PARABLES OF THE MODERN WORLD: CRITICISM OF CERTAIN WELL-KNOWN NOVELS WITHIN THE FRAME OF PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

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ABSTRACT

In this study, a literary scan of best-selling books in the world that involve religious and mythological elements has been done. For instance, novels such as The Da Vinci Code, Angels and Demons, Harry Potter, Twilight and The Sacred Bones are dealt with. It is examined reasons for high demand to these works that might be samples of religious narration. Do these books have psychological effects on people, do they meet the readers religious needs, what are their religious background? Tradition of religious stories in our culture and the place of modern novels with religious context are compared while answers to these questions are looked for. Departing from the assumption that there is a relation between religious narratives and religious belief, reasons why these books are widely read, are explained. Because of the effect of religious narrative on religious belief, the possibility of these works, which are foreign to our own cultural codes, to sometimes negatively affect people’s religious perception has been contemplated.

Keywords: Religious Narrative, Modern Novel, Parable, Religious Belief.

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Introduction: From 'Parable' to 'Novel'

The word “parable” (Arb. “ قصة”, Tr. “kîssa”), means “a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson” (oxforddictionaries.com, 2012) and “an expression of a thought or an improvised event, story, rumour, forming of an event, conditions that pass through” (Altunel, 1994, 157). Besides its lexical meaning, particularly in Islamic litterateur, this term is used for the stories in Qur’an. This concept also can be used in other sacred texts to narrate instructive lessons, which about ancient peoples and prophets. This usage shows religious essence of the parable. Parable can be used in the sense of the religion as “events which have a historical truth and reality and will be exemplary” (Şengül, 2002, 499). There are many parables in Qur’an. These parables have become involved into tradition over time and converted to the stories with new additions by keeping its original shape intact. For example, parable of Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) is widespread because its originated from Qur’an and described as a folk tale in Arabic, Persian and Turkish literature (Köktürk, 2007, 1). Moreover, parables of Prophet Adem (Adam), Prophet Eyup (Job) and Prophet Musa (Moses) and other similar parables are also told as stories.

In this article, stories and novels driven from religious or mythological parables will be expressed in “religious narrative” and the effects of modern novels, shape that they took together with their function as a carrier of religious belief in culture and modernity will be analysed with present samples. Any modern stories/novels that have been replaced or driven from parables or in our expression "modern parables" exist? Do these texts have the same function as in the past? In order to find answer to these questions, we will take into account widely read and best seller The Da Vinci Code (Brown, 2003), Angels and Demons (Brown, 2004), Harry Potter (Rowling, 2001), Twilight (Meyer, 2008) and The Sacred Bones (Byrnes, 2008) which was probably created from religious symbol, beliefs and parables. These books, which have many examples, have different versions of appeal that speaks to children, adolescent, young and adults. From the point, being a subject to examine, sales rate and read rate are given importance. The Da Vinci Code sold 7.5 million units one year after its publication in year 2003, translated into 40 languages and took place in bestseller list in New York Times during 27 weeks (Hürriyet Gazetesi, 2004). All the works Dan Brown translated into Turkish, best-selling two books transferred to the big screen with the same name and later published book called Lost Symbol (Brown, 2009) has sold tens of thousands without translating into Turkish (Star Gazetesi, 2009). This book also took place in the bestseller lists (kitappyurdu.com, 2009), like the others. Moreover, Harry Potter and Twilight series also were in bestseller list and at the same time movies were created from those novels. There are numerous examples to these books. Adaptations to cinema and number of sales are not indicator of the importance of a work, of course. However, they take place among the most read articles in
many university libraries (universitem.erciyes.edu.tr, 2009; akdeniz.edu.tr, 2009), so it provides adequate importance for review.

The reason why these works are called ironically as "modern day parables" is that they consider religious symbols, religious beliefs, mythological elements and stories which borrow from religious texts. It is also necessary that the effects of these works on the individual and the society should also be mentioned departing from the assumption that religious parables have effects on religious perception, also taking the scale of the masses these parables appeal to. But initially the relationship between religious narrative and religious belief should be taken into account.

The Relation of Religious Narrative and Religious Belief

Religious narrative can be described as written and oral texts where religious symbols and characters are frequently used and religious issues are covered and those texts can affect the religious beliefs of the reader and audience. Narratives cover symbols which are the carriers of the culture, and transfer them to subsequent generations. Culture “denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life” (Geertz, 1993, 89). According to Geertz; “religion is a system of symbols” (Geertz, 1993, 90). “At the same time symbols are carriers of beliefs in our world. Religious beliefs are able to survive just with the symbolic forms and social tools” (Arslan, 2004, 193). Sociological explanations of religion, uses stories that contains arousals and analogies in order to highlight some important points. The stories have a power to clarify our sensibility about truth and virtue. These stories save us from pure deeds and put us to the world in a symbolic meaning (Rooif, 1993, 299). In other words, transfer of religious belief to the subsequent generation in cultural sense made in symbols and one of the important elements providing this transfer is religious narrative. Religion refers to the symbols in order to ensure continuity, make learning easier and to increase its permanence in the mind. Symbols which are basis for religious narrative are cases for abstraction of concrete applications and concretization of abstract applications. These symbols are shaping the world of the individual perception and function taught abstract religious concepts in the mind. Durkheim emphasizes that symbols which symbolize the society provide to control egocentric stimulations and make discipline in life (Argyle, 2004, 250). For people with religious faith all imaginations derived from the holy and divine are motives which add a meaning to the life (Schmid, 2003, 185). Religious texts are sources of these imaginations. Stories namely narratives inside the text provide the popularity of the religious texts and delivery in an understandable way to people. Religious narratives enriched and transferred to subsequent generations. This also fosters the traditional religious beliefs. Majority of the public by means of
modelling and by the influence of the family and the environment have a religious belief namely traditional belief. "Traditional religious perception and life are the most important social value on the individual's religious life. In this respect, religious narratives are one of the most important tools to deliver traditional religious life to the individual's life" (Özer, 2006, 109). Spread of religion and deliver to future generations realized not only by systematic education but also with the help religious narratives which had symbols related to religious belief, perception and basis of beliefs and all this had created big emotional and intellectual effect on individual. These narratives are one of the factors that provide impact of religion as a cultural system on individuals. According to William James, people have will to believe which are the basic and indispensable, and have a right to have religious and moral beliefs even when there is no logical or factual evidence (Cevizci, 2000, 505). Basis for this thesis, the will to believe represents an intrinsic factor as well as leading to many other religious beliefs. Here religious narrative is offered by culture to the individual as a response to this need and motive. Religious perception directly affected by the religious narrative because conceptual construction of traditional religious belief was created with a certain amount of religious narrative. According Hökelekli behind all forms of belief has the effect of social environment. Each individual comes from a culture and religious values inside that culture transferred to children. In this regard, feelings and thoughts of each individual bear the imprints of cultural form which was presented to him (Hökelekli, 2010, 118). Undoubtedly one of the instruments to transfer cultural forms is TV and internet, as well as texts engaging novel and story style. Hökelekli explains the effect of communication tools and language on religious belief:

The function of the word in individual's behaviour is similar to the function of other objects with the same degree... The man lives in the word's world in a genuine way as well as in a world of objects. Human can change someone's world by inserting automobile, computer and multi-story buildings, as well as can change by inserting words. Thus, we can change the behaviour, belief and attitudes of an individual by changing the world of individual through the words (Hökelekli, 2009, 246)... In case, communication targets to change the belief, thought and life style of individual, there is a big possibility that it will face "resistance". It is the most appropriate way to take advantage of the opportunities of the rich narrative indirectly or implicitly in order to bring religious values permanently... This scientific truth indicates the reason why parables and stories in moral and religious means are highly consulted to (Hökelekli, 2009, 268)... Message transmission in religious communication through parables and stories has significance in two respects: First; it is unavoidable to use 'symbolic' and 'constructive association' language, because religious truths are related metaphysical (unseen) world. Secondly, the main purpose of
Qur’an is not to give information people, but is to open a way to a change in their moral and mental worlds. The most effective way to do this is to speak to the holistic aspect of human perception (Hökelekli, 2009, 269). Parables, stories and myths have a role to impress and actuate the integrated capabilities of the brain. Symbolic language is accepted to be more suggestive and constructive association rather than illustrative (Hökelekli, 2009, 269).

According to Tekse, similar to the views of Hökelekli, myths and stories attract people, help them understand themselves and their identity and formulate their intellectual, emotional and concrete life (Tekse, 2005). According to Özer, religious narrative offers useful intellectual values to the individual’s religious life. Hence, it can be said that an individual can change attitudes and actions in a direction consistent with the principles of religion (Özer, 2006, 107). According to the findings of the survey conducted by him “the religious narratives that carry religious information and role models, go into a relationship with the religious imagination of the individual. Investigation and interpretation of religious narratives dealt with under the headline that analysis of the relationship between religious narrative-religious imaginations in psycho-social aspects, revealed the information to confirm this result” (Özer, 2006, 111). Robert A. Emmons, who work in the field of psychology of religion, found in a study of "thanksgiving", that the individuals took part in the religious activities by reading sacred books are more grateful (Emmons, 2009, 86). This is a fundamental attribute of spiritual and religious readings and is one of the factors supporting it.

Ninian Smart divides religious belief in six dimensions: which are, experience and emotional, narrative and mythic, doctrinal and philosophical, ethical and legal and the material of social and institutional. There is great importance of experience and emotion and they nourish other dimensions in the formation and development of religions. Experience is expressed in religious ritual, stories and myths. Religious texts containing religious stories and myths rather affect the lives of the individuals. It can be said that these stories affect people cognitive and emotional by narrating symbols of religious doctrine clearly and shortly and by solidifying (Kayıklık, 2011, 192). In fact there are therapeutic methods based on the idea that texts affect the people. For example, bibliotherapy is based on the idea of individuals spiritual structure is influenced by texts. Such as this, narrative therapy (O’Connor, 2010, 609) is based on rearrangement of individuals plot on the question and changing the certain concepts in the story. They show us the religious narrative can be effective on certain individuals. Besides the numerous factors that lead individuals in the pursuit of intellectual, the topics and articles about religion may be impressive (Hökelekli, 2010, 299). All these show us the impact of religious narrative on the religious belief. It is important to look at the effects
on the readers of these novels, because these are not only effective but also very much demanded.

**Religious Narrative in Turkish Culture**

Many people, who testify to previous periods before television occupy their places in the houses, know that the stories about the Prophets, war journals of Hazrat Ali and adventures of Battal Ghazi are read and narrated in family conversations, visits and in special day and nights. These are the examples dating back to our recent past and the stories in which an individual reads and narrates the stories to others that gather around to listen and get enlightened. Coffee houses or named as “reading houses” then, which were positioned near the mosques, had small libraries containing these books. Those gathered in certain times of a day read or listened to these books. Also today there are coffee houses in the similar forms but the television prevents the continuation of the tradition. “Almost in all Islamic countries there were parables which give moral advices, talk about topics on wisdom, narrate events related to these and those were brought up who write and narrate these parables” (Altunel, 1994, 157) The knowing of these works among the public in oral and written widely, raise awareness giving religious, moral and historical information and resource the Modern Turkish Storytelling (Atalan, 2008, 9). *Kısas-ı Enbiya* (Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, 1994), *Siyer-i Nebi* (Erzurumlu Mustafa Dair Efendi, 2004), *Yusuf ile Züleyha* (Köktürk, 2007). *Hz. Ali Cenknameleri* (Atalan, 2008) are good examples to these. “War journals play a leading role in the formation of faith, mentality, behavior, and pleasures of the public today. These works were used to meet the need of historical, religious, literal information of the public and to satisfy esthetic, heroic, and religious feeling curiosity. War journals mentioned, many times have been read in the public in long winter nights and in evening meetings, as other instructive religious works. Even war journals in verses told with maqam and tune” (Atalan, 2008, 17). Some these parables have been subject to today’s novels as religious narrative (Bekiroğlu, 2009).

Religious stories in our story remained loyal to the origins and were written in axis spiritual and moral. Today, we can say there are rare publication received but the style is well preserved. Modern novel as to analyse in our article are translated to Turkish and western originated as they used their origin as a source. But they didn’t handle these sources as an appropriate style to the religious doctrines and pursue the common characteristics like enlighten the reader or show them the good path. Some of them took the certain official elements accepted by Catholic Church but yet they found their popular appeal in keeping an extraordinary line. The popularity of these novels shows modern

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1 In classical Turkish music, a concept of melodic creation that determines tonal relations, tessitura, starting tone, reciting tone, and the finalis, as well as an overall indication of the melodic contour and patterns.
man’s interest and appetite to religious and mythological subjects as well as interesting and unusual events.

**The Effect of Modernity to Religious Narrative and Mass Literature**

The efforts of enlightenment almost in all human activity areas to create a rational basis surely affect the novel and the modern novel style was born due to these. "Voyages of discovery, the Renaissance and the Reformation, these three "huge event" caused the people to think about and doubt the authority of traditional religious beliefs as these were full of catholic doctrine and Greek science and cosmology than these old tradition began to solve and replaced by search of finding more rational basis" (West, 1998, 23). Scientific advancements have not only stay as mere intellectual activities but also rocked the Christian worldview deeply. Thus secularization, as effect of modernization, has become active on culture (Cevizci, 2000, 656). The West, constituted the new sacred texts in which looking for the secrets of his own classics in them depending on rational grounds (Moretti, 2005, 2).

Although many of the Enlightenment philosophers continued to believe in God (West, 1998, 30), deist belief began to be very effective instead of theistic understanding of Catholic Church. Sacred texts, those hold the public together and require a solo understanding, have had a significant drop and "world text" has emerged which allowed multiple readings. The novel emerged as a consumer material, though in the early texts of modernity they would have carried political content, with the effect of capitalism they became less political. Western novelist tried to explain the attitude of human against the world, on the basis of human-centred world in his novel (Özcan, 2000, 109). In the novels of the modern world the man turned his face down the sky to the terrain.

When modern "homo consumens" started to consume novels at the same rate, mass literacy has emerged.

This term is known as Triviallitteratur, Kolportage, Kompensation, Konformlitteratur, Schundliteratur, Unterhaltungsliteratur etc. in German. In English and French, (for the vulgar) this term is used as popular, industrial and again Colportage. The term "trivial", comes from the Latin word "trivium" which means "three ways junction" and "parting of the ways". When approached from this aspect trivial means, the thing "in the middle of the road" and "the thing with little value or importance"... With its most common meanings, the term is acknowledged and used as "cheap, valueless, artless, ordinary like soapsuds, soap opera" in Turkish.

The biggest difference that separates Mass Literacy from other works of art is; "in Mass Literacy becoming cliche, in a way no difference from similar works" is the matter when in literary works "originality" and "multidimensionality" are the matters of subject...
although young ones and undereducated show more tendency to Mass Literacy, enlightened people are also interested in this genre due to its context.

The fact that these novels target consumption and that they are for entertainment purposes, gives us the hint that they are samples of mass literacy. Novelists of our day, unlike the works written in beginning of modernism, started to produce works of mass literacy that may involve any topic, with a capitalist understanding that exploits religion. These highly popular and best-selling novels also occupy a great place in reading lists of educated people in our country. Although they involve religious narratives, it is obviously seen that they are not able to go beyond just including religious symbols and beliefs, they deal with the subjects without loyalty to the original, and they do not undertake a purpose to increase religious sensitivity and motivation. All these matters compile the problematic sides of the novels we deal with.

These novels we analyse are products of popular culture. According to Bilgin, popular culture is different from national culture. Because it is produced by certain amounts of people, consumed in short periods and contribute so little to national culture. Besides its entertainment purposes, it has an ideological function to manipulate masses and stall them. Moreover, products of popular culture consist of elements that religion does not approve (Bilgin, 2003, 207). Thus, it is essential to touch on possible effects to emerge instead of seeing them as ordinary books that are read just to have a good time.

**Modern Parables**

As we said modern parables includes examples of written mass literature which contains religious belief and symbols without harbouring of the main goal of religious narratives; events relating seizing of secret plans, solution of passwords, working in hazardous environments, the characters involving escape and follow-up and also contains legendary and mystical events. These features are characterized in terms of literature to be an example of a mass. The aspects which put them to the religious narratives are confidential in their subjects. For example, *The Sacred Bones* has used symbols of the Christian faith and people and place names in the Bible. In the Bible it is explained that Joseph of Arimathea had gone to Pontius Pilate and taken the body of Jesus and made funeral and put him to own tomb (Matthew, 27/ 57-65). This event is considered as the main issue in the novel. After that part, it explained in the Bible how Jesus revived, appeared to his disciples and raised to the heaven (Matthew, 28/ 1-20; Luke, 24/ 36-53). Some of them are consistent with the Islamic belief, but the Qur’an describes Jesus had not been killed, and raised to God’s layer (Women 4/ 156-158). These stories formed a basis for a belief of billions of people for centuries. This novel puts contrary idea to the religious tradition at this point. According to the diary kept by Joseph of Arimathea and
protected by The Knights Templar, the body of Jesus remained for a year in a tomb and the bones was put to box according to Jewish tradition and stored in a secret location in The Temple of Solomon. After abolishment of Templar by Pope Clement V this secret was on the lam for a long time. During excavation under Al-Aqsa Mosque daily found which Vatican owned and the bone box is found, using the latest technology carbon test and DNA test applied on bones. Bones were subjected to archeological investigation. At the end it was found that bones were belonging to the period of Jesus, and it has different DNA coding. So, according to the novel, contrary to the popular belief Jesus was killed and did not rise to the heaven.

Other popular book titled *Angels and Demons*, uses in the same manner symbols and characters intensively. However, the issue is discussed in a more complex way. At CERN (nuclear research centre) in Switzerland are conducted experiments to help explain the theories of modern physics. During these experiments "Antimatter" was obtained. Vatican representative also be presented in the experiments. Because they are closely interested in the explanation of the theories of modern physics. Vatican seeks that science is not opposed to religion. Antimatter will react in case of contact with any substance and there will be a large explosion. But this antimatter will be stolen. It is told that this substance placed in Vatican and place will be blown up. At the same time Pope died in a suspected way. The new Pope will be chosen. Other candidate cardinals will be kidnapped and killed one after another. There is a stamp on the corpses: "Illuminate" which means enlightened secret society. It is described that Illuminate is the movement which first began with the Renaissance. This society tries to explain the nature by using the reason and make foundations of science. However, Vatican fought against this society. They were excommunicated because they put thoughts against the fundamental principles of Christianity. That's why they continued their work secretly in Vatican using a symbolic language. Villain of the novel tries to give the image that the community revives again. Afterwards, this person who killed the Pope and Cardinals blamed for this Illuminati pretended he found the antimatter. In reality, he stole and placed in Vatican itself. Duration was about to expire. This man takes the explosive substance with him and rises to the sky with the helicopter, pretending he sacrifices itself. Saint Peter's Square in Vatican is full of people waiting for the selection of new pope. A helicopter explodes in the invisible layers of the sky and the man inside the helicopter descends with the parachute. The scene is full of action and quite natural. Even the symbols are used in the novel explicitly, they are also used secretly. For example, the crowd gathered in the square symbolizes humanity, man sacrificing himself symbolized Jesus, rising to the sky of the man symbolizes Jesus rise into the heaven after crucifixion, and man’s descent with the parachute from the sky symbolizes the return of Christ. However, these events are adequate for classifying the novel as a religious narrative, the most important point which attracts us is that the man symbolizing Jesus is the villain of the novel. This person's fraud and disbelief revealed by the man named Langdon who is a main
character. When asked about belief, the man in main character told that "I am a man of science; I can speak on what I see only".

Another book which is the most popular and most widely sold and read is The Da Vinci Code. This novel also begins with Jesus. The basis described in that book is: In fact Jesus was married before he died. Mary Magdalene (Matthew, 27/ 56; Luke, 24/ 10; John, 20/ 18) was the person he married. Ancestry has continued until today. However, this is a secret that nobody knows except for the mystery community. The name of the mystery community is Priory of Sion. There were famous names among its members: Botticelli, Isaac Newton, Victor Hugo and Leonardo Da Vinci. Da Vinci is The Grand Master\(^2\) of the fraternal organization. Da Vinci has placed hidden symbols in many Christian paintings which was nothing to do with Christianity. It underestimated them by not revealing to the Church. There are also some hidden symbols in the painting called "The Last Supper". The most striking point is The Holy Grail in that scene. The last supper (Matthew, 26/ 17-30; Luke, 27/ 7-23; John, 13/ 21-30; Mark, 14/ 12-26) of Jesus and his disciples are pictured in this painting. According to the Christian belief Mary Magdalene is not considered as an apostle, but she presented in that painting. Here Da Vinci imprinted his secret. Mary Magdalene is The Holy Grail. When depicting old symbols are used. For example, a feminine and masculine triangle which forms the Star of David (Magen David) is used in this picture. Such as hidden narrative style exists also in other classic. Victor Hugo’s The Hunchback of Notre Dame and Mozart’s Magic Flute is full of with the mystery symbols and secret of bowls. It describes in book that Christianity contains intensely pagan symbols and beliefs. The solar circle of ancient Egyptian is turned into "halo". Isis and her infant became the Virgin Mary and Baby Jesus. Some pagan symbols have been deformed during war which the Catholic Church started against pagans. For example, the star of Venus turned into a demonic image. The trident of Poseidon symbolized the devil’s fork; wise old woman’s pointed hat symbolized the witch.

In some of these novels it is described that the Bible is the product of the man which was written to keep the history of mankind in turbulent periods, translated into countless translations, made additions and renovations afterwards. Again, at the beginning Jesus recognition as a mortal man; first foundations of basis of Christian theology in Council of Nicaea; the reason of irrational elements of Christianity; the life of billions of people who learnt their religion in an irrational way was described. It was expressed that Christianity comprised many pagan symbols and beliefs over time. The political background of the duration of Christianity to be accepted as official religion by Emperor Constantine and the evolution of pagan belief strongly emphasized. Some of these narratives seem to the readers as quite new and original thought. According to Islam, pagan symbols and beliefs included to the Christianity

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\(^2\) Grand Master (Tr. Büyük Üstad, Üstad-ı Azam) is used as a Masonic expression. See Asım Akin, Tarih Boyunca Masonluk, Hacettepe-Taş Kitapcılık, Ankara, 1998.
during institutionalization of Christianity in Rome (Aydın, 2007, 90). But the reason of these was to explain how it arouses in a society and what functional role it played. Because according to the modern understanding, religion which is a human product that emerged as cultural system inverse during time by additions and subtractions. This perspective is a product of western-style understanding of history and modernity.

The book named Twilight has a different subject and readership when compared to other books. It can be said that it gained more popularity among adolescents. The reason for this can be that characters are people in that age group and it has a love theme. The subject of this book is that a young girl falls in love with a vampire and has to struggle with him against werewolf and other obstacles. Actually her love is a forbidden love. Prohibition of love was subject of the most world poems and always attractive one. Moreover, in Christian tradition Prophet Adam’s expulsion from heaven was the result of forbidden love. Forbidden fruit or other mean forbidden apple, in fact, is a forbidden love. In the cover page it is also seen that there is a pair of hands grasping red apple.

Author Stephenie Meyer has issued the following statement on this subject: 'The apple on the cover of Twilight represents 'forbidden fruit'. I used the scripture from Genesis (located just after the table of contents) because I loved the phrase 'the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil'. Isn't this exactly what Bella ends up with? A working knowledge of what good is, and what evil is. The nice thing about the apple is it has so many symbolic roots. You've got the apple in Snow White, one bite and you're frozen forever in a state of not-quite-death... Then you have Paris and the golden apple in Greek mythology—look how much trouble that started. Apples are quite the versatile fruit. In the end, I love the beautiful simplicity of the picture. To me it says: choice" (stepheniemeyer.com, 2011). As we have seen novel besides being love novel, it also contains mythological beings which roots comes from the religious and mythological history of West.

Finally, the last book we will discuss named Harry Potter that appeals to children and adolescents, come out for the first time in 1997, caught up quickly sales chart and had a series of books. It can be said that the book one of the most and fastest selling book in the world. It transferred to the big screen after catching a high sales rate. The main character Harry Potter whose parent was magicians then got killed by the other witch. The reason for killing his parents was that the witch learnt that children born from them will kill him in the future. In order to prevent this, the witch kills them. Later on, not knowing that he is also magician, Harry Potter gets invited to the school of witchcraft. The invitation was a mysterious which Harry Potter did not understand. That's why he got anxious and in order not to worry more he moved to an island. But then, he learnt that he is a magician and returns back to the witchcraft. All things learnt in school, his friends, teachers and life with them and his marvellous struggles contain big scale mythical elements. However, the clothes, structure of the school, general admissions about magic, mythical beings and events still
contain elements of Western culture. For example, the man knowing that his future in the hand of the child which will born and an attempt to kill his family inspired by Prophet Moses. Settlement of a person to an island, who wants to get rid of evil is a matter committed in old stories. There is a narrative related to magic and mythic events in every culture and they have different characteristics in every culture. All the names, buildings, places and characters and the like in this series reflect elements of British culture. That's why when the novel transferred to the big screen the main characters were English players because of the insistence of the writer J. K. Rowling. Both the movie and the novel of this series contain extensive cultural codes. It is highly probable that these works influence their readers as religious and mythological narratives. The fact that children are exposed to narrations deprived of their own cultural fundamentals is an issue that should be mulled over.

**Conclusion**

One of the most significant characteristics of these books is that the influence of esoteric thought is seen in almost all of them. Esoteric thought includes symbols, keywords, and beliefs beyond the general acceptance. In these books; religious, mystical and esoteric elements such as The Knights Templar, The Temple of Solomon, Illuminati, The Grand Master, The Holy Grail, Magen David, vampires, magic(ians), dragons and werewolves are included. Since modern world is not able to satisfy the people's motive of belief, these works provide them with inscribed materials which contain divinity, love and "the mysterious". However these greatly read books, does not maintain true information flow and suitable affection. Also demonstrates the effects of esoteric thought on people while providing new and interesting knowledge to the reader. The case that the modern people are distant and weak towards the religion, may sometimes lead to the acceptance of religious-looking knowledge without questioning. The oddest one is how come, in our world where we think we rationalized everything, learning the fact that most of the symbols and beliefs in our lives actually sustain a religious background draw people's attention. This astonishment and relation push modern people to look for the codes of the life in *The Da Vinci Code*.

Modernity's perception of life that ignores the sacred, have not been able to satisfy human in some ways. Even if the modernity meets almost all the needs, it is insufficient in satisfying the motive of belief. A new consumption material has been provided for modern people who satisfy his/her need to believe with symbols and main characters, to meet this demand: which is the mythic mass literacy. However the enlightened absolutism is not able to let go off the rationalist fundamentals that it tries to build everything upon. The aspects of these books related to our (Turkish) society, is about the high ratio of sales rates. If the reason why they are widely read is entitled with the indication of people's hunger for these topics, it should be revealed that sequences from
modern life similar to the religious parables from our past are presented, in a way there is a great need for novels. People both find the opportunity to read about religious characters and events and scenes that appeal to our day together in these novels and maybe they feel closer to the story this way. New versions of religious narratives (because of their effect on religious perception and motivation) which carry the conventional religious belief and maintain the authenticity are required.

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