Wars have become more common, phones have video-screens, floods have become more dangerous, we are being watched by satellites, still, new freedoms with new pleasures are sought after (Agaoglu 1987, 6).
In *Lying Down to Die*, Aysel experiences a moment of enlightenment. That is, she becomes an intellectual. In Turkish, the word for intellectual is *aydın*, someone who has been enlightened. Later, when Agaoglu speaks of *Lying Down to Die*, she mentions this novel as "the moment of enlightenment." I will analyze two aspects of the intellectual in *Lying Down to Die, A Wedding Party and No.*:

1- The independence of intellectuals.

2- The social position of intellectuals and opposition.

**1-The independence of intellectuals:** Every human being is born and lives in a society. His environment, family, education, language and nationality have important effects on him. Even concepts of dependence or independence are constructed by his environment. He speaks a language and belongs to a nation and country. Being independent necessitates that he sees all these connections and considers their possible negative influence.

Aysel was unavoidably affected by her circumstances. All the definitions were given by the schools she attended, the books she read and the environment she was in. Between 1938 and 1968 in the novel’s time and in Turkey’s real time, too, Keralism was very effective. There was almost no other alternative voice in the intellectual realm.

In this era, Aysel tries to be free from what she brought from her past. These attempts take her to an intersection where she has to choose a way for herself, to die or to live. She rebels against all the present values of the society by having an unconventional wedding ceremony, a different husband-wife relationship, a different marriage, and an unusual student-professor relationship, different from the society she lives in. She starts
to live how she believes since she thinks that this is the only way that she can be independent. In order to reach her goal, in order to be independent, she even has an affair with her student. Later, she calls this relationship "a rare plant in our territory" (Agaoglu 1987, 115). Despite her efforts, she still feels torn between Kemalism and living true to herself. This leads to a crisis. In a hotel room, she abandons all the burdens that she brought from her past and decides to live what she, herself, really believes in. (Agaoglu 1973, 344)

In the second novel of the trilogy, *A Wedding Party*, Aysel is not seen very much, but almost everything was built upon her. Omer, her husband, Tezel, her sister, and Aysen, her niece, always give Aysel first place in their thoughts. Aysen, for example, marries someone whom she does not really love because she thinks that Aysel does not care about her, and she has nobody else to go to. Tezel, in all her struggles and discussions puts Aysel first and Aysel is always the main figure in Omer’s thinking.

In the first novel, *Lying Down to Die*, Aysel experiences great difficulties in search of independence and succeeds in being independent, but independence is not a thing that once you get it you have it forever. It has to be lived in every moment of life, in every layer of a person’s life. In *A Wedding Party* the author takes away all Aysel’s supporters one by one. Independence has a cost. Aysel loses her job and her economic status in *A Wedding Party*. In *Lying Down to Die*, Aysel’s husband Omer was one of her biggest supporters, but in *A Wedding Party* Aysel loses this support. He even insults her by saying, “everybody cannot be stubborn like you. People might change.” She has nobody to depend upon but herself. Tezel, Aysel’s painter sister, comforts herself by
drinking. She does not ascribe to herself any duty but finding a place for drinking. Once she had ideals, today she calls herself a nihilist. Social circumstances and her personal conditions “drag” her into this position.

Omer is a lecturer at a university. The author draws him as a meticulous scientist in *Lying Down to Die*. His socialist students want him to take action, to come with them to the villages for political propaganda, to march. He refuses to do these kinds of activities. He believes that by teaching and by writing, society and social injustices are going to change. In *Lying Down to Die*, Omer has no problem. At least, the author does not show any of his problems. When we come to *A Wedding Party*, we follow his transformation process. There are certain reasons causing Omer’s coming to this point, for example, he saw one of his former students, Tuncer, in the wedding. When Tuncer was in college, he criticized Omer and accused of him being a “pacifist” and helping “capitalists” because he refused to come with them and criticized Cuban economy, which was a model for Tuncer and his socialist friends. However, Tuncer married Yildiz, a daughter of a senator, started to live in a “mansion” and went to Sweden for academic studies.

In *Na...* we see Aysel completely alone. Nobody reads what she writes. Omer, her former husband, marries Aysen, a younger woman Aysel’s niece. Aysel moves into a poor neighborhood and tries to survive in terrible conditions. There are a few people around her, but she is not really close to these people.

2- The social position of the intellectual and opposition: The social positions of the intellectuals should not be a problem. In every situation, intellectuals can fulfill the
enlightenment function. Intellectuals can be at a university, in business or can be state officials. In every situation, they can fulfill their enlightenment function. Edward Said, in his book *Representations of the Intellectuals* (1996) mentions this issue. There are some claims that at a university, or in any other occupation, an intellectual cannot be or cannot fulfill the enlightenment function.

Aysel succeeds in becoming herself wherever she is. At the university she is doing her mission by teaching, after she gets fired she is doing her mission by writing.

In the same book, Said almost promotes being in diaspora for an intellectual. Aysel, although she lives in her native country, lives in diaspora. She comes to a point where she has nothing in common with the society she lives in. The post office where she goes, the girl who answers Aysel’s phone, the people who live around her are foreign to her. There is nobody nor anything with whom she can communicate.

In *A Wedding Party*, the wedding takes place in “Anatolian Club”, an archetype of the nation. Aysel does not come to this wedding, because the only thing that is familiar to Aysel in this club is the wild flowers sent by Ali Usta, a worker who was together with Aysel in primary school. Said separates intellectuals simply into two groups: “The yea-sayers and nay-sayers” or “insiders and outsiders”. The yea-sayers are those who are satisfied with the given situation of a society, who do not have any disagreement with their society. Nay-sayers disagree with the wrongdoings of the society in which they live and oppose the injustice. Aysel is definitely a nay-sayer. For this reason, she is thrown out of the society. Beginning in *Lying Down to Die*, she gets the disapproval of her parents, her environment and finally her husband. She is fired from

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the university; her brother Ilhan, who is a typical man of his time, does not want to see her and her husband deserts her. In No... an award is given to Aysel, but actually this reward is given to her not because she is really appreciated by the society but because she got an award from the West. The chair of the reward committee says, “if something is appreciated by the West, nobody criticizes it” (Agaoglu 1987, 291).

To Agaoglu, “an intellectual is a person who is able to stay out of the flock, who is able to chose loneliness, when it becomes necessary, who is able to decide whether he is guilty or not and he is able to punish himself accordingly” (Sen 1995, 224). Aysel fits this definition of intellectual very well. She chooses loneliness so that she does not lose her values. Omer, her husband says for her: “Everybody cannot be persistent like you. Sometimes circumstances can catch people in an unexpected way” (Agaoglu 1980, 320). Circumstances cannot change Aysel no matter how terrible they are.

There are some things that a human being or intellectual should oppose and this opposition can take many shapes. The independence of an intellectual is related to his opposition. After independence, after an intellectual finds his “true self,” he should continue his opposition in different ways. There is no authority that an intellectual should be dependent on forever. If we use Said’s words, “the duty of the intellectuals is not to follow anybody” (Said 1990, 13).

Especially in A Wedding Party and No... we see Aysel as someone who opposes injustice. In Lying Down to Die, Aysel lives this opposition within herself. On one side, there is the old Aysel, her beliefs, her past, her environment; on the other side, we see the new Aysel, realities and French culture. She lives in contradiction between these two and
opposes her past, beliefs and environment. She tries to oppose her old self within herself. In *A Wedding Party*, this opposition extends almost everywhere and to everybody. Aysel’s place and the other people’s are very significant in the novel. Everybody except Aysel and Ali Usta are in the Anatolian Club, in the wedding party of Aysen and Erkan. Aysel refuses to go. This is her first radical rebellious step against her environment. She stays at home. That is to say, home, if we take it in the sense that Adorno does, represents a disintegrated world, an unbroken personality, not obeying others.

Aysel and her position in this novel represent her attitude towards the present values of the society. The society that she lives in is “a sphere of constant circulation, in which all ideas are marketable, all values are transmutable, all professions reduced to the pursuit of easy money and quack success” (Said 1996, 19). Being rich is the most important thing in the society. Aysel’s mother compares her with Ilhan, Aysel’s brother, who is a typical money-lover. There is nothing he will not do to make money. He even forces his daughter to marry a boy through whose family he can earn money. Aysel’s mother says about Aysel “her only problem is that she does not know where she can benefit” (Agaoglu 1979, 261) and regarding Ilhan, she says, “his father could not see the fact that he became a great man” (Agaoglu 1979, 261). In this world, “thousands of liras are paid for two songs even though there are very many hungry people” (Agaoglu 1979, 261). In spite of all these pressures, Aysel does not join “the big flock.” However, everybody around her somehow does.

In *No...* the most widely covered issue is suicide. Aysel, the main figure of *No...*, is studying the phenomenon of suicide. Her study’s name is “Suicide of the Intellectuals
and the Rebel of the Future." She is studying intellectuals who committed suicide not only in real life but also in the fictitious world, in novels. Aysel considers suicide in the fictive world as an outcome of novelists' intellectual action and describes suicide as eternal freedom, sonsuz özgürlük. She ascribes suicides a very important mission. This act of intellectuals is going to be their mission in the future. The existence of intellectuals is meaningful if they are able to perform their enlightenment function, otherwise, it is meaningless. If there is no way to perform their enlightenment function, suicide becomes the only choice.

There are quite a few intellectuals who have committed suicide. Kleist, Zweig, Wolf, Yesenin, Mayakovski are some of them. The number of suicides by intellectuals in Turkish society is low, but the number portrayed in Turkish literature is quite high. Halit Ziya's Bihter in Aşık Meşhur and Nemide in Nemide, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpinar's Suat in Hicur, Oguz Atay's Turgut Ozben in Tutunamayanlar and Vedat Turkali's Kenan in Bir Güm Tek Basina are some of the examples. In Turkish society, before the 20th century, we do not see suicide very often either in reality or in fiction. This is because religion considers suicide a great sin. Aysel claims that there is a relationship between the number of people who commit suicide and the consciousness level in the society. She says "although there are some thirty artists and scientist and some twenty novel characters who committed suicide, this number is going to increase in relation to the consciousness level in the society" (Agaoglu 1987, 11).

If we turn to the first Turkish intellectual who committed suicide, Besir Fuat, there are some discussions about why did so. Some argue the cause was family
problems. Others argue that it was a result of his rejection of religious and social values. To Semih Gamus, who wrote a book on No...called Baskaldırı ve Edebiyatı [Rebel and Literature], Besir Fuat's decision was a conscious one. For Besir Fuat, suicide was a form of free choice. He did not want to die out of his choice. He wanted to make a conscious action. His suicide was a part of his intellectual action.

Beginning with Agaoglu’s first novel, Lying Down to Die, suicide is a highly important theme in her novels. As the name says, Lying Down to Die is an attempt to commit suicide. We follow Aysel minute by minute in this novel in making this decision. At the end, she chooses another way of opposition, she chooses to live.

A Wedding Party opens with an interesting line. “If we are not going to die, then let’s drink” (Agaoglu 1979, 5). This sentence belongs to Tezel, Aysel’s sister. Tezel could not cope with the difficulties of the life that she lives and seeks refuge in alcoholism. She sees suicide as a means of opposition. There are certain reasons why she came to this position. She is a very good painter and makes her life by painting. One day, two young people, one girl and one boy, come and see her paintings. They accuse her of not being socialist enough and insult her. The girl even hits her. Later on, Tezel sees this girl in a TV commercial, which is considered to be the antithesis of socialism. Most of the people around Tezel are like these two young people. They do not live by what they say.

At the very beginning of the novel, No... we come across the following lines: “I thought at first that it [suicide] was going to be easy. Even weak women did this. It

1 Semih Gamus, Baskaldırı ve Edebiyatı [Rebel and Literature], (İstanbul: Oğlak, 1997)
requires balmleness, not arrogance. Cesare Pavese, nineteen fifty.” (Agaoglu 1987, 5).

Later on, we see the names of Stefan Zweig, Mayakovski and Kbnlow, who all committed suicide. The whole novel is filled with the suicide phenomenon.

Aysel sees suicide as a language, as an intellectual action, dusunsel faaliyet. There is no hope in Aysel’s life as far as “this world” is considered. She is completely desperate and alone. Beginning with her husband, everything is against her. Her family isolates her; she gets fired from the university, what she writes does not get read, intellectuals are insulted, there have been coups in the country, the world is becoming worse and worse everyday. Technology destroys as much as it builds, wars are becoming more common and destructive. In this context, Aysel sees committing suicide as the only way of doing her intellectual action.

To Aysel, suicide is very important in terms of showing disagreement with the disintegrated values of life. She considers suicide as a conscious action rather than an impulsive one. “As the consciousness of human beings improves, the questioning of existence, rebelling against attacks on identities and choosing eternal freedom [suicide] are going to increase... (Agaoglu 1987, 11).

In No,... opposition is the most important issue for Aysel. There is a leitmotiv throughout the novel, which gives the idea of opposition very clearly. Most of the time it is written in upper case: “PROTECTING OUR FREE IDENTITY IN EVERY SITUATION IS DEPENDENT UPON THESE TWO WORDS, WHICH SHOULD BE ARTICULATED WITH FREE CHOICE: NO TO REPETITION... NO TO

SAMENESS...” (HER DURUMDA OZGUR KIMLIGIMIZI KAZANABILMEK ANCAK EDİMLE SOYLENEBILECEK SU İKİ KELİMENİ EĞITMİŞTİR: YINELEMEYE HAYIR...
CHAPTER 4

A GENERATION BETWEEN TWO COUPS

"Ey'arih, ey tarih... Seni tarih kitaplarindan, tarih
ogretmenlerinden cok, o tarihi yayayanlarin tasa, kagida,
kile, tuglaya, boyaya, cizgiye doktuklerinden sorsunlar."

Adalet Agaoglu, A Romantic Vienna Summer

"The students asked the right questions— but they could not
find the right answers."

John Rose

In this chapter, I will discuss the reflections of the generation of ‘68 in Turkey in
Adalet Agaoglu’s two novels, Lying Down to Die (1973) and A Wedding Party (1979). I
have chosen these novels because literature provides us with different insights that we
cannot get through other social sciences, especially when it comes to individuals. As
Althusser said, “art falls between science and ideology and can describe the lived
experience of dominant ideologies, as well as subverting and undermining them”
(Makaryk 1995, 98). “The peculiarity of art [in our case literature] is to make us see,
makes us perceive, makes us feel something which alludes to reality” (Althusser 1971,
222). Another reason that I have chosen these novels is the fact that Adalet Agaoglu is an
author who is able to describe and criticize every part of society without being biased,
without going after one 'team'. Her experience as someone who lived through 1968 in her middle age adds the perspective of real world experience to these two novels.

1968 is a date that symbolizes a chain of events in the world. In the late '60s and early '70s a lot tumultuous events took place in various countries of the world, from Japan to South Africa, from France to Turkey. Their causes and effects were different but the common feature was the same: rebellion of the students. Rebellion against everything, in every field of the life. The decision of the United States to invade and bomb Vietnam in 1965, the Chinese Cultural Revolution in 1966, Che Guevara's success in Bolivia in 1967, and the French student uprising in May 1968 were influential worldwide in this rebellion.

The generation of '68 in Turkey was a generation that was on the scene between two coups, May 27, 1960 and March 12, 1971. In Turkey, one of the most important institutions is the armed forces. Its role in the National Salvation War, Kurtulus Savasi, and in establishing the country secured its place in the life of the country. The first leaders of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal and Ismet Inonu, were soldiers. From time to time, when the armed forces saw that the security and the integrity of the country were at stake, they intervened. There have been three military interventions so far. May 27, 1960, March 12, 1971 and September 12, 1980. The first and the second determined the beginning and the end of the generation of '68.

There were various international and domestic causes of Turkey's March 12, 1971 military coup. Internationally, there was a change in Turkish foreign policy in the late '60s. The relationship with Soviet Russia improved and Turkey started to seek new
markets in the Middle East. These two factors affected Turkey's relationship with the U.S. and the West. There was a tremendous amount of anti-American protest, especially among the university students. American soldiers in American bases were seen as occupation forces, the Sixth Fleet was protested and the car of an American ambassador was burnt down in an American-oriented university, Middle East Technical University. The Turkish government put certain limitations on the usage of American bases in Turkey. The hashish policy of the government, which was very important to the U.S., was changed against the U.S.'s desire.

Nationally, the actions of peasants, including the occupation of lands in certain regions, workers' activities, especially those of the DISK (Revolutionary Worker Unions Confederation), the belief that socialism would spread all over the country, the insecure condition of the country in terms of business and the loss of confidence in the government were basic reasons for the 12 March military coup. The armed activities of youth accelerated this process.

The causes and effects of '68 were different in Turkey than in rest of the world. While capitalism had its golden age in Europe, Turkey had not experienced similar economic conditions. There was a diversity in European and American societies in the 1960s, in the form of hippies, pacifists, green peace activists and feminists. We cannot see such a diversity in Turkey. The difference is the dominant character of Turkey's '68 was overwhelmingly leftist. If we explain the reason behind this using known codes, the

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13 On this issue following sources might be useful: Toktamis Ates, 68’li Olnmak (Being from 68 Generation) (Ankara: Umit 1992); Oral Çalışlar, Baskıldırın Yedi Renk (Seven Colors of Torbel), (No place: Milliyet, 1991)
May 17, 1960 military coup was against the right and the 1961 constitution provided a free atmosphere. In this atmosphere, student organizations were established, journals were published and there was an intensive politicization among the university students, especially in big cities. The factors that influenced Turkey in '68 included the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the Cuban Revolution, the Palestine Struggle movement (one of the student leaders of '68, Deniz Gezmiş, and a famous journalist, Cengiz Candar, for example, had been to Palestine) and the availability of leftist books in translation. In the 1960s, the most widely read journals were the Monthly Review, New Left Review, the Peking Review from China, Gramma from Cuba and Liberation from India. Mao Zedong’s books, Regis Debray’s Revolution in Revolution, Carlos Marighella’s books and other Marxist and Leninist literature were also popular.

The interpretation of ‘68 is one of the controversial issues in Turkey today, especially among the leftists. On one hand, people have considered its end as a reflection of the decline of the left. This particular interpretation has been done recently in the light of the fall of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, most of the intellectuals of today’s Turkey somehow took part in ‘68 events. For this reason, their views on ‘68 can be interpreted either as self-defense or nostalgia. However, there are two main opinions about the results of ‘68. The first one is that ‘68 did not contribute anything to today’s Turkey. It was a hope; it was a utopia, yet it did not work. Tradition, capitalism or specifically the the military coup of March 12, 1971 stranded it. In this category, we can put those who say “He is stupid if he is not communist before he is thirty and he is stupid

16 Enver Korkcu, one of the student leaders of ‘68, was not allowed to participate in a protest since he had long hair. Sosyalizm ve Tıbbi Araci İnceleme Arastırma, p. 1705.
if he is communist after he is thirty." To them, the activities of the generation of '68 were a fashion of youth and they were doomed to die out.

The second opinion is that today's Turkey has inherited a lot of things from '68. To this claim, there is not any political movement in today's politics whose roots are not in '68. '68 is especially important to the left. The theory goes that the Turkish left gained its universal, real character after this period.

Agaoglu's two novels, Lying Down to Die and A Wedding Party reflect the turmoil of events that took place in Turkey in the 1960s. To begin with, I will talk about Lying Down to Die. It was first published in 1973, but as we learn from its author it was written right after 1968. Although there are always exceptions, there are similarities between the text and its historical context. There is a connection between the structure of meaning in Lying Down to Die and its encompassing structure, which is the atmosphere of Turkey in 1960s. I do not claim that the only impetus for this novel is '68, but it had a great deal of influence. When we look at the issues raised by the generation of '68, and the issues covered in this novel we will see parallels. One of the results of the '68 movement in Turkey is the separation of the left from the official ideology, Kemalism. The Turkish left and the official ideology were together or had seemed to be together until this time. Marat Belge explains this by saying, "in underdeveloped countries like Turkey, communists had to form an alliance with the most radical sectors of the bourgeoisie, both in order to legalize themselves and in order to find a breathing space" (Schick, 1987, 159). Another academician, Binanaz Toprak, indicates this togetherness and separation. To Toprak, "the secularists in Turkey were not leftists: rather they
served the function of what might be called a 'surrogate left.' Secularists versus anti-
secularists became substitutes for left and right throughout the mono-party years and
later" (Schick 1987, 219).

The distinctive characteristic of the '68 movement was rebellion against the
status quo. This was happening in Turkey as well as the other parts of the world.
Although the Democrat Party made a transitory change in the political and social life of
the country, nothing remained that was representative of the Democrat Party after the
May 27, 1960 military coup. The status quo, the tradition, was the official ideology. At
least, the official ideology was the prevailing order at the time.

Another important characteristic of the '68 movement in Turkey is its
international ties. Those who define '68 as civil, international and from down to top are
right in this regard. In Turkey, the first movement which has a simultaneous
relationship with the other parts of the world is the '68 movement. As soon as Ernesto
Guevara's Diary was published in Europe, it was translated into Turkish and published.
As soon as Yenish students occupied the Sorbome in France, Turkish students occupied
Bosphorus University.

The main characteristic of the official ideology is its nationalist stream. We can
see this in the mottoes of the official ideology. "Happy is the person who can call
himself Turk" and "one Turk is worth the whole world" are just two examples. When the
students learned about and experienced other cultures, often through reading, they saw
the unique and common aspects of cultures so that they could make a comparison. When
they were exposed to the cultures and the belief systems of other countries, the
nationalism that the official ideology offered to youth did not make sense. The official ideology did not have a theoretical base. This was not something accidental, this was intentional. When Yakup Kadri Karaoğlan, novelist and ideologue of early modern Turkey, suggested to Mustafa Kemal that they produced a theory for the ideology, Mustafa Kemal told him that if they produced a theory, the ideology would freeze and become stagnant. This issue did not cause many problems when Mustafa Kemal was alive and the following mono-party years but when the youth and intellectuals of ’68 scrutinized the ideology, things did not work as they did in the past. The generation of ’68 convinced itself that it could change everything. A member of this generation elucidates this belief. He says “it was an ideal of a society where everything was completed. We had decided what each building in Ankara would be after the revolution. Children were going to stay here, elderly were going to stay there.” When they compared the official ideology with others, they refused the official ideology. To some degree, Marxism’s clear-cut answers with a theoretical base played a part in this decision. Marx, for example, in his Labor and Wage gives the details of how much money an employee and an employer make per hour as opposed to lack of theoretical base of the official ideology. 

Lying Down to Die is a novel of an intellectual. Aysel is a 40-year old associate professor, a privileged female intellectual of Turkey. Aysel believes in the official ideology and arranges her life according to its requirements. She becomes a devout

believer of the ideology, so much so that she finishes one of her personal letters by citing one of its well-known maxims. The reader follows her from 1938 to 1968. At the end of the novel, she abandons the official ideology. The attitude of the intellectuals, the behavior of the Republican elite towards peasants and the poor, the distribution of wealth, the behavior of authorities and her experience living abroad in France, are some of the reason that affect her decision.

In the novel, Aysel goes to France and stays there for one year. In Turkey, the Westernization process began in the 19th century, France was the model. Since 68 movement was originally a middle class, city youth movement, France's position is not unusual. It is a continuation of a historical tradition. In France, Aysel meets Alain, a French boy. They discuss social issues and go to conferences together. During this period, Aysel "finds things meaningful" (seylere anlam verir). Aysel admires Alain since she sees in Alain most of the things that she wanted to see in her Turkish friends.

The rebelling students wanted to change everything. Although in Turkey the color of the change was determined only by the left, change was the dominant theme of this period. In the novel, Aysel questions everything she has, everything she has been told. In the following line this dissatisfaction and questioning is obvious: "If nothing has been achieved in thirty years, there certainly has to be a revolt. This nothingness has to be experienced. One has to fall into vacuum. And this falling has to reveal its true face. You cannot watch the stars from where you have fallen down. One cannot remain hanging between an injection of right-wing idealism and an Oscar Wilde pedantry. One needs to be rooted somewhere and look around from there" (Agaoglu 1980, 38)
The second novel that I will discuss, *A Wedding Party*, is also about the members of the generation of '68. Commonly, the March 12, 1971 military coup is taken to be the ending point of the '68 movement. The "12 March military coup smashed the generation of '68 generation like a sledgehammer" (Naci 1976, 134). In Turkish literature, there are novels which narrate the post 12 March period.17 *Buyuk Gozalti* by Cetin Altan, *Gum Dondu* by Tarik Dursun, *Yaratilisir* by Erdal Oz and Safak by Sevgi Soysal are some of them. Although some critics place *A Wedding Party* in this category, it is different from other post 12 March novels in terms of its content and the background of the novel's characters. The novel is almost a continuation of *Lying Down to Die* and it is about the pre-12 March period rather than post, because it's talking mostly about the backgrounds of the characters.

*A Wedding Party* is a story of a wedding between Aysen, who is a member of the generation of '68 and Erkan, who is the son of the generals who launched the 12 March coup. Other characters who are members of the generation of '68 are Tuncer, Omer and Tezel.

Aysen is a typical member. Her father is a lawyer and makes a lot of money in real estate. Her mother spends her time at parties and driving luxury cars. Aysen cannot find a warm family atmosphere. She lives metaphorically in isolation. In college she meets socialist students. She tries to become one of them. She even plays an active role in burning down the car of an American ambassador. However, her socialists friends do

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not admit her as one of them saying that she is a bourgeoisie girl. She is alone and she
has no place to go, so she goes and marries Ercan.

The second character in the novel is Tuncer. He describes himself as a senior at
university who is very lazy in classes and very hardworking in all movement activities.
His father is a carpenter. He is a typical student leader of '68. There is a strong
solidarity between him and his friends, they share almost everything. He is committed to
a socialist revolution. To him, there is no happiness just for two people, there is no place
for romance or love; all girls are his sisters, all his love is for his society, and all his
hatred is for hegemonies (Agaoglu 1979, 171). He says he will never marry and he
criticizes severely those who are not friends of the revolution in the sense of he
understands. One of his targets is Omer. Omer is a professor at Tuncer and Aysen's
university. He also wants a socialist revolution. However, he does not believe that the
methods that Tuncer and his friends are using are appropriate. When Tuncer and his
socialist friends boycott the university, Omer opposes this by saying, "when we have a
revolution, we will need engineers, and economists." When Omer criticizes the Cuban
economy, which is a model for Tuncer and his friends because of its socialist structure,
they protest against him. Tuncer is the leader in this protest. The generation of '68 used
slogans very much. One of the slogans at the time was "do not listen to those who are
over thirty." They obey this slogan and they do not listen to Omer.

The same Tuncer meets Yıldız, the daughter of Remzi Tarakçı, a senator from the
party in power, and his world changes. He falls in love with her, marries and goes to

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Lausanne to study with Yildiz on Remzi Tarakci’s money. He becomes a member of the established order himself. When Tuncer comes to Aysen’s wedding ceremony, he meets Omer, his former professor. Tuncer is in a different position now. He explains his position by saying he loves Yildiz a lot. Love is an acceptable excuse for Omer, but when Tuncer leaves alone, Tuncer cannot answer the question of whether he loves Yildiz or whether he loves being in his new position in Lausanne, a position that is very comfortable.

One of the students who also criticizes Omer severely is Zehra. Zehra is a daughter of a cotton worker from Adana. Since her father married a singer and her favorite boy did not accept her friendship, she became a strong revolutionary. This is the way she is described in the novel. When Tuncer and his friends, including Zehra, discuss the issue of whether they should boycott the university, Zehra refers to passages from Stalin. She uses Marxist literature almost as a manual for daily activities (Agaoglu 1979, 296).

The fourth character that the novelist describes is Tezel. From her early years, from high school, she took part in ‘68 events. She attends the Academy of Fine Arts in Istanbul and becomes a serious, idealist painter. At the wedding, she defines herself as a nihilist by saying, “I understood that being a nihilist is much more difficult than being a communist” (Agaoglu 1979, 33) She does not believe in anything nor anybody. She does not believe that human beings can be good either. She says, “We witnessed: It's not true that human beings are sublime and that human beings govern; money talks, guns talk, guns govern” (Agaoglu 1979, 35). External factors affect Tezel, but one personal
event affects her deeply. Tezel believes that through abstract expressionism she can express her socialist thought and paints these kinds of paintings. One day two young people, a girl and a boy, Tezel later describes this boy as a Che-looking boy, come to her exhibition. Tezel is very happy because she sees them as a hope for the future of her cause. She plans to explain in a detailed way why she used this color or that in her paintings. They look at her paintings and accuse her of not being socialist enough since she does not draw factories and workers. They say, “If you are going to paint something, then at least describe our workers and their oppression. Describe exploitation, exploitation” (Agaoglu 1979, 48). They insult her and the girl even beats her. Later, Tezel sees this girl in a TV commercial, which is a typical representation of capitalism (Agaoglu 1979, 295). The novel is rich with symbolism of a political nature. The wedding symbolizes the cooperation between the business community and soldiers. İlhan, the father of the bride, represents the business community and the bridegroom’s side represents the armed forces. Ercan, the bridegroom, is the son of a general who took part in 12 the March military coup. He got his education in the U.S. He is, in the eyes of the leftist characters, a materialistic young capitalist. He is only interested in fast cars and soccer matches. But eventually he wins and marries Ayşen. The wedding ceremony takes place in the Anatolian Club, in Ankara. The Anatolian Club was founded in 1926 by Atatürk as a meeting place for parliamentarians, and later high ranking officials were also accepted as members. The Anatolian Club represents the country. Actually it’s the

18 At this point, I want to mention a prophecy of Agaoglu or literature. Today, in the commercial business, a business that deals with how the Turkish society can spend more, the so-called leftists, this boy and girl and the like are dominant figures.
representation of the place from where the country is governed. During the wedding, there is hostility even between the family members. İhan, the father of the bride, does not speak with his two sisters Aysel and Tezel for political reasons. The brother of the bridegroom, Hakan, is a leftist and threatens to kill the bridegroom. Aysel hates her mother and father. Ali Usta, who is an acquaintance of Aysel and Tuncer, also experiences the hostility. His older nephew, who is a policeman, does not get along well with his younger brother and his uncle because of their political commitments. This shows the diversity and separation between families and among the family members in the 1960s in Turkey. In Turkey, this variety of social groups and political choices did not exist until the multi-party period. In the Ottoman state, people could be either Muslim or non-Muslim. Between 1923 and 1946, people still did not have a chance to choose another political option. After the 1950s, especially in the 1960s, people started to define themselves as rightist or leftist or other varieties of these two options.

The generation of ’68, what they contributed to Turkish society, what they brought and what they took is a controversial issue. As we get from the novels, there are three reasons why the generation of ’68 could not succeed in what it wanted to.

It represented only a small segment of society. It started as a student movement and continued this way. Neither Aysen, a daughter of a member of the business community, nor Ali Usta, who is a worker, joined the students in a real sense. Although some parts of the society supported them, this support was too marginal and transitory.

The second cause is that the members of the generation of ’68 could not tolerate differences even among themselves. Students defined themselves as oppressed, but the
rise of the oppressed could not be emancipatory because the oppressed themselves became repressive. In A Wedding Ceremony, Tezel is beaten, Omer is insulted and Aysen is thrown out of the circle although they define themselves as leftist.

Lastly, students ignored human nature. They tried to apply what they learnt through reading translations and did not take into consideration human factors. The indispensable, natural needs of people were ignored and overlooked. Everything started to become for the sake of ideologies not the other way around.
CONCLUSIONS

Turkey has a lot of problems. Although she has passed through many steps on the way to modernization, she is still not able to solve all her problems. Economical backwardness, political unrest, Turkish-Kurdish and secular-anti-secular separation, and problems between Turkey and her neighbors are the prevailing ones. However, there are underlying problems, which are the actual causes of these apparent ones.

The stance of Turkish intellectuals, Turkish society’s relationship with its recent past and the problem of “what we were, what we are and what we want to become” are deeper problems especially where social issues are concerned. The Turkish modernization process and the issues grouped around it add to her baggage. Despite these disadvantages, Turkey has a lot going in her favor, too. Turkey holds a unique balance between the East and the West. Her historical relationships with the East, and more importantly the end of the fear of being an Easterner, “the end of humiliating grandfathers since they have no idea about classical Western music,” bring extra credit. Turkey also has a relationship with Western civilization. The discussions of whether we should take Western, infidel innovation, gavar içadi, is moot. At various times, the West was a target of hatred or admiration. Radical anti-Westernism or the blind admiration of the West that began in the 19th century, the idea that “whenever each village has an orchestra, we will be modern” were moderated and reached a consensus. In one sense,
the basic premise of Hegel, thesis, antithesis and synthesis, was realized in terms of the relationship between anti-Westerners and Westerners and between the West and Turkey. In this context, Turkey can become a dominant, modern, developed country. A modern legislator, Samuel Huntington, sees her as “a decisive case in the coming clash between the West and the rest” (Bozdogan 1997. 32).

George Lukacs claims that “the happy ages have no philosophy” [We can easily substitute novel for philosophy in this context.] To him, we live in a disintegrated civilization. Everything is foreign and unfamiliar Philosophy or literature tries to reverse this status and complete an integration. In Agaoglu’s novels, we cannot see a happy man or hope. For this reason, sometimes those who read her works ask whether she is a novelist of hopelessness. Agaoglu, as parallel to the nature of the novel genre, talks about disintegration rather than integration. She focuses on problems particularly the problems of recent Turkish history.

In the 1990s, due to economic backwardness and unrest in the society and some problems in democratizing all the country’s institutions, Turkish intellectuals asked “where things had gone wrong or where they had gone wrong” (Bozdogan 1997, 24). Leftists, Islamists and Second Republicans came up with different answers depending upon their agenda. When we look at their discourses, they mainly focus on recent Turkish history, particularly after the 19th century, the beginning of the Westernization period. There are two main groups with theories about the causes of social problems of Turkey. The first group, such as Second Republicans and Islamists and some leftists, claims that the official ideology brought the country to its current place. It was/is not a good way of modernizing the country. The second group, which includes the Kemalists,
claims that Turkey has not reached its potential because she has not followed the blueprint of the official ideology closely enough. In their view, the rightists, the Democrat Party and its descendants, diverted Turkey from following this blueprint.

In the three novels, *Lying Down to Die, A Wedding Party and No...*, Agaoglu, without labeling any group or phenomenon, without making totlizing approaches, presents and analyzes individuals and their relations in Turkish society. She brings significant insights to the first generation of the republic, the generation of '68 and intellectuals in modern era. Although Agaoglu can be placed in a leftist intellectual sphere, she can criticize leftist experiences too. Her basic thesis is that human beings are being ignored and overlooked for the sake of ideology. Ideology is not seen as something in the service of, or for the goodness of human beings, but it is seen as something bigger than humans, wiser than humans and more important than humans. In this relation, she sees the intellectuals as society's conscience, as the necessary rebels for humanity.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


