Comparison of Modern Turkish and Modern Greek Literature with Psychoanalytic Approaches: Mother – Daughter Relationship and the Maternal Image in Sevim Burak and Margarita Karapanou's Works

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MA PROGRAM IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

ASSOC. PROF. FERDA KESKİN

2012

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Psikanalitik Yaklaşımla Çağdaş Türk Edebiyatı ve Çağdaş Yunan Edebiyatı Karşılaştırması : Sevim Burak ve Margarita Karapanou'nun Çalısmalarında Anne – Kız İlişkisi ve Anne Figürü

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Tezin Onaylandığı Tarih: 02/10/2012

Toplam Sayfa Sayısı: 71

Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe)

1) Anne
2) Kimlik
3) Simbiyotic
4) Bunalım
5) Azınlık

Anahtar Kelimeler (İngilizce)

1) Mother
2) Identity
3) Symbiotic
4) Depression
5) Minority

Thesis Abstract

Comparison on Modern Turkish and Modern Greek Literature with Psychoanalytic Approaches:

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The purpose of this study is to use a psychoanalytic approach in analyzing the works of Margarita Karapanou and Sevim Burak. It discusses the mother-daughter relationship and the impact that this relationship may have had in these authors' writing. Furthermore, it focuses on identity issues when the mother belongs to a minority group and identification with the mother, especially when a symbiotic relationship is experienced. Finally, it indicates how the writing process facilitates identification, when not accomplished in proper time.

Tez Özeti

Psikanalitik Yaklaşımla Çağdaş Türk Edebiyatı ve Çağdaş Yunan Edebiyatı Karşılaştırması :

Sevim Burak ve Margarita Karapanou'nun Çalısmalarında

Anne – Kız İlişkisi ve Anne Figürü

Angeliki Melliou

Bu calışmanın amacı Sevim Burak ve Margarita Karapanou'nun çalışmalarının analizinde psikanalitik bir yaklaşım kullanmaktır. Anne - kız ilişkisini ve bu ilişkinin yazarların calışmaları üzerindeki olası etkilerini tartışır. Bunun yanı sıra, annenin bir azınlık grubuna ait olduğu durumlarda ortaya çıkan kimlik meseleleri ve özellikle simbiyotik yaşam söz konusu olduğunda anneyle özdeşim kurma üzerinde odaklanır. Son olarak, doğru zamanda gerçekleşmediği takdirde, yazma sürecinin kimlik saptamayı nasıl kolaylaştırdığını belirtir.

Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not have been possible without the help of several people, to whom I owe my deepest gratitude. First and foremost I wish to thank my thesis supervisor Assistant Professor Ferda Keskin for his invaluable advices, his support and his endless patience. I am deeply indebted to my professor and thesis committee member Dr. Süha Oğuzertem for his constant support, encouragement and guidance, not only throughout my dissertation but from the beginning of my studies in this field. I wish to thank my thesis committee member and Head of the Department, Professor Jale Parla for her fruitful comments and discussion. Also, I would like to thank my professor Bülent Somay for his guidance regarding the theme of my dissertation and his priceless suggestions. Besides, I am heartily thankful to Nilüfer Erdem Güngörmüş for kindly sharing with me her invaluable studies on Sevim Burak and for her insightful suggestions. I owe my deepest gratitude to the writer, psychologist and Professor in Panteion University Fotini Tsaliloglou and to Nouli Boutha for the fruitful discussions upon Margarita Karapanou. I would like to thank the psychoanalyst and Assoc. Prof. in Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Dora Psaltopoulou for her essential support on the psychoanalytic approach of this dissertation. Furthermore, I am truly indebted and grateful to my mother Anatoli Melliou, my sister Anastasia Melliou and my aunt Dimitra Konstantinidou for their inspiration and support and for believing in from the very first moment. Last but not least I wish to thank my companion Murat Bayık for his support and patience during the last years of my studies.

Preface

I had always been an admirer of Margarita Karapanou's work. I was particularly fascinated by the engagement of her good writing and the bipolar disorder, which was always a mystery to me. Soon I started to think that apparently it was the disorder that made the writing so attractive. As it is known, bipolar disorder made a lot of people quite creative. I was prompted by Karapanou's work to study literature in combination with bipolar disorder. Then, as I began to read her works more carefully, not as a simple reader who reads for pleasure but as a researcher who tries to find something more, I found myself much more captivated by Karapanou's relationship to her mother, which I thought might be the origin of her illness. As a woman myself I consider the relationship between mothers and daughters extremely significant for the daughter's healthy development. Karapanou never disappointed me in her frank, outspoken, nearly childish wording of her feelings towards her mother. The material on this subject provided to the reader in her works is plentiful and almost everything is based on her past experiences.

Then, I turned to my teachers and I asked for their help in order to find a Turkish writer, whose works also contain an intricate relationship like that, and that is how I became acquainted with Sevim Burak. It was tremendously difficult for me to understand Sevim Burak's writing. I was never sure about my interpretations. I even thought about changing this thesis's subject. But then I began to understand that in her works, the mother figure is so concealed and so diffuse at the same time that it is easy to ignore. Her works are based on her past experiences, as well.

One of the most difficult parts of this thesis was the constant vacillation between languages and the translations that I had to do. I was afraid of this transference from this back and forth from one language to another, mostly because the excerpt could lose the significance it

had in the original. To avoid any loss here, the extracts from Burak's works will be juxtaposed in Turkish, as well.

Finally, it required a lot of effort to complete this thesis, because I had to enter the paths of psychoanalysis and at the same time to touch upon a topic, which engrosses every woman: the mother-daughter relationship.

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"The writer is someone who plays with his mother's body"

Roland Barthes

1. Introduction

In this thesis I intend to point out the extent of the mother's influence on her daughter and the impact that it may have had in her creative writing. The mother is the first object of love of every human being. In women's cases their first love relationship is a "homosexual" one. They have to go through a difficult process in order to invest their feelings in a person of the opposite sex (the father) by identifying with the person of the same sex (the mother) and then through that to become autonomous. The father's role is significant because he intervenes and cuts the bond between the mother and the infant, while introducing to the infant the 'symbolic order', in Lacanian terms; that is, the law, the language, the Other and so on. This is a situation to be accepted as much by the infant as by the mother. In a different case it may lead to numerous problems, both in child's mentality and in her further adult life.

According to Winnicott, the early mother-infant relationship is the starting point for the awakening of human creativity; and when the human is creative, he discovers himself (Psaltopoulou, "Η Μουσική Δημιουργική…" 66, 68). All the pain, the rage, the aggression, the search of mother and identity lead to incredible lateral thinking and literary ingenuity, which, when developed and managed properly, create a talent.

The purpose of this thesis is to study both authors' works under the scope of loss of the object of love and of difficulty in identification. I will attempt to prove that the identification with the mother and thus the acquiring of an identity was achieved only after the mother's death and throughout literary writing. In Karapanou's works I will use mainly the theory of the 'hypersymbiotic' mother and bipolar disorder, whereas in Burak's work the identification and

the Kleinien reparation, that is, the preservation, reparation or revival of the loved objects (Klein, *Envy and Gratitude* 35).

While the works of Karapanou are unquestionably related to her mother, to the relationship between them and to the author's mental illness, from which the mother's voice clearly emerges, in the works of Burak are hidden a more nebulous relationship between the mother, the mother's identity and the mother's tongue; the latter is imitated in some of her works. But in both authors' works the mother-figure is seen in various ways, in an effort to close the gap in the relationship with their mothers.

In order for us to understand better how this relationship has impacted the authors' works, we should first look at the relationship itself as much as possible from our position. I deem that the reader, who wishes to extend this search, will find it more than hard to gather adequate information about Karapanou's life, unless he knows Greek. The same is valid about Burak and the researcher who is unfamiliar with Turkish. This is why I consider the juxtaposition of some biographical facts essential. Nonetheless, this is the beginning of this thesis.

I will try to provide the framework for a psychoanalytic approach in their works and in this way, I will focus both on their lives and their literature. Thus, I will use the novels, the short stories or the plays they wrote – some of them more and some of them less or not at all if there is no relevant material – as well as their diaries and letters, as literary texts and sources of biographical facts.

I will conclude by reminding the reader that psychoanalysis is exclusively subjective. We are not in a position to claim that there is merely one interpretation, because it derives from the individual who interprets. Thus, the findings and the conclusion are always under discussion, similar to what happens with every interpretation of art.

2. Biographical Facts

2.1. Sevim Burak

2.1.1. The Writer's Mother and Childhood.

"Annem öleli yirmi yıl oldu, babamın soyu hala ortada. Onlar bana gene "Madam Mari'nin kızı" diyorlar." / "It's been twenty years since my mother's death, while my father's family is still there. However, people call me "Madam Mari's daughter" anyway." (Burak, *Beni Deliler Anlar* 27)

In order for us to understand Sevim Burak and her writing, one must know a bit about the writer's life, her mother's life and the relationship between the mother and daughter. Nilüfer Güngörmüş gives some important background information about Sevim Burak and especially about her mother Anne Marie Mandil, coming from the private interviews that she had with Burak's elder sister, Nezahat Çelik. Also Bedia Koçakoğlu sheds light on the writer's life, from which some highlights are included in the following paragraphs.

Anne Marie was from a Jewish family with Romanian or Bulgarian origins who migrated to Istanbul in order to escape from the First World War. They settled into a modest house in the lower part of Kuzguncuk, a district in Asian side of Istanbul known for the Jewish, Armenian and Greek inhabitants, and Anne Marie started to work in the Ottoman Bank (Güngörmüş, "Analysis of Two Short Stories…" 95). She was engaged to a young Jewish man but then fell in love with Mehmet Seyfullah Burak, a pilot steering large ships through the Bosporus and Dardanelles, and son of a wealthy Ottoman family, who used to live in a big house upon the hill of Kuzguncuk. Despite the groom's family's objections to the origins and the financial status of the bride-to-be, they got married in 1920 (96). Anne Marie's father and brothers were at war during that time, so she had no obstacles to face in her own family about her marriage to a

Muslim. The groom's family accepted the new daughter-in-law only after she gave birth to her first daughter, Nezahat, who since birth, remained under her grandmother's supervision. Soon after Nezahat's birth, Anne Marie was allowed to live next to her husband's family and her daughter, in the house up the hill (96).

Anne Marie Mandil was a native speaker of Hebrew and she also knew French and Spanish (102). Because she never spoke Turkish fluently, she became a target of mockery in her husband's family (102). Some years after Sevim Burak's birth, Anne Marie became a Muslim and acquired the name Aysel Kudret Burak (97). Yet, she never succeeded in hiding her identity, due to her outward appearance (she was blond with green eyes) and her poor Turkish (Koçakoğlu 28).

Sevim Burak was born on June 26th, in 1931 in Istanbul, as the daughter that her mother would raise by herself, finally permitted by her husband's family.

Anne Marie was a kind woman and her mother-in-law loved her soon after she came to live next to her. She was fond of novels and stories but she couldn't read them, due to the new Latin alphabet, so her daughter-in-law would read to her (Güngörmüş, "Analysis of Two Short Stories…" 104). Her funny accent in Turkish while reading literature must have been one of Sevim Burak's first memories and also one of her first exposures to literature; through her mother's voice.

Nezahat, the eldest daughter and Sevim's oldest sister, never accepted her mother's Jewish origins and tried to keep this identity secret, though she did learn Hebrew and French and used to talk in Hebrew with her mother and her uncle secretly (103). What is more, during the first interviews carried out by Güngörmüş for the latter to assemble the biography of Sevim Burak, Mrs. Nezahat tried once again to hide with great mastery their mother's origins (101). On

the other hand, Sevim completely refused to learn Hebrew and felt an aversion towards Jews, during her teenage years (103). However, she had a compassion for Armenian people and their language. Moreover, she received her education in a German school, which was probably particularly confusing for her, due to her Jewish blood (104). And as we read in Koçakoğlu, both Nezahat and Sevim had believed that they didn't resemble their mother at all. They had inherited nothing from her, and instead they had taken all their characteristics after their father (29).

Then, in 1947, when Sevim was sixteen-years-old, her mother died from cancer while reading a novel to her mother-in-law. Her last words were "Sevim, I'm dying" (Güngörmüş, "Analysis of Two Short Stories…" 105).

2.1.2. Adulthood and Death

> 1931'de İstanbul'da doğdum. 21 yaşıma kadar Kuzguncuk'un tepesindeki evimizde babaannem ve büyükbabamla geçirdim. Bu yüzden çocukluğumla büyüklüğüm arasında büyük fark yok gibidir. Aile çevremizde, çocuktan çok yaşlı komsular, yaşlı akrabalar bulunduğu için, onların arasında, yaşlı bir insan gibi yetiştim. (Şöylesi, Mübeccel İzmirli)

> I was born in 1931 in Istanbul. Until I was 21, I had been living in our house up the hill in Kuzguncuk with my paternal grandmother and grandfather. That is why it seems like there is not such a big difference between my childhood and my adolescence. Our family was surrounded by aged relatives and neighbors and among them I was raised like an elderly person. (Interview to Mübeccel İzmirli, quoted. in Güngörmüş, "A'dan…" 4)

After her mother's death – which soon after was followed by her father's as well - Sevim became a model and at the same time she started working at a bookstore in Beyoğlu (Koçakoğlu 31). Two years later, in 1949, she got married to Orhan Borar, a man 20-years her senior, who was a violin player. In 1955 she gave birth to their son, A. Karaca Borar (33). Their marriage ended in 1958 (34).

During those years, Burak opened her own fashion store, where she sewed clothes for the Avant-garde of the time. Because of the ruined economy, she was forced to close it in 1961 (Güngörmüş, "A'dan…" 6).

In 1961 she got married to the artist Ömer Uluç and later on she gave birth to their daughter Elfe Uluç (Koçakoğlu 35-6). In 1976 she spent one and a half years in Nigeria with her husband because of his work, where she was particularly influenced by African art. She remained married to him until 1980, when she decided to file for divorce (37).

Sevim Burak had suffering from rheumatic heart disease since she was 10 years old. Due to carelessness and not heeding doctors' advice, she was hospitalized and operated on several times. While waiting to be operated on again, on December 30th in 1983, Sevim Burak released her last breath (54). Until the end of her life, she had a great passion for old furniture and antiques, which is reflected significantly in her works.

2.1.3. Her Works

Burak started to write stories while still working as a model, but she focused solely on her writing, particularly after she closed her fashion store in 1961 (32). Her works mainly consisted of short stories and theatrical plays. Also, she had been writing a novel entitled *Ford Mach I* for several years, and although she considered it her masterpiece, she left it unfinished.

Lastly, she left behind a great number of letters, most of them addressed to her son, which were published some years after her death, firstly with the title *Mach 1'dan Mektuplar* (Letters from the Mach 1), and in the latest edition as *Beni Deliler Anlar* (The insane ones understand me).

Her books of short stories are *Yanık Saraylar* (Burnt Palaces, 1965), *Afrika Dansı* (African Dance, 1976) and *Palyaço Ruşen* (Clown Rushen, 1993), while her theatrical plays are *Sahibinin Sesi* (His Master's Voice, 1982), *Everest My Lord* (1984) and *İşte Baş İşte Gövde İşte Kanatlar* (Here's the Head, Here's the Body, Here are the Wings, 1984).

2.1.4. An Overview of Her Works

> Bu dünyayı izleyenlere bir halt yok. Açıkgözler için hiçbir şey yazmayacağım. Dünyalarını kaybetmişler için… Kendim için yazacağım. Erken bunamışlara, hayalperestlere, çok acıklılara, bu dünyadan gitmek üzere hazırlık yapanlara yazacağım. Yalnız aklını kaybetmişlere bu dünyayı paylaşacağım. Aşktan aklını oynatanlara, şizofrenlere, aşırı romantiklere ve aşırı sadistlere. Delilere yazacağım. Aptallara da sevgim var. Ama delileri yaratıcı buluyorum… (Burak, *Beni Deliler Anlar* 24)

> There's nothing for those who watch this world. I won't write a thing for the greedy. I will write for those who have lost their worlds… for myself. I'll write for those who became senile early, the dreamers, the very pathetic ones, and those preparing to leave this world. I will share this world only with those who have lost their minds. Those who went crazy from love, the schizophrenics, the extreme romantics and the extreme sadists.

> I will write for the insane. I have love for the fools as well. But I find the insane creative… (Burak, *Beni Deliler Anlar* 24)

As Burak states in the text above (taken from a letter she wrote to a friend in 1967), she had no intention to write for those who didn't need the writing or the reading. In other words, it can be assumed that she would write for those who needed to be cured this way, or to those who deserved it, according to the writer's principles. And who deserved it? The pathetic, the miserable, the crazy ones; those who dedicated their lives to love or to their dreams; those who lost everything, who are getting ready to die. She would write to herself, because she is one of them and she is healing this way.

In her works, Burak focuses mainly on the lives of poor and lonely women, compelled to live under men's dominance; women with lost pasts or underestimated identities, impelled to identify with houses, in which they feel safe and imprisoned at the same time (Tokat "Sevim Burak'ın Tekinsiz Evlerinde Dolaşmak"); those not accepted by the outer world, who have no social status. Most of her characters belong to one of the minority groups of Turkey and, as she will reveal in some of her letters, they were generally people from her surroundings; people she had known from her childhood in Kuzguncuk, which is why she often uses the same names in her stories.

Moreover, there are many allusions to the Torah, the Jewish holy book, by which, as the author herself had said, she was greatly influenced; so much so, that she wanted to write it all over again (Burak, *Beni Deliler Anlar* 25). This shouldn't surprise us, if we think about her mother's religious views. Also, she strongly admired Dostoyevsky, Kafka, Joyce and Beckett.

The language and the style in which she chooses to write her works is attention-grabbing, as well. Sevim Burak's works are characterized by complicated syntax and word order. This style of writing is less an exception and more a norm for the period in which she was producing her work, since there were a lot of writers who had adopted the same style, like writers she admired, such as James Joyce. However, it can be argued that her writing – which is complicated as much as unique – was not an attempt to follow time's flow but a way to express herself; to accept her identity and to appease her sense of guilt towards her mother.

In some of Burak's works we come across some "Ottoman-French" linguistic elements, as Burak called it (Burak, *Beni Deliler Anlar* 157), or we may say 'broken' Turkish or, a phonetic language, as I will refer to it below. I am going to claim further on in this thesis, that these linguistic choices refer to her mother's language, the "secret language", as Güngörmüş calls it ("Sanatçının Annesinin Kızı Olarak Portresi."). This implies that this writing style was coming from a private, personal source.

Furthermore, in her writing there are many images, concealed or exposed icons, sketches and photographs, used in a way of knocking down the language, putting it in a position of less usefulness, making communication possible without it. Yet, it is full of metaphors and ambiguities.

However, the peculiar capital lettering, the horizontal or vertical arrangements and the punctuation marks found in her writing are still a mystery, an unanswered question, which, as Memet Fuat claims in his article "Sevim Burak Yazı Düzenlemeleri" (Sevim Burak's Writing Arrangements), is obviously related to the content and the way the writer wished the book to be read. According to these clues, she wanted to stress whose voice should be underlined more;

generally it is the men's voice. It could also be another sign of the 'broken' language that she was using.

Another thing that one may notice is that Burak gives the impression that she frequently conceals her issues regarding her identity as a half-minority and the pressure by her father's side that she probably noticed her mother was under, behind the politico-social circumstances of that time in Turkey. Indeed, the period to which she refers is a period during which the country was undergoing many politico-social changes. I feel, however, that Burak chooses that period as a background for her stories on purpose because it is not the period in which she lived, but mostly the period of her mother. One may interpret this as a sign that Burak indeed wrote for her mother. I will go further and claim that it is indisputable that she wrote for her mother but that such a choice was a profound way to reveal all her depressed thoughts indirectly and painlessly.

Finally, it is notable that Burak started to write stories right after her mother's death. Moreover, she published her first book –which is one of the most distinctive ones- after having given birth to her daughter, that is, after having a taste of a mother-daughter relationship. We cannot be sure if the stories were written before or after the birth of her daughter, but I believe that this relationship may have awakened memories of her own repressed mother-daughter relationship of her own, leading to her unique writing style.

2.2. Margarita Karapanou

2.2.1. Margarita L. and Margarita K.: the beginning of a lifelong relationship.

"It is important to introduce the previous generation's mother-daughter relationship into everything under consideration." (H. Freud 16)

Margarita Karapanou's writing was evidently influenced by her mother Margarita Lymberaki and the relationship they had had. Thus, a brief look at some biographical facts of those two women would be quite insightful. A big part of the following biographical description is taken by one of the author's interview to Evi Kiriakopoulou on the broadcast "Η Ζωή Είναι Αλλού" (Life is Elsewhere), her interview to Stavros Theodorakis and her personal diaries, published by the name *Η Ζωή Είναι Αγρίως Απίθανη: Ημερολόγια 1959-1979* (Life is wildly great: Diaries from 1959 to 1979).

Margarita Lymberaki was the daughter of Sappho Feksi, a woman writer. As we read in Nazou's article, Sappho divorced her husband and, since she was most likely busy with her career and her life in general, Margarita Lymberaki was raised by her parental grandfather (527). At a young age she traveled to France, where she learned French and became a writer herself. She wrote novels and plays in Greek and French. Later on, she married George Karapanos but she divorced him for being unfaithful, soon after she gave birth to their daughter Margarita Karapanou (527). Then, she left for Paris seeking a chance to make her dream come true: she was already an acknowledged writer and she believed that her place was in the artistic center of Western culture, among the international avant-garde. Thus, she left the eight-month baby to be raised by her mother in Greece (527). "I don't blame her for leaving. However, her absence as well as my father's, played a great role in my life" (interview with Kiriakopoulou).

Margarita Karapanou was born on July 17th in 1946 in Athens. She spent her childhood between Athens (with her paternal grandparents) and Paris (with her mother). Her father was mostly absent throughout her life but she remembered him as a prince, despite his betrayal of her and her mother, as well. In the interview mentioned before, Margarita confessed that she had hated Paris and all those nights that her mother had left her alone to go for dinner with friends.

She had been scared to death of the darkness and she had felt very lonely and stressed. Her childhood had been really painful; the only good thing she had to remember were the years with her grandmother, whose presence made her feel more like an ordinary girl of her age. After her grandmother's death, she was forced to move to Paris again, to live with her mother. Her mother, an attractive woman as she was, who used to hang out with the likes of Simon de Beauvoir and a coterie of literary and artistic celebrities such as Jean-Paul Sartre or Picasso, had to make a drastic change from the life she had lived up to that point for the sake of her new journey in motherhood. As Karapanou would confess later in the same broadcast, "I adored my mother and she adored me, too. But I still hold a grudge towards her; she shouldn't have been a mother," revealing her mother's inability to be a proper parent.

It is very enlightening to take a quick look at the letters that Lymberaki wrote to her daughter during the years that she was living in Paris and her daughter in Greece. These papers of correspondence were published some years after Lymberaki's death by the title *Δεν Μ' Αγαπάς, Μ' Αγαπάς: Τα Παράξενα της Μητρικής Αγάπης* (You Don't Love Me, You Love Me: The Bizarreness of Maternal Love), with Karapanou's permission. In this book, as is clear by the contents of her mother's letters, Karapanou was upset about her mother's absence. Lymberaki writes to her daughter often and hopes for frequent correspondence. Her 117 published letters cover a span of 12.5 years. When the correspondence began, Karapanou was 15 and living in Athens with her grandmother. We can read only Lymberaki's letters but despite the fact that Karapanou's replies are more or less indicated by Lymberaki's next letter, the reader is still missing the tone and the words she selected and the style. At least, we can imagine her thoughts when reading these letters. Of the points worth mentioning, it seems notable that the prologues of the letters are basically a complaint for being 'neglected' and an encouragement to her daughter

to write back. In fact, this is exactly the complaint that she is afraid of hearing from her daughter, so it is a way to forestall her, and the encouragement to write back seems to be addressed to herself.

Monday, November 9 [1964]

My girl Margarita,

I haven't received any letter from you yet. I know it is hard at the beginning.
I feel the same way as well and I postpone my writing each day,
while in everything I see or do I constantly think of you. (89)

Wednesday, February 24 1965

[….] The most terrible is that I couldn't write to you, either, but today I feel that a kind of dialogue has started to work again. I know that the problem is elsewhere and all these are not normal. I feel that it is not normal to be away from you, neither for you nor for me. I know that you miss me, sometimes a little, sometimes a lot, and that I miss you dreadfully all the time. I don't know truly why and how things are like this. (101)

Friday, March 26 1965

[…] As you see, I reply on the very same day. I always do so. So, why are you saying that I don't write to you often? Until some time ago, I

> was writing very often two or three letters… with no response! But I understand, I have the same difficulty myself sometimes when it comes to letters. Honey, I never believed that you love me less. Not even for a moment. How did an idea like this cross your mind? (105)

In that final letter, Lymberaki's fears come true and her daughter complains about the frequency of the letters. Karapanou is actually complaining about her mother's lack of affection. They need to convince one another of their love. But it seems that the signs of affection are never sufficient or satisfying.

Margarita ironically carried the same name as her mother, after the latter's wish. "That was a tragic mistake, I didn't have an identity" (interview with Kiriakopoulou). As a matter of fact, her mother in her first book had signed as Margarita Karapanou, using her husband's surname, since they were still married. "Can you believe it? That was insane!" commented Karapanou in the same interview, who throughout her career had been frequently asked about that book, as if it was hers.

Margarita Lymberaki died in 2001. Her death was followed by a Karapanou's book dedicated to her. "Towards my mother I have felt great anger and at the same time adoration" (interview to Theodorakis after the book's publication). During her whole life she had mixed and clashing feelings for her mother; hate and love, anger and pity, need for similarity and differentiation; always the two edges, the two poles.

2.2.2. A Close Friend: The Bipolar Disorder

At the age of 24 Karapanou's illness showed its initial signs and soon she was hospitalized for the first time due to bipolar disorder. That was a life-secret, which was first revealed in her autobiographical book *Ναι* (Yes) and her recently published personal diaries. Her mother had been her constant companion during her stay in the hospital. "When I got sick, my mother loved me at last" (interview with Kiriakopoulou). In some way, she had achieved what she had been craving the most: her mother's love and affection. She was hospitalized twice and spent the rest of her life close to psychiatrists and psychoanalysts. Moreover, she tried to commit suicide but she was persuaded against it at the last minute by her dog (interview with Kiriakopoulou). She suffered with bipolar disorder until the end of her life.

In the interview that she gave to Theodorakis she confessed that she would have been "saved" if she hadn't moved to Paris to live with her mother. "If only I had stayed with my grandmother… ".

2.2.3. Adulthood and Death

Margarita Karapanou studied cinema and philosophy in Paris and became a nursery school-teacher through distant-learning education in London. She got married but her marriage was short-lived. There are no further details regarding her marriage but the author admitted that the first part of the book *Rien ne vas plus* is about her husband and she affirms the information given there (Tsalikoglou and Karapanou 178-9). Her husband was a bisexual veterinarian who committed suicide in an overdose of pills for dogs sometime after they divorced. She never had a family of her own but till the last years of her life she continued to say she wanted at least to

adopt a child from Africa and give him what she had been deprived of: love and affection (interview with Kiriakopoulou).

However, she had owned many dogs during her lifetime, which she loved deeply and treated as if they were human beings.

Margarita had been suffering from pneumonopathy. That brought her end, on December 2, 2008.

2.2.4. Her Works

Margarita became a writer herself, like her mother and her maternal grandmother. She started to write at the age of 21. She wrote 6 novels: *Η Κασσάνδρα και ο λύκος* (Cassandra and the Wolf, 1974), *Ο Υπνοβάτης* (The Sleep-Walker, 1985), *Rien ne vas plus* (1993), *Ναι* (Yes, 1999), *Μαμά* (Mom, 2004) and Lee και Lou (Lee and Lou, 2003). Among them, the novel *Ο Υπνοβάτης* (The Sleep-Walker) won in 1988 the award of Best Foreign Language Book in Paris. Also, she co-wrote the book *Μήπως;* (I wonder if..? 2006), with her friend and psychologist Fotini Tsalikoglou, which includes 32 mornings of conversation over coffee between them. In 2008, some days after her death, her private diaries, by the title *Η ζωή είναι αγρίως απίθανη: Ημερολόγια 1959-1979* (Life is wildly great: Diaries from 1959 to 1979), and 117 letters that her mother had sent to her, by the title Δεν *μ'αγαπάς, μ'αγαπάς: Τα παράξενα της Μητρικής Αγάπης* (You don't love me, you love me: The Bizarreness of Maternal Love), were published. She was also preparing a play based on mother-daughter relationships, where their relationship would be incestuous (*Η ζωή είναι…* 323), as well as a "magnificent thriller", as she was a big fan of thrillers. Sadly, those works were never finished or published.

2.2.5. An Overview

All of Karapanou's books reflect her experiences and are quite autobiographical in nature. Even though they are written in Greek, her mother-tongue, there are many phrases written directly in French, the language her mother used to write the letters she had been sending to her daughter during the years of their separation. The mother figure permeates every part of them, since they mainly revolve around the maternal character. Among the author's published books, the most enlightening one in association to her relationship to her mother is *Μαμά* (Mom). It is a book dedicated to her mother, as it was written after her mother's death.

Karapanou's style is a very simple one. It is almost a style that a child might choose. It is that simplicity that made her works difficult, because the reader is trying to trace the hidden meanings. The writer was aware of that and in her interviews she insisted upon the easiness of her works. Largely, the message that she is passing is direct and repeated.

Her writing was a "two-horses race", as she used to say. One horse was the consciousness and the other was the unconsciousness. Sometimes, she let one horse have priority and other times the other. "And that is a good writing", according to Karapanou (interview with Kiriakopoulou).

3. Anne-Marie Mendil in Sevim Burak

3.1. An unacceptable lineage, a hidden identity

> Küçücük bir kızken burnum çok havadaydı, şimdi yerlere, yerin dibine indi. Yahudilerden, annemden utanırdım, nefretle karışık… Annem hep bir gün anlayacaksın der, ağlardı… İşte şimdi bu bir avuç Yahudi, iki tanecik ev, bana anamdan kalanlar… Onun için yazdım Yehova'yı… Gerçek olduğu için gün geçtikçe daha da anlamlar kazanıyor… (Burak, *Beni Deliler Anlar* 27)

> When I was a little girl I was very arrogant, now I am more than modest. I used to be ashamed of the Jews, of my mother and that feeling was mixed with hate… My mother always said "one day you will understand" and cried… Now a handful of Jews, a couple of houses are what's left to me from my mum. I wrote Yehova for her… Because it is real, it gains more meaning as time goes by… (Burak, *Beni Deliler Anlar* 27)

Sevim Burak flirts a lot in her writings with minorities, oppressed and lonely women and identity. I assert that this is a twist to her mother and an acceptance of her identity through her writing. In the following texts we may observe it clearly.

In the story "Sedef Kakmalı Ev" (House Inlayed with Mother-of-Pearl) included in *Yanık Saraylar*, through flashbacks, we witness the story of a young girl from Ioannina (Yanya), named Nurperi, who is taken by four brother soldiers to their house in order to take care of them. Evidently, she belonged to a minority and she spoke "the language of Yanya mixed with Turkish" (*Yanık Saraylar* 12). It is vague whether the older brother, Ziya Bey, eventually became

her husband or not. She stayed with those brothers for forty years. One by one, they died but until the end she was waiting for them to keep their promise: to leave her the ownership of the house. Ziya Bey, who was the last one alive among the brothers, died without keeping his promise. As "they come" to take the house from her, after the funeral of the last brother, she refuses to let it happen. She cuts her hair "alagarson" as a final effort, in a symbolic way of disclaiming her feminine side; besides, it is a men's world. She screams to Ziya Bey for help but he doesn't hear her. So she sticks to the bottom of a stew pan and becomes part of it.

I believe that the origins of Nurperi, is a reference to her mother and her being a member of a minority. Also the mixed language in which the woman was speaking recalls the way that Anne-Marie had used the Turkish language.

The story "Yanık Saraylar" (Burnt Palaces) in the same-titled book is the story of a woman who, by means of some objects and her memories, unveils her childhood to a man that she admires. She was the daughter of an Armenian woman and a Muslim man but both her parents had drowned while they were passing through the river and their feet were tied to one another with iron chains. The baby had been rescued and was delivered in a basket to a rich aunt from the paternal family, who lived in a palace.

The female character in the story is described at the beginning of the story, and the narrative style continues as follows:

YEŞİLKÖY	YEŞİLKÖY
YOL	ROAD
KADIN	WOMAN

Every time the woman is mentioned, she is accompanied by the word Yeşilköy, which indicates probably the place in which the woman was born or lived, and the word "road", which

reveals perhaps an effort to escape; but this effort is fruitless. It is an origin – and probably her mother's origin again – that she is trying to repress, even if she knows it is hard to escape. All words are in capitals, indicating their importance. Moreover, it is characteristic that the word "woman" is the last one, as if its importance is the least, whereas the word Yeşilköy is the first and consequently the most important. Finally, the main character, that woman, is not mentioned by a name, as if her sole identity is her gender and her descent (Yeşilköy), followed by a tendency to leave (road).

She then goes deeper into her life story and confesses that she used to wash her hands 8 times before bedtime, how clean her bed was and how "untouched" her toys were. She goes on by saying that "AİLE KUTSAL BİR SIRDIR […] BAZI SIRLAR AİLENİN KUTSALLIĞINI ARTIRIR. / FAMILY IS A HOLY SECRET […] SOME SECRETS INCREASE THE HOLINESS OF THE FAMILY" (34). That implies that the girl had somehow the feeling that she had been contaminated and she had to clean it up, to clean up the dirt and the sense of guilt. She was hiding a secret, which seemed to be known by the family.

I dare to assume that this could be the secret that the Burak family kept from those in their close surroundings: the descent of the mother. In this short story the mother is presented as an Armenian, which is not unexpected, since, in her biography (as I mentioned), she seemed to prefer Armenians to Jews. Besides, the maternal figure in this story belongs again to a minority, while the paternal side is Ottoman, and the way they meet death recalls the tragic end of Armenians in 1915. This story reflects the difficulties and differences among people with diverse religious and ethnic origins. In the story, the mother is not allowed to live; she is killed by the community –a community to which her husband probably belongs. He was drowned as well, which is particularly confusing, since he was presented as Ottoman. Moreover, confusing is the

relational title between the girl and the aunt; the Turkish noun "teyze" means the aunt from the maternal side, while it is supposed to be an aunt from the Ottoman paternal family. This confusion probably reflects the identity issues that the author had personally experienced and I assume that she was particularly muddled about the role that paternal family played in this identity's development. She writes: "HAYATA NASIL BAŞLADIM? NERDEN GELDİM? / HOW DID I BEGIN THIS LIFE? FROM WHERE DID I COME?" (35). She doubts her parents and their origins. The aunt in the story could be the writer's grandmother from the paternal side, next to whom the writer was raised: it is a relative from the paternal side but still symbolizes a maternal figure. This confusion is expressed by the title "teyze". Also, the palace may represent the big house that Burak's grandmother had lived in and where she herself spent the most of her childhood.

Finally, the woman burns the palace and her aunt. This is a symbolic action, which can be interpreted as a struggle to find her real identity and to fight for it. She burns whatever she had as family up until that time. This is a potential allusion to Judaism; the whole story recalls the most important story in the Torah – a story that was fascinating even to Sigmund Freud –; the story of Moses. Moses had been put by his parents in a box and then into the river in order to survive, since Pharaoh was killing all the Jewish boys as he considered all Jews the enemy. Pharaoh's sister rescued and adopted the baby, despite knowing his real identity. The boy enjoyed a life in wealth, among his two identities. Years later, Moses took revenge on the family who had saved and adopted him for torturing his biological family and the Jewish people in general. Similarly, the woman in this short story burns her aunt and her palace – and whatever they signify, such as the paternal family, the law, the government, wealth – for having killed her maternal family, as Burak's mother and her family were, in a way, 'vanished' by her father's side. Throughout this

short story, Sevim Burak 'burns' the paternal side and chooses the maternal side over them. She is able to give her mother and the rest of her family a history through her writing, as Moses did for Jewish people. The decision to die at the end of the story is an action of catharsis; through this symbolic death the author experiences her own renaissance, her revival, after having accepted her past.

In the same book, we find the story "Ah Ya Rab Yehova" that the writer dedicated to her mother. It seems to be her mother's personal story through Burak's eyes: A Jewish woman falls in love with a Muslim man, though she is already engaged to a Jew, and gives birth to a child, after a painful labor. The literary birth is a month before Burak's own birthday and the place is Kuzguncuk, the place where she spent her whole childhood. The story begins with the death of the mother, who was not married to the baby's father, Bilal Bey. The whole story uncoils mainly through the man's perspective as if written in his diary. Although he mentions his father's death, his son's birth, and other supposed-to-be emotional events, there are no feelings in this diary. His speech is 'wooden', and is a cold, almost impersonal descriptions of the facts. It is clear that the man doesn't want the baby. He cares mostly about his own life, his leisure and his paternal family and spends little or no time dwelling on the Jewish woman. At the end, the woman and her relatives are burned – inside the burning house – by the man, who felt threatened by them. The day of the fire is not random; it is forty days after the baby's birth, when all the relatives come to see it. It is also the day when the couple is supposedly going to give an end to their relationship, as it was previously decided in a fight that they had.

As Seher Özkök points out in her unpublished Master's thesis by the name "A Language and Content Oriented Analysis Concerning the Stories of Sevim Burak", in this story, the woman's date of birth is not mentioned, as if it is of no importance, though her death is described

in full detail (121). The woman asks not to be buried in the Jewish cemetery but to be left lying down. Here it is clear that she could not be buried in a Muslim cemetery either, since she was not a Muslim herself and she was not even married to the child's father whom she loved. This wish implies firstly that she is not worthy of being buried properly, because of the "sin" that she committed according to the Jewish community, and secondly, that she has no origins any more, no place to live or die. She is one of the main characters of the story but still it seems that her life is not worth extended description. Yet, her death, which is probably a kind of catharsis for the writer, is a focal point.

As Güngörmüş informs us in her Master's Thesis, the author's actual mother also wished not to be buried in a Jewish cemetery but in a Muslim one, next to her Muslim husband (103). Of course, she had the opportunity to ask for something like this, since she had become a Muslim herself.

The importance of "Ah Ya Rab Yehova" is also implied by the fact that on this story was based a play called *Sahibinin Sesi* (His Master's Voice), which was published 17 years after the book *Yanık Saraylar* (Burnt Palaces). In that play, we watch the same story, yet the double identities are more striking and distributed almost equally to all characters. Bilal stole the identity of a deceased former soldier for avoiding the army; Zembul changed her Jewish name to a Muslim one, Sümbül, because, as Bilal thinks, the first name brought loss, while the second one would bring benefits. For the same reason, her aunt, her mother and their Jewish neighbor changed their names to Muslim ones. Moreover, Bilal, despite being a Muslim, delves into seeking relief in the Torah, when he is in pain. These blurred identities give rise to suspicion to the reader in general, as well as to Bilal. He is afraid that someone will betray him and that his neighbors and all Zembul's surroundings are his enemies, thus, leading to paranoia. In his effort

to rescue himself from this anxiety and the sense of guilt, Bilal attempts to burn the house with 40 kerosene cans, the 40th day after his son's birth, when all the Jewish relatives and neighbors came to congratulate for the baby. However, it is ambiguous whether he succeeds in his plan and who – if anyone – is burned to death.

These two works undoubtedly refer to her mother and her life as seen from Burak's eyes and it might be 'reparation', in Melanie Klein's terms; reparation to the damage that she caused, reparation to her memories concerning her mother, through writing. The tendency to make reparation is inseparably linked with feelings of guilt towards the love object; reparation is associated with mourning and it is a defense to overcome guilt and mourning (Klein, *Envy and Gratitude* 74).

The two names, the two religions, the multicultural environment around the house are the main identity issues that Burak points out here. The fire started from the father is once again a 'burning' of the maternal origins and the two identities.

The last short story of the book *Yanık Saraylar*, was first published by the name "İki Şarkı" (Two Songs) and later was changed to "Ölüm Saati" (Death's Hour). In this thesis I prefer the first title, despite using a recent edition of the book. I claim that this story encloses the writer's relationship to her mother, though in a more concealed way, and the title refers to the symbiotic relationship of the infant and the mother, during the first months of the infant's life (Chorodow 61). Based on that suggestion, I will consider all the characters of this story who have no precise gender, as women. More specifically, I claim that they are Burak and her mother.

At the beginning of the story we follow this dialogue:

"Babanız sağ mıdır?	Is your father alive?
Evet – Babam hala hayattadır" (85)	Yes – My father is still living.

This dialogue gives us the impression that the woman is disappointed by her father being "still" alive or that someone else should be in his place, but s/he isn't. That other person could be her mother. As we know from Burak's biography her mother died first.

Then we learn about a separation that took place in 1930, in August. According to the biographical facts that we have, Burak was born on June 26, 1931. But Koçakoğlu has some doubts about that. She says that in Burak's passport the year of birth appears to be 1930. Moreover, on the back of a photo from Burak's childhood is written the date 16 June 1930 (25). We cannot be sure about the date of Burak's precise birthday but it seems almost certain that it was at the beginning of the summer. The chronology of separation mentioned in the short story, might be her weaning, the first separation of the mother and the infant.

In the whole story we observe a death which is about to come or a death that came already. In addition to that, two individuals are very close to each other, probably with a family bond, as the one is departing and the other one is inheriting everything:

Benim yerime O imza etmeye yetkilidir	She is authorized to sign on my behalf
Benim adıma her ne varsa O'nundur	Whatever I have is hers
[…] Gidiyorum	I am going
Yerime O'nu bırakıyorum (87)	I am leaving her in my place

The inheritance that the one who goes leaves to the other one it is not necessarily money or estates, but a heritage, a history, an identity. And to be left "in one's place" is a position of serious responsibility, because it is linked with the unfulfilled wishes or the unforgettable sorrows of the deceased.

Also, there are familiar places and names, like the grandmother's big house and the writer's name, coming out from a familiar person's voice, maybe the mother's: "Etrafı taş

duvarlı bir köşk içersindeyim – Orda oturuyorsun – Biliyorum – […] Sensin – Sevim'sin – Karanlıktasın" (87). " I am inside the big house with the stone walls – You are sitting there – I know – It's you – You 're Sevim – You're in the dark".

What is characteristic about this story are the quick interchanges between the grammatical persons: I, you and he/ she: "Sonra yatmışım – Doktor Zıpçıyan gelmiş O'nu muayene etmiş – Öbür çocuklar oynarken O çocuk pencerenin önünde kalmış – Az değil – Tam dört ay kaldım yatakta" (87) "Then [I have been told that] I lied down – Doctor Zıpçıyan came and examined her apparently – While the other kids were playing, she stayed in front of the window [as I have been told] – It wasn't a short time – I stayed in bed exactly four months." It is like the author distances herself and watches herself by means of the things that she has been told.

> O sene Muhacırlar da gelmiş – Bakmak istemiş Muhacırlara – Yara tamamıyla geçmemiş – Bir ağrı başlamış O'nda – Hem de ne ağrı – Artık o ağrıya dayanamadım – Hep bağırdım – Hem de nasıl – Doktor gelmiş iğne yapmış O'na – Bir daha da kalkmamış – o taş duvarlı köşkün içinde kalmış – Nerdeyim? – O nereye gitti? Sonu mu geldi? Sargılarımı çıkarmışlar – Çok bağırmış – o taş duvarlı köşkte – hep kendi sesimi duyuyorum – (87-8)

> That year [I have been told that] the Turkish immigrants came, too – She wanted to look at the Turkish immigrants [as I have been told] – The wound was not healed completely [as I have been told] – She started feeling in pain [as I have been told] – And what a pain – I couldn't stand the pain any more – I was yelling all the time – And how – The doctor came and gave her an injection [as I have been told] – And she didn't get up again [as I

have been told] – she stayed in that big house with the stone walls [as I have been told] – Where am I – Where did she go? Did her end come? – They removed my bandages [as I have been told] – She yelled a lot [as I have been told] – in that big house with the stone walls – I hear constantly my own voice –

In this passage we observe the mixture of two grammatical persons: she and I. If we look carefully, we will see that it is as if the same story is told by two different individuals, the one who actually experienced it and the other who had been recounting it. Or it could be the one who experienced it literally and the other who embraced the memories and the pain, as if they were hers. In addition to that, the Turkish immigrants are mentioned; let's not forget that Burak's mother and her family were immigrants; though they were not Turkish. This could be 'reparation' in her mother's past. Then the narrator doesn't know where she is and where the other person went. She is thinking that the other person's end came. And then the death again: "Saati yaklaşıyor – Saati gelmiş – Ortalıkta yok – Kendi kendini çağırıyor – Sevim – Sevim – Sevim" (88) "Her time is coming – Her time came – She is not around here – She is calling herself – Sevim – Sevim – Sevim". Someone is about to die and calls Sevim. As we now from Güngörmüş, Burak's mother died after saying to her daughter "Sevim, I'm dying". It is likely that she called her daughter's name some times for help. So, that could be a repressed memory of her mother's death. Yet, the person dying is Sevim herself, since "she is calling herself". So maybe the identification goes so deep that Sevim fantasizes of dying instead of or with her mother.

"O çocuk nerde – Zamanı yok – Geleceği yok – Geçmişi yok – Bu gece ölüyor – Gerçeğe bu kadar yakınlaşmışken O'nu kim tutabilir" (88). "Where is that child? – She has no time – She

has no future – She has no past – She is dying tonight – Since she has come that close to the truth, who can restrain her?" In this excerpt, we realize that death is indeed Sevim's and the person talking is in all probability her mother. Sevim is still a kid who has no future, because she is dying, and no past because of her identity; just like her mother, she shouldn't have a past of her own. And she is very close to the truth; to her mother's truth, to the identification with her. Once again in Burak's writing, death is a symbolic action which leads to a revival.

"[…] Ben bir çocuktum – İçinize düştüm – Sizinle çevriliyim – Siz mi beni kurtaracaksınız – Gerçeğe bu kadar yakın bir köşkte – Gerçeğe bu kadar uzak" (88). "[…] I was a child – I fell among you – I am surrounded by you – Are you the ones who are going to save me – In a big house this close to the truth – This far away from the truth". At this point the writer blames her family for not protecting her and letting her suffer in between her two identities. Those two identities were fed by the place they had lived, as well: the big house is very close to the modest houses of the Jews – the truth – but still it looks so far away.

"Bugün çok üzgün – Hep yatıyor – Hep yatıyor – Hiç kalkmaz o yerinden bir daha da – Çok üzgünüm bugün" (89). "Today she is very sad – She lies down constantly – She lies down constantly – And she is not going to get up again – I am very sad today". Finally we observe the identification, by means of an 'oneness': I am good, you are good, I am sad, you are sad and vice versa. The sadness refers to an ultimate grief for the mother's deaths: the real one and the one from which she had suffered throughout her life by being forced to 'kill' her identity and adopt a foreign one.

The title "Two Songs" alludes to the two women, the mother and the daughter; for changing places, for being the same, for being one again.

When it comes to her book *Afrika Dansı* (African Dance), one may see in it a lot of biographical facts, concealed or not. The title of the short story "Osmanlı Bankası" (Ottoman Bank) may refer to Burak's mother, who had indeed worked at the Ottoman Bank before her marriage, as mentioned in her biography. In the first section of this story, on page 56, we see the following words:

ÜZÜLME ANNEANNE

AYNI SENSİN

BAŞINDA BAŞÖRTÜ

TAM ÇENESİNİN ALTINDA DÜĞÜMLÜ

MÜSLÜMAN OLMUŞ

İCADİYE CADDESİNDE YÜRÜYOR

AYSEL KUDRET AYŞE HANIM

DON'T WORRY GRANDMA

SHE IS JUST LIKE YOU

ON HER HEAD A HEADSCARF

BUTTONED UP UNDER HER CHIN

SHE BECAME A MUSLIM [AS THEY TOLD ME]

SHE IS WALKING IN İCADİYE STREET

[AS] AYŞEL KUDRET, MRS AYŞE

It seems that Burak tries to reassure her grandmother that her daughter still looks like her, she is not a stranger. She is not Jewish, she became a Muslim with a Muslim name and she is also dressed properly, according to the Muslim standards, so she is no longer distinct from the other women when she walks on the streets. However, we have the sense that she is really saying "But she is still your daughter, her name is quite close to what it was, nothing changed". Even her conversion to Islam is not an unquestionable fact, and that is indicated by the grammatical tense used. It is important at that point for the writer to persuade the mother that her daughter is identical to her, as a daughter should be, according to her words. It is as if Burak is addressing her own mother and trying to console her for their resemblance; a resemblance that she had been resisting during her mother's life. And she goes on:

PSI PSI PSI	PSI PSI PSI
GEL BENİM YAHUDİ KEDİM	COME MY JEWISH CAT
ZAVALLI YAHUDİ KEDİLER (57)	POOR JEWISH CATS

The personification of the cats as Jewish is not random. Further on we watch the cats on fire (59). As Seher Özkök notes in her MA thesis, the burning cats in combination with a reference to the Germans and the World War II that follows in the same page, lead our thoughts to the Holocaust (196). Moreover, the grandchild's hair is on fire, too, lit by her grandmother's lamp of kerosene. And those two are mixed with one another: "yanık saç kokusu [….] yanık kedi kokusu" (59) "Smell of burning hair […] smell of burning cat". The comment on the burning Jewish cats is clearer now but what about the grandchild's hair –which leads to the head? I believe that the connection between those two is the heritage of a 'burned' nation's identity,

passed on to Sevim Burak through the maternal side of her family, which baffled and tortured her all her life. This statement becomes strengthened by the phonetic alphabet used for the first time in this story, representing her mother's voice, as examined in the following subchapter.

In the same book, we also find the story "Altıncı Vay" (Sixteenth Alas), where the narrator (who I assert is the writer herself) and her maternal grandmother get on a steamship for a short trip. Her grandmother's name is Liza, which indicates a non-Muslim woman. On the steamship there are also some other Jewish travelers (68). There is a storm, during which each wave is expressed as "vay", and their lives are threatened. According to the narrator, this storm is her paternal grandfather's punishment to her grandmother, for being late in finding him in the next world. Let's now remember something from the biographical facts of Burak. Her father was working on boats, just like his own father. So boats are considered as paternal ground, the place that the father rules. The maternal grandmother and the paternal grandfather are supposed to be a couple in this story and that signifies Burak's mother's connection to her father. The grandfather enjoys the storm and does nothing to help his wife and his granddaughter. As a matter of fact, he is the one who caused it. And the question I want to pose here is this: Does Burak once again indirectly blame her father and his family for her mother's modest position in the family and her divided identity? I believe that she does. She considers her father responsible for not protecting her mother, for not supporting her regarding her lineage and her religion and for not rescuing Sevim from this blurred environment. Burak needs to blame someone for not identifying with her mother during her childhood, for denying her similarities to her, for not accepting her and for being embarrassed of her instead. As Klein points out, "in order to identify strongly with another person, it is essential to feel that there is within the self enough common ground with that object"

(Klein, *Envy and Gratitude* 173). Burak was deprived from that feeling, due to her paternal family's attitude.

In the book *Everest My Lord* we come across another clouded identity; that of the main character Everest My Lord. As Tokat points out in her article, we are not sure about the lineage of Everest My Lord and this confusion stems once again from a woman: his mother. The reader wonders whether Everest My Lord is the son of a pasha or just the son of a housekeeper. Once again the heritage coming from the father is superior, whereas the one deriving from the mother is disgraceful. His name indicates an aristocratic lineage, but as Burak proved to us many times before, names could be quite misleading or could unveil only the half of the truth.

All these different lineages and identities in Burak's stories and plays, as I tried to show above, were springing from her mother's unacceptable Jewish origins, and were usually given away through language, as we will study further on.

3.2. The Mother's Language

In all these stories and plays studied above, the woman belongs to a minority group and that's why she is different. This is shown from her attitude, her external appearance and her 'broken' Turkish. Moreover, in some of the stories the mother is killed by the Muslim father. As Levent Açlan states in his article "Kendini Yazmak, Ötekini Aramak" (Writing About One's Self, Looking for the Other), Sevim Burak 'kills' her mother in her works and then she grieves through embracing her mother's identity. The way she used the language is evidence of this.

As Nilüfer Güngörmüş claims in her presentation entitled "Sanatçının Annesinin Kızı Olarak Portresi" (The Artist's Portrait as her Mother's Daughter), when we mention the mother

tongue we are actually talking about the father's language. The mother's actual language is passed from the mother to the daughter and remains a "secret" language.

Also, in this "secret" language there are semiotic elements. The semiotic is related with the rhythms, tones, and movement, passed by the mother to the child, since the first object the humans associate with these is the maternal body. These semiotic elements will always menace the symbolic language but it will also give to words life and importance, as well as a more poetic and lyric character (Kristeva 89-136).

"Annede gizlenen kızda kendini gösterir" / "What is hidden in mother, shows itself in the daughter" wrote Sevim Burak in her novel *Ford Mach I*. As it will be shown in the stories below, Burak's writing style derives from this secret language passed on by her mother, a poor speaker of Turkish.

In the story "Sedef Kakmalı Ev", Nurperi speaks Turkish mixed with her mother-tongue, like Anne-Marie did. Moreover, when she felt under great threat, she was repeating a phrase, which is meaningless in Turkish, probably taken from her mother-tongue: "Anferudunicihanımanevi" (Burak, *Yanık Saraylar* 15).

In the short story "Yanık Saraylar", the main character begs her aunt to give her the cup that she holds in her hands and hurts with her nails, but her aunt doesn't hear her. So she starts to speak in a language that her paternal aunt doesn't understand. It looks more like a stammer than a language. And that kept on going for forty days.

The paternal aunt is not in a position to understand that language which springs from the inside and refers to the mother's language, as described before. Moreover, this stammer goes on for forty days, which refers to a period of mourning, according to the Islamic and Christian customs.

Also the Baron Bahar seems not to comprehend what the woman says in some points, which is why his responses are irrelevant. From this stems the idea that women's language is incoherent to men, because it is passed by the mother to the daughter only.

In the story "Ah Ya Rab Yehova" the narration is divided into two completely different styles: at the beginning, where Zembul's last minutes with her brother and her death are narrated, we come across several emotions. On the contrary, the rest of the narration is realized through Bilal's notebook, where there is a complete lack of feelings. This indicates again the difference between the men's and the women's language, the mother's language and the mother-tongue.

We observe a similar situation in the story "İki Şarkı": a woman asks desperately the time but a man gives her constantly false answers. All the replies that he gives to her questions regarding time and space are short and misleading, and apparently he is mocking her.

Besides, in this story one may notice the mother's and daughter's voice embroiled by means of identification and presented as one.

In the short story "Osmanlı Bankası" of the book *Afrika Dansı* the written language is of particular interest. The writer uses, for the very first time, a style that will generally predominate in her following stories: an alphabet similar to the phonetic one. The phonetic alphabet is the phonetic representation of human speech. An excerpt of this story from page fifty-seven can be read below: "Zavalle kediler her gun sardela baleghe tchalmak itchun bouraya guéliyorler" is Burak's phonetic representation for "Zavallı kediler her gün sardalye balığı çalmak için buraya geliyorlar", which means "Poor cats they come here every day in order to steal sardines". If we compare carefully the prototype and the transcription, we will notice two things: one, this alphabet addresses to someone who can read but doesn't know the correct pronunciation rules of this specific language or it is written by someone who is able to communicate in this language

orally but doesn't know how to write, so he or she writes Turkish with the Latin alphabet, in a way that he or she can read the difficult letters, those that do not exist in Latin, such as ö, ü, ç etc.; and two, sometimes the same phonetic sounds are expressed by different letters or vice versa. Moreover, this type of writing is used generally in some of her works when a Jew is supposedly talking or when there is a reference to a Jew. That leads us to think that this is Burak's mother's voice that we hear who, as we know, had an outlandish accent in Turkish. This language reminds us of the "secret" language described before.

In the same book, we also find the story "Altıncı Vay" (Sixteenth Alas), where we meet again the same writing styles in many parts of the story. Here is an excerpt from page sixty-nine:

> Geldi ON DÖRDÜNCÜ VAY
>
> Bir katch zumrud kupé guestérin
>
> Firouzecini daha severim
>
> THE FOURTEENTH ALAS came
>
> Show [us] some emerald earrings
>
> I prefer more the turquoise

The second and the third line are partially changed, while the proper text should be "Birkaç zümrüt küpe gösterin/ firuzesini daha severim". Burak referred to that style as 'French-Ottoman' language, as mentioned in her biographical facts. Hence, according to the writer it is the mother's language: Anne Marie was a very good speaker of French and she was trying to speak in Ottoman-Turkish.

As Seher Özkök notices in her MA thesis, the phrases written with capital letters belong to the male world, while those in small letters are coming out of a woman's mouth (200). Thus, here we have a woman who speaks poor Turkish, just like Burak's own mother. And according to the story, it is her maternal grandmother who speaks, the Jewish mother of Anne-Marie.

In the stories "Ayakkabıcı Bürjeni" (The shoemaker Bürjeni) and "Terzi Kalivrusi" (The Tailor Kalivrusi) of the same book we come across the same writing style by means of the phonetic alphabet, which indicates the voice of a foreign woman: Anne-Marie's. And again, in the book *Palyaço Ruşen* (The Clown by the Name Rusen) we find the same writing style in the short story "Ajda Pekkan", which is named after the famous singer, and contains the lyrics of a song. However, the name of this story could be "Two Strangers", as the name of the song ("İki Yabancı"). I believe that this song wasn't selected aimlessly, but because it refers to the love of two strangers (or "foreigners", as the word "yabancı" can be translated) and also because it was first released abroad in English and then it was reconstructed in Turkish. Finally, since it is written again via the phonetic alphabet, it is again the mother's voice. Accordingly, we observe the same in the short stories "Eski Ateş" (Old Fire), "Seyahat Esnasında" (During the Journey) and "Takvim Altı Yazıları" (Texts in the Calendar) of the same book.

Last but not least, Burak's play *Everest My Lord,* gives the reader the impression that it is all based on teaching Turkish to someone who doesn't know the language. In this work, Burak uses a method used before, as well: she hides her identity issues and family issues behind the politico-social circumstances of that time's Turkey, so she expresses herself in an indirect and 'harmless' way. This play begins with some writings related to the alphabet in an imaginary blackboard, and with the alphabet itself. Later on, we watch the Everest My Lord himself teach his daughters and their boyfriends the new alphabet. Apparently, Burak alludes to the period

after 1928, when the new Latin alphabet took the place of the Ottoman script and people tried to learn it. But Burak doesn't stop here. In this play, we come across 11 verbs' conjugation in no logical order. The selected verbs are: bilmek (to know), bitmek (to come to an end/ to be a physical wreck), tükenmek (to be used up/ to be exhausted), anlatmak (to explain/ to describe), vazgeçmek (to give up), çıkmak (to go out), ağlamak (to cry), yorulmak (to get tired) and anlamak (to understand). If we look at their meanings we will notice that they have all either an educational (bilmek, anlatmak, anlamak) or a negative tone; it seems that the chosen educational method or the excuse for learning arises from an obligation and not from an actual desire to acquire the languages. Generally in these cases, one never really conquers the educational subject that he is trying to, parallel to the outcome of Anne-Marie's effort to learn Turkish.

Sevim Burak pacified her sense of guilt for not accepting her mother and for being embarrassed of her through her writing. It was her writing that saved her, as she had admitted in a letter to her son: "Aslında san'at yapmak büyücülük gibi bir şeydir. Seni her şeyden kurtarır mutlu kılar, ufacık bir şiir yazsan bütün dünyanın anlamı odur" (Burak, *Beni Deliler Anlar* 58). "Actually, to make art is something like magic. It rescues you from everything, it makes you happy, if you write just a small poem, it becomes your everything." Through her writing Burak heard her mother's voice and identified with her; and only then was she set free. Stelzer points out that language had always been a central issue to the psychoanalytic procedure because "the word in its representation transforms the unconscious into preconscious. Nothing more and nothing less than the process in which the cure-transformation is based" (1). It is obvious that Burak was cured by means of her writing.

That reminds us of Beckett's writing. As we know from her letters and from the short story "Afrika Dansı", Sevim Burak admired Beckett deeply and she was particularly affected by

him. His writings, which were mostly in French although Beckett's mother-tongue was English, was abound with allusions to mothers. Beckett had a very problematic relationship with his mother and that probably was inherent in his works. In an analysis about Samuel Becket's writing, Patrick Casement states that Samuel Becket could only return to English once he felt freed from his mother and that was accomplished after her death. And it was only after returning to his mother-tongue that he finally found himself in his writing.

Similarly, Sevim Burak when freed from her mother's presence was finally able to face her painful childhood through her stories and find atonement by means of the secret language of the mother. Furthermore, it was through that language and her writing that she finally succeeded in identifying with her mother, but only after the latter's death. In psychoanalysis this is known as identification after object loss and sometimes women begin to identify with their mothers in such an extent that they virtually turn into her (H. Feud 65). Burak's turn to her mother is clearer in her letters to her son. It is apparent that she is still confused about her identity but she accepts at last her Jewish origins. In pages 79-80 of the book *Beni Deliler Anlar* she writes to her son (30/11/80) that she is sure that he is doing something worthwhile in America; after all, he has Jewish blood. She asks him why he doesn't go to the Jewish community there to say that his mother is Jew. She probably believes that the Jewish community will help him and he will do something advantageous. And she goes on by saying that he wastes his time among "our people" ('bizimkiler' in Turkish). She calls the Turks hers and her son's people, that is to say, people that are like her, of the same nation and descent. But it was just right before that she named herself Jew, as well as her son. In page 116, in another letter to her son, almost 6 months after the previous, she praises the Jewish families about how much hardworking they are and rich, that they have a lot of opportunities and they learn easily two languages. Finally, she is reconciled

with her mother's origins. It is not any more a reason to be ashamed of; on the contrary, Jewish people have many things to be proud of. Just like her; because finally she identifies with her mother and acquires her identity.

3.3. The Symbolic Role of Furnishings and Houses

"EŞYALARI SEVİYORUM. İNSANLARI SEVMİYORUM. ÇÜNKÜ: İnsanları sevmek için onlara ayıracak bol vaktim olmadı" (Burak, *Beni Deliler Anlar* 147). "I LOVE FURNISHINGS. I DON'T LOVE HUMANS. BECAUSE: I haven't had enough time to dedicate towards loving humans."

Sevim Burak was passionate towards old furnishings and special objects and through them she could weave stories and write. From that we can deduce that she believed that objects carried with them a history, which gave them an identity. The characters of her stories often struggle for a history and an identity of their own but often they fail in finding something to fit in; thus, they shelter in identification with objects and houses, in order to belong somewhere. Author's own yearning to belong somewhere reflects a 'loss' or an 'insecurity' emerging from her two identities, as expressed in the works below.

In the story "Sedef Kakmalı Ev" we see for the first time an eagerness of a woman to identify with a house. This is because the history that she carries with her is not good enough, is not accepted by the outer world. Thus, Nurperi never comes out of her house, which becomes everything she has, a family, an identity. She even starts to sell the valuable items of the dead brothers in an effort to usurp them, thus, to acquire a history of her own. This could be the way that Burak thought that her mother had felt. Since her ancestry was not good enough, and even something to be hidden, she had to identify with something else. Her family wasn't there to protect her; she was seeing only one of her brothers secretly. Most likely her husband's family

never really accepted her as an equal member of their family. Her mother-in-law nearly deprived of her the right to raise her own daughters by herself. In addition to that, her husband wasn't there to defend her, symbolized by the last fruitless scream of the story's Nurperi to Ziya-Bey. But she always had the house in the foot of the hill, a modest house left by her family. The house that she had lived the first time after her new-born daughter, Nezahat, was taken by her mother-in-law to live next to her in the big house up to the hill. And that difference between grandma's big house up the hill and mother's modest one in the lower part, next to other poor Jews' houses, must had baffled the young Sevim.

In the story "Yanık Saraylar" the female character insisted on how happy a childhood she had had in her aunt's aristocratic palace, a childhood that according to her, many girls would have been jealous of. Instead, it is obvious that she feels the need to construct a fake happy childhood and to believe in it. She probably feels in a way inferior towards her rich aunt and she struggles to find a place for herself in this palace, to be a part of it, to belong somewhere; somewhere that she will be proud of and not embarrassed by. We observe again the same agony, as in the former story. That's why she feels like having ties to the objects of the palace and to the palace itself. She treats the objects which she carries with her, as well as her memories as if they were her children that she raised and educated. They become her family and family means origins and identity.

In the short story "Osmanlı Bankası" we see a comparison of the houses and the people:

İCADİYE'DEKİ HANELERE BAKIYORUM
BU HANELER SENİN YAHUDİ KOMŞULARIN
HANELERİNE

BENZİYOR MU

CEVAP YOK (57)

I AM LOOKING AT THE HOUSES IN İCADİYE

DO THESE HOUSES LOOK LIKE THE ONES

OF YOUR JEWISH NEIGHBORS

NO ANSWER

The houses are “shanty” and so are their owners. In Burak’s environment Jewish people were poor and considered of a modest descent, just like their houses. But at this point the author doesn’t give us an answer on that; it’s like she doesn’t usurp this point of view any more.

“When daughters write to and about their mothers, they are seeking to work out the complex matter of subjectivities: their own and that of their mothers” (Juhasz 157). The writing helped Burak to reconstruct many of the views that she used to have, most likely because she realized that these views didn’t belong to her but to the paternal family, regardless of the presence of her mother in their house. Therefore, she ‘repairs’ the mother’s past and history, which allows her to identify with the dead mother at last and acquire her identity.

4. Margarita and Margarita

4.1. A Harmful Symbiotic Relationship

> Lyn was the only dog I adored. […] We had a mother-daughter relationship, where the daughter refuses to reach majority and the mother offers her constantly her ambiguous love, her complicity, for keeping her close to her (*Rien ne vas plus* 51).

Hendrika Freud, refers to the 'symbiotic illusion' which is "the mutual psychological involvement that leads to extreme interdependence" between the mother and the daughter and it is altered from the normal symbiosis during the infant's first months of life (10). It is a dyad idyllic relationship between the two, who wish for 'oneness'. Usually this relationship contains characteristics of a husband-wife's relationship and it is the Other, commonly the Father, that can intervene between those two and break this bond.

"I was born in July […]. When they delivered me for her to see me, she turned her head towards the wall" (*Η Κασσάνδρα και ο Λύκος* 13). Karapanou experienced her mother's rejection from the very first moments of her birth. The infant and its mother are expected to have a 'symbiotic' relationship during the first months of the infant's life, which reaches its height during the fourth or fifth month and may last approximately through the baby's first year of life (Chodorow 61). This is a normal stage, which helps the infant feel safe through its mother's responses to its needs. As we saw in Karapanou's biography, her mother soon after her daughter's birth abandoned her to the care of her own mother and departed for Paris. So this first 'symbiotic' stage was not completed or accomplished at all. Lymberaki chose herself over her

daughter. In addition to that she named her daughter after her, as a proof of her narcissism. She wanted her daughter to be her own extension.

In her book *Rien ne vas plus* we witness something which obviously reflects her memories. The heroine's name is the only one in the story not revealed until the penultimate chapter, where the woman decides to give an end to her life but at the last moment she changes her mind and decides to travel and make a fresh start somewhere far away instead. That is to say, the subject acquires a name only after she comes to terms with herself and she is literally reborn, she is individualized. Her name is Luisa. This is a surprise to the reader, because until that point the only female relative that appears in the story is the woman's dear aunt, Louisa. This is an obvious reference to Karapanou and her mother, who had the same name and that led to a further difficulty for Karapanou to gain her own identity. In the last chapter, which is particularly short, the reader realizes from the first line that the couple had a child: "Louisa's child stayed with aunt Louisa […]" (180), an act that recalls what Lymberaki did by leaving her baby to her mother. And the novel ends with this phrase: "The boy's name was Alkis" (180), just like his father's. This phrase's significance is very great, because it implies that these relations by name between the family members and all that it brings with it, such as narcissistic behavior, are in a vicious circle.

Karapanou dedicated her first book *Η Κασσάνδρα και ο Λύκος* to her mother. The reader feels that a girl's childhood is narrated from the girl's unique childish voice. She bears the same name as her mother: Kassandra. The young girl lives with her grandmother –and those around the latter, like her second husband, her friends and some housekeepers- in a big house. The mother is not there, but sometimes the young girl goes and visits her in Paris. Usually they correspond via letters. All these recall Karapanou's own childhood.

"Grandma is beautiful and still" (74); at least she is there, but is she her mother? She asks their housekeeper how children come to life and, when the housekeeper tells her that they come out of a belly and then you love them for your whole life, she ends up thinking "I don't know from which belly I came from. Maybe grandma gave birth to me" (124). Who is actually her mother?

> I am in my room. [….] Someone knocks the door. I shout 'Mom' and I close my eyes. I know neither who's going to enter nor what that word means. Someone is in the room. Now I am going to 'see' the word 'mom' becoming a human (114).

Melanie Klein in her article "The Depressive Position" claims that "the loss of a loved person leads to an impulse in the mourner to reinstate the lost loved object in the ego" (306). Young Margarita had to construct a mother, a fantastic mother in order to fill the gap, but she doesn't have a clue what the real mother is supposed to be like. She projects the 'internalized mother', that is, the mother inside the child's head (H. Feud 12), the image of the 'good' mother, in many people and objects around her in order to feel safe. This excerpt from the book *Μαμά* is quite telling:

> Grandmother grabs the hand of an unknown woman.
>
> - This is your mother, she says to me.
>
> I have never seen her before. She has a strange look.
>
> Hot and fleeting. "She is emotionally cross-eyed", I think.
>
> - Who are you? I ask. Who are you?
>
> I break out in a sweat, in a fever, I shiver, I will die.

- Shall we play with your dolls?

I grab her hand.

- Let's go.

I show her my dolls.

- All of them are called "mom". Which one are you? (106)

Her endless need to find a loving and caring mother is futile. She will always know that her mother rejected her at first. This leads to a depressive state of hate: "My dear mom, when are you coming back? I want to kill you" (*Η Κασσάνδρα και ο Λύκος* 75) for ignoring my existence, for not loving me for who I am, for trying to change me.

Some mothers are unavailable to provide their children the 'symbiosis' that they need in the early years of their lives. When they realize that their daughters have begun to differentiate themselves, they turn into 'hypersymbiotic' mothers.

> Having denied their daughters the stability and security of a confident early symbiosis, they turned around and refused to allow them any leeway for separateness or individuation. Instead, they now treated their daughters and cathected them as narcissistic physical and mental extensions of themselves, attributing their own body feelings to them (Chodorow 100).

Lymberaki refused at first the symbiosis to Karapanou but later on she turned into something close to 'hypersymbiotic', though still partly indifferent, causing damage to her

daughter's development of identity. Margarita got confused and tried to interpret her mother's love. So is this what love is?

> One day my mum, Kassandra, brought me a nice doll as a present. […] I put it to sleep in its box, after cutting its feet and its arms in order to fit. Later I cut its head, as well, for being heavy. Now I love it very much. (20)

Does love mean to make someone fit in your standards, in the boundaries that you set, even if you have to amputate him? Is this a condition for love? It must be, since the mother does so. This amputation could also refer to her mother's denial towards her daughter's growth (Kiosses 5). Further on, we see the same symbolic amputation without the projection to external objects, straight to the mother: "Mother, how much I love you! I want to cut your arms and your feet for you to fit in my heart" (*Μαμά* 90). Mother-daughter love seems to be 'I love you if you be the way I want you to'. In the symbiotic relationships the mother provides her daughter with her love on condition that she will surrender to her wishes. Besides, it is a strongly narcissistic relationship that "serves to keep the mother's vulnerable sense of self-worth intact as much as possible" (H. Freud 11).

As one may see in her mother's published letters, Lymberaki limited her daughter to all the things that she thought would be good for her, starting from little everyday things, like what she should wear or how she should brush her hair. She even competes with her daughter for little or big things, such as the short skirts that they wore or the things they possessed. This unfair competition is expressed by Karapanou in the book *Μαμά*:

> My mother and I know each other from old times.
> When I was a child, she was showing me the stars. “They are mine”,
> she was saying to me. When I was twelve years old, we were walking
> in the road with a man. “He is mine”, she was saying to me. (9)

Lymberaki was afraid of losing her youth and beauty while her daughter was just about to become a woman; and an individuated one. She wasn’t willing to allow it. Nonetheless through this oppression over her daughter she was trying, as well, to eliminate the distance between them, to convince her and herself that she was next to her and thus to confine her guilt. Consequently she leaves nearly no space to her daughter to breathe. Karapanou feels the drought that mother’s absence brings with and at the same time she is drowning in her mother’s shadow.

In her book *Ο Υπνοβάτης* a young female writer named Louka, goes to an island –by the description it is apparent that it is Hydra, the island that Karapanou used to go every summer since her first years of life– to write her novel and there she falls in love with a policeman, Manolis. At some point, Manolis describes a dream that he has been seeing since childhood and he believes that when the dream changes, he will have changed, as well. The dream is the following: He walks on a beach. The sea is still, black and coagulated. The water surrounds his feet and hits them pettishly and that creates an arrhythmia, an irregularity of nature, a panic. And then he sees an enormous tidal wave moving slowly towards him. He is trying to escape. He runs, he falls, he cries but he knows that it is going to engulf him anyway and he is going to die. As the wave approaches him, he sees its cavity which it looks like the entrails of a huge monster. Now the wave covers everything in the horizon, everything is dark. He cannot escape anymore. He sees the wave covering him slowly, whereas many colorful drops embrace him. Under this

total beauty he can no longer feel horror; this death doesn't scare him anymore. Finally, he is full of love and impatience, because he knows that the wave chose him to gulp, only him. Thus, he hugs it, he accepts it, he is caved into it and his last thought is "I am saved" (164-67).

Louka shares with him a similar dream she had been seeing since childhood, too. She sits for days on a high rock. Under her feet, the sea glistens. It is summer, she is hot and thirsty; her mouth and her skin are dry. If she doesn't enter the water she will die. She comes down off the rock and she approaches the water, her feet almost touching the first wave. Then she sees the sea withdrawing. She runs faster and the water keeps moving away. She comforts herself by saying that when she climbs that rock, she will see the sea and she will be saved. The landscape turns into a desert. Her skin fills with wounds, and her tongue becomes swollen, she weeps inconsolably. In a few minutes she becomes old (168-69).

From these dreams we derive some very important clues about Karapanou's symbiotic relationship to her mother. According to Sigmund Freud's work *Η ερμηνεία των Ονείρων* (*The Interpretation of Dreams* 353), water and sea refer to the mother's womb. It is the place that each individual lusts to return to, to the safety that it provides, to the eternal union with the mother and her body. In Manolis's dream, the sea swallows him and despite of his primary fear he relishes it. In Karapanou's life, this can be interpreted as her mother's overbalance to her. Let's not forget that this is the male's dream. Karapanou had confessed in her diary that –according to her psychoanalytic sessions– she was a couple with her mother and in this relationship she was the man (*Η Ζωή είναι Αγρίως…* 304). That was the way mother wanted her, she had no choice; her mother chose her, as in the dream.

In Louka's dream, the sea withdraws. In other words the mother abandons her. It is the woman's dream now. Karapanou never experienced her mother's maternal love in a healthy way,

Lymberaki never recognized her as a different being; from this point of view all she experienced was drought.

And finally, Louka concludes: "Ever since I was a child I was counting love like this: Why does nobody love me for who I am?" (169). The answer is that her mother never loved her the way she wanted and after that she didn't accomplish becoming a separate individual. Karapanou's fear of being swallowed up by the powerful mother figure is at the same time her desperate longing for her love and affection. In real symbiotic relationships there is an extreme fear of merging while at the same time there is a wish to merge, and this is because the sense of individuation wasn't developed from the beginning (Chodorow 102).

She wishes to go back to her mother's womb, in order to be safe with her, to become one again, but her mother doesn't want her. She writes:

> - Where are you? Mom asks.
>
> - Inside your belly. I don't want to come out. If I come out, everything will hurt me, I know.
>
> - And I can't bear you anymore. You're a monster who eats my entrails. I want you to die, now, to come out of my belly dead. [….]
>
> You will come out without help –as you entered. (*Μαμά* 73)

Lymberaki can be likened to what Green termed "the dead mother". She is emotionally unavailable, absent. Dead mother means dead child, as Christopher Bollas states in his paper in the book *The Dead Mother* (100). Karapanou's depression symbolizes her death.

Wednesday, March 9 [1960]

> These days mom is very angry and cries all the time. I completely lose my courage when I see the person that I love the most in this world being with swollen red days all day. Afterwards, I am not in the mood for anything, when I see her like this (*Η Ζωή Είναι Αγρίως…* 121).

In Karapanou's relationship to her mother one can easily find traces of the ancient myth of Electra. It is a relationship of love and hate. Karapanou shows this on one page, where she wrote in a single sentence: "I hate mom, I adore mom" (*Η Ζωή είναι Αγρίως…* 310). According to Hendrika Freud, although Electra seemed to refuse to love her mother, in fact she had to repress her desire for a homosexual relationship with her mother, because of her mother's lover Aegisthus. That's why she had turned to her father (66). As a matter of fact, she was jealous of Aegisthus for taking her place in her mother's heart.

Karapanou, as a contemporary Electra, is jealous of her mother, who doesn't give her the affection that she yearns for but she gives it to other men, instead. Thus, she prefers to kill her for choosing other men instead of her and for having enjoyed all men just by herself, starting by her own father.

> She is with a man. I want to kill them both, I hate her and love her so much when she is getting ready and waiting for a man. I want a man that deeply but she has taken them all, I have to stay a little girl (*Η Ζωή είναι Αγρίως…* 311).

In the book *Μαμά,* which was written after Lymberaki's death, we read: "The house is desolated… I hear your voice… Since you're dead, you're mine. Since you're dead, I love you more. Since you're dead, I cannot kill you anymore…" (30). She will not be rejected any more, her mother is totally hers finally. There is no need to share her, thus no need to kill her. Narrating her mother's funeral, we witness her bitter comment: "I lose you once again" (24), as she lost her many times during her life; if she ever had her.

Karapanou was fed by her aggression, which seemed to be an answer to the rejection of love by her mother. But the moments of aggression vacillated with moments of yearning for her mother's attention, just like the moments of mania alternated with moments of depression. Her aggression could be interpreted as a wish to individualize, to separate from the mother and to become autonomous. "Women often interpret their detachment as a form of aggression that might harm the mother" (H. Freud 3). Thus, they often conceal their anger and turn it against themselves in the form of guilt for having hurt the mother or anxiety for the potential harm they may cause.

"Tomorrow my mother is coming. I am so happy I am going to see her. Above all I don't want to hurt her. I love her very much. I love her extremely. Nonetheless it is not possible for me to keep on wearing away like that" (*Η Ζωή Είναι Αγρίως*… 240). I believe that her "wearing away" was provoked by her need to separate from her mother and the feeling of guilt that she had. "Delirium, automatic and wanted: I wish I had another mom, guilt, I wish I had a family" (*Η Ζωή Είναι Αγρίως*… 311).

In the book Δεν *Μ' Αγαπάς, Μ' Αγαπάς: Τα Παράξενα της Μητρικής Αγάπης* (You Don't Love Me, You Love Me: The Bizarreness of Maternal Love), which consists of Lymberaki's letters to her daughter, Karapanou wrote a letter to her (dead) mother instead of a prologue:

> Your death distressed me inconceivably. It left me orphan but it also set me free. [….] All the ambiguousness of our relationship is gone with your death. [….] Mother I love you. You are the only person in my life that I loved that way. (9)

And with her mother's death, Karapanou is finally free to develop her own identity, to become an individual, especially through her writing.

4.2. Denial to Identification and Language

In Karapanou's work we find frequently her difficulty in language. It is expressed in two ways: in the language that the mother uses often and in her oral speech. More specifically, she refuses to translate her first book in French by saying that she forgot French (*Η Ζωή είναι Αγρίως...* 320). French is the language used by her mother in her letters, as well as the spoken language in the place that the mother inhabits. The truth behind this refusal is probably her feelings of guilt towards her mother, for the autobiographical facts that the book contains (Nazou 536). Moreover, she refuses to talk –particularly to her family– and occasionally she stammers.

Karapanou, at age 29, writes down in her diary a dream she had seven years before.

> I am a child, and my father holds my hand, we are in 'countryside'. "I will take you to see your mother", he says to me. We are before a house with pillars, some "colonial". It is a madhouse. We enter a room with many women, old, disgusting, mad, lying down in beds one above the other, like in trains. There is my mother,

> too, old, mad, disgusting. A doctor enters, who starts to count them, comes to my mother's name, who has to say: "Lymberaki". She cannot say it. Doctor turns to me and waits me to speak instead of her, to say: "Lymberaki". It is impossible for me to say this word, because I "stammer", no sound comes out of my mouth. The women around me are laughing, showing their wicked teeth with disgusting grimaces. I wake up with a dreadful anxiety by the inability to speak. (*Η Ζωή Είναι Αγρίως*... 304)

This is truly a very interesting excerpt. This dream encompasses so poignantly the major events of her life and her relationship to her mother. According to psychoanalysis, dreams have a very special place on the hard road of recognition and realization of who we are. Karapanou was indeed psychoanalyzed during that period of her life, so the answer came from her, just a few lines further down.

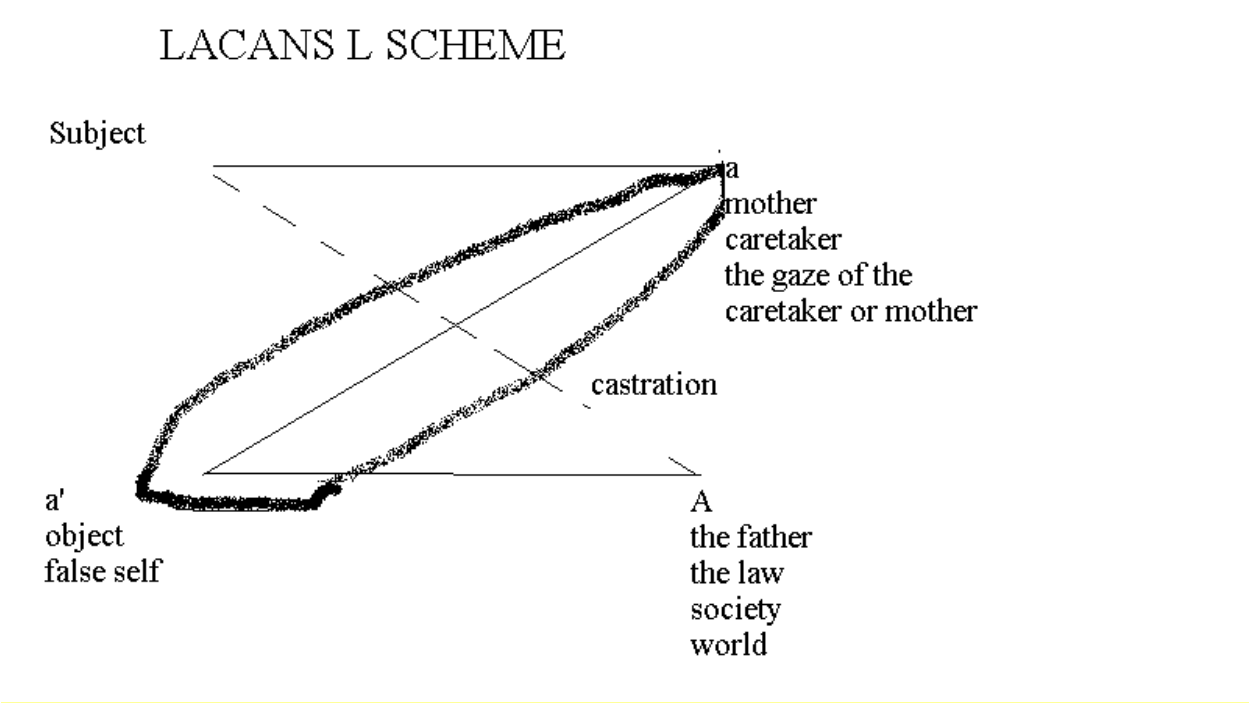
> The first thing that comes to my mind is that I was actually the one hospitalized some years later. [….] My refusal to say her name is a refusal to identify with her, in other words what the doctor asks me to do. How can I identify with her, since me and the mother are a couple, I am the man in this relationship. The father merely brings me in front of this situation. (304)

In the book *Η Κασσάνδρα και ο Λύκος* she describes her play with her male cousin by writing: "We play mom and dad, we play the doctors, too. I become dad and he becomes mom"

(133). She doesn't know how to play the role of the mother and she probably refuses it, too. Her mother put her in the role of the man and that is how she wants her, so she obeys.

One may derive a similar conclusion from her book *Rien ne vas plus*, where her relationship to her husband is described. He was a homosexual and she was the only woman in his life; because he treated her as to a boy. She has again the role of the man in the relationship. Almost in all of her books, one may see homosexual and bisexual intercourse. It is apparent that in her life the differentiation of the sexes hadn't been accomplished.

Chorodow claims that a major outcome from the Oedipal Period is the girl's orientation to heterosexual relationships, by means of her choosing her father and the penis. But this involves identification –conscious or not– with her mother (112-13). It seems quite likely that Karapanou hadn't passed through the Oedipus complex successfully, because there was no father around, thus no fear of castration and no Name-of-the-Father, in Lacanian terms. Accordingly, no one could break the bonds between her and her mother. The author didn't succeed in developing a superego or entering the symbolic order, according to Lacan's module of the structure of the psyche. She was imprisoned between the real and the imaginary. Lacan, in order to explain infant's psyche, used the L Scheme (Lacan 214). The following schema, designed by Dora Psaltopoulou for the International Day Conference of Music Therapy, is based on Lacan's.

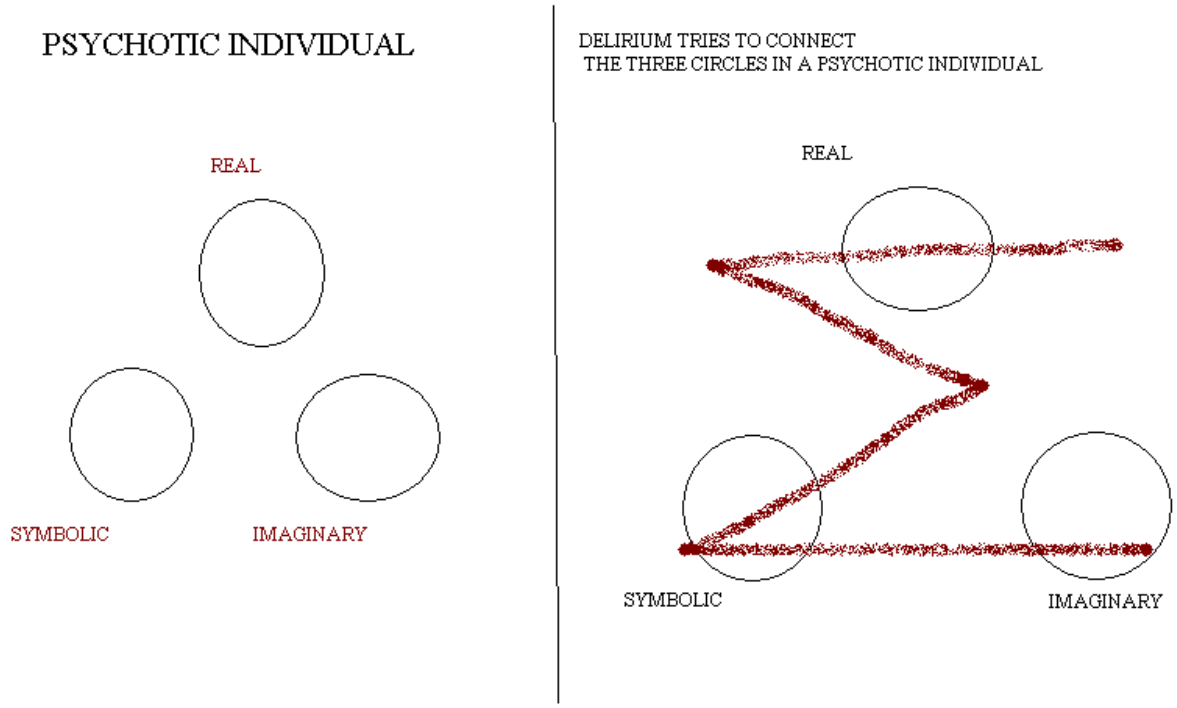


The Subject is united to the ‘a’ (which represents the mother and the first symbiosis) which is joined with the ‘a´’, the false self, the mirroring of the Subject, based on its mother’s eyes. This connection is of major importance as underlined in the scheme. The capital A represents the Father and the symbolic order. Father’s function is freeing the mother and child from each other’s love, intervening and breaking the bond (this function is resembled with a broken line in the scheme).

As we know from the biography, her father wasn’t there to cut this bond. She had to find another way; “I have to read the tragedy of Oedipus Rex definitely, it is now or never!” (*Η Ζωή Είναι Αγρίως*… 252). In her future relationships she will know that she needs someone powerful enough to intervene, as father should have, but she will admit that she had been always choosing weak men on purpose because of her fear of separation with the mother (*Η Ζωή είναι Αγρίως*… 314).

It was her writing through which she achieved an identity of her own. She describes her first steps to writing as "the written papers finally separated us. That night I had no nightmares […]. I was born…" (*Μαμά* 128).

Lacan used the 'borromean knot' to explain a neurotic's psyche; according to that schema, the rings are bounded together. On the other hand in a psychotic, the Real, the Imaginary and the Symbolic are not even touching each other, as shown in the first schema below, designed by Psaltopoulou for the International Day Conference of Music Therapy:



As we can see in the second schema by Psaltopoulou as well, the psychotic might approach the neurotic's psyche by inventing a way to unite them. In Karapanou's case, it was the writing which did it. Through her writing Karapanou passed through the Symbolic Order, in which we find language as well. Hence, she managed to join the Real and the Imaginary by means of her novels.

4.3. Bipolar Disorder

"Desires… desires… If I let them come out, they will devour me… But they are not that fearsome… A little bit of warmth and a little bit of health" (*Ναι* 120). Margarita Karapanou lived her life negotiating with her disease. I will try to prove that her bipolar disorder may have a connection to what she received from her mother and the way that her ego was developed.

As I claimed above, Margarita and Margarita had a peculiar symbiotic relationship nearly until Lymberaki's death. Nonetheless, their relationship, despite being symbiotic, was peculiar too, as mentioned, and its peculiarity is located in Lymberaki's weaknesses in being a real mother, in making sacrifices for her daughter, in really loving her.

"I adore you. I ask for mercy… Do me a favor and love me…" (*Μαμά* 34). In Karapanou's writing the struggle for love is diffuse. And in real life, it started during her first months of life.

Klein asserts that the depressive position represents "the infant's inner turmoil and distress accompanying weaning; the first painful, frustrating and alarming experience of separation and loss; and the recognition that a whole object is both loved and hated" (298) and she continues by saying that an individual's failure to overcome successfully the depressive position may result in depressive illness and mania (308). Karapanou didn't not only experience a faulty weaning but a literal separation from the mother and an almost complete loss of the first object of love. It is likely that this loss, which was interpreted as rejection, led to her depression. Depression symbolizes death. "Mom didn't want me, I don't deserve to live, I have to live secretly, without being seen by anyone" (*Η Ζωή Είναι Αγρίως...* 315). So this is her symbolic death; she is dead in her mother's eyes. As the writer confessed, her mother loved her only when her terminal illness was diagnosed and she was hospitalized. Regarding those days, she writes:

"Mother, now that you love me, I am going to defeat everything" (*Μαμά* 105). It is profound that she considers her mother's inability to love her responsible for her condition.

"In my book *Η Κασσάνδρα και ο Λύκος* the child cannot endure not being loved. Thus, she remains in a permanent depression. And from the depression derives violence, maybe mania, as well", says the author (*Μήπως* 164). The violence probably reflects the face of rage and hatred towards the mother, as a reaction to the neglect. But then again it is the other edge, mania. Mania is interpreted as life. So Karapanou is located between death and life. Life is her mother's effort to persuade her that she is there for her daughter, all the ambiguous feelings that she made her daughter have by wanting her for herself in a symbiotic relationship. It is mostly her mother who is responsible for this outcome; it is her fault for not letting her daughter to individualize, for making her think that she was there while she wasn't, that she was free to choose, while she wouldn't let her, and that she loved her while she loved whatever she consider hers.

As the child advances towards his creative nature, somehow he achieves his deliverance (Psaltopoulou, "Η Μουσική Δημιουργική…" 63). And fortunately for Karapanou, at last she emotionally invested in her writing and expressed herself and her mental illness in a creative way, partly achieving her freedom.

5. Conclusion

As one can see, Margarita Karapanou and Sevim Burak had very complicated and painful childhoods. They both wrote about these early years of childhood and adolescence, unraveling their complex relationships with their 'unconventional' mothers. The language they have chosen to utilize while writing, is the mother-tongue; that is to say, the father's language, as described previously. But the mother's voice appears through the 'secret', unconscious language, through numerous elements taken from the mother's language. Clear or not, directly or implied, sentimental or cold, the mother's language and the mother herself remains constantly in her presence.

Their problematic relationships with their mothers were never completely resolved, at least not while their mothers were still alive. Karapanou's mother remained her first object of affection and her last; an endless love, that was never withdrawn; a relationship of blind passion, of love and abandonment, of tenderness and desperation mixed with fear, of worship and rejection followed by anger, the desire to become united but to be independent at the same time. This was a relationship that challenged the limits of normalcy, almost evolving into an illness. Karapanou expressed the lack of proper mothering in bipolar disorder. She spent many years in mental clinics or working with healer doctors. These treatments first brought to her attention the cause of her damaged development: her mother. And probably, that is why she focused her work so clearly on her mother; both an indifferent and hypersymbiotic mother. As she was afraid of being swallowed by the mother, she had been experiencing difficulties in identifying with her.

On the other hand, Burak had been ashamed of her mother, feeling more a part of her father's family, due to the mother's Jewish origins. Her father and his family never facilitated her identity development. Instead, they preferred to hide the mother's origins. The paternal

environment in which she grew up had obviously muddled the writer's own sense of identity, and thus, during her childhood, she nearly refused to identify with her mother. But after her mother's death she returned to her mother and her familiar past, determined to identify with what was hers.

Through their writing both Burak and Karapanou intend to rediscover their mothers; to identify with them without guilt, and finally to 'kill' them in a symbolic death, which represents at the same time the independence, freedom and rebirth of both these authors. Through their writing, each writer obtained an identity and succeeded in identifying with the mother. It was a healing writing, which led to redemption. However, it happened only after the mother's death, as identifying with an object only after losing it.

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