A dark literary tourist at the end of life: Tezer Özlü

Çevik, Samet [a]

[a] Department of Tourism and Hotel Management, Erdek Vocational School, Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University, Türkiye, scevik@bandirma.edu.tr

tourism
&
heritage

J O U R N A L

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

The blending of dark tourism and literary tourism has created a sub-niche as dark literary tourism. It offers dissimilar experiences as it incorporates distinctive motivations from literary tourism and dark tourism. This study aims to provide a better understanding of dark literary tourism motivations and experiences by offering a perspective on the concept of dark literary tourism. For that purpose, the work Journey to the End of Life by Turkish author Tezer Özlü, in which she traced three authors, Franz Kafka, Italo Svevo, and Cesare Pavese, was selected. The work was subjected to qualitative textual analysis. As a result of the analysis, the data obtained on the concept of dark literary tourism were interpreted under three headings. The findings of the study show that dark literary tourists have both dark tourist and literary pilgrim motivations, travelling for motivations such as paying homage to authors and the past, understanding their feelings by establishing closeness and connection with the authors, empathizing with their suffering, acquiring the smallest details about their lives, and experiencing their daily lives. The most crucial finding of the study is that the dark literary tourism experience allows tourists an inner journey and provides awareness about their lives.

all is the same
time has gone by
someday you come
someday you'll die
someone has died
long time ago
someone who tried
but didn't know
(C. Pavese - Last Blues, to be Read Some Day)

1. INTRODUCTION

When tourism serves as a tool for the literary imagination, it produces a particular kind of text that can be derived as 'tourist literature'. Tourist literature concerns poets and authors who act as tourists while preparing their works and use these experiences as the source of the literary imagination. Within this practice, tourism has a special appeal to places associated with literary memories (from the graves and homes of the poets to the landscapes described in their works), as exemplified by the phenomenon of literary pilgrimage by many authors since Antiquity (Hendrix, 2022, p. 137).

Tourist literature refers to a set of texts that, due to intentional and semantic effects, are permeable to an interdisciplinary exegesis in the field of literature and tourism. It encompasses literary texts that can motivate readers to become tourists and go beyond the book to feel closer to the book, author or character (Baleiro & Quinteiro, 2018, pp. 19-21). These texts constitute a subgenre within the category of travel literature (Hendrix, 2022, p. 137), and they offer a literary representation of space which adds to its value as a tourist attraction (Hendrix, 2014, p. 23). These texts examine the tourism industry with all its voluntary and involuntary stakeholders and portray tourism practices and literary tourism, in particular, are considered within the scope of tourist literature (Baleiro & Quinteiro, 2018, p. 22).

According to Hendrix (2014, p. 21), the most important and rich category depending on literary texts and their representation of real or imagined worlds they offer is travel writing. Travel writing is defined as a vehicle through which places and people have been re-interpreted and communicated to wider audiences, to some extent for tourism purposes (Squire, 1996, p. 120). However, all travel writing texts do not fall into the tourist literature category. Non-literary texts such as guidebooks, magazines, websites or blogs are popular examples of travel writing. The purpose of such works is to inform and guide the tourist (Baleiro & Quinteiro, 2018; Hendrix, 2014).

Some travel books that feature literary texts are examples of nature-based travel writings that feature the discoveries and dangers of elite adventure travellers. On the other hand, in some travel books, travel writers report about their experiences in distinctive cultures. Some examples focus on themes such as escape from modernity, an inner journey or self-discovery through travel (Frost & Frost, 2022). These travel writings, which represent the tourist literature, reflect the cultural, social and environmental effects of tourism; motivate the readers to travel by arousing curiosity, and influence their travel decisions and expectations.

Another example of travel writing within the scope of tourist literature is the Turkish author Tezer Özlü's work, *Journey to the End of Life*. She received the 1983 Marburg Literary Award with this book. Written in German (Auf den Spuren eines Selbstmords [In the Footsteps of a Suicide]), this book was published in Turkish in 1984 as Journey to the End of Life (Yiğit, 2010). Tezer Özlü focused on searching for the meaning of life by experiencing the questioning attitude that started in her childhood, as well as in her own life. Every emotion that marked her every period of life was reflected in her works (Aydoğdu, 2020). The concepts of loneliness, suffering, existence, eternity and death are the most prominent focus of her art (Erbil, 1997).

In her work *Journey to the End of Life*, Tezer Özlü embarks on a journey to follow the traces of Franz Kafka, Italo Svevo, and Cesare Pavese. The main purpose of this journey is actually to search for herself in pursuit of the authors she admires. Her self-awareness was increased during her visits to the regions where her authors lived, to their graves, to their homes, to the streets they visited, to the places associated with them, and to their surviving relatives or novel characters. Tezer Özlü had a dark literary tourism experience on this journey and reported this experience in detail in her work. Accordingly, in this study, this travel writing was chosen to provide a perspective on the concept of dark literary tourism and the work

was analyzed with qualitative textual analysis. The data were interpreted based on dark literary tourism experiences and motivations. As dark literary tourism is a sub-niche, firstly, a theoretical framework for dark tourism and literary tourism is presented in the study. Then, the concept of dark literary tourism was explained and the findings obtained from the work analyzed were interpreted. Since dark literary tourism is an understudied subject academically, it is thought that this paper will contribute to a better understanding of dark literary tourism experiences and motivations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Dark tourism

Many different definitions of dark tourism have been made in the literature. Although the concept is much older, the first definition of dark tourism belongs to Foley and Lennon (1996). Foley & Lennon (1996, p. 198) defined dark tourism as "a type of tourism that encompasses the presentation of real and commodified death and disaster zones, and their consumption by visitors". Seaton (1996, p. 234) remarked that "death is the one heritage that everyone shares and it has been an element of tourism longer than any other form of heritage". Arguing that dark tourism is not actually a new phenomenon but comes from a thanatoptic tradition dating back to the Middle Ages, Seaton (1996, p. 240) described this phenomenon known as thanatourism as "travel to a location wholly, or partially, motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death, particularly, but not exclusively, violent death, which may, to a varying degree be activated by the person-specific features of those whose deaths are its focal objects". In another study, Blom (2000, p. 32) defined this type of tourism, by entitling morbid tourism, as "on the one hand, focuses on sudden violent death and attracts a large number of people quickly, on the other hand, as an attraction-focused artificial morbidity-related tourism".

Seaton (1996, pp. 240-242) divided dark travel activities, which he considered as thanatourism, into five categories-: 1) Travel to witness public acts of death: This is the strongest and, in modern Western societies, the most morally proscribed form of thanatourism. 2) Travel to see the sites of mass or individual deaths: This is the most common form of this type of tourism. 3) Travel to internment sites of, and memorials to, the dead: This includes visits to graveyards, catacombs, crypts, war memorials and cenotaphs. 4) Travel to view the material evidence, or symbolic representations of death, in locations unconnected with their occurrence: It includes visits to synthetic sites or museums. 5) Travel for re-enactments or simulation of death: This category originally took the form of religious presentations as plays or festivals. Afterwards, secular derivations have developed in the form of battle re-enactments staged by members of societies dedicated to particular wars. In another study, Sharpley (2005) discussed dark tourism under four categories: dark tourism as experience; dark tourism as play; dark tourism as integration and dark tourism as classification. Dark tourism experiences can be consumed to give tourists a phenomenological meaning to their social existence. This category includes visits to war cemeteries/memorials, battlefields, other war-related museums or attractions, and graves. The category of dark tourism as play represents paler experiences. It is based on the shared, communal consumption of dark tourism sites or experiences. Examples of this category are annual commemorative ceremonies or one-off events. The motivation for the category of

dark tourism as integration refers to motivations for tourists that integrate themselves with death by witnessing violent or untimely deaths. The category of dark tourism as classification is based on the perception of travel as a social status indicator for a long while. In the context of dark tourism, such status may be sought through travelling to places or undertaking forms of travel that are dangerous for the tourist. Being able to tell such an experience is a source of motivation in itself.

Dark tourism allows death to be brought back into the public realm and discourse that allows absent death to be made present. It may aid in reducing the potential sense of dread that death inevitably brings. Moreover, dark tourism creates an opportunity to confront and contemplate 'mortality moments' from a perceived safe distance and environment (Stone & Sharpley, 2008). Dark tourism motivations differ according to the type of place visited. Biran et al. (2011) found four motivation factors in their study on the motivation of dark tourists. The first is that tourists travel with the need to believe that such bad events really happened. The second is the motivation to learn and understand. Tourists hope to gain an understanding of the past. The third is due to the desire to visit these famous places that have gained popularity. The fourth factor, namely emotional heritage experience, refers to the motivation of tourists to travel with an emotional visit experience. In another study, Baidwan (2022) pointed out significant results in his study of dark tourism motivations. It was revealed that dark tourists mostly travel with the motivations of the desire to pay respect, honour the past and need to better understand the reality of specific conditions and frustrations of the past.

2.2. Literary tourism

Literary tourism is associated with places celebrated for literary depictions and/or connections with literary figures (Squire, 1996, p. 119). It originates when the popularity of a literary depiction or the stature of an individual author is such that people are drawn to visit the places that the author wrote about or was associated with (Busby & Klug, 2001, p. 319). It is a niche of cultural tourism that involves travelling to places that somehow have a connection with literature (Baleiro & Quinteiro, 2018, p. 31).

The motivations and experiences of visiting literary places vary according to the degree of interest. At this point, it is useful to mention the distinctions between the concepts of the literary pilgrim and literary tourist. A literary pilgrim is someone who seeks places sacred to literary memory. Common places for literary pilgrims include authors' birthplaces, homes, haunts, and graves, as well as real-world settings for literary works (Westover, 2022, p. 69). The authors' houses are valuable for literary pilgrims as they offer a full range of authentic experiences as niche attractions (MacLeod, 2021). These places allow an emotional connection with the author, a better understanding of the author's life and works, and a nostalgic feeling (Herbert, 2001). Journeys to visit such a place linked to an author, or which features in his or her writings, can be considered a form of homage, a paying tribute by literary pilgrims to works of fiction and authors within landscapes or settings they have made famous (Stiebel, 2007, p. 93).

Literary pilgrims are well-educated tourists, versed in literature and with the cultural capital to appreciate and understand this form of heritage (Herbert, 2001, pp. 312-313).

Literary pilgrims who devotedly seek a literary place (Baleiro, 2022a) have a higher level of prior knowledge or, in other words, literary awareness (Herbert, 2001; Smith, 2003). As an integral part of the idea of literary pilgrimage, literary awareness indicates the literary tourists' levels of becoming literary pilgrims (Çevik, 2020). Gothie (2016, p. 406) stated that "literary tourists who have previously 'visited' a place in the pages of a novel will feel they know something about the place and the events that unfolded there".

Literary pilgrims mostly travel with motivations such as being close to the author, establishing an emotional and spiritual connection with the author, and paying homage to the author (Baleiro, 2022a; Brown, 2016; Herbert, 2001). On the other hand, literary tourists who display a love of the author or their works (Smith, 2003) may visit the literary sites with the motivations such as getting to know the author's life and their works or nostalgia, leisure and experiencing the literary places (Baleiro, 2022a; Çevik, 2022; Herbert, 2001). Moreover, literary tourists inspired by the fictional work travel to compare the places in the work with their own mental image (Çevik, 2020). Similarly, Baleiro et al. (2022) concluded the most important literary tourism motivation is to enhance understanding of the literary work. This finding highlights the educational potential of the literary tourism experience. Tourists interact with these places where they fill in the gaps in the text by adding and affirming layers of meaning.

Literary tourism is closely related to many types of tourism such as heritage tourism, event tourism, creative tourism, media-related tourism, film-television tourism, and gastronomy tourism. Literary tourism is also associated with dark tourism, which is a niche of cultural tourism and this association has created dark literary tourism as a sub-niche.

2.3. Dark literary tourism

Dark literary tourism can offer dissimilar and memorable experiences as it incorporates distinctive motivations from literary tourism and dark tourism. Visiting the graves of authors, visiting prisons that turned into museums where authors were convicted, participating in commemorative ceremonies, and travelling inspired by fictional works such as crime, horror, gothic, and holocaust fiction are the most fundamental dark literary tourism products.

At the 'darkest' end of dark literary tourism, literature such as Schindler's List can motivate visitors to see concentration camps. On the other side, at the 'lighter' end of dark literary tourism, Gothic literature undoubtedly influences visitors (Busby, 2022b, p. 33). In this context a specific example of dark literary tourism is Dracula tourism. It brings together aspects of literary, film, cultural, and dark tourism (Busby, 2022a). An interest in the literary, cinematic, and supernatural dimensions of the Dracula phenomenon attracts tourists to Dracula tourism with different motivations (Light, 2017). Light et al. (2021) discussed the concept of gothic tourism in their paper. According to the authors, gothic tourism can be conceptualized as a particular form of "lighter" dark tourism, but it can also be considered as a form of literary tourism. In the study, the authors placed gothic tourism at the nexus of dark and literary tourism.

Arguing that dark tourism motivations can be shaped through literature and film, Busby and Devereux (2015) examined the influence of *The Diary of Anne Frank* on the motivations for visiting The Anne Frank House, a dark literary tourism place. Educational reasons emerged as the primary motivational factor for visiting such places. They concluded that visitors who had read *The Diary of Anne Frank* are more encouraged to visit the place than those who had not. In another study, Westover (2009) analysed the book of William Goodwin's titled *Essay on Sepulchres* which is about visiting graves or in other words, necromanticism. Tolić et al. (2009) conducted an auto-ethnographic study regarding the visit to the grave of Eugène Ionesco. Similarly, Brown (2016) carried out a study on the visits to the graves of Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, using interview and observation techniques. The study revealed visitor motivations as a desire for closeness, connection and communion, a wish to pay homage and acknowledge influence, a space for reflection, and a desire to leave an offering. Xerri (2018) conducted an auto-ethnographic study to understand the dark literary tourism experience. The author organized a tour to the Isle of the Dead at Port Arthur in Tasmania. Discovering Savery's grave led him to research the author's life and his works as well as the history of Port Arthur and the Isle of the Dead. The tour enriched his knowledge of Australia's literary heritage and dark past. An outstanding result of the study is that the dark literary tourism experience turns into an inner journey and allows the tourist to re-evaluate their relationship with the destination.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study aims to provide a better understanding of dark literary tourism experiences and motivations by offering a perspective on the concept of dark literary tourism. For this purpose, the study selected the work *"Journey to the End of Life"* by Tezer Özlü which is a remarkable example of this concept.

There are several opinions about the genre of this work. While Erbil (1997) evaluated the work in the category of a novel, Akatlı (1997) characterized it as a narrative. Akatlı (1997) pointed out that the main feature that distinguishes this work from travel writing is that it delves into life in a way that cannot occur in any travel writing. Özgüven (1997) described this work as a memoir. Aydoğdu (2020) asserted that although this work has the characteristics of travel writing and a memoir, it cannot be considered within a certain genre. Because it narrates the conflict she experienced with herself, society, her past, and her struggle to exist, and also a test that includes suicide, which is called the end of life.

This work is quite far from the novel genre. The absence of a fictional storyline in the work clearly reveals that it does not have the feature of a novel genre. This nonfictional narrative is much closer to the travel writing genre. The author reported highlights of her journey first-hand by adding the date to the beginning of some chapters. While doing this, she made some social implications, and most importantly, she confronted herself and her past. As mentioned in the previous sections, travel writing is not only a genre that consists of describing the places visited, but also allows various cultural, social, and environmental assessments through these trips, and even includes sharing about one's self-discovery and inner journey. Therefore, this work is discussed in the travel writing in this study, as the author's writings about herself or society were the implications she made based on her journey.

The work was subjected to qualitative textual analysis. Textual analysis is a methodology that involves understanding language, symbols, and/or pictures present in texts to gain information regarding how people make sense of and communicate life and life experiences (Hawkins, 2017, p. 1753). It is interested in gathering information about how individuals in particular cultures at particular times make sense of the world around them (McKee, 2003; Smith, 2017). A variety of specific methods fall under the umbrella method of textual analysis such as content analysis, semiotics, and interactional analysis and are found in qualitative, quantitative, rhetorical, and critical approaches (Hawkins, 2017; Smith, 2017).

Many studies analyze works in the travel writing genre with a qualitative approach. In these studies, texts were analyzed for the purposes such as discussing the relationship between literature and the construction of place myth (Amoamo, 2013), better understanding the concept of urban tourism (Busby et al., 2011), and exploring the motivations to undertake journeying and the experience of literary pilgrims (Baleiro, 2022b). Similarly, in this study, Tezer Özlü's text was analyzed based on dark literary tourist motivations and dark literary tourism experiences to better understand the concept of dark literary tourism. The text was read twice, and data on the analyzed concept were revealed with a descriptive approach in the first reading. The data were grouped under certain themes. The text was read a second time and the relationships between the data and themes were reviewed. Finally, three headings were determined based on the dark literary tourism concept and the data were interpreted under these headings.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. In the footsteps of her authors: a dark literary tourist motivations and experience

The narrator has a literary pilgrim experience while following the footsteps of authors whom she defines as her most loyal friends. By visiting the graves of the authors, and the places where they were born or lived, she explores their lives in these cities and their reflections in their works, and tries to feel their feelings. The narrative begins with the expression of the narrator that she finds out she was born on the same day as Pavese and hence she shuddered. She skillfully chooses Pavese's quotes while describing every emotion she experiences to better portray it. Perhaps what make her so fascinated with Pavese was the possibility that Pavese felt the same way as she did.

The narrator begins her journey, which she says *"now the world will open in front of me"*, from East Berlin Station. As soon as she arrives in Prague, she goes to the house where Kafka was born. She forgets all her tiredness when she sees Kafka's statue. She becomes aware of how the years spent with Kafka's narratives direct her thoughts and how they affect her. She follows in the footsteps of Kafka in the city and goes to the house where Kafka wrote his stories for nearly a year, but the house is closed that day. She arrives at the cemetery and walks through the cemetery with deep thoughts on life and death. When she finds his grave, she realizes that she is incredibly relieved. The silence and atmosphere of the cemetery made her forget the world she lived in. She questions the reason for this relief, whether it is because Kafka suffered the same pains as she did. This visit enables her to identify herself with an author whom she admires and who influenced her personality. The fact that his father and then his mother were buried in Kafka's grave, and that he was not alone in the

grave relieves her. She remembers his sisters killed in Nazi camps and Milena. Since Kafka did not go to these camps and died of tuberculosis at a young age, she is glad he did not experience these pains. Afterwards, when she moves to Vienna, she thinks differently about Kafka's grave. It bothers her that his father, who oppressed him throughout his life, does not leave him alone in the grave. The narrator can empathize with the authors who have a place in her life and can feel their pain as a dark literary tourist and she is glad that they died without suffering possible pain regarding sad events that could happen to them if they were alive.

According to the narrator, the main destination of this journey is S. Stefano Belbo. This journey will be to experience the author by seeing his hills, houses, and streets, and being a part of nature there. However, before S. Stefano Belbo, there is another author that needs to track down. She proceeds towards Trieste and wants to feel the winds of Italo Svevo's city on her skin. She remembers the author's *Zeno Cosini* novel and its characters. She discerns once again that literature is the most loyal friend of her.

In the public library, she spends time in the section reserved for Italo Svevo. She examines all the photographs of the author and witnesses how passionate his eyes are in his youth photographs. She discovers from his youth photos that his hair loss at a young age and identifies the author with the hero of his novel *Sanilita*, the young man who feels old. She imagines that the author took on an old man's face when he was still young and remained that way. Among the photographs are the author's wedding photos. According to her, Svevo is the author who best portrays marriage in world literature. In the background of these photographs, she feels the author's anger towards love and the meaninglessness of marriage. A handwritten page of "A Marriage" from *Zeno Cosini* novel draws her attention.

She travels to the Gardino Publico, where Italo Svevo's grave is located. She immediately recognizes the park due to the house of the girl characterized in the novel *Sanilita* being around here. She observes that unlike the Jewish cemetery in Prague, this place is more lively, people spend time on the benches, and children play. She deems that Svevo continues to live here with his passion and uneasiness.

The narrator turns her route to the main destination she desires to visit. The closer she gets to Torino, the more she dwells upon Cesare Pavese, who was found dead in a hotel room. She notices that she did not visit anywhere else as eagerly as the region Pavese lived in. If he had not committed suicide, maybe she would have seen the most beautiful sad face and caressed it. She feels the urge to wander the streets that she recognizes from Pavese's portrayals as soon as she will arrive in Torino.

In the elevator of Hotel Rome, she thinks about the elevator being the size of a coffin but was built for a corpse larger than Pavese's. To her, no elevator could be more gloomy, darker, and more conducive to arriving at death than this one. She comprehends that Pavese sought and found this coffin to make his way to death. Pavese's suicide is not only reflected in his narratives; she discerns that many concrete connections are in the city down to the boulevards, streets, sidewalks, station, hotel, hotel elevator, and corridor regarding his suicide. She figures out that the author may have been prepared, tried and lived his suicide

for a long time here, just as he experienced Torino, and his native town of Belbo, with his feelings as a whole.

The corridors of Hotel Rome are dark, narrow, cruel corridors that do not allow a return from death. She enters room 305, where Pavese committed suicide, with the receptionist. This renovated room bears no trace of Pavese's last day. When the employee attempts to open a door in the room, she supposes it is a wardrobe or a bathroom. As she enters this dark room with the shutters closed, she not only perceives the darkness but also senses suicide. She feels that his suicide has taken over his entire being. She remembers that wooden bedstead and the bed on which Pavese's body was found in his clothes from the photograph. Preservation of all the objects as they are leads her to envisage the last evening of the author. While in this room, which she calls the coffin, she tries to grasp how the author was preparing for death. She assumes that he may have been in this room often before. She ponders the Hotel Rome, the Felice Piazza, the elevator, the corridors, and this room which are places that together prepared him for suicide. The narrator tries to feel the process that led the author to commit suicide in this experience that she has in the footsteps of suicide, and empathizes with his feelings by trying to make sense of the reasons for this process and its reflections on his works.

While continuing to seek traces of him in Torino, she visits Platti Cafe. This place is one of the haunts of Pavese. She counts her steps from Platti Cafe to Einaudi Publishing House, where he worked for many years, and from the cafe to the Hotel Roma. In this way, she tries to experience the daily life of Pavese. Her next stop is the author's cemetery. His grave is in the inner courtyard of the Cimitero Principali cemetery. But she cannot reconcile this cemetery, hydrangeas, and marble with him at all. She believes that his grave should be in an unstoned grave in the Piemonte hills, close to the cornfields, as he always mentioned in his narratives.

4.2. Searching for people and characters of her authors

Since the narrator has excellently assimilated the works and the characters of the authors, she constantly tries to associate with these works during her journey. She almost rereads the novels in her mind and tries to imagine the characters in the places she travels. She tends to identify them with the characters they created, with the knowledge she has got about the authors. As touring Trieste and Torino, she immediately recognizes these places from the narratives of the authors. She tries to comprehend whether the places she visited in Trieste are the places Svevo describes in *Zeno Cosini* novel. She re-lives the novel once again, remembering what happened to the characters in these hills and streets she travelled to.

Travelling through the cornfields by train she recalls *The Cornfield* she translated from Pavese years ago. Another example of her constant association with novels and characters is the evocation of the lonely heroes of Pavese of a stranger she has a conversation with on the Torino train. In Torino, as she gets out of the station, she immediately put her finger on the boulevard she encounters, from the narratives of Pavese, and figures out that this is the tree-lined road he most often passes by. But the narrator reports that she is disappointed with Torino. During the period she read his books in Istanbul, she imagined Torino as a magnificent European city with its boulevards and areas. However, her first impression is

that it is a scary city. She presumes this is probably due to her thoughts, as she associates this city with Pavese's suicide.

In this journey, the narrator not only searches for the traces of her authors but also tries to reach their surviving family members or the heroes she met in their novels to better experience the authors. In Trieste, she arranges a meeting with Svevo's surviving daughter. When she meets her, Letiza, she realizes that she has known her since her mother was pregnant. Based on Letiza's account of her father, she tries to find traces of Svevo's protagonists, especially Zeno, and to identify the characters with Svevo. She tries to associate the events and characters in the novel *Zeno Cosini* with Svevo's life. As touring the house and viewing family photos, she curiously seeks photos of Ada, whom Zeno fell in love with in the *Zeno Cosini* novel.

On her trip to S. Stefano Belbo, the town where Pavese was born, she visits the atelier of Nuto, one of Pavese's protagonists. A portrait of Pavese hangs on one wall in the atelier, and his books are lined up on the bookshelves below the portrait. She bears witness that Nuto hiding everything in his atelier for over a century and discovers that the people who generate the literature and keep it alive are Nuto and the like. She indicates that when she read Pavese's novel The Moon and the Bonfires years ago, she certainly never thought that she would find Nuto alive and get into his car. In this town, she finds the opportunity to grasp once again how powerful literature is and how it transcends real life.

She visits Pavese's 84-year-old sister, Maria. She lives in the new parts of the city with her daughter who has never been married. She first looked after her father and now she takes care of her mother. As she listens to their stories, she recalls Pavese's novel *Among Women Only*. She finds out that Pavese went to the Unita newspaper where he worked after writing a letter and that he had chosen his photograph for the article that would announce his death. She gets once again that this suicide is a slow-prepared suicide that has been lived for years. In this newly developing part of the city, she welcomes Pavese's suicide for the first time. She is glad that he does not live, he does not reside here, and he has never seen these new neighbourhoods. She queries why one should endure this life, this unbearable loneliness more.

4.3. Implications and awareness for her own life

While seeking the traces of the authors she admires, the narrator searches for her own self and during this journey, she has many awareness and implications regarding her life and past. Her visits to the graves of authors lead her to ponder on life and death. While seeking the grave of Kafka she discovers that death never seems like a distant future to her and that she is approaching the end of life at every moment of her life. As she leaves the cemetery, she remembers the words her brother had said in Berlin in the past. He said that *"we should make up ready our graves in Istanbul"*. She responded that where she will be buried means nothing to her and that she does not want to know what her grave will be. This journey made her think that her brother was right, but she notices that she still does not want a grave in Istanbul.

In the city bearing the traces of Kafka, she experiences a remarkable moment to be able to transcend her borders. When she goes to the station to pick up the bag she left, everyone looks at her noisy, wheeled suitcase. For a moment, the effect of this situation makes her feel a great emotional intensity. She desires to throw the suitcase in the middle of the station and cry. She is ashamed to carry such a suitcase. She feels the urge to shout against all systems. She thinks about Kafka, his works and their depths. At that moment, she decides that the only way to shout is to write.

While touring the streets where her authors roamed, she remembers the periods she read their books. She confronts her past, the past of the city she lives in. She remembers that while reading Svevo in Istanbul, she always admired the heroes of Svevo wandering the boulevards of Trieste. She recollects that in hard years when the city she lived in was in turmoil and death was everywhere at any time, she had taken refuge in Svevo and thought what a gift her heroes who could walk on the street in Trieste had. In the section of the public library reserved for Italo Svevo, the dark times of her past once again come to light. Perhaps the most-smoking author in world literature, Svevo smoked at least sixty cigarettes a day. She revisits the period spent in Istanbul mental hospitals when she smoked sixty cigarettes a day because she had nothing else to do. She feels a glow of happiness that she survived that dark period and that her freedom was not taken away. She is both in the life of the author she admires, right beside her people and heroes, and in an environment surrounded by the scent of four hundred thousand books on the shelves. She assumes that there can be no independence beyond this. She perceives better why she set out on this journey. She remarks that each journey is to find yourself, to discover the unknown of your own "self".

As she walks towards Svevo's daughter's house, she discerns that she takes all her stamina from the dead people who she lives in their narratives. The dead, who have said and written everything that the world needs, enable her to hold on to life in a way. In Svevo's daughter's house, while Letiza depicts her father's youth and the development process of his passion for literature from his youth, she reconsiders her youth, which authors she was influenced by, and the authors who formed her personality. She questions literature's relationship with life and death and its commitment to pain.

The trips to Torino and S. Stefano Belbo, where she feels Pavese's suicide intensely, also enabled her to experience self-awareness. Travelling in Pavese's footsteps, a feeling emerges that the closest person in her life is this dead. She thinks that anything after S. Stefano Belbo will no longer be significant to her. At the atelier of Nuto, the hero of Pavese's novel, she feels that the city of Torino and the Piemonte region are surrounded by her own and Nuto's solitude. She discerns that the roof of Nuto's atelier is covered with ivy, as in her house overlooking the Bosphorus in Istanbul. This leads her on a journey through her faint childhood memories. Nuto informs her that people travel there from Russia, Japan, and New Zealand for Pavese, but she is the first person from Türkiye. Thereupon she tries to grasp where she came from. From the Bosphorus hills, from Prague, or the graves of the literary world? S. Stefano Belbo also provides awareness to her as to why she has so many relationships. She distinguishes that she is afraid of being alone in her limitlessness and that a person needs limits. However, now she can perceive life more deeply than ever and is determined not to be afraid anymore.

5. CONCLUSION

> *For the first time during this journey; in this journey that I embark on around my authors' neighbourhoods, streets, cafes, boulevards, graves, houses, and places where they perceive the world, I sense that the constantly conflicting dual personality within me is united in a single "self" (Özlü, 2015: 121 [Translated by the author]).*

This study offers a perspective on dark tourism experiences and dark tourist motivations. Tezer Özlü exhibits the characteristics of a dark literary tourist and literary pilgrim on her journey towards the graves of her authors. Herbert (2001) stated that although the number of literary pilgrims is lower than literary tourists travelling for motivations such as curiosity, general interest and pleasure, their experiences are very distinctive compared to the other group. Tezer Özlü has achieved more than a literary tourist experience on this journey. The combination of her literary tourism motivations with the dark tourism motivations and the addition of the darkness of her own life and past made her get a pilgrim experience. She tried to better understand the lives of authors by including the graves of the authors, the places where they died, their houses, the haunts, the streets and boulevards they wandered, their surviving relatives and even the heroes of the novel. She wanted to have an idea about how they felt by experiencing their daily lives. In this respect, the results of the study coincide with Brown's (2016) findings of a desire for closeness, connection and communion and a wish to pay homage and acknowledge the influence. Besides, these results are also parallel with the dark tourism motivations findings of Biran et al. (2011) and Baidwan (2022).

As a dark literary tourist, this journey allowed Tezer Özlü to empathize with her authors and feel their pain. There were even moments when she rejoiced at their death, considering the possible pain they would have encountered if they were alive. Remembering the murder of Kafka's sisters in Nazi camps, she was glad that he had not witnessed those days due to dying of tuberculosis. She felt Pavese's suicide step by step and tried to make sense of the process that led him to suicide.

Tezer Özlü, who has a high literary awareness of the authors, almost relived the novels of the authors, this time in the regions where they had been created, during this journey. As Gothie (2016) puts it about literary tourists with high literary awareness, she felt that she had previously visited these places and had known something about these places. So long as she acquired the fine details of the authors' lives that she was not aware of from their relatives or viewed the photographs of the authors, she tended to identify the authors with the heroes they created in their novels. In this sense, this journey not only provided her with what she had not been cognizant of about the lives of the authors but also enabled her to enter the borders of their literary worlds and allowed her to make sense of the characters and fictional worlds they created. Through this journey, she became aware that literature is her only faithful and best friend.

The key point of this study is that dark literary tourism, in a sense, allows people to have implications for their own lives and to make an inner journey. This result is consistent with the findings of Brown (2016) and Xerri (2018). This result also justifies Collins-Kreiner's (2016) suggestion. The author suggested in her study that it should be considered the

concepts of dark tourism and pilgrimage as a single phenomenon. Both concepts originated from the individual's desire for an experience that will ultimately change his or her life, or at least make a valuable contribution to it. Tezer Özlü constantly questioned the phenomena of life and death in the graves of the authors. While following the traces of her authors, she confronted her past, her dark periods. The journey provided awarenesses about her own self, loneliness, and fears. She pondered how literature and the authors she pursued had affected her personality. And thanks to this journey, she reached that writing, writing despite life, is the only way to salvation. In brief, this journey set light on her darkness.

The most significant limitation of this study is that it was conducted with a focus on the narrative. The study aimed to gain a perspective against dark literary tourism through a narrative that is an outstanding example of the concept. In future studies, research can be carried out to determine tourist motivations for several products of dark literary tourism and to make sense of their experiences.

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