AGGLUTINATION OF THE TURKISH IDEAL AND WESTERN LITERATURE, RELIGION AND MYTHOLOGY IN MÜFİDE FERİT TEK’S AYDEMİR

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ABSTRACT

Müfide Ferit Tek (1892-1971) is a Turkish woman writer who produced her works between the years 1911 and 1923 – the era generally known as the Period of National Literature in Turkish Literature. Müfide Ferit Tek wrote her novels with the feelings of ‘nation’ and ‘nationalism’ along with the other authors writing in the same period such as Ömer Seyfettin, Halide Edib Adıvar, Ahmet Hikmet Müftüoğlu and Aka Gündüz. She is famous for her first novel Aydemir (1918) and her second novel Pervaneler (1924). In Aydemir, Tek created her main character as the embodiment of the Turkish ideal. He is a young man who devotes his life to spread national feelings among the Turks oppressed and exploited by Russian administration. He goes to those zones under Russian domination out of Turkey. Aydemir is a novel through which Tek tried to strengthen Turkish nationalism and identity. In the novel a constellation of the Turkish ideal and the images from the western world ranging from literature to religion and mythology takes the reader’s attention. Therefore this study aims to depict the intertextual relations between the novel, Aydemir and firstly, medieval romances in English Literature, secondly, Christianity and lastly, western mythology. The novel offers not only striking parallels with the medieval romances with its reflection of the sublimity in love between Aydemir and Hazin, but also resemblances between Aydemir and Christ as both redeemers/saviours and scapegoats and sacrificial figures. Aydemir also seems to bear a mythological aspect in respect of the reflection of the dying-reviving gods in Greek mythology in the character of Aydemir. The paper would be one examining how Tek exploited western literature, religion and mythology in the writing of her novel and presenting these connections in Aydemir, which includes an agglutination of the Turkish ideal and the values pertaining to the western world.
STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Müfide Ferit Tek (1892-1971) is a Turkish woman writer, who has, unfortunately, been little read currently and a novelist who produced her works between the years 1911 and 1923 – the era generally known as the Period of National Literature in Turkish Literature. She is an important novelist in Turkish Literature because her first novel Aydemir is the second novel in Turkish Literature to be written through the sensation of nationalism. The first novel to reflect the feelings of Turkism and Turkish nationalism is Halide Edib Adıvar’s Yeni Toran. Müfide Ferit Tek wrote her novels with the feelings of ‘nation’ and ‘nationalism’ along with the other authors writing in the same period such as Ömer Seyfettin, Halide Edib Adıvar, Ahmet Hikmet Müftüoğlu and Aka Gündüz. Müfide Ferit Tek is famous for her first novel Aydemir (1918) and her second novel Pervaneler (1924). When she wrote Aydemir, Turkism Flow was one of the prevalent views.

This study argues that Aydemir may be analyzed with regard to its having an agglutination of the Turkish ideal and the images from the Western world ranging from literature to religion and mythology because the author constructed her novel through the intertextual practices. The novel bearing intertextual relationships with the Western literature, religion and mythology, the study argues that in the writing of Aydemir, the author did not only utilize the elements pertaining to the Turkish nation, people i.e. Turkish world, rather she incorporated into her novel the elements belonging to the Western world. Among them are English medieval romances, Christianity, Christ and his teachings and lastly Greek and Roman mythology. Hence, the study, depicting the aforementioned intertextual practices, aims to offer an analysis of Aydemir in order to characterize the novel as a constellation of both the Turkish ideal and the values and elements pertaining to the Western world.

In Aydemir, Tek created her main character as the embodiment of the Turkish ideal. He is a young man who devotes his life to spread national feelings among the Turks oppressed and exploited by Russian administration. He goes to those regions under Russian domination out of Turkey. Aydemir is a novel through which Tek tried to strengthen Turkish nationalism and identity. Despite the novel’s implicit intertextual connections, this study argues that in the novel a constellation of the Turkish ideal and the images from the western world ranging from literature to religion and mythology takes the reader’s attention.

The intertextual link between the novel and medieval romances in English Literature appears in the depiction of the love between Aydemir and Hazin. There are striking parallels between Aydemir’s personality and that of Christ. Christ as both a redeemer/saviour and a scapegoat and sacrificial figure is represented in the character of Aydemir. This study also claims that the novel offers striking resemblances between the main character and the dying-reviving gods in Greek Mythology. The function of the intertextual connections between the novel and the literary, religious and mythological elements pertaining to the Western world and how the author exploited them to draw her character and

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reflect the main themes in the plot of the novel are the issues contained in the scope of this study.

In the first part of the study, titled “The Linkage between Aydemir and English Medieval Romances”, Aydemir is studied as a novel applying to romance elements; its treatment of taking romance qualities are noticed especially in the drawing of the character and the theme of love in the novel. In the study the male protagonist’s quest for the ideal, noble deeds and achievements, adventures, and his experience of unconsummated love are considered to be romance qualities which Tek employed in the novel. It is also noted that though some of the romance elements have slight differences with those of the medieval romances, Tek seems to have made use of them to strengthen the theme of Turkish idealism in and through her main character, Aydemir. The parallels between Aydemir and a romance hero found through a comparative analysis attest that Aydemir is in a quest for the ideal, he has adventures to realize his noble ideal, he has also a spiritual journey during which he reaches altruism, which makes him a romance hero. The sublimity in the romances is echoed in not only his noble ideal but also his struggles to realize his noble aim and his attitude in the pursuit of his sublime goal: He dissolves from his personality for the sake of the unity among Turkish peoples. In this part of the study, it is also put forth that the principles of courtly love, if not all of them, were embodied in Aydemir. In order to prove that Aydemir and Hazin’s love is analogous to the tradition of the courtly love in some respects, the connection between the novel and courtly love tradition in romances is attested through the motif of inaccessible love. The part concludes with the ideas that Aydemir presents to its readers partly implicit and partly explicit relations with romances in respect of courtly love since Hazin and Aydemir’s love is reflected as exemplar of true noble and unconsummated love enriching the lovers as reflected in romances.

In the second part of the study dealing with Aydemir as the embodiment of Christ, the main character is analyzed to detect the parallels between him and Jesus Christ, who is considered to be the most important leit-motif employed by the author to create her main character. Aydemir is discussed as a character having many parallels with Christ and exhibiting many teachings of Christ. The analogy between Christ and Aydemir is emphasized by means of Christ qualities adopted by Aydemir. These qualities are Christ’s devotion of his life to humanity, his helpfulness and patience, his being a redeemer of the poor, his commandments and teachings, his sacrifice, his being a scapegoat, the meaning of his death, his poverty and his possessing disciples. The numerous examples to the affinities between Aydemir and Christ are conveyed in the study through an analysis of Aydemir as reflection of Christ in the novel and the biblical references to Christ. The striking similarities between Aydemir’s personality and that of Christ are all presented in the study in many regards. Christ’s devotion to his ideal and his sacrificial way of life, his love of people, his helping poverty-stricken people and his caring for the sick are compared to those of Aydemir. The similarities between Aydemir and Christ are also studied in line by means of the reflection of Aydemir’s misery and poverty, his physical appearance, his demise for the sake of the others, his having disciples
and lastly his and his disciples' demises. It is also emphasized that Christ
as both a saviour and a scapegoat and sacrificial figure is represented in
the character of Aydemir. This part of the study comes to the conclusions
that having such sad predicaments both when he is alive and during his
death, Aydemir is a modern representation of Jesus Christ and that
undoubtedly, Tek's intertextual practice with Jesus Christ added much
to the characterization of the novel with regard to the description of the
main character, and more importantly, Tek's drawing of Aydemir in
respects of his manners, behaviours, and the worldview he has. Besides,
the theme of the novel, viz. the Turkish ideal is reflected as so sublime
an ideal in the novel that the reader feels that its achievement can be
gained only through ones having divine potency, ones having Christ-like
qualities like Aydemir. Consequently, Tek seems to have constructed his
main character Aydemir by means of the allusions from Jesus Christ as
a religious, mysterious and sacrificial figure and from The Bible. It has
been put forth in this study that the author shaped the personae of her
character by alluding Christ's personal qualities and teachings.
Throughout the relevant part, the parallels between Aydemir and Christ
have been detected. And this study argues that these parallels constitute
a part of the novel's intertextual practices.

The last intertextual practice in the novel is the one between the
novel and Greek mythology. Exploiting the myths of dying-reviving gods
in the writing of Aydemir, Müfide Ferit Tek seems to have transformed
them for her own purposes in her novel. In the last part of this study, it
is denoted that Aydemir was drawn as a character enduring the most
intense trials and efforts, suffering, violence and death like deities whose
stories bear death-rebirth theme. Owing to the meaning of his death,
Aydemir is accepted as a partial conversion of the gods suggesting death-
rebirth theme. He is actually the embodiment of the dying-reviving deities
not just because he is exposed to suffering but because he incarnates
spiritually. His spiritual incarnation occurs in the personality of his lover,
Hazar. In order to explicate the relation between Aydemir and the dying-
reviving gods in Greek Mythology, it is made clear in the first place, who
these gods and what their functions are and in the second place, why
Aydemir might be considered to have such a mythic personality as dying-
reviving deities.

A dying-reviving god, also known as a resurrection deity, is a
mythical and religious motif in which a god or goddess dies and then is
resurrected. For the purpose of this study among many dying-reviving
deities, Attis and Adonis have been chosen. Although there is no direct
reference to dying-reviving deities in the novel, this study argues that
Tek's major character Aydemir can be regarded as the incarnation of the
dying-reviving gods due to his suffering for the good of his people while
he is alive, his self-mutilation for the good of the others, his having the
sublime ideals and his being a sacrificial hero who victimizes himself for
his own nation and people. It is also pinpointed that like a hero-god,
Aydemir does not try to contemplate death rather he accepts it happily
and valiantly.

Throughout the last part of the study the god-like qualities of
Aydemir are studied in detail to detect the connections between him and
the mythical figures. The focal point in this part is the thematic
intertextual relations provided by the author by means of the connections between the dying-reviving gods in Greek Mythology and Aydemir. Thus the study argues that Aydemir is reflected as a special modern version of Attis and Adonis. Focusing on such major motifs in the myths of dying-reviving deities as incarnation, reviving in another spirit and giving life after death, the study has put forward the intertextual bonds between Aydemir, a novel belonging to Turkish Literature, and Greek mythology. Referring to the relevant scenes of the novel, the study has also detected that like a dying-reviving god’s death, Aydemir’s death is not an end and an annihilator; on the contrary, it is the final unifier because though the two lovers cannot unite while they are living, they seem to be united at the end. Moreover, through Aydemir’s death, the Turkish ideal reincarnates in Hazin’s spirit. It is reborn in a woman. This idea connected with the rebirth theme and implied at the end of the novel provides clear evidence to suggest that there is a close connection between Aydemir and dying-reviving gods and thus the novel has a thematic interest in the myths of dying-reviving gods in mythology.

All in all, it can be said that Müfide Ferit Tek made use of English medieval romances, Jesus Christ and dying-reviving gods in Greek and Roman Mythologies, and thus enriched her novel Aydemir with the echoes of Western cultural context. The author seems to have transformed the medieval romances, Christ and his teachings, and mythological figures and themes in a new way so that the novel could reflect the national sentiments, by which the author wrote it. Combining the western values with the theme of the Turkish ideal, Aydemir is characterized in this study as an agglutination of the Turkish ideal and Western literature, religion and mythology.

**Keywords:** Aydemir, Turkish ideal, medieval romances, Christ, scapegoat, dying-reviving gods

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**MÜFİDE FERİT TEK’İN AYDEMİR ADLI ROMANINDA TÜRK İDEALİ İLE BATI EDEBIYATI, DİN VE MİTOLOJİNİN BİRLEŞİMİ**

**ÖZET**


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**Introduction**

Müfide Ferit Tek is a Turkish woman writer and novelist who is unfortunately known little but has a significant place in Turkish Literature with regard to her being among the first Turkish novelist to produce novels with the theme of Turkish ideal. Born in Kastamonu in 1892, Müfide Ferit Tek received her primary and lycée education out of Turkey. Therefore it would not be wrong to say that her interest in Western literature and culture stems from her education firstly in St Joseph Sister School in Tripolitia, the former province of Libya when her father was there as an aide-de-camp of Müşir Recep Pasha and secondly in Versailles Lycée in Paris in 1903. Married to Ahmet Ferit Tek in 1907, she lived in places where her husband either worked or was exiled. She wrote her first novel Aydemir between the years 1913 and 1918 when they lived in Sinop and Bilecik, where Ahmet Ferit Tek was exiled due to his objections to the deeds of the Committee of Union and Progress. During the years of Armistice and the National Struggles, the author wrote articles in national newspapers to support the National Struggle of Turks. She wrote her second famous novel, Pervaneler in 1924. Owing to her husband’s duty in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she mostly lived out of Turkey (Yardım, http://www.ufukotesi.com/yazigoster.asp?yazi no=20030451). Müfide Ferit Tek is known to be a great supporter of the Turkish Independence War. Through the end of the war, she provided the correspondence between Mustafa Kemal Pasha and Pierre Loti, who was a friend of Turks. When she went to Paris again in 1921 owing to the diplomatic service of her husband there, she visited Pierre Loti on his deathbed. She graduated from École des Sciences Politiques in the same year. After a gruelling life, Müfide Ferit Tek died in Istanbul in 1971 (Belge, http://kaknus.com.tr/new/index.php?q=en/node/745).

When Müfide Ferit Tek wrote Aydemir, Turkism Flow was one of the prevalent views. Aydemir’s significance comes from its being the second novel after Halide Edib Adıvar’s Yeni Turan; they both include the themes of Turkish nationalism, the feelings of nation and nationalism (Köprülüze, 2002, p. 143). Tek may be assessed among the novelists in Turkish Literature who produced their novels in the Period of National Literature covering the years between 1911 and 1923. Tek is considered to be a nationalist writer along with Ömer Seyfettin, Halide Edib Adıvar, Ahmet Hikmet Müfitoğlu, Aka Gündüz, all of whom wrote their novels through the feelings of ‘nation’, ‘nationalism’ and ‘Turkism’.

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¹All the references and quotations from the Turkish sources have been translated into English by the writer of this study.

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Aydemir is a novel of ideas through which Tek tried to endorse Turkish nationalism and identity. It belongs to the fantastic literature with respect to its utopian elements. It delineates a part of the life of the eponymous hero, who is the embodiment of the Turkish ideal. Aydemir is a young man who devotes his life to spread national feelings among the Turks oppressed and exploited by Russian administration. The time in which the action of the novel takes place is the years before the World War I broke out, viz. the years between 1910 and 1915. Aydemir goes to those zones under Russian domination out of Turkey. He is so sacrificial a hero that he gives up his life love for the sake of the good of Turkish people. When he is asked where he comes from and who his family is, his response is: “My hometown is everywhere in which Turks live; my beloved one and my family is every man in grief!” He devotes his life, his physical and spiritual existence to his ideal, Turkism and is arrested during his struggles and is sentenced to death penalty. In his last moment, he shows solidarity against death. Thinking about his love, Hazin and his nation, he submits himself to the gallows by yielding “Long live, Turks!” (p. 122)

This study argues that Tek’s novel may be analyzed with regard to its having an agglutination of the Turkish ideal and the images from the western world ranging from literature to religion and mythology because the author constructed her novel through the intertextual practices. The intertextual relations between the novel and medieval romances in English Literature appear in the depiction of the love between Aydemir, (also referred as Demir Bey and Demir Khan in the novel) and Hazin. There are striking parallels between Aydemir’s personality and that of Christ. Christ as both a redeemer/saviour and a scapegoat and sacrificial figure is represented in the character of Aydemir. This study also claims that the novel offers striking resemblances between the main character and the dying-reviving gods in Greek Mythology. Thus the study aims to depict all these intertextual practices in the novel. The function of the intertextual connections between the novel and the literary, religious and mythological elements belonging to the Western world and how the author exploited them to draw her character and reflect the main themes in the plot of the novel are also in the scope of this study.

The events in the plot of the novel may be summarized as in the following: Demir and Hazin are two young people living in Istanbul around 1910. Being an idealist young man Demir and his love Hazin, a Pasha’s daughter sacrifice their love for the Turkish idealism. Demir goes to Turkestan to save the Turks oppressed by the Russian domination. Meanwhile Hazin is forced to marry Neyyir, who would appear to be ill and die later on in the novel. During the years spent out of Turkey Aydemir works so hard; he opens non-governmental organizations to make Turkish people come together under one idealism, he helps the poverty-stricken Turks, tries to overcome the ignorance of Turkish people by educating them, and helps the poor and the sick. Aydemir becomes the leader of the Turks pressurized by the Ahund\textsuperscript{3} partisans. When World War I breaks out, the Turkish people there rebel against the domination. But Aydemir becomes very ill. Ahund Ömer, the great opponent of Aydemir, breaks all the works fulfilled by Aydemir to rehabilitate Turks and collect all the Turkish people under one idealism, Turkishness, and thus to save and rescue them from the oppressions of others. Ömer also provokes people to rebel against the Russian administration and he is therefore found guilty of being a provocateur and sentenced to death, but his wife having five children begs Aydemir

\textsuperscript{2}Tek, MüfideFerit. Aydemir. (İstanbul: KaknüşYayınları, 2002), p. 86. (All the subsequent references to the novel will be made from this edition of the novel and only the page numbers will be given in parentheses following the quotations in the main text. The extracts taken from this Turkish edition have been translated into English by the author of this study.)

\textsuperscript{3}Ahund\textsuperscript{3} is a term in Persian which means someone who is the greatest scholar or mulla teaching the other mullas as the head of them in a madrasah. The term is used in the novel as the title of Ömer, to whom the other mullas in madrasah are bound. Yet, it goes without saying that the term is associated with the villainy of Ömer, who is, in effect, a conspirator against Aydemir.

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to save her husband. Thinking that he himself is very ill and death is imminent for him, Aydemir decides to take on the crime and so he is sent to the gallows by the Court Martial, but Aydemir’s twelve disciples are sent to the scaffold as well. Meanwhile, Hazin, a widow now, learns that Aydemir has died and leaves Istanbul to visit her beloved one’s tomb. She swears that her love to Aydemir will live forever with her love of nation and also promises to keep Aydemir’s ideal alive as long as she lives by working as Aydemir did when he was alive. The novel ends with these vows.

From now on this study aims to show the parallels between Aydemir and English medieval romances in the first section and it presents an analysis of Aydemir as the embodiment of Jesus Christ in the second part and a study of Aydemir as an echo of dying-reviving gods in Greek Mythology in the third part.

1. The Linkage between Aydemir and English Medieval Romances

Aydemir is a novel which exhibits in itself the elements of romance, which is a narrative poem tracing a story of adventure, love and chivalry. Romances are the distinguished literary genres in Western literatures produced especially in the Middle Ages and they were written usually in verse. The term ‘romance’ also refers to prose tale with scene and incidents remote from everyday life. Originally coming from French literature and also known as chivalric romance, the medieval romance can be defined as a narrative of adventure following a hero through the successive episodes of a quest toward his chosen or appointed goal. The typical hero is usually a knight on a quest. The quest is “a symbolic journey during which moral and spiritual qualities are tested” (Peck & Coyle, 2002, p. 69). A romance includes supernatural elements such as fantasy, improbability, extravagance, love, adventure, the marvelous and the mythic. It generally presents the deeds of a hero of chivalry or of love (Bozkurt, 1977, pp. 64-65). In the medieval romances courtly love is a distinguishing characteristic. As Bozkurt (1977) puts it “[c]ourtly love is the conventional medieval tradition of knightly love and conduct or etiquette” (p. 139). This was a philosophy of love which was very influential in medieval literature as well. “According to the rules of this tradition, a gallant and courageous knight woos and pays respect to a beautiful, intelligent and lofty-minded noble woman who usually remains chaste and unattainable” (Bozkurt, 1977, p. 139). The knight or hero performs noble deeds for his lover’s sake, but suffers terribly because she remains indifferent to his love or even if she favours his devotion, because of her purity and his respect for it, their love is not consummated. Often the male lover must keep secret the lady’s name although he carries a scarf or glove into battle or he celebrates her beauty in a song or songs because the lady is usually married to someone else. This may be attributable to the basic principle of the tradition – the incompatibility of love with marriage. Yet, the male lover welcomes the suffering of his passion, which, in a sense, ennobles and inspires him to great achievements (Bozkurt, 1977, p. 139). Abrams (1999) also points out that “love between the sexes, with its erotic and physical aspects spiritualized, is regarded as the noblest passion this side of heaven. The courtly lover idealizes and idolizes his beloved, and subjects himself in every whim” (p. 48). As described by Mikics (2007), courtly love subjects the lover to both “torment and intense pleasure at the hands […] of his lady”, and according to the courtly ideal the lovers are obligated “to refrain from sexual intercourse” (p. 75).

Aydemir as a novel applies to romance elements. In its treatment of taking the romance qualities, the novel seems to have taken some of its prime characteristics in the contexts of both character and plot. For this reason, the male protagonist’s quest for the ideal, noble deeds and achievements, adventures, his experience of unconsummated love may all be considered to be romance qualities employed in the novel though some of them have slight differences with those of the medieval romances.
Aydemir is like a hero in medieval romances with respect to his quest for the ideal. He sets off a journey to realize the unity of the Turks living out of Turkey. The only difference between Aydemir’s quest and that of a knight in a romance is that Aydemir tries to construct the ideal position by himself, but a hero in a romance is in the quest of the ideal that is believed to exist; so Aydemir does not quest a ready-made thing but rather he himself tries to create the ideal position – the Turkish ideal. Aydemir’s journey to other Turkish lands also provides a journey within himself, a spiritual journey during which he reaches altruism. It is his altruistic view that makes him cease to think of himself and, as such, he becomes able to think of the others more than himself like a romance hero.

Aydemir’s adventures motivated by a noble ideal bulk large in the novel. During these adventures he performs many deeds which serve his sublime aim. At the beginning of the novel he explains Hazin that the Turkish people living in those Turkish lands should be awakened first. He is aware of the fact that Turkish people are poverty-stricken and unrefined. Believing in the power of science, he explains Hazin how progress can be achieved in Turkish society: “Schools, instructors, doctors, medicine and health-care, to be precise, science can only be found in prosperity” (p. 15). Through his struggles in almost every part of Turkestan, the idealism of Turkism engenders. His deeds especially when he is in Samarkand are the signs of his idealism. He rehabilitates Ahund Ömer’s Madrasah, opens Ziraat Bank, and publishes a newspaper. These deeds are interrupted by Ahund Ömer’s provocations about Aydemir when Aydemir is about to found Workers’ Trade Union.

The principles of courtly love, if not all of them, were embodied in Aydemir. It is my contention that Aydemir and Hazin’s love is analogous to the tradition of the courtly love in some respects. The connection between the novel and courtly love tradition in romances emerges most emphatically in the motif of inaccessible love. Though Aydemir and Hazin are attracted to each other, they never consummate their love. If they had had a physical love, this would have been destroyed the sublimity of their love, and this would have prevented Aydemir from realizing his noble ideas, i.e. performing the good and noble deeds such as leaving his home and family to construct the Turkish ideal, helping the poor, healing the patients, educating the illiterate and so on.

Some incidents in the plot related to love attest that there are close parallels between Tek’s dealing with the theme of love in her novel and that of a romance. Aydemir experiences an unconsummated love with Hazin. He cannot voice his love towards his beloved – like a male lover in a romance – even they are both unmarried, but then Hazin marries Neyyir, a Pasha’s son by the order of the Sultan. Only when Hazin becomes married does Aydemir reveal his love to Hazin. As Neyyir is not loved by Hazin, who actually loves Aydemir, goes to Tripolitanian War in Libya and returns from the war as injured. In his deathbed he forces Hazin to keep promise not to marry Aydemir. Upon learning that Hazin’s husband was dead, Aydemir has a conflict for a while whether to go to Istanbul to marry Hazin or to stay in Turkestan for the sake of his ideal. At last he decides not to go to Istanbul. Both Hazin and Aydemir, in a sense, torture themselves. The two lovers’ being unable to unite seems to have been organized to provide compliance with the romance. Their suffering makes their love akin to the loves in English medieval romances. The unconsummated love motivates Aydemir to have extraordinary courage and strength in order to realize his aims. In other words, he reaches the sublime in his spiritual world by means of suffering from his love towards Hazin, yet refraining from physical love. This suffering, in effect, makes Aydemir able to cling to his ideals more powerfully. Love is reflected as something that gives suffering to lovers because their love is believed to make sufferers able to reach the perfection. As love reflected in Aydemir has such a function, Aydemir keeps on performing his ideals and Hazin becomes mature and brave enough to keep on realizing Aydemir’s ideals after his demise.

In romances we can find models for “beautiful, lovelorn, and grief-stricken women” (Anderson, 2008, p. 56). In the character of Hazin this model is incarnated. Hazin is defined as
beautiful; she is not actually a lovelorn because she receives Aydemir’s love in return for hers; yet she is full of grief because they never unite.

To conclude, some romance elements are evident in Tek’s novel. They were embodied in the novel via either the personality of the main character or his almost heroic deeds. Aydemir, abiding the chivalry’s strict codes of honour, does not think of his love and himself during the course of events. Courtly love, which is of prime importance in romances, constitutes a great part of the intertextual relations between the novel and medieval romances. The novel presents to its readers partly implicit and partly explicit relations with romances in respect of courtly love though some elements of courtly love do not appear in the novel. Like love reflected in romances, Hazin and Aydemir’s love is reflected as exemplar of true and noble love with regard to Aydemir’s faithfulness to his love in adversity, their love’s being un consummated and enriching the lovers.

2. The Embodiment of Christ in Aydemir

Aydemir is known to have been unfavoured by some critics because the main character, Aydemir emulates Christ, he is a supernatural hero and a mystic; so he is assumed to be a character whose qualities are exaggerated and unrealistic. It is my contention, however, that this must be taken as an intertextual practice in the novel.

Perhaps Jesus Christ is the most important leit-motif employed by the author to create her main character. Aydemir was drawn so as to have many parallels with Christ. He exhibits many teachings of Christ. He is the embodiment of Christ’s devotion of his life to humanity, of helpfulness, of patience and of sacrifice; in short, he is the symbol of all the virtues and idealized thoughts. The analogy between Jesus and Aydemir was constructed in the novel through the attribution of many qualities of Christ to Aydemir. Among these qualities are Christ’s being a redeemer of the poor, his commandments and teachings, his devotion of his own life for the humanity, his being a scapegoat, the meaning of his death, his poverty and his possessing disciples.

Aydemir is recognized as a saviour by Turkish people just as Jesus is called “Saviour” (O’Collins, SJ, 2007, p. 7). But it should be noted here that there is a difference between Christ and Aydemir’ positions with regard to their being saviours Aydemir is seen as savior while he is living but Christ was worshipped as a saviour while he was alive and is accepted as saviour even after his decease. However, the reference to Christ in the characterization of Aydemir is sufficient to evoke Christ in the personality of Aydemir. It is known that the mysteries of Jesus’ life are revealed in The New Testament, and as Kasper (2011) points out, the theology of Christ’s mysteries played a major role in Christology” (p. 8). Aydemir, like Christ has mysteries. People believe that he can heal the patients. The healing power, they believe, come from not his knowledge on illnesses as a physician has but his mysteries. We are told that “the guest showing, with his head, a faint, weak, skinny girl said ‘I am taking my daughter to Demir Khan’, and explained that the hodjas and amulets were all in vain. He anticipated the last healing from Demir. Everyone was telling that anyone who was sick and got close to him was healed by him” (p. 68). When he is in the central Asia, there are spreading rumours about him. He is almost a mythic hero. He is believed to “do everybody a favour wandering in villages, find jobs for the unemployed, teach reading to the illiterate, give money to the poverty-stricken, give bread to the starved, book to the bookless and knowledge to the ignorant; he thinks of everyone, loves everyone… And he is announcing the approach of the day of salvation” (p. 66).

In the novel, there are numerous examples to illustrate the similarities between Jesus and Aydemir. Among these instances are his devotion to his ideal and his sacrificial way of life. Another instance, his love of people even if they are the enemies, draws parallelism between Jesus and Aydemir’s treatment of people. “Love your enemies”, which is a well-known commandment of
Christ, is observed to be a motto in Aydemir’s life. The parable in *The New Testament* which is likely to have been referred to by Müfide Ferit Tek is the one titled “Love Your Enemies”. Christ voices:

But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also […] But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful (*The New Testament*, 1996, p. 68).

The biblical reference can be seen in the novel in the part where Aydemir forcefully advises the people, whose dream is to become persecutor, to love even their enemies. While Aydemir is chatting with a group of Turks in Samarkand, a man expresses his hatred against the Russian people and asks: “Will we see for once that the Russian would be defeated? Will we be the judge and will they be the captured, will we be the master and will they be slaves?” The analogy between Jesus and Aydemir appears once again via Aydemir’s expressions:

No, Ali; don’t think in this way… Don’t ask for this… We won’t see that day and our not having such a day is better on behalf of humanity. On the day when the oppressed become dominant, the cruel would not be overwhelmed. The cruel would also be free and happy because what we want is not to replace them […] what we want is happiness for all humanity. Let’s be happy and let them be happy as well. You will be wronged if you punish them through atrocity because make sure that committing atrocity is as torturing as being exposed to tyranny. The aggrieved may be miserable but remain good… whereas those committing atrocities become tyrannical. Is there a greater punishment than this (p. 90)?

As the above extract indicates, Aydemir is so virtuous that his ideas do not correspond with the view of ‘an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth’. His view is very similar to that of Christ. Under no circumstances does he approve of committing evil acts. In the same scene it is also observed that Aydemir’s love of Turks is not on the level of racism. On the contrary, he is very tolerant towards the other people in the world. These qualities seem to have been taken from Jesus, who is the archetype of the redeemer.

Kasper’s succinct information about Christ’s personality as reflected in *The Bible* both supports the connections made above and would help us draw similar parallels between Christ and Aydemir:

God’s love claims Jesus totally for others. He wants nothing for himself, but everything for God and others. Among his disciples he is like a servant; he does not disdain even the most menial slave’s work (*Lk* 22.26–27). He did not come to be served but to serve (*Mk* 10.45). He does not belong to the establishment, but comes from humble origins and retains a feeling for the everyday distress and troubles of the poor (*Mt* 9.36). His respect for women is striking in a man of the ancient world. He does not look on poverty and disease as punishments from God; the poor and sick are particular objects of God’s love. He goes after the lost (*Lk* 15). Most striking of all, even at the time, was that he brought even sinners and misfits, the ritually impure and the outcasts, into his company. He even invites them to eat with him. But there is no sign of hatred or envy of the rich. He gets along even with exploiters, the tax collectors; he summons one or two of them into the immediate circle of his disciples (*Mk* 2.13–17). […] The final end of his service to others is that men should recognize
the goodness of God and praise him (Mk 2.12 etc.). He is not just the man for others, but the man from God and for God (2011, p. 57).

Aydemir’s acts of helping the poor and caring for the sick seem to have been inspired by Christ’s deeds of mystery told in The Bible. In Luke 9 in The Bible, the tract on a girl restored to life and a woman healed (1996, p. 72) may be taken as the source of Aydemir’s similar actions in the novel. But it should be noted that Aydemir does not have the power to resurrect one from the dead, which is a mystery associated with Christ. Though Aydemir’s way of healing the sick is reasonable, that is, there is nothing extraordinary in his act, and what it requires is patience, care and effort, his act of healing the sick may be considered to have a biblical essence.

Aydemir has also been drawn as poverty-stricken in the novel. His misery especially in his last days is a reminiscent of Christ’s poverty. Christ is described as poor both in the Nativity and during his lifetime in the Bible. In the Nativity scenes Christ is depicted as born in a stable among beasts, in an impoverished environment and wrapped in rags or poor clothes. Yet all of them refer to the spiritual mystery of Christ’s redemption of the poor. One cannot fail to observe the parallelism between Christ’s poverty and Aydemir’s poverty. In Tek’s novel, the description of the room in MirzaUluğ Madrasah, in which Aydemir lies on his deathbed, reveals his poverty:

His room was silent and cold. A sooty little lamp, which left half of the room in darkness, reflected the shadows of the things on the walls as scary images. The holes in the windows shutters closing the windows without glass were compressed with pieces of newspaper. The jar on the stove without fire for twenty-four hours and the fluid in the medicine bottle were frozen. Wrapped with a blanket Demir was lying on a wooden bedstead in the deep corner of the room (pp. 91-92).

Aydemir’s physical appearance echoes that of Christ. Aydemir is described as an earnest man “with dark brown long beard” and “wearing an old but neat suit” and “his soft-collared shirt could not hide its oldness” (p. 27). In a meeting when Madame M. D. first encounters Aydemir, she says that “he looks like a monk, an apostle and men from the other worlds” (p. 27).

The demise of Aydemir, who dedicates himself to his ideal and people, may be resembled to the Crucifixion in the sense that he is a sacrificial figure. Aydemir sacrifices himself to save AhundÖmer, who has actually conspired against him. As AhundÖmer provokes Turkish people there to rebel against the Russian Tsar, he is sentenced to death; but later he throws the blame on Aydemir. Christ is believed to have given his blood and flesh as ransom, to redeem humanity; he is represented as a sufferer in the following extracts taken from The Bible:

“The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed and after three days rise again The New Testament, 1996, p. 46).

For He taught His disciples and said to them: “The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day (The New Testament, 1996, p. 47).

“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again” (The New Testament, 1996, p. 49).

Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and beat Him. And having blindfolded him, they struck Him on the face and asked Him, saying: “Prophesy!
Who is the one who struck You?” And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him (The New Testament, 1996, p. 92-93).

Aydemir can also be viewed as someone giving ransom to save – if not many people or all humanity – a man and his family.

With his pupils around himself Aydemir also looks like Christ (with a slight difference in the number: Christ has twelve disciples but Aydemir is told to have twelve other than the two disciples whose names are mentioned: Hasan and Şakir (p. 116) ). In one of the parables in The Bible, the devotion to Jesus is reflected as a prerequisite of being a disciple of Christ:

Leaving All to Follow Christ

Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them: If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple (The New Testament, 1996, p. 82).

It can be understood that in order to provide conformity between Christ’s twelve disciples and those of Aydemir, Müfide Ferit Tek made them being sent to the gallows after Aydemir. They clearly share the same destiny with their tutor.

To conclude, having such sad predicaments both when he is alive and during his death, Aydemir is a modern representation of Jesus Christ. Undoubtedly, Tek’s intertextual practice with Jesus Christ added much to the characterization of the novel with regard to the description of the main character, and more importantly, his manners, behaviours, and the worldview he has. Besides, the theme of the novel, viz. the Turkish ideal, is reflected as so sublime an ideal in the novel that the reader feels that its achievement can be gained only through ones having divine potency, ones having Christ-like qualities like Aydemir. It is because of this reason that Aydemir is compared, by Şakir, to “an angel who came down from the heavens” (p. 87).

3. Aydemir as an Echo of the Dying-Reviving Gods in Greek Mythology

When looked from the viewpoint of Intertextuality, it can be observed that myths have always been an attractive and fruitful area for the novelists in the creation of both their characters, actions and their themes. Gerald A. Larue (1975) begins his work Ancient Myth and Modern Man with the idea that “ancient man and his gods are dead and nearly forgotten, but their influence lingers” (p. 1). This indicates that mythic stories and the mythic figures reflected along with their actions and experiences are meaningful because they not only indicate what gods and goddesses do in their own realms but also embrace what they do in the world of man. So myths also say about human trials and choices. Because they were developed from human experience and observation, myths are intimately “related to attitudes toward life, death, survival, and most of all, ‘meaning’ ” (Larue, 1975, p. 7). In his Dying Gods in Twentieth-Century Fiction, K. J. Philips (1990) takes the reader’s attention to the function of the dying deities. He argues that modern authors are attracted to the dying gods because these myths express not only the most intense suffering and violence that they endure but also their violent deaths they are exposed to (p. 6). Reflecting human experiences, in effect, the myths of dying deities indicate the sufferings of humans; therefore the dying gods share man’s lot. Philips (1990) notes that the authors adopt these myths and hold up them as a way of confronting and questioning the world (p. 17).

Exploiting the myths of dying-reviving gods in the writing of Aydemir, Müfide Ferit Tek seems to have transformed them for her own purposes in her novel. Aydemir was drawn as a character
enduring the most intense trials and efforts, suffering, violence and death like deities whose stories bear death-rebirth theme. Owing to the meaning of his death, Aydemir is a partial conversion of the gods suggesting death-rebirth theme. He is actually the embodiment of the dying-reviving deities not just because he is exposed to suffering but because he incarnates spiritually. His spiritual incarnation occurs in the personality of his lover, Hazin. In order to explicate the relation between Aydemir and the dying-reviving gods in Greek Mythology, it should be made clear in the first place, who these gods and what their functions are and in the second place, why Aydemir might be considered to have such a mythic personality as dying-reviving deities.

A dying-reviving god, also known as both a dying-and-rising god and a resurrection deity, is a mythical and religious motif in which a god or goddess dies and then is resurrected. Many instances of the dying-reviving god can be found in the religions of ancient Near East and various mythologies such as Osiris in Egyptian Mythology, Tammuz in Sumerian, Babylonian and Mesopotamian mythologies. Various mythologies ranging from Greek, Roman and Phrygian to Norse, Chinese and, etc. created their own counterparts of dying-reviving deities. Whilst Attis, Adonis, Demeter, Persephone and Dionysus are Greek dying-reviving gods and goddesses, Ceres and Saturn are Roman equivalents. XipeTotec in Norse and Aztec Mythologies, Blodeuwedd and Modron in Welsh, Jarilo in Slavic, Hou Ji in Chinese and Rauni in Finnish mythologies can also be listed as dying-reviving gods/goddesses. However, this study will limit itself dealing with just the extension of the dying-reviving god in Greek Mythology. The vegetation gods and goddesses associated with the fertility myths and characterized with their perennial in plant life and thus with their death-rebirth sequences will also be excluded from the study due to the limited length of the study. Henceforth among the gods aforementioned, only Attis4 and Adonis5, (who are also cited, in Phrygian Mythology, as dying-reviving gods) will be referred to in this study.

4Though Attis is a god with Phrygian origin, he is associated with the Greek and Roman culture due to the facts that he was worshipped throughout the Roman Empire and that the rituals of worship of Attis and Cybele including the annual celebration of the coming of spring were held at the same time. Attis was the consort of Cybele, the great Mother of Gods in Greek Mythology. According to the cult, “Attis was a boy of marvelous beauty [...] Agdistis fell in love with him. The savage deity took the grown lad out hunting, led him into the most inaccessible wilderness and gave him spoils of the chase. Midas, King of Pessinous, sought to separate Attis from Agdistis, and to this end gave the boy his own daughter to wife. Agdistis appeared at the wedding and draw the participants mad with the notes of a syrinx. Attis castrated himself beneath a pine-tree, crying out: “Unto, thee, Agdistis!” And thus he died” (Leeming, 1981, p. 203). Frazer’s Golden Bough involves both the myths of Attis (pp. 817-838) and the rituals connected with the death of Attis (pp. 820-822).

5Adonis is the vegetation god in Greek Mythology. According to the tale, Myrrha was a king’s daughter and fell mortally in love with her own father. “Various reasons were given for this: the wrath of the son-god, or the wrath of Aphrodite. Myrrha was supposed to have thought her hair lovelier than that of the goddess”. She succeeded in deceiving her father by making him drunk. Leeming notes that “she slept with him as an unknown wench for twelve nights, or for less. At last her father discovered, by the light of a hidden lamp, who his bedmate was, and pursued her with a drawn sword. Myrrha had already conceived a child of this forbidden love, and was full of shame. She prayed to the gods that she might be nowhere, neither amongst the living nor amongst the dead”. Zeus took pity on her and “she was turned into the tree that weeps its fruit in spicy gum, the fruit of the wood: Adonis” (Leeming, 1981, p. 40). The stories about Adonis and the loves of Persephone and Aphrodite can be found in Edith Hamilton, Mythology. (USA: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1969, pp. 94-95) and Michael Simpson, and Leonard Baskin, Gods and Heroes of the Greeks: The Library of ApolloEdora. (USA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1976, p.203). See also Leeming, pp. 205-206. In Frazer’s Golden Bough, the remaining part of Adonis’s story is as in the following “the oriental deity appears as a comely youth beloved by Aphrodite. In his infancy the goddess hid him in a chest, which she gave in charge to Persephone, queen of the nether world. But when Persephone opened the chest and beheld the beauty of the babe, she refused to give him back to Aphrodite, though the goddess of love went down herself to hell to ransom her dear one from the power of the grave. The dispute between the two goddesses of love and death was settled by Zeus, who decreed that Adonis should abide with Persephone in the underworld for one part of the year, and with Aphrodite in the upper world for another part. At last the fair youth was killed in hunting by a wild boar, or by the jealous Ares, who turned himself into the likeness of a boar in order to compass the death of his rival. Bitterly did Aphrodite lament her loved and lost Adonis” (2009, p. 769).
James G. Frazer (2009) popularized the dying-reviving gods in his seminal work, *The Golden Bough*, which was first published in 1890. In this work Frazer associates the motif of dying-reviving gods with the fertility rites involving the re-enactment of the yearly cycle of vegetation and of reproduction. Frazer combines the vegetation deities and dying-reviving gods and uses these names interchangeably because a vegetation deity/fertility deity refers to a nature deity whose appearance, disappearance and reappearance, i.e. cyclical existence and absence suggest life, death and rebirth respectively. A vegetation deity has the ability to resurrect or regenerate itself. Attis, Adonis, Osiris, Tammuz, Dionysus and Jesus Christ are the gods whom Frazer cited as dying-reviving and fertility deities. Frazer argues that in ancient times man was unable to comprehend the concept of time, so he naturally thought that everything in nature was mortal as him, gods and goddesses are no exception. Frazer (2009) notes that “[m]an has created gods in his own likeness and being himself mortal he has naturally supposed his creatures to be in the same sad predicament” (p. 625) and that deities “were conceived to be human in their bodily shape, human in their passions, and human in their fate; for like men they were born into the world, and like men they loved and fought and died” (p. 627).

However, it is pinpointed by Frazer that though death was unavoidable even for gods, the worshippers of god considered the decease of the god as dangerous because his death meant the decease of nature. Put another way, their own safety and that of the world is closely connected with the life of the deities. Hence it was necessary to keep god’s spirit alive. In order to keep the spirit alive, they believed, they could transform it before he became weak because of the illnesses or any other reasons of death. If they waited for his natural death, his spirit would also become weak like his body. This meant that a god who was weakened spiritually could not help his worshippers to defeat death, i.e. to be immortal. The rationale behind the killing of the gods is explained by Frazer (2009) in his work:

Naturally, therefore, they take the utmost care of his life, out of a regard for their own. But no amount of care and precaution will prevent the man-god from growing old and feeble and at last dying. His worshippers have to lay their account with this sad necessity and to meet it as best they can. The danger is a formidable one; for if the course of nature is dependent on the man-god’s life, what catastrophes may not be expected from the gradual enfeeblement of his powers and their final extinction in death? There is only one way of averting these dangers. The man-god must be killed as soon as he shows symptoms that his powers are beginning to fail, and his soul must be transferred to a vigorous successor before it has been seriously impaired by the threatened decay (pp. 627-628).

Only by killing the deity, i.e. putting him/her into death and not allowing him/her to die of old age or diseases, the worshippers believed, could they take the advantages of the death of the deity. If s/he dies of a natural death, it means that the soul of the god or goddesses “has either voluntarily departed from his body and refuses to return, or more commonly that it has been extracted, or at least detained in its wanderings, by a demon or sorcerer” (Frazer, 2009, p. 628). As in either case “the soul of the man-god is lost to his worshippers, and with it their prosperity is gone and their very existence endangered”, they try to catch the spirit of the dying god as if it left his lips or nostrils so as to transfer the spirit to a suitable vigorous successor (Frazer, 2009, p. 628).

What connect the dying-reviving gods to each other are their deaths, as well as their reincarnations. The death of the god is usually by some violent means such as hanging, dismemberment, castration or rape. The demise of the god means his departure from the land, which causes a loss of fertility in land. The death is followed by a lament for the loss of the hero, which is almost always expressed by women. The search for the dead body of the god implies the probability of his being found, i.e. the possibility of resurrection. As Philips (1990) notes the death of the hero
and his association with the female force holds promise of a new life (p. 11). In other words, reproduction is bound to the god’s death and the association of the god and the goddess respectively. David Adams Leeming (1981) pinpoints the same function of the death of the god: One or more catastrophes usually befell the god. The hero faces death and dies for his worshippers, which holds promise of a new life. His death is the catalyst for a new birth through the spirit (p. 8). According to Leeming (1981), “the hero, usually with the help of a woman – woman representing both fertility and the hope of eventual union of all things – […] rises from the dead” (p. 8). He also points to the scapegoat function of the dying-reviving god: “In death the hero acts, psychologically, for all of us; he becomes a scapegoat for our fear and our guilt. Of course, he also serves as a reminder that we all must follow (Leeming, 1981, pp. 7-8).

This study argues that Tek’s major character Aydemir can be regarded as the incarnation of the dying-reviving gods, two of whom would be taken here as references as it has been mentioned above. Although it is not the foremost quality that makes Aydemir similar to a dying-reviving god, Aydemir’s suffering for the good of his people while he is alive may be noted as one of the similarities. Yet his suffering is not due to the torture he is exposed to by others but the life conditions he has in the pursuit of his ideal. He is devoid of the facilities to lead a humane life, let alone comforts. Furthermore, playing the role of a dying-reviving god, i.e. a mythological figure, Aydemir has self-mutilation for the good of the others. Tek seems to have made use of the dying-reviving deities as a way of drawing her character Aydemir as a hero having the sublime ideals as well as a sacrificial hero who victimizes himself for his own nation and people. Like a hero-god he does not try to contemplate death, rather he accepts it happily.

There is no direct implication to these gods in the novel, rather Tek evokes them little by little especially through the end of the novel with Aydemir’s death in the gallows and at the end of the novel Hazin’s lament at Aydemir’s tomb. In the scene in which Aydemir is hung in the gallows, the reader is told that it is Aydemir himself who loops “the noose around his neck” (p. 122), and this indicates that he has accepted death happily because he would die for the sake of his people like a dying-reviving deity. Aydemir’s rebirth is suggested immediately after his death in the same scene with the feeling of unity the people have. Their shouting together as if they were one body, “Long live Demir Khan, long live Turks” (p. 122) is an indication of the power of Aydemir’s death and of its function of creating unity among Turks, as Aydemir desired while he was alive. The unity after Aydemir’s death is also seen in the scene in which Hazin laments over the death of her young lover as “bitterly did Aphrodite lament her loved and lost Adonis” (Frazer, 2009, p. 769). The spiritual unity of Aydemir and Hazin will be mentioned in a later part of the study, attempting to analyze the theme of the novel revealed with the idea of unity. It should also be noted here that the scene indicates a parallelism between Aydemir and the dying-reviving god with regard to its employment of a woman’s lamentation. In an earlier part of the study, it has been mentioned that those who lament after the deaths of god-heroes are usually women.

When Aydemir becomes severely sick, writing a letter to Hazin he calls her to Turkmenistan so that she could fulfill his unfinished mission. But during this time World War I breaks out and the innocent Turkish people provoked by Ahund Ömer to rebel against the Russian Tsar come to consult him. Aydemir, who has forethought, thinks that the powerful Russian authority might turn out this situation an opportunity to kill many innocent people; and therefore he tries to make them give up this vain job. Nevertheless, with the provocation of some ignorant, thoughtless and manipulative mullas, people rebel against the Russian administration. Upon hearing this, Aydemir goes there despite his severe illness. Some of the people die till he goes there; however, he manages to prevent the rebellion. Ahund Ömer turns out to be guilty and is decided to be sent to the scaffold. His innocent wife along with their five children comes to Aydemir with the hope of that her husband could be
rescued from death by him because Aydemir found remedies for the grief of many people beforehand. Suddenly there appears a sparkling idea in Aydemir’s mind: Because he is very close to death, he may show himself to be a provocateur and thus he can rescue Ahund Ömer, who is the actual criminal and furthermore, he is Aydemir’s great enemy. The rationale behind Aydemir’s sacrificial act is expounded by himself. He thinks: ‘‘Perhaps’ he says, ‘no not perhaps, I am sure that he will become remorseful. Undoubtedly, he will learn goodness and appreciate it by receiving it; it is probable that he will serve the ideal with a new power and enthusiasm” (p. 114). In this way of thinking and acting of Aydemir, it is obvious that there are parallels between his wish of death and that of Christ as well as that of a dying-reviving god. Like Christ he becomes a scapegoat taking on others’ fears and guilt. In Aydemir’s death wish there can be found two parallels between him and a dying-reviving god. The first one is that he sacrifices himself for the others; i.e. he gives up his life just as a dying-reviving deity does so that the others could live. However, his sacrificial act should be distinguished from those of the dying-reviving gods in the sense that those for whom Aydemir victimizes himself are not his worshippers while a dying-reviving deity sacrifices himself/herself for his/her worshippers. But it can also be argued that Aydemir sacrifices himself with the hope that Ahund Ömer will learn to be virtuous, will have the ability to see the goodness, i.e. improve himself and thus he will pursue the true way and learn to be a human by this act of Aydemir. Besides, it should not be forgotten that Aydemir sacrifices himself partially for Ahund Ömer’s wife and children, who are innocent. So with this sacrificial act, Aydemir rescues not only Ahund Ömer but also his wife and their children. During the process of making up his mind, Aydemir is impressed by the idea that these five children will not be orphans if he lets himself die instead of their father (p. 115). This can also be taken as a life giving function of the dying-reviving gods. The second parallel is that like a dying-reviving god, Aydemir is not allowed to die of a natural death; rather he is killed as if his spirit could be transformed to a successor before his body and spirit become too weak to be transformed. The case in point here is to realize the transformation of the soul before the god-hero dies naturally because if he dies naturally, his spirit would not be strong enough to help the living. The transformation of Aydemir’s spirit is provided in two ways in the novel. One is realized immediately after his death in the gallows, a scene aforementioned. The other is the last scene of the novel, in which Hazin promises to keep Aydemir’s ideal alive, which strengthens life-affirming function of Aydemir’s death.

In her novel, Tek alludes to dying-reviving gods when she makes Aydemir both hanged in the gallows and buried under a tree. Recognizing the significance of ‘tree’ in death-rebirth myths, Frazer (2009) pinpoints the connection between the dying heroes/gods and fertility. They are either buried in a tree (as in the case of Osiris) (p. 859), or born of a tree (as in the case of Adonis) (p. 1105) or hanged on a tree (as can be seen in the cases of both Jesus Christ and Attis). Osiris is also known to have taught cultivation to people and to have been “the first to gather fruit from trees” (Frazer, 2009, p. 855) and Attis is attached to pine-tree (Frazer, 2009, p. 894). The tree motif is seen in Aydemir’s death scene because he is hung in the gallows (pp. 121-122) (though gallows are not living trees, they evoke the idea of a tree due to their wooden structure, and it should also be recalled that Christ was believed to be crucified on a wooden cross). His grave is also described to be under the green leaves of the pine trees (p. 123). The author’s definition of Aydemir’s tomb through the depiction of a renewal in nature gives one the idea that he is associated with the dying-reviving gods, by means of whose deaths they give life: “A damp but blue starry spring morning... The graves with clean and black stones were in grief as if they were covered with tears. While everything, birds, flowers, butterflies, leaves were chanting about the renewal of nature, only they [the dead] did not join in this general resurrection in their everlasting silence. They pretended not to join, but what was really happening... Who knows” (p. 123)?
Aydemir’s death recalls the deaths of the dying-reviving deities in some other respects, too. The dissolution of personality which Aydemir confirms through the end of the novel is seen in the form of letting himself die and this is certainly the result of the godlike quality in his personality.

Aydemir also fits the pattern of the dying-reviving god not only because he becomes a hero when he is alive but because he dies young. Aydemir’s young manhood is sacrificed for the sake of his people. Attis and Adonis are the god-heroes dying so young.

The dying-reviving gods in mythology give life to the world through their deaths; their deaths mean a kind of reviving and fertility and therefore have a universal meaning. What connects the deaths of these gods and that of Aydemir is their quality of revival and of fertility. Attis and Adonis are the two of the dying-reviving gods in Greek mythology, by means of whose deaths, people believed, they could achieve immortality. Likewise the death of Aydemir does not imply an end of the search for the ideal, rather it promises the continuity and the everlastingness of the ideal. The death-rebirth sequence is noticed especially in the scene in which Hazin promises to keep Aydemir’s ideal alive. Her expression is a promise of the revival. Putting herself in charge of such a high ideal and noble mission, Hazin develops a spirit in herself akin to that of Aydemir. In other words, Aydemir’s soul wishing the unity of Turkish peoples is reincarnated in his lover, Hazin. The reader is told through the free indirect speech that Aydemir’s physical sufferings and grief melting and evolving into an infinite and divine love, Aydemir would live his second life in Hazin’s heart (p. 127). Hazin’s last words demonstrating the unity between the two lovers evoke the incarnation of Aydemir and his ideal. Suggesting a romantic idealism, these words are related with the death-rebirth theme of the novel. Hazin says:

I swear on your beloved and holly tomb that by killing you they cannot kill your ideals, dreams and your existence. Assigning myself to your duty, adopting your duty and dream as a divine duty of mine, I am going to work for you… I was not yours when you were alive, I was moaning in grief without you; but now, after you died, despite everyone and everything, even death, you will live by my love… I will live with you by the miracle of my love, I’ll be yours, Demir!...

After each renewed difficulty, I’ll be yours combining with you more, living in your soul at the most difficult and the highest point during my mission, thinking with your mind, feeling with your heart, hiding your exceptional existence in my body, Demir. My love!… (p. 127)

The demise of the romantic hero, Aydemir serves the novel’s thematic completeness. In this way the author reflects the Turkish ideal not in an abandoned situation or as if it is over, rather it is kept more strongly. Aydemir revives spiritually in his successor to collect all Turkish peoples under a single ideal. The novel ends with a rebirth. The concluding sentiment of the novel reflected by means of the expression that Hazin has united with Aydemir “beyond life and death” (p. 128) is an affirmation of reincarnation of the Turkish ideal.

As can be seen in the above extract, Tek portrays Hazin in the role of a successor who is expected to keep Aydemir’s spirit alive. She appears in Aydemir’s grave. However, after a long crying and lamentation full of remorse she achieves to revive him through the dissolution of her personality, and this unity is one that is realized spiritually. Unity through death and the dissolution of personality confirmed firstly by Aydemir and then by Hazin are reflected as a means of immortality. By so doing, Tek implies her two wishes in her novel: The former is that Turkish people would always follow the Turkish ideal and the latter relevant to the former is that Turkish ideal will survive forever.
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**Conclusion**

As a conclusion, this study has shed light on the intertextual practices in Müfide Ferit Tek’s novel, *Aydemir*, which is known to have been written with the author’s national feelings. The intertextual relation of the novel with romances appears best in the love story between the two lovers, the intertextual practice with religion is noticed best in the characterization of the novel, especially in Tek’s drawing the main character with the qualities of Christ and his teachings, and the last intertextual practice of the novel, which this study has attempted to detect along with the others mentioned, occurs between *Aydemir* and the dying-reviving gods in mythology. Through this study it has become obvious that the writer interwove two distinct genres, romance and novel while writing *Aydemir*. In the creation of the eponymous hero, Tek made use of the qualities of a romance hero. She characterized *Aydemir* with the aspects of a knight in a romance having sublime thoughts and noble ideals and who is in a quest. Aydemir is integrated into the heroes of romance because he was drawn as a figure that transcends human limitations. Partly exhibiting the elements of courtly love with its reflection of *Aydemir* and Hazin’s love, the novel has gained a romance quality, too. Their love is identified with the qualities of loves reflected in the romances with regard to especially their being unconsummated. Tek portrays *Aydemir* in the role of a hero in romances. Like a romance knight, *Aydemir* has adventures for the good of his own people, he is in a quest of the ideal – he tries to construct a unity of Turkish nations – and he sacrifices his own private desires and aspirations for the sake of the others in his pursuit of the ideal.

Tek seems to have constructed her main character *Aydemir* by means of the allusions from Jesus Christ as a religious, mysterious and sacrificial figure and from *The Bible*. It has been put forth in this study that the author shaped the personae of her character by alluding Christ’s personal qualities and teachings. Throughout the relevant part, the parallels between *Aydemir* and Christ have been detected. And this study argues that these parallels constitute a part of the novel’s intertextual practices.

The focal point in the third part of the study has been the thematic intertextual relations provided by the author by means of the connections between the dying-reviving gods in Greek Mythology and *Aydemir*. Arguing that the shreds of the myths of the dying-reviving gods were spotted in Müfide Ferit Tek’s novel, it has been attempted in this study to read *Aydemir* as a special modern version of Attis and Adonis’s mythic stories. Focusing on such major motifs in the myths of dying-reviving deities as incarnation, reviving in another spirit and giving life after death, the study has put forward the intertextual bonds between *Aydemir* – a novel belonging to Turkish Literature – and Greek mythology. The study has also detected that like a dying-reviving god’s death, *Aydemir’s* death is not an end and an annihilator in the novel; on the contrary, it is the final unifier because though the two lovers cannot unite while they are living, they seem to be united at the end. Moreover, through *Aydemir’s* death, the Turkish ideal reincarnates in Hazin’s spirit. It is reborn in a woman. This idea implied at the end of the novel provides clear evidence to suggest that there is a close connection between *Aydemir* and dying-reviving gods and thus the novel has a thematic interest in the myths of dying-reviving gods in mythology.

All in all, throughout the study it has been observed that Müfide Ferit Tek made use of English medieval romances, Jesus Christ and dying-reviving gods in Greek and Roman Mythologies, and thus enriched her novel *Aydemir* with the echoes of Western cultural context. The author seems to have transformed the medieval romances, Christ and his teachings, and mythological figures and themes in a new way so that the novel could reflect the national sentiments, by which the author wrote it. Combining the western values with the theme of the Turkish ideal, *Aydemir* is characterized in this study as an agglutination of the Turkish ideal and Western literature, religion and mythology.
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