

**WRESTLER SERIALS (PEHLİVAN TEFRIKALARI)
IN
THE TURKISH PRESS**

POPULAR TEXTS' USE OF POPULAR CULTURE

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
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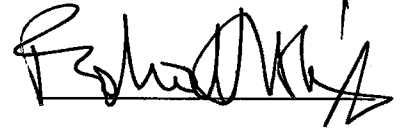
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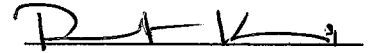
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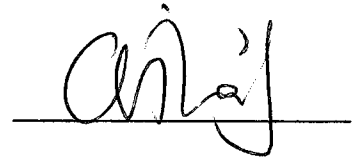


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ABSTRACT

WRESTLER SERIALS (PEHLİVAN TEFRİKALARI) IN THE TURKISH PRESS POPULAR TEXT'S USE OF POPULAR CULTURE

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This study aims at finding out the role of popular narrations in the process of construction, maintenance and reproduction of the hegemony in society. In respect of this purpose, the Gramscian approach which regards the hegemonic activity as an arena of struggle between dominant and oppositional views and interests is taken as the point of departure and the Wrestler Serials (Pehlivan Tefrikaları), which are the example of popular narrations are assumed to be an agent in the process of hegemony formation.

In collecting data, the discourse of Wrestler Serials is analyzed and 11 Wrestler Serials which were published in daily *Tercüman* between 1962 and 1995 are studied. By the discourse analysis, it is aimed to disclose the nature of Wrestler Serials which comprises the contradictory elements; internalises, articulates and transforms the

resistant views in favour of the dominant powers and thus represents the existing order as the common interest of the society. The discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials is composed of two main steps: The former focuses on the analysis of the narrative characteristics of Wrestler Serials. Under the heading of “Narrative Structure”, the sequence of events and the contradictions which formulate the content and formal characteristics of these narrations, the styles of the narrations and the main characters are studied. And the latter stresses on the main ideological points of references in narration, which are developed to define and interpret the social events and values. Therefore, under the heading of “Ideological References”, the main definitions and references about the reality and rationality, the relations of power, the notion of “people”, the wrestling as a sportive event, the religion and traditionalism, the regionalism, nationalism and racism, the gender relations and the economic relations are examined.

In consequence, it is justified that Wrestler Serials play an important role to reproduce and maintain the hegemony in society by the processes of consent production and consensus formation.

Key words: Popular culture, hegemony, serial narrations.

ÖZ

TÜRK BASININDA PEHLİVAN TEFRİKALARI POPÜLER METİNLER VE POPÜLER KÜLTÜR

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Birer popüler kültür metni olan Pehlivan Tefrikaları'nın toplumdaki mevcut hegemonyanın kurulması, sürdürülmesi ve yeniden üretilmesi sürecinde oynadığı rolü ortaya koymak, bu çalışmanın temel amacıdır. Sözü edilen amaç doğrultusunda, hegemonyayı egemen ve karşıt güçler arasındaki bir mücadele alanı olarak gören Gramscici yaklaşım temel alınmış ve popüler medya metinleri olan Pehlivan Tefrikaları'nın hegemonya oluşturma sürecinin birer aracı olduğu varsayılmıştır.

Veri toplama aşamasında, 1962 ve 1995 yılları arasında *Tercüman* gazetesinde yayınlanan 11 Pehlivan Tefrikası'nın söylem çözümlemesi yapılmıştır. Bu şekilde, Pehlivan Tefrikaları'nın farklı öğeleri bir arada barındıran, karşıt görüşleri içselleştiren, eklemleyen ve dönüştüren, dolayısıyla mevcut çıkarları bütün toplumun çıkarı olarak yansıtan söylem yapısını ortaya koymak amaçlanmıştır.

Pehlivan Tefrikaları'nın söylem analizi iki temel aşama üzerinde durur: Birincisi, bu metinlerin anlatım yapısını oluşturan öğelerdir. "Anlatım Yapısı" başlığı altında, Pehlivan Tefrikaları'nın içerik ve biçim özelliklerini oluşturan olaylar dizgesi, karşıtlıklar, anlatıların biçimsel özellikleri ve temel kişiler incelenmiştir. İkincisi ise, bu metinler aracılığıyla toplumsal olay ve değerlerin tanımlanması ve yorumlanmasına yönelik geliştirilen belli başlı ideolojik gönderme noktalarını inceler. "İdeolojik Göndermeler" başlığı altında, metinlerde yer alan gerçeklik ve rasyonaliteye, güç ilişkilerine, "halk" kavramına, bir spor etkinliği olarak "güreş"e, din ve gelenekçiliğe, bölgecilik, ulusçuluk ve ırkçılığa, cinsiyet ilişkilerine ekonomik ilişkilere yönelik ideolojik göndermeler, tanımlamalar incelenmiştir.

Çalışmanın sonuçları, Pehlivan Tefrikaları'nın egemen ve karşıt görüşleri, tanımlamaları bir arada içerdiğini, bununla beraber, bir rıza elde etme ve uzlaşma sağlama süreci aracılığıyla toplumsal hegemonyanın sürdürülmesinde, yeniden üretilmesinde etkili olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Popüler kültür, hegemonya, tefrika anlatılar.

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INTRODUCTION

Wrestler Serials (Pehlivan Tefrikaları) are long-lasting newspaper stories in which the life stories and performances of famous Turkish Wrestlers are narrated in serial form. In this study, it is attempted to analyze the Wrestler Serials as an example of popular culture, diffused by mass media. In this respect, two main components determine structural nature and the content of Wrestler Serials: The sportive activity of wrestling -mainly the oriental wrestling¹ - and the mass media. Once approached from the perspectives of their content, one can notice that the Wrestler Serials deal with the wrestling activity which is in effect a product of folk culture. Similarly, as a narrative form, Wrestler Serials may be rooted to the folk cultural stories about wrestling. In this way, one can assume certain common characteristics between Wrestler Serials and the folk cultural narrations. Nevertheless, the fact that they are the mass media products requires an approach from the perspectives of popular culture activity. Accordingly, the Wrestler Serials are certain fictive mass media narrations. From this perspective, the textual form of Wrestler Serials differs from the sportive news, though their subject focuses on the sportive activity of wrestling. Therefore, the Wrestler Serials are certain storified accounts in series of the past wrestling events. And they are much more closer to the newspaper or magazine stories given in successive issues or novels divided into several episodes.

¹ The Oriental (Turkish) Wrestling is a kind of wrestling in which the opponents oil their bodies before the match.

As generally admitted, the transition from the oral to the written culture, the industrialisation process through which the modern styles of entertainment are developed and the increase of leisure time are the reasons for the appearance of modern popular culture. In the development process of modern popular culture, the mass media activity has played an important role. In this respect, the Wrestler Serials can be considered as media narrated popular cultural products since they are exposed to and consumed by masses of people.

Once they are conceptualized as a popular cultural product, all the controversy as to the nature of the popular culture becomes relevant in the context of Wrestler Serials: As it is known, there are many different views about the function and meaning of popular culture. For instance, the Mass Culture Theory attributes the popular culture a pessimistic function and the populist view sees it from an optimistic way. Furthermore, a wide tradition of thought on the subject gives much more importance to popular culture as an ideological activity and associates it with "ideology". For instance, the Althusserian view would associate the popular culture as an ideological practice (Mumby, 1989:298). Consequently, for those who refer to the works of Althusser, popular culture is an agent of the ideological process where the "dominant ideology" is maintained and reproduced by providing the individuals with an imaginary model of the whole (Dant, 1991).

In this respect, the Gramscian approach which focuses on the conceptualisation of "hegemony" and which is widely favoured by the members of the Critical Cultural Studies School (CCCS) is at the core of many works about popular culture. For the Gramscian view, the popular culture is neither an oppositional culture of the people produced by and for them, nor a manipulative culture imposed from above by the holders of the economic power. But it is an arena of manufacturing the voluntary

consent of the people for the existing establishment (Bennett, 1986:19). Therefore, the popular culture is an activity where the ideological structures of society are reproduced and maintained through the acquired consensus over the existing values, interests and establishment of the status quo. For such a view, the popular cultural forms and narrations are the result of an ideological effort to construct the consensus and consent over the interests of the dominant powers in society. In this process, the voluntary and spontaneous 'consent' of the subordinate groups is secured by convincing them to believe that it is in their best interests to submit to the "exploitation" and "domination".

Such a framework enables us to conceive the Wrestler Serials as an agent of popular culture serving the dominant powers to produce and maintain their hegemony over the subordinate groups. In this connection, it is opportune to stress that the sportive activities which are at the origin of the Wrestler Serials function so as to produce and maintain the preferred views of the social world. As a matter of fact, it is generally accepted that the sports games are the components of the hegemony formation process where the consent over main values and ideas is produced in favour of the dominant-hegemonic powers (Donnelly, 1988:69).

In this conceptualisation, the struggle conducted by the dominant-hegemonic culture to disorganise and reorganise the popular culture is not a consistent and unilaterally functioning effort. It has a conflictual nature and thus, it is rather a process of articulation of the relations of domination and subordination. Accordingly, the hegemonic activity is the result of complex negotiations and alignments of interests which incorporates both the dominant and oppositional aspects: Therefore, the "consent" of the subordinate groups for the cultural leadership of the dominant powers and the existing establishment have to be continually reproduced, since it is achieved through a combination of incorporation and resistance (Storey, 1993:13; Hall

1981:235). From this perspective, the popular culture must be seen as a polysemic process which includes both the dominant and oppositional characters and which articulates them in favour of the status quo. This polysemic nature means that the popular narrations are open to be represented in an alternative reader response, regarding the social conditions and other aspects (Hall, 1993). Consequently, a popular cultural text may be decoded in a negotiated or oppositional manner as well. In this respect, the conceptualisation of "open" and "closed" texts developed by Elliot et al. (1986) is as necessary to understand the relationship between the "encoding" and "decoding" activity. Accordingly, the "closed" texts (e.g. the news) operate with the terms of reference constructed by the official discourse and define the world through the accepted boundaries of the dominant official discourses. They are closed to alternative/oppositional interpretations. However, another category of mass media texts which are "open" to possible alternative readings contains contradictory elements.

In this study, the popular mass media texts like *Wrestler Serials* are assumed as being open to alternative interpretations, since they are thought to contain the oppositional conceptualisations about the social system together with the dominant values, views and claims. In other words, they are conceived as "open" popular cultural texts. Consequently, *Wrestler Serials* are seen as primarily the expressions of the ideological activities of the dominant powers to maintain and reproduce their hegemony over the subordinate groups, although they contain oppositional elements to the social system and thus they are assumed to contain certain discursive components which project the hegemonic activity.

The main objective of this study is a discursive investigation of *Wrestler Serials* to discover how the process of hegemony formation functions through

popular narrations and how the hegemony of the dominant powers is secured by means of popular culture. In other words, through the discursive analysis of Wrestler Serials, it is aimed to establish the relationship between the popular narrative discourse and the hegemonic activity which produces the common sense by articulating the contradictory views and interests in society, in favour of the maintenance and the reproduction of the existing system.

In the first part of the study, it is attempted to determine the Wrestler Serials as certain popular cultural narrations. For this purpose, a brief information is given about the wrestling in Turkey, since they provide the context for the studied texts. Secondly, the common characteristics of the serial as a specific form of the mass media output is analyzed with a special emphasis on the Wrestler Serials.

The second part of the study is the discursive analysis of Wrestler Serials published by the Turkish dailies. The sample of analysis consisted of 11 different stories written by four different authors. All these stories are selected from the daily "*Tercüman*", where a total of 41 different serial stories of wrestling were published from 1962 (the birthdate of the paper) to 1995 (the time the paper was closed). Although there are also other dailies which publish or have published Wrestler Serials, *Tercüman* is preferred since it had published Wrestler Serials for thirty three years nearly without interruption and since it had been one of the most popular dailies in Turkey during its life of publication. As a criteria for comparison, we have tried to choose at least one story for every five years and for a similar reason, we have selected the stories about the same wrestlers written by different authors.

The fact that the recent studies in the field of popular culture used mainly the techniques of content analysis based upon the readers' responses (Radway, 1984;

Ang, 1985; Liebes & Katz, 1986; Cassata & Skill, 1983) forced us to develop our own method of analysis which proposes a wider perspective of ideological categories for the study.

Jerry Palmer's work *Potboilers, Methods, Concepts and Case Studies in Popular Fiction* (1991) and Mike Cormack's essay about methods of analysis in his work *Ideology* (1992) guided us to develop this method of analysis for Wrestler Serials. Accordingly, the discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials in this study consists of two main headings: The Structural Analysis of Narration and The Analysis of Ideological References.

In order to define the subject of analysis and to find out the ideological elements inherent in the structure of narration, firstly, the narrative structures of the texts are analyzed. To do so, the common sequences of events, the skeleton of stories and the distinctions made or assumed by the texts -the binary oppositions- are examined and the style of narration and the characters in the narrations are analyzed. Secondly, the discourse of Wrestler Serials is analyzed so as to disclose how some ideological points of references are settled in discourse and how the social aspects are defined through these references. For this purpose, the eight main categories are settled to answer the questions how the texts refer to reality and rationality, how the relations of power are projected, how the "people" are defined, what attributes are given to wrestling as a sportive activity, how the references to traditionalism and religion are made, how the regionalism, nationalism and racism are handled, what references to gender relations and the place of the women in the society are made and how the economic relations are defined.

The results of the discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials in this study corroborate the attributed position to popular culture in the process of hegemony formation. Accordingly, once the sequence of events, the basic contradictions, the style of narration and the characters of the narrations which formulate the narrative structure of Wrestler Serials are analyzed, it can be noticed that they have certain ideological preferences in favour of the construction of social reality for the sakes of the dominant hegemonic powers. Similarly, by the analysis of the main ideological points of references in the discourse, it is confirmed that the desirable attitudes, positions and values about social life are defined and emphasized. In this process, the content of Wrestler Serials includes both the dominant and resistant elements. Yet, this conflictual nature of the narration does not refer to a process where the oppositional elements are given a similar importance and place with the dominant values, views and interests. The discourse of Wrestler Serials is rather formulated by an articulatory process through which the resistant ideas and interests are internalised in favour of the dominant-hegemony and the dominant establishment is projected as the common interest of the society, as a whole.

CHAPTER II

WRESTLER SERIALS, MASS MEDIA and POPULAR NARRATIONS

Wrestler Serials are the mass media narrations in serial form, the subject of which focuses on wrestling activity and the life stories of wrestlers. Two main social components determine the content and structural nature of Wrestler Serials: the former is the sportive activity upon which the context of the narrations are fixed and the latter is the mass media activity, itself. Accordingly, the Wrestler Serials deal with the (oriental) wrestling, which is a folk cultural game-contest. Besides, although they are mass media narrations about wrestling activity, they are different from the sportive news as such. The Wrestler Serials are in effect certain fictive narrations about the stories of wrestling and wrestlers. In this respect, being solely the product of a mass media narration, they should be considered as a manifestation of the popular culture.

2.1. Wrestling as The Subject of Wrestler Serials

The subject matter of Wrestler Serials is the oriental wrestling events, which are a product of the folk culture in Turkey. The importance given to the spectators as the indissoluble part of the contest, or the "spectacular nature" of the game by the terms of Barthes (1993) is one of the main reasons to define the (oriental) wrestling as folk culture. Accordingly, the foremost goal of the wrestlers is to assure that the spectators are delighted. The contest in its totality based on the approval of the spectators and each movement of wrestlers are organised for embarrassing and

exciting them. The spectator involvement is essential to the contest and the success of the opponents is measured in terms of the spectator's reactions. Therefore, wrestling cannot be considered without the spectators who support their chosen side. In this way, to borrow the terms of Boratav (1973:297), the oriental wrestling may be defined as a "sportive show". The rituals of wrestling and the rising passions are much more important than what happens in fact. As argued by Barthes, "the function of the wrestler is not to win: it is to go exactly through the motions which are expected of him" (1993:16). This statement explains the spectacular nature of wrestling very well.¹

Moreover, as a game-contest, the oriental wrestling has certain common characteristics with other folk sports. For example, in the societies where these combat-sports acquire a great approval, the social development and state organizations are weaker. As a result, these societies are often regulated by patriarchal rules and the violence is more regular, and overt feature of social life (Dunning, 1986c:271). Such kind of generalisation may also be justified for the Ottoman society where the oriental wrestling was an important part of folk cultural activities.² Accordingly, the violence is conceived as an internal structural feature of the oriental wrestling which is considered as a war between the opponents. This is a murderous contest in which the competitors fight with every part of their body: with their hands, feet, elbows, knees, necks, heads, etc... The contest-games which developed as folk cultural activities do not have any time limit. The struggle continues until one of the opponents is defeated

¹From this perspective, the wrestling activity can be likened to a spectacle or drama which contains a fantasy theme: the fight between a hero and a villain. The performers in this spectacular activity present a show by hurting each other and the dramatization of wrestling serves to create a new reality. For further detail see Mondak (1989).

²For further information about the social conditions in Ottoman Empire, see Taner Timur, *Osmanlı Toplumsal Düzeni* (1994).

or cries small. Three or more hours of contest are not surprising. As noted by Elias, in the folk games such as olympic boxing, pancreas or oriental wrestling, even the murder in fight is natural and legitimate:

It was in line with this warrior ethics that a boy or man killed of the olympic boxing or wrestling was often crowned as victor to the glory of his clan and his city and that the survivor-the killer was neither punished nor stigmatized (Elias, 1986a:138).

Furthermore, there is a fundamental conceptualisation of justice which determines the struggle and the ritualised structure of the contest. This sense of justice is rooted to the idea of "paying back" and the assumption that "the powerful gets what he deserves".

All of these characteristics of the oriental wrestling which serve to define it as folk cultural sport game play a determinant role in the study of the content of Wrestler Serials.

Therefore, it becomes quite legitimate to claim at the outset that the discursive characteristics of Wrestler Serials are constructed over certain ideological definitions and references. Especially, when the sportive activity which provides their subject matter is considered, this ideological nature becomes more clear. For the sportive activity itself is constructed by some ideological components. As a matter of fact, contrary to the views that the sport is a struggle only involving the personal qualities and that it is only the use of physical qualities of the body, it is not, and has never been irrelevant to the social and political events (Clark and Clark, 1985:63). The contest in sport and the effort to settle the dominance are some reflections of the social

practices. The sportive activity plays an important role in the production process of the favoured views about the dominant values and social life, as well as the other popular culture activities. For instance, the sense of "belonging to" and "national unity" are the main motivating factors in the ideological nature of sport. As noted by Blain et al. (1992:27), the sense of national community and the myth of an ideological communion are emphasized by the sporting competitions. In this way, the common sense over the dominant rules is produced by attributing the socially wishable and acceptable attitudes to the stereotyped "heroes", who are the living representatives of the national or ethnic characteristics. Consequently, as certain discourse enclosed in the nature of the sportive activity itself, the Wrestler Serials enable the functioning of a hegemonic process.

2.2. Wrestler Serials as Mass Media Narrations

The content of Wrestler Serials may be rooted to the public stories about wrestling. In this respect, they have strict relationships with the folk cultural narrations. Nevertheless, since they are the mass media products, the Wrestler Serials cannot be considered as folk culture. Contrary to the folk cultural narrations such as tales, epics, public stories etc., the Wrestler Serials are produced and published by the mass media agents and thus they are not oral and anonymous, they do not change according to regions and traditions. In this respect, the Wrestler Serials must be considered as popular cultural narrations rather than folk culture.

Besides, while the Wrestler Serials focus on the subject of wrestling, they cannot be defined as having the same function and position with the mass media news reports, where the events of wrestling are directly narrated. In this way, they have certain different discursive characteristics than the sports news. They are rather certain

fictive narrations. And regarding their formal characteristics and narrative structures, the Wrestler Serials may be considered in the same category with the serial newspaper novels or stories. From this perspective, they may be rooted to "Roman Feuilletons".

"Roman Feuilletons" are the long-lasting newspaper and magazine stories published in serial form. They firstly appeared in France in the nineteenth century.³ The appearance of the serial form in newspapers intersects with the beginning of a process of popularisation in press. In this process, the "Roman Feuilletons" played an important role since they attracted more and more reader and helped to increase the publication revenues of the papers they were published in. Therefore, the newspapers and magazines of the time could reach the great masses of people at a cheaper cost.⁴

Moreover, the serial form in Turkey can be rooted to the oral tradition of telling stories among people. For example, the stories about wrestling and the lives of wrestlers used to be told mainly in public areas like coffee-houses (*kahvehane*) haunted by wrestlers. As it is indicated by V. M. Kocatürk (quoted from Karadağ, 1995:60), in the transition to the written literature, the oral tradition of telling stories or epics turned out to some small works which can be read in one or two hours. The longer stories which were divided into parts called "meclis" may be assumed to be the "ancestors" of the serial form in Turkey.

³ The appearance of serial form in newspapers and magazines is claimed to be marked by the publication of a translation of Lazerillo de Tormes, in *Siècle*, August 5, 1836. Minor argues that the history of the printed continued story started by that text, each episode of which was short and self-contained (1975:78-9). The following feuilleton was "La Vieille Fille" by Balzac, published in *La Presse*, October 1836.

⁴ The tirages of the papers which published serials augmented from 47.000 to 200.000 in 1846 (Oskay, 1977, 214). The popularity of 'serialised novels' increased also the earnings of the writers of the time. Newspaper editors paid highly for novelists whose writings attracted an increasing readership (Minor, 1975:79).

In a similar way, as far as Turkey is concerned, the language revolution and the technological developments in newspaper industry can be considered as the conditions of the popularisation of press. While not having concrete data about the subject, a relationship between the development of popular press and the appearance of the serial form in Turkey may be assumed. In this respect, the romance mainly written by famous Turkish writers found a great approval, when they were published in serial form. The first Wrestler Serial is published by T. P. Piremehmetoğlu in 1938, in *Yeni Sabah*. This is followed by the others and the Wrestler Serials became as popular as to be announced on the first pages of the papers, days ago they were published.

The contemporary followers of the newspaper serials are the radio and television soap operas.⁵ In respect of their narrative characteristics, either in newspaper columns, or on the radio or television soap operas, the serial stories contain certain common features of content and structure of narration. For example, they are in most cases never-ending narratives with no final conclusion. Their narration is structured around the gaps and strategic interruptions through which the interest and passions of the audience/reader are aroused and maintained. Therefore, the textual structures of serial forms focus on the pretensive tension caused by textual gaps. In this way, the imagination and curiosity of the audience/reader are motivated by the help of the question "What is going to happen next?"⁶ and the audience/reader

⁵ This genre is so called because it was soap manufacturers who first sponsored these programmes which focus mainly on human relations and daily life. (Ang, 1985:54)

⁶ Allen notes that the stimulated sense of curiosity in the narration of serial form helps the audience/reader to be more active in the process of meaning production. In this respect, he defines the serials as "open" texts which make the alternative readings of the audience/reader possible (1987:84).

is manoeuvred into a position of permanent expectation through the narrative structure: S/he is given an emotional release by means of this never-ending conflict.

Besides, the narrative structure of the serial form is dominated by the repetitiveness of the same sequence of events in different manners. The oppositional characteristics attributed to "the hero" and "the villain" are essential to the narration: the contradiction between the good and the bad, the powerful and the weak, the kind and the selfish etc. are repeatedly produced in the discursive structure of the serial form (Livingstone and Liebes, 1995:158-9).

Another generalisation about serial narrations can be made in respect of their features of content: The personal life and individuals are the main starting points of the stories. As claimed by Kozloff (1987:70), the serial format interconnects individualized characters into standardized roles. The experiences of the individuals are projected as the key to understand the social totality. In this way, only the experiences of individuals are narrated. Rosen cites that "in the soap's world, everyone is preoccupied with life, and the community is the family writ large." (1986:50). This statement is also true for other serial narrations. Therefore, one can claim that the social or cultural references are widely ignored in the serial form.

2.3. Wrestler Serials as Popular Culture

Wrestler Serials are the product of mass media activity which are consumed and approved by masses of people. In this respect, they have to be defined in a direct relationship with popular culture: Within their discursive characteristics, Wrestler Serials are the examples of popular culture. Therefore, like other popular cultural narrations, they may be conceived as certain ideological processes. Yet, this process

of ideological activity does not refer to a conceptualisation of popular culture as the manipulative mass culture imposed from above by the dominant powers.⁷ Nor is it the culture of the people produced by and for them.⁸ It is rather a terrain of interaction by which the dominant, subordinate and oppositional values intersect and co-exist. In this respect, popular culture is an arena of ideological practices where the "hegemony" of the dominant powers is constructed and reproduced in the Gramscian sense.⁹ McQuail defines the process of hegemony in such a way:

Hegemony refers to a loosely interrelated set of ruling ideas permeating a society, but in such a way to make the established order of power and values appear natural, taken

⁷ This kind of view of popular culture may be connected to the assumptions of mass culture theory. Accordingly, this is a pessimistic view of the term which accuses the popular culture of being mass produced commercial culture and imposing 'false needs' and 'desires' on its consumers. For this view, the popular culture produces passive, supine, undemanding, vulnerable, manipulative, exploitable and sentimental masses of individuals and in this way it prevents the people from perceiving their own interests.

For further information about the mass culture theory's approach to popular culture, see Strinati (1995), Bennett (1986), Storey (1993), Gruneau (1995).

⁸ Contrary to the pessimistic view of mass culture theory, an optimistic approach to popular culture attributes it an authentic and democratic quality. This is the "populist" view through which the popular narrations are conceptualised as the "mirror image of a nation" or as "the voice of the people". From this perspective, the popular culture is seen as the expression of the values and interests of the ordinary people. The ideological value attributed to popular culture by this view implies a sense of exaltation of the people and of the things belonging to people.

For further information about the populist view about popular culture, see Bennett (1986), Fluck (1987), Strinati (1995), Storey (1993).

⁹ This kind of approach to popular culture is mainly conducted by the CCCS approach, which focuses on the analysis of ideological process into which the popular texts and practices are assimilated. The contributors of the CCCS opposes the idea of culture as a manipulative force and of people as purely passive agents in this process. On the contrary, they emphasize the role of social practices and creative human agency (Hargreaves, 1985:14). For this view, the popular culture is assimilated to ideology in a variety of complex ways which include the nature of social struggles and cultural production.

For further information about CCCS, see Turner (1990).

for granted and common sensical. A ruling ideology is not imposed but appears to exist by virtue of an unquestioned consensus (1994:99).

Accordingly, by an approach developed from the perspectives of such a notion of hegemony, Wrestler Serials may be seen as an illustration of these popular media narrations where the common sense in society is formed in favour of the dominant powers. In this process, it is clear that the voluntary consent of the subordinate groups is essential: the hegemonic activity implies the process of winning and shaping the voluntary consent of the subordinate groups at a non-violent level and thus the cultural leadership and domination can be achieved not by force or coercion but through the common sense in society. In this respect, the popular narrations like Wrestler Serials are the areas where the power of the dominant classes is projected as legitimate, natural and convenient for the interests of the subordinate ones (Eagleton, 1991). Yet, the process of common-sense formation requires complex negotiations and alignments of interests between the dominant and oppositional values. For this reason, the hegemony does not refer to a static position of dominance. It is not permanent. From such a perspective, the powerful classes have to move beyond their concrete interests and unite other social groups behind a common purpose. The consent of the dominated groups may be won to the dominant class values and interests only when they provide real or illusory compensations to all.¹⁰

¹⁰Ü. Oskay (1980) explains the contradictory nature of hegemonic ideology by the example of contemporary capitalist society where the values of the individual honor and the values of former humanist tradition live together with the capitalist possessive individualism and the passion for work. Accordingly, the values which emphasize the solidarity between people, the feeling of love, religion, the beliefs on the loftiness of the morale and spirituality are side by side with selfishness, materialised relationships, consumerism, etc.

As a result, the Wrestler Serials cannot be expected to be purely manipulative narrations where a universal and overlasting ideological dominance of a particular class is constructed. They are rather the agent of a continual process of winning and rewinning the consent of the majority (Fiske, 1990a:259). In this way, they are both dominant and oppositional (Storey, 1993, Hall, 1981). As argued by Hall, the contradiction between the dominant power-bloc and the popular forces is an essential character of popular culture as an ideological site:

Popular culture is one of the sites where the struggle for and against a culture of the powerful is engaged; it is also the stake to be won or lost in that struggle. It is the area of consent and resistance. It is partly where hegemony arises and where it is searched (Hall, 1981:239).

This contradictory nature of popular culture implies the incorporation of the oppositional values as well as the imposition of dominant interests, in the process of consensus formation. For such a view, the values of both the dominant and subordinate powers are mixed through popular culture and the interests of the dominant classes and the status quo in social relations are reproduced and maintained by the hegemonic process of incorporation, distortion, negotiation and articulation (Turner, 19990:213). Therefore, in this process, the social relations are constituted and organized by the articulatory practice between the oppositional and dominant values in favour of the dominant hegemony (Laclau, Mouffe, 1992:96).

The "conflictual" components of the popular narrations attribute them a "polysemic" nature. Accordingly, these narrations are "open" to alternative

readings.¹¹ For the distinction offered by Elliott et al (1986), popular narrations have different discursive characteristics than the mass media texts which operate mainly within the terms of reference constructed by the official discourse. Accordingly, the mass media news define the world within the accepted boundaries of the dominant/official discourse and they do not leave any place for the alternative/resistant readings. However, some other texts like the popular cultural narrations "produce spaces in which the official discourse can be interrogated and contested, and alternative and even oppositional themes presented and examined" (Elliott et al, 1986:269). For this reason, Wrestler Serials are "open" texts and they "can be articulated with different 'accents' by different people in different contexts" (Storey, 1996:4). This nature of Wrestler Serials emphasizes their place in the process of the "struggle" between dominant and oppositional conceptualisations of the world to maintain, reproduce and transform the hegemony.

¹¹ In his work "Encoding, Decoding" (1993), Hall stresses that meaning is the product of the interaction between the text and the reader. Accordingly, the "decoding" of a message is as important as the "encoding" for the meaning production. And the message may be decoded in a negotiated or oppositional way, as well as dominant. In this respect, the negotiated reading position "accords the privileged position to the dominant definitions of events while reserving the right to make a more negotiated application to 'local conditions' to its own more corporated positions"(1993:102). Therefore, the negotiated reading plays an important role in the hegemonic activity of consensus formation.

For further discussion about the reading (decoding) positions, see Hall (1993), Storey (1996), Fiske (1990), Fiske (1991a), Abercrombie (1990), Morley (1984).

CHAPTER III

CASE STUDY: THE FRAME FOR THE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF WRESTLER SERIALS

In the second chapter of this work, Wrestler Serials were defined as certain popular texts in serial form the main focus of which is the sportive activity of wrestling and the life stories of the wrestlers. In this respect, the popular culture was assumed to be an agent in the struggle of hegemony formation. Accordingly, as popular cultural narrations, the Wrestler Serials were thought to include both the contradictory interests and views. They were claimed to naturalise the interests of the dominant powers by producing the voluntary consent of the subordinate groups for the existing establishment and the common sense in society. In this process, the internalisation of the elements of resistance and their articulation with the dominant ones in favour of the maintenance and reproduction of the dominant hegemonic powers were considered essential. From this perspective, the aim of this study is to discover the role of Wrestler Serials in the struggle of hegemony and to formulate the relationship between the popular narrative discourse and the hegemonic process of consensus formation.

Therefore, the study of Wrestler Serials depends on the idea that the definitions about social events, values and positions in narration reflect certain ideological preferences. The individual, social and cultural conditions of meaning production are guided by the ideological nature of discourse. Thus, the analysis of the ideological

components of the narration which determine the ways in which meanings are produced in favour of a particular construction of the world is essential to the study of Wrestler Serials. And the main way to determine how the ideological activity is positioned in these narrations is the discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials.

The universe of the discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials includes the dailies which published Wrestler Serials. The daily *Tercüman* is chosen as the sample of the study because it had been among the most popular papers during his life of publication and it had published 41 Wrestler Serials almost without any interruption, from 1962 to the time it was closed in 1995.

The time sampling of the study includes the 33 years of publication of the daily. Together with this, among the 41 stories published in this period, only 11 of them written by the four different authors are chosen.¹ Accordingly, five of these stories are written by Murat Sertoğlu, who is the author of 24 serials which were published in this paper; four of them are selected from the 15 serials of "Eski Bir Pehlivan"; one is from Tevfik Pars Piremehmetoğlu (who is also the author of the firstly published Wrestler Serial in 1936) and one from Ali Ahmet Pehlivan who has written his own story. As the criteria for comparison, at least a story for each five years is chosen and the stories about the same wrestlers written by various authors are examined.²

¹For a detailed list of the sample, see Appendix A.

²As it will be seen in detail in Chapter IV, an important point to be noted is that the stories of "Koca Yusuf" and "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin" which were published in different times by "Eski Bir Pehlivan" and "Murat Sertoğlu" are exactly similar. Consequently, to avoid any confusion, one of them (the one written by "Eski Bir Pehlivan" in the story of "Koca Yusuf" and the one by Murat Sertoğlu in the story of "Çolak Mümin") is used for quotations.

The frame developed for the discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials should aim at finding out the narrative properties of the texts which functions in favour of a process of hegemony formation. In this respect, the content and the formal characteristics of the Wrestler Serials' narrative structure³ and the ideological points of references in the narration are studied as the main components and different aspects of the discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials.

The analysis of the narrative structure of Wrestler Serials is necessary for a comprehending the ideological pattern structured in the discourse of popular narrations. In this connection, the discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials is to focus on the main structural characteristics which formulate the narration. First of all, the narratives are composed of certain elements that are essential for the creation of a story. As already indicated by Berger:

The order in which events take place in a narrative is of great importance. There is a logic to narrative texts and the arrangement of elements in a story greatly affects our perception of what anything 'means' (1991:17).

Therefore, the sequence of events in a narration imply certain ideological connotations. In other words, the world is constructed in a particular way in the narration by the series of actions which are linked together in a significant sequence. Similarly the causalities established in the narrative sequence and the underlying logic that determines the content have certain ideological implications.

³ The importance and frames of the structural analysis of a narration are stressed by the works of Palmer (1991:43-65), Berger (1991:13-20), Thompson (1992:286-288) and Cormack (1992:29-30).

Moreover, the oppositions which exist between the elements of a narrative text is also important for the analysis of the narrative structure. The structured relationships in the form of oppositions between the characters in a narrative text such as the oppositions between "the good" and "the bad", "the old" and "the young", "the male" and "the female" etc. represent certain ideological connotations.

Nevertheless, the study of the sequence of events and the main contradictions in the narration is inadequate for a complete analysis of Wrestler Serials' narrative structure. The styles of narration and the attributes attached to characters of a given story such as the "heroes" and the "villains" must also be analyzed as a certain pattern with certain ideological implications.

The ideological nature of the meaning production as a process requires the analysis of how the subjects in a text are positioned during the construction of that particular text (Palmer, 1991:109). Accordingly, the characteristics of the content of the narration include certain ideological references. In this respect, the narration of Wrestler Serials is directed by certain ideological preferences about the public definition of social events, positions and values. The evolution of these ideological references are of course necessary to discover how the meanings are produced in the narration in favour of the maintenance of the hegemonic power. In other words, any attempt to analyse the discourse of the studied texts should include an assesment of the ideological reference points in the situation definitions of the reported events such as socially acceptable and/or desirable or unacceptable and undesirable.

Consequently, the discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials employed in this study consists of the narrative structure and the ideological references as levels of analysis.

For this purposes, in the light of the above considerations four categories of analysis are developed to comprehend the narrative structure of the Wrestler Serials. They are respectively the Sequence of Events, the Main Contradictions in the Narration, The Style of Narration, and The Characters of Narration.

The Sequence of Events is about the analysis of the ways in which the series of actions are structured in the narration. In this respect, the underlying logic of the flow of events and the skeleton of the stories are studied.

The Main Contradictions in the Narrative Structure is about the analysis of the contradictions between the good and the bad, the force and the intelligence and the contradiction of national and religious origins in Wrestler Serials.

The Style of Narration implies the position of the author as a part of narration, the comparisons between the styles of different authors and the use of the language in these texts. Two main stages are essential for the analysis of the style of narration: The Position of the Author and The Comparisons Between the Styles of Various Authors.

The Characters of the Narration have an important function to impose the ideological values and preferred views to the readers by the help of the process of identification. In this category, it is aimed to analyze the ways in which meanings are associated with particular characters or types. In this respect, main characters in Wrestler Serials are defined and examined through the perspectives of their stereotypical characteristics and ideological functions.

As for the categories of analysis developed to analyse the ideological references eight different reference point is fixed. They are cited and explained as follows:

References to Reality and Rationality: Under this heading, it is aimed to analyze the components of the realist discourse which attribute a rationally functioning position to itself and the claim to reality inherent in the narration.

References to the Relations of Powers: This category is about the analysis of the ways in which the relations with the representatives of the authority such as agha, pasha, sir, the master, the referees are settled and the ways in which the power struggles between wrestlers are projected in narration. On the other hand, the violence has certain ideological references as an internal part of the power struggle. In this respect, the references to the relations of powers are examined under three stages: The Relations with Authority; The Power Struggle Between Wrestlers, The Place of Violence in the Power Struggle.

References to the Notion of "People": The attributed roles and positions of the people and its defined place in the narrative context compose another ideological point of reference in discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials.

References to Wrestling as a Sportive Activity: This stage of analysis deals with the ways in which wrestling is defined as a sportive activity and the values attributed to the morality of wrestling.

References to Traditionalism and Religion: The place attributed to religion and traditions composes an ideological function in the process of hegemony formation.

Consequently, the ways in which the social aspects are defined according to traditions and religion is an important category for the analysis.

References to Regionalism, Nationalism and Racism: This category deals with the points of identifications for the reader and the definition of the world according to these points of identification.

References to Gender Relations and The Place Of Women: This stage deals with the ways in which the relations of gender and the place of women in society and family are defined.

References to Economic Relations: In this category of the analysis of the ideological references in Wrestler Serials' discourse, the place and value attributed to money in social life and the ways in which the economic relations are represented in narration are studied.

CHAPTER IV

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF WRESTLER SERIALS

4.1. The Analysis Of Narrative Structure

In the light of the frame proposed on the previous pages, here, the narrative structure of Wrestler Serials is analyzed under four main sub-categories which will help us to determine the narrative properties of our subject of analysis and to disclose the ideological components of the meaning production process. Accordingly, the sequences of events in narration, the main contradictions in the narrative structure, the style of narrations, the ways in which the characters of the narration would help us to disclose some elements of the structured discourse of the analyzed stories.

4.1.1. The Sequence of Events

The narrative structure of Wrestler Serials is mainly composed of numerous conflicts and tensions which form the story of a wrestler. The serials studied in this work contain some common sequences of events. Accordingly, each story have a skeleton of nameable events.

The serial, in most cases, begins with the childhood or the adolescence of the wrestler, that is the time he had first begun to wrestle. There exists no variation in

these texts. An habitual scheme is continuously repeated. And the narration is rendered fluent by means of conversations among spectators and their interferences to the wrestlers. An episode of these serialised stories does often include many such dialogues among spectators, wrestlers, the representatives of government, etc. Therefore, the main struggle among wrestlers is supported by the struggle among the spectators, the governors favoring different wrestlers, etc. Similarly, the gypsies playing *durm* and *souries* are also the components of the narration. They play their instruments enthusiastically, and they direct the wrestlers in this way. The main personalities of these texts are the "hero"; the "rival" of the hero (the "villain"); the representatives of authority such as agha, pasha, sir, Sultan whose authority is almost unbreakable; at times the owner of the wedding feast or the owner of the farm who organizes the wrestling; the "master" of the wrestler owning an unbreakable authority against his "novice"; "cazgır" who announces the wrestlers and recites a prayer before a contest; the referees and spectators.

The main places of the stories are the field of wrestling that is sometimes called also "field of contest"; the farm of agha, pasha or sir; "Pehlivan Kahvesi" and khans.

The repetitive textual scheme of Wrestler Serials consists of three main stages similar to that attributed by Thompson to the romance form (1992:309). The first is an initial stage which sets up a tension. When we consider this stage from the perspectives of our subject of study, we can see that the tension is settled by the deterioration of the "hero" by people, governors or his rival. The majority of the spectators do not applause the hero and despise him.

The intermediate stage provokes and explains the transformation. The hero falls into a difficult position, but manages to get over and wins superiority against his

rival. The final stage repeatedly transforms the initial stage and resolves the tension. The hero embarrasses the spectators and proves his superiority.

This form is repeatedly reproduced through the narrative structure of serial form. These three main stages can thus be exemplified by the stories we have examined so far:

1) The "hero" is despised by his rival, pasha, agha, sir, people or "cazgır"¹. For instance, his rival, Filibeli Kara Ahmet despises Koca Rüstem. Pasha, "cazgır" and the people, do not believe him.² Similarly, in the match of Koca Rüstem and Adalı Halil nobody praises Rüstem. Tahsin Pasha and the spectators are sure that Adalı Halil will be the winner.³ The newspaper critics, his rivals and even his manager despise Koca Yusuf in his foreign wrestlings, for he does not have a muscular body. The majority of people wage against Yusuf. Or, Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan is belittled in many places of the story.⁴

2) The match begins. The "hero" seems to be reserved. The spectators and the representatives of authority talk among themselves. The hero waits for his rival to make the first attack. He fall into a difficult/dangerous position. He seems to be defeated.⁵

¹ Cazgır is the man who announces the wrestlers and recites a prayer before the contest, in Turkish wrestling

² M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 3. 11. 1986, *Tercüman*

³ Ibid, 8. 11.1986

⁴ See for example, Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 1. 10. 1974; 5, 10, 1974; 30. 10. 1974; 29. 11. 1974, *Tercüman*

⁵ See for example, the stories of the matches between Bursalı Koca Rüstem and Adalı Halil, 8. 11. 1986; Bursalı Koca Rüstem, Hergeleci İbrahim Pehlivan, 14. 11. 1986.; Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan, Bekir Pehlivan, 1. 10. 1974; Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan, Kepsutlu Çakır Pehlivan, 17. 10. 1974.

3) The hero confuses everybody. He "suddenly", "unexpectedly" becomes dominant, escapes from dangers and wins the match (or at least comes in a dead heat with his really famous and powerful rival. It is an honor for him).

These statements can also be supported by a more schematized example, examining the structure of the match between Kavalalı Çolak Mümin and Katrancı.⁶ There exist four initial stages in the story of this match:

- 1) The rival of Mümin enters into the contest strongly and assaults on Mümin.
- 2) Mümin attacks, but is not successful. He falls into a difficult position.
- 3) Mümin escapes from the danger and becomes dominant.
- 4) The "rival" is caught in his own trap and loses the match.

The hero's losing the match is exceptional. And this is not because of his inadequacy but some outer factors such as a hollow in the land⁷ or the interference of the arbitration committee, pasha, sir, agha taking the rival's side.

In most cases, the tension does not reach to a concrete and final solution. The defeat of the rival is related by the spectators or the rival himself to the factors such as illness, bad chance, cheating or having lost on purpose. However, the tension tends to be transmitted from one match to another.

In the beginning of the stories the heroes of Wrestler Serials are generally shown as someone powerless. As it is stated before, this is the first step of the

⁶ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 23-26. 10. 1992, *Tercüman*

⁷ See the match between Kurutdereli and Kepsutlu Çakır Pehlivan, Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurutdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 16. 10. 1974, *Tercüman*

structure of narration. The humility of the wrestler is seen by people as a sign of his inability. For example, Kurtdereli is thought to be easily defeated, because he does not have a muscular body.⁸ The owner of the wedding feast does not trust Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, since he is not as big in size as his rivals.⁹ The governor of Selanik decides that Rüstem is not a good wrestler, because of his bad "peşrev".¹⁰ Mümin is frequently despised because of his paralyzed arms and his being small in body sizes.¹¹ Or, Koca Yusuf is thought to lose the matches in the foreign countries. Most of the wrestlers are despised because of their smallness in body sizes, youngness or being a foreigner (coming from another region or from the province), although they are powerful and superior than they seem to be. The hero, in the end, bewilders everybody and proves his "latent" power. We can see the hero's being portrayed as someone subjected into unjustness; despised in spite of his superiority to his rival.

4.1.2. The Main Contradictions in the Narrative Structure

The textual narration of Wrestler Serials is based upon the contradictions inherent in the structure of binary oppositions in terms of which they are expressed. This is in fact a common characteristic of the popular narrations. Therefore, the analysis of the main contradictions is as necessary as the analysis of the sequence of events in the narration.

⁸ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 31. 1. 1975, *Tercüman*

⁹ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 11. 5. 1975, *Tercüman*

¹⁰ Peşrev is the preliminary movement of the wrestlers before wrestling. M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 31. 10. 1986, *Tercüman*

¹¹ See, for example, Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 1. 5. 1962, *Tercüman*

4.1.2.a. The Contradiction Between The Good And The Bad

The textual narration of Wrestler Serials is settled on the main distinction between the good and the bad, and the struggle among them which results with the victory of the good.

Accordingly, the hero is defined as the stereotyped representative of the socially desirable person. Certain values are emphasized in this way, attributing them to the hero. For example, he is modest in all circumstances. But the people thinks he is really weak.¹² He is loyal to traditional values. The relations with the members of family, with the elders and especially with the "master" of the wrestler are organized according to these traditions. Another quality attributed to the good is to be religious. The good does not drink alcohol and does not gamble. He avoids eating pig meat. He does not give importance to money, at all. For example, Adalı Halil claims that he will not go back on his word, since he is Turk and that money means nothing for him in such circumstances.¹³ He replies his manager who asks if the man would get into trouble without any profit or not, by saying that it can sometimes be so.¹⁴ There exists for him certain values such as honesty, bravery, being the man of his word, being philanthropic, all of which are much more important than money. Therefore, the "good" wrestler never lies, he keeps his promises, he does not swindle or cheat for money, he is kind against other wrestlers. He helps them, he even feels compassion for them. Similarly, the good wrestlers are just and self-sacrificing. These values identified with the wrestler's character are projected as related to his national identity :

¹² See for example, Ibid, 13. 4. 1962; 29. 5. 1962, 15. 4. 1962, 1. 8. 1962 or, Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 29. 1. 1975, *Tercüman*; Ali Ahmet Pehlivan "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 24. 7. 1975, *Tercüman*

¹³ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 25. 11. 1981, *Tercüman*

¹⁴ Ibid, 25. 11. 1981

"The Turk is good willing, brave and he thinks that everybody is good willing and brave as he himself is."¹⁵ He is courageous. It is claimed in the story of Aliço and Adalı Halil that the provident wrestlers may be defeated even by the ones they can easily overcome and that the courageous wrestlers can win the ones who are most powerful than them.¹⁶

Alamet Ali Pehlivan says that the most important motives which led him to the victory are the courage and greed.¹⁷ He does not escape from wrestling. As it is claimed in the story of Çolak Mümin, "What is shameful for a wrestler is not to be overcome but to escape from wrestling".¹⁸ He says in the same story that he is content to be defeated by the wrestler of Deliorman, rather than being known by everybody as someone who is afraid of and escaping from him.¹⁹ Similarly, in the story of Koca Yusuf, it is argued that what is shameful for a wrestler is to escape from the wrestler challenging him. Accordingly, it is said that "the defeated wrestler does not lose anything from his glory".²⁰ Therefore, they never accept to agree with the result of the match before the wrestling. Furthermore, they are clever as well as powerful.

Nevertheless, the "rival" (villain) who is in most cases given the role of "the bad" may have every kind of wickedness, unless he is moslem or Turk. He has a great and false self-confidence. While the hero says that he cannot guess the result of

¹⁵ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 11.4. 1986, *Tercüman*

¹⁶ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 15. 1. 1981, *Tercüman*

¹⁷ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 29. 9. 1975, *Tercüman*

¹⁸ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 19. 7. 1992

¹⁹ Ibid, 8. 11. 1992

²⁰ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Avrupa Güreşleri", 11. 8. 1962, *Tercüman*

the match before wrestling with his rival²¹, the bad claims that he will defeat his rival by a noticeable superiority. He is impatient and rough against his rival. The bad is malicious; he wants to crush his rival; he is liar and trickster; he is not loyal to the rules of wrestling; he bets and gambles; he is opportunist.

The contradictions between the good and the bad may be exemplified in Wrestler Serials in such a way:

In M. Sertoğlu's serial, Koca Rüstem is portrayed as a poor young wrestler in the beginning of the story. He is always despised by people and his rivals. He does not give much importance to money, although he is poor. However, his rivals, e.g. the Bulgarian Wrestler, wrestle not for fame or reputation but money. Thus, the point of contradiction between the hero and his rival is settled on the base of money.²² Rüstem does not escape from wrestling. He accepts the invitation of Bulgarian Wrestler to wrestle in his country. He is loyal to his word. However, the Bulgarian wrestler is liar. He pretends that he is ill, when he is defeated.²³

Besides, in the story of Kurtdereli written by T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, there exists a contradiction between Kurtdereli and his rival, Katrancı. Kurtdereli is shy and modest, while Katrancı is aggressive.²⁴ Kurtdereli is modest, but his rival Kepsutlu Çakır is insolent. Although Kurtdereli says that he cannot guess the result of match before wrestling, his rival says: "I will show him! He will repent for having wrestled with me."²⁵

²¹ See for example, T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 21. 2. 1968, *Tercüman*.

²² M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 23. 2. 1986, *Tercüman*

²³ See for example, Ibid, 9.3.1986 and 16.3.1986

²⁴ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 18. 2. 1968

²⁵ Ibid, 21-22. 2. 1968

A similar contradiction between the good (hero) and the bad (villain) exists also in the story of Kurtdereli written by Eski Bir Pehlivan. Accordingly, Katrancı is defined as someone cruel. He crushes Kurtdereli.²⁶ He advises Kurtdereli to agree with the result of the match. He says: "Wrestlers do this every time." However, Kurtdereli refuses his rival's advice.²⁷ Or, Adalı Halil despises Kurtdereli and he loses the chance to overcome him, because of his great self-confidence.²⁸

In the story of Koca Yusuf written by Eski Bir Pehlivan, Adalı Halil is defined as someone haughty. Yet, Koca Yusuf is modest. Adalı Halil tries to crush Yusuf.²⁹ Koca Yusuf says "one cannot keep away from one's destiny", while his rival Briton Tomson claims that he will "surely" win.³⁰ The Russian wrestler tries to suffocate Yusuf.³¹ Although his Russian rival Hakişmit wants to take 3/4 of revenues of the match, Yusuf does not care much about the money. He gives the money he has earned from the match to the poor and old wrestlers.³²

In the story of Çolak Mümin, Mümin does not mind money, while his rival Adalı wants to take 3/4 of the revenues.³³ Or, Mümin is very quiet during the wrestling while his rival, Koca Ahmet is very nervous and he loses the match, because

²⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 11. 10. 1974, *Tercüman*

²⁷ Ibid, 8. 11. 1974

²⁸ Ibid, 8. 12. 1974

²⁹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 9. 2. 1962. ; 19. 2. 1962. *Tercüman*

³⁰ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 18. 7. 1962, *Tercüman*

³¹ Ibid, 26. 8. 1962

³² Ibid, 11. 10. 1962

³³ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 16. 5. 1992, *Tercüman*

of his nervousness.³⁴ Adalı Halil is defined as someone swaggerer. But Mümin is really humble. Adalı behaves like an enemy against Mümin.³⁵

In the story of Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, his rivals join against him and try to deceive him.³⁶ Or the ones who are jealous of him make plans of trickery to overcome him.³⁷

In effect, this kind of distinction between "the good" and "the bad" is also the main structural aspect of the other popular narrations. Examining our own concern of study, we have noticed that this main duality goes together with the others, between the intelligence and the force and nationalities and religions of the wrestlers.

4.1.2.b. The Contradiction of Force/Intelligence

The superiorities of wrestlers against their rivals derives from two main points of dominance: the first is the physical power of the wrestler and the latter is the mental power and the technical domination over the game. These two qualities are projected in the texts as the contradicting aspects of narrative structure. One of these two properties dominates the other, regarding the properties of the Wrestler who is the hero of the story.

For example, while narrating the matches of wrestlers who are small in body sizes, Çolak Molla, Hergeleci İbrahim, Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, etc., the intelligence, the technical dominance, the playfulness are projected as superior than

³⁴ Ibid, 8. 8. 1992

³⁵ Ibid, 8. 12. 1992

³⁶ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 14. 8. 1975, *Tercüman*

³⁷ Ibid, 1. 9. 1975

physical power. However, in the stories of Adalı Halil, Koca Yusuf, Aliço, Bursalı Koca Rüstem, Katrancı, etc., the physical power is generally projected as dominant to the mental one, or at least, as equivalent to it.

Comparing the powers of Koca Yusuf and the Russian wrestler, Eski Bir Pehlivan says: "The Turkish wrestler was incredibly powerful. However, the Russian's technic was superior."³⁸ But, The power of Koca Yusuf becomes superior to the technic of the Russian wrestler, in the end. Similarly, in the story of the match of Kurtdereli and Kepsutlu Çakır where the power and mastery come face to face, Kurtdereli becomes dominant due to his power. However, Kepsutlu Çakır defeats him by putting his foot into a hole on the ground. In this respect, the mastery tends to dominate the power. Yet, this is not seen in the text as a true dominance.³⁹ A similar contradiction is also emphasized in the story of the match between Koca Yusuf and Hergeleci İbrahim:

The match between Hergeleci İbrahim and Koca Yusuf was the fight of the highest mastery and the highest physical power. These two powers had not been able to dominate each another, before.⁴⁰

Besides, the intelligence and playfulness are exalted in some situations, especially when the hero is small in body sizes: "The body sizes in 'Oriental Wrestling', is secondary. What is essential is the playfulness and especially the arm

³⁸ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 16. 10. 1962, *Tercüman*

³⁹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 20. 10. 1974, *Tercüman*

⁴⁰ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 28. 4. 1962, *Tercüman*

power and the acrobacy."⁴¹ Yet, the intelligence of the wrestler is seen as the main condition of his success. For example, in the story of Kurtdereli, T. P. Piremehmetoğlu argues that:

In effect, the ancient Turks used to praise the wrestlers, saying that the mind of wrestler is that of the devil. Everybody may be wrestler, but it is difficult to rise at that branch. The wrestler who is not intelligent may never be successful.⁴²

The identification of the Wrestler's intelligence with that of devil is common in all these texts. For example, in the story of Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, one says to him : "You are not a wrestler, but something like the devil. Everything can be expected from you."⁴³ Or T. P. Piremehmetoğlu says for Hergeleci İbrahim: "Hergeleci İbrahim is the "master" of masters. You deem that he is personally taught by the devil."⁴⁴ He is, in a similar way, defined by Eski Bir Pehlivan as someone sly as a fox.⁴⁵ Accordingly, the small wrestlers are seen as the jewellers of the wrestling⁴⁶ and they are apt to dominate the physic powers of their rivals by creating new wrestling games and watching out for their weak points. For example, Ali Ahmet Pehlivan says that: "The most important point in wrestling is to invent new games when it is the occasion".⁴⁷

⁴¹ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 13. 1. 1968, *Tercüman*

⁴² Ibid, 23. 3. 1968

⁴³ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 7. 7. 1975, *Tercüman*

⁴⁴ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 14. 4. 1962, *Tercüman*

⁴⁵ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 24. 4. 1962, *Tercüman*

⁴⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 11. 1. 1963, *Tercüman*

⁴⁷ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 30. 4. 1975, *Tercüman*

Nevertheless, the place attributed to playfulness and cheating differs to some extent at times. In fact, there are certain conditions for the legitimacy of cheating. The distinction between the legitimate cheating (defined in the perspective of playfulness) and the cheating in the meaning of breaking the wrestling rules is important from the perspective of these dichotomies, though it is in effect an artificial distinction. If the wrestler kicks his rival, hit him with the fist or head, it is an illegitimate trick, breaking the game rules. For example, when Koca Yusuf hurls his rival who makes foul hitting and kicking, out from the arena, it is seen as understandable by the writer since he was subjected to tricks.⁴⁸

Otherwise, the sham fight is refused. The wrestler given the role of "the good" in story does not come to an agreement with his rival to lose the match for money or other things. For example, Kurtdereli does not accept Katrancı's proposal of being defeated on purpose.⁴⁹ When the rivals pretend to be ill or injured after the match, this is also seen as an unacceptable attitude. For example, in the story of Koca Yusuf, the Italian Wrestler claims that he was injured and he leaves the match.⁵⁰ Often, the wrestlers who are defeated or who do not have any hope to win the match say that they have a sudden stomach ache.⁵¹ These are unacceptable attitudes for the ethic of wrestling. However, we can see in these texts that the wrestler are free to pretend to be ill or injured in the match so as to confuse his rival and deceive him. These kind of cheatings are legitimated by calling it "playfulness". For example, Yusuf's rival Tom escapes from Yusuf, by pretending to be suffocated. It is seen as

⁴⁸ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 28. 11. 1962, *Tercüman*

⁴⁹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 29. 8. 1974-8. 11. 1974, *Tercüman*

⁵⁰ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 30. 8. 1962, *Tercüman*

⁵¹ See for example M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 35. 6. 1992, *Tercüman*

acceptable. As it is situated in the text : "Then, Yusuf understood how a strong wrestler his rival was, not only with his physical power but with his intelligence and cunning."⁵²

Furthermore, it is also legitimate for a wrestler to pretend to be weak and not ready or mistrained before the match. The wrestler may deceive his rival in this way as it is indicated in the story of Koca Yusuf:

Do not talk as if you don't know the slyness and tactics of wrestlers. I have come across with these kinds of things a lot. To bewilder their rivals, to offer them hope, they act as if they were injured or badly tried, in the match.⁵³

Therefore, to play a trick, to lay a trap for him, to catch him unawares are acceptable actions. For example, the wrestler can mislead his rival in the match, by extending his legs or arms ahead so as to be easily caught. Koca Yusuf catches his rival unawares, deceiving him in this way.⁵⁴ Or, Hergeleci İbrahim lies on the ground intentionally, to draw the game onto the ground, where he is much more successful.⁵⁵ And, Koca Yusuf acts in his wrestling with Loryan, as if he were weak. He postpones the result of the match. By doing so, he deceives his real rival, Pol Pons and convinces Pol Pons to wrestle with him, letting him to think that he is superior than Yusuf.⁵⁶ And this is defined in text as an intelligent tactic : "Now, everybody

⁵² Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 1. 11. 1962, *Tercüman*

⁵³ Ibid, 11. 9. 1962.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 5. 8. 1962; 20. 5. 1963

⁵⁵ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 23. 4. 1962.

⁵⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 2. 11. 1962, *Tercüman*

saw the intelligent tactics of Koca Yusuf."⁵⁷ In another match, Yusuf explains these tactics in this way:

This is said to be the game of wrestler. As if I have quickly defeated the wrestler named Coni, in the preceeding match, the other wrestlers would probably avoid wrestling with me.⁵⁸

4.1.2.c. The Contradictions As National and Religious Origins

The narrative structure of Wrestler Serials includes another point of contradiction which is based on the wrestlers' nationalities and religions. That is, in the narrative of Wrestler Serials, one main point of contradiction is settled on the base of the distinction of Turk/Giaour and Moslem/Non Moslem (Heretic). Accordingly, the struggle of wrestlers is shown as a struggle of the nationalities and religions: the Turk and Moslem and the Giaour and Heretic. For example, in the story of Koca Rüstem, the Bulgarian Wrestler is called as unbeliever, heretic. The struggle of two wrestlers is projected as a struggle of the Turk and Moslem and the giaour and heretic. In the text, we can easily see that: A priest comes to watch the match between Rüstem and the Bulgarian Wrestler. Rüstem undresses himself, recting "besmele" and while his rival makes the sign of the cross.⁵⁹ This contradiction is supported by Rüstem's refusal of the prize he won from Bulgarians. He does so, because of a religious reason, since he thinks that to eat meat and to drink the milks of animals which pastured on the meadows where the pigs wandered was disliked by the hodja of

⁵⁷ Ibid, 8. 12. 1962

⁵⁸ Ibid, 22. 11. 1962

⁵⁹ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 3.3.1986; 12. 3. 1986, *Tercüman*

his village.⁶⁰ In a similar way, it is claimed that the Bulgarians are enemy to Turks, since they have lived for ages under the rule of Turks and since the Turks are the masters of them.⁶¹

The distinction of religion is widely emphasized in the story of Çolak Mümin. Agha says that the people of Serez will be pleased if a Turkish wrestler overcomes Rum Toma : "If this heretic learns that he is a mullah of medresse, he will certainly crush him."⁶² Or:

Some of them thinks that the wrestler who will wrestle with Rum Kara Toma is a mullah and they are afraid of thinking that this will be a kind of fight between the Cross and "Hilal"... There is not any possibility for mullah to overestimate this Rum wrestler. Probably, many Rums relates the miracle to the Priest.⁶³

In his wrestling, Mümin is called by the non-moslem Rum wrestler as "Mullah". For example:" The Turks were very sorry. The heretic was wrestling very carefully".⁶⁴ And, "To show who the Turkish wrestlers are is the duty of mullah".⁶⁵ This contradiction is frequently emphasized in text. For instance, the Rum wrestler thinks that the others would try to agree against him, since he is giaour.⁶⁶ "Mullah" is afraid of being defeated by a Rum wrestler. It is stated in the text in such a way : "If he was wrestling with a Turkish wrestler, he would accept his defeat without

⁶⁰ Ibid, 23. 3. 1986

⁶¹ Ibid, 27. 3. 1986

⁶² M. Sertoğlu, " Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 27. 7. 1992, *Tercüman*

⁶³ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 29. 7. 1986, *Tercüman*

⁶⁴ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 30. 7. 1992, *Tercüman*

⁶⁵ Ibid, 5. 2. 1993

⁶⁶ Ibid, 9. 2. 1993

hesitation, and quit wrestling."⁶⁷ A similar contradiction is also settled on the basis of spectators : "While Turks were enthusiastically clapping their hands for the mullah, there was an absolute silence in the place where Rums stayed."⁶⁸

Moreover, in the story of Koca Yusuf, the Black wrestler who cannot wrestle with a White according to the rules of that time says to persuade the White spectators:

I am a Negro but also a Christian ... However, the Turk is Moslem. By overcoming him, I will acquire the victory of Christians as well as take the vengeance of the Christian wrestlers he has defeated.⁶⁹

Another Black wrestler in Detroit speaks likewise: "Please my good masters, give me this chance. Let me fight with this Turk."⁷⁰ This contradiction is emphasized also by the following words:

Yusuf was White but neither American, nor Christian. He could easily defeat him. The Americans would take his side, since they want the championship to stay in America.⁷¹

Another contradiction of the wrestlers' identity is not religious but national. This is settled by defining the wrestlers who are not Turk as trickster, bad, rude, cruel, unfriendly, etc. For example, in the story of foreign wrestlings of Adalı Halil, the Americans are defined in such a way: "These people do not turn their heads to look

⁶⁷ Ibid, 14. 3. 1993

⁶⁸ Ibid, 21. 3. 1993

⁶⁹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 26. 11. 1962, *Tercüman*

⁷⁰ Ibid, 14. 4. 1963

⁷¹ Ibid, 1. 8. 1963

even if you were to die of hunger in front of their eyes."⁷² However, the Turkish wrestlers are projected as being very merciful: Halil gives the money he won in his last match in America to the poor wrestlers living there.⁷³ The American wrestlers in the same story are told to treat badly, as soon as they understand that they will lose the match. They are often called as "giaour" and to be defeated by a "giaour" is mostly seen as offensive: "It would not give me offence to be defeated by a hundred of Turkish Wrestlers but one French is enough."⁷⁴

In the story of Mümin, the Khedive of Egypt stresses this contradiction by ordering his wrestler: "You will wrestle and defeat him in a minute. In this way, you will prove the superiority of Egyptian wrestlers to the Turks."⁷⁵ Similarly, the story of the match between Yusuf and the Russian wrestler is narrated like a war between Ottomans and Russians.⁷⁶ For instance, "The spectators crowding in the sale watched almost a war between Ottomans and Russians."⁷⁷ Or, according to this story, it is written in the American newspapers that : "The wonderful Russian will give his lesson to the Ottoman"; "Salin will defeat Hilal"; "The new war of Ottoman-Russian will result with the victory of the Russian".⁷⁸ Yusuf says, here: "How will I return to my country after having been defeated by a Moscovite. ... Will I escape from the Moscovite!"⁷⁹ Or, "What does it mean to be overcome by a Moscovite? Whose face can I dare to look? In any case, if the Russian happens to overcome me, he can only

⁷² M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil" 9. 2. 1981, *Tercüman*

⁷³ Ibid, 13. 2. 1981

⁷⁴ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 14. 8. 1962, *Tercüman*

⁷⁵ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 5. 2. 1993, *Tercüman*

⁷⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 9. 8. 1962; 11. 8. 1962, *Tercüman*

⁷⁷ Ibid, 31. 8. 1962

⁷⁸ Ibid, 7. 10. 1962

⁷⁹ Ibid, 10. 8. 1962

overcome my corpse."⁸⁰ It is really hurting his pride, to be defeated by a Russian. He says : "Be defeated by a fly, but not by this Russian."⁸¹ And, the African wrestler Tom is defined as someone trickster and untrustworthy in this story. The dominance of the Turk over the African is emphasized in the text by these words : "The awful Turk proved his awful power. He defeated the African Tom by injuring him."⁸² And the contradiction is settled: "The fact that he defeated the Sud-African Tom who is protected by Britons was irritating the fanatical and proud Britons."⁸³

The signs of the contradiction between nationalities may be at the same time seen, directly out of the wrestling field, in the life stories of the heroes. Mainly the explanations by which the authors give about the socio-historical situation of the time the wrestlers lived emphasize this contradiction. For example, M. Sertoğlu explains the reason why the Ottoman Empire did not change the names of the countries it had conquered, in this way:

The Turks did not change the names of the areas in the region of Deliorman, as well as other cities and towns, taking them into their boundaries. The only reason of this is to remind the new generation that these areas are obtained as a result of conquest.⁸⁴

Besides the problems about the Balkan countries at Koca Rüstem's time are explained in this way :

⁸⁰ Ibid, 14. 8. 1962

⁸¹ Ibid, 8. 10. 1962

⁸² Ibid, 2. 11. 1962

⁸³ Ibid, 4. 11. 1962

⁸⁴ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 14. 2. 1986, *Tercüman*

Nowadays, the things have changed a lot. The Bulgarian heretics are spoilt by indulgence. There are some instructions of the government. We will, accordingly, not give any opportunity to the complainings of the Bulgarian, Greek, or Serbian people, no matter whatever happens. Would I give any chance to them, if it was ago? Nevertheless, our hands are tied.

...

In effect, he [Kurtdereli] heard from elders that the problems being considered as betraying between little Balkan Communities were gradually developing during the last years. According to them, these brigands aiming at killing and destroying all the Turks, seizing their ownings and lands were in fact helped by the Russian Tsardom.⁸⁵

Some solutions to these above mentioned problems are also suggested by the texts we have examined :

- Last week, the rebels have attacked back, and burned the three Turkish villages.

...

-Let one or two Efe's pass here. The cruelties done to the Turkish villages would just be finished when they attacked some giaour villages .⁸⁶

In another episode, the Turks are defined as the masters of Bulgarians : "Then, he comprehended once again, how long the Bulgarians were living under the domination of Turks for centuries, and how they were antagonist against their Turkish

⁸⁵ Ibid, 1. 3. 1986

⁸⁶ Ibid, 18. 3. 1986

masters."⁸⁷ The Bulgarians are despised also in the story of Mümin : "The Rums and Bulgarians who were our shepherd yesterday, were thirsty for our blood, now."⁸⁸ Or, "The Rums, the Bulgarians and the Serbian people who used to live under the domination of Ottoman Empire for centuries, began to rebel by the provocations of the bigger states aiming at collapsing the big empire ."⁸⁹ When the Bulgarians kill Rüstem's family, he decides to fight with these "brigands".⁹⁰

This contradiction between nationalities is also emphasized by symbols like flags. In the match of Yusuf and an American Wrestler, it is indicated in such a manner : "The hall was embellished by American flags. Among them, only a Turkish flag was hanged up" ⁹¹ Or ;

Koca Yusuf's eyes were on the Turkish flag that was swinging modestly among these hundreds of American flags. This small flag was as if it developed and surrounded the whole hall.⁹²

The spectators are always the parts of these contradictions. For example: "If Tom had wrestled with another wrestler, people would have protested his fouls. But the fact that his rival was a Turk changed everything."⁹³ In the match between Koca Yusuf and Briton Tomson, the spectators took their part according to the relationships between nations. For example, the Britons were acclaiming Tomson, and wishing him

⁸⁷ Ibid, 27. 3. 1986

⁸⁸ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 23. 1. 1993, *Tercüman*

⁸⁹ Ibid, 21.1. 1993

⁹⁰ See, M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 28. 3. 1986, *Tercüman*

⁹¹ Eski bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 17. 7. 1963, *Tercüman*

⁹² Ibid, 31. 7. 1963

⁹³ Ibid, 20. 4. 1963

good luck whereas the French people were taking Yusuf's side.⁹⁴ Or, as indicated in the text: "The French people and the Belgians were taking the side of Russian, and the Germans and Ottomans that of Yusuf."⁹⁵

4.1.3. The Style of Narration

The author of Wrestler Serials does not hide himself. They are the active agents of narration. Therefore, to situate the position of the author in the narration is necessary for the analysis of the style of narration. And, the fact that the Wrestler Serials are written by different authors enforces us to compare the styles of the authors, and to situate the similarities or differences in the use of language.

4.1.3.a. The Position of the Author

One important characteristic of Wrestler Serial is that they do not have a consistent and unbroken style of narration. Accordingly, the narrative structure of these texts is broken by some extra-information and interferences of the author. The narrator of these stories often plays an active role, by giving certain explanations about wrestlers and wrestling, replying the reader letters, putting his own ideas about various subjects of wrestling. He writes as if he was the witness of the wrestling matches he is narrating. Therefore, it is obvious from the texts that the author is an important element of the narration. And this active position of the writer gives us the

⁹⁴ Ibid, 18. 7. 1962

⁹⁵ Ibid, 24. 9. 1962

feeling that the author witnessed the story and that he is an authority about the subject, rather than removing from the sense of reality.

The writer, in general, intervenes the story by giving some explanations about the subject. For example, in the story of Bursalı Koca Rüstem, M. Sertoğlu gives information about the problems in Balkan countries of the time.⁹⁶ He talks about dervish lodges using the following words: " Now, it is time to state a thing".⁹⁷

In the story of Koca Yusuf, Eski Bir Pehlivan gives some extra-information of Kırkpınar Wrestlings⁹⁸ and makes certain propositions claiming that the referee committee is incompetent to make decisions about the wrestlings.⁹⁹ With the arrival of Koca Yusuf to İstanbul, the writer gives information about the period of Sultan Abdülaziz and the wrestlers of the time. To return to the subject, he uses this expression: "Well, to cut a long story short."¹⁰⁰ Another expression to move from the subject is used by Eski Bir Pehlivan in such a way : "These topics of wrestlings are nice to talk... One topic leads to another ... Lets leave 'cazgır' at Kavala in his prayer and pass over suddenly, 50 years later, for a few lines."¹⁰¹ Or, "Just as Koca Yusuf is ill, we can take advantage of this opportunity and pass time explaining some narratives of this strong and unique wrestler [Arnavutoğlu]."¹⁰²

⁹⁶ M .Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 1. 3. 1986, *Tercüman*

⁹⁷ Ibid, 27. 9. 1986

⁹⁸ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 6.2.1962, *Tercüman*

⁹⁹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 20. 6. 1963, *Tercüman*

¹⁰⁰ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 11. 4. 1962, *Tercüman*

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 10. 5. 1962

¹⁰² Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 10. 5. 1963, *Tercüman*

In a similar way, the narrative structure of the story of a wrestler does not only include his own experiences. We can also see the life stories and matches of other wrestlers. For example, in the story of Bursalı Koca Rüstem, the author frequently interrupts the narration and gives certain information about Aliço, Adalı Halil, Kurtdereli. He explains an anecdote of Aydın Demir.¹⁰³ Or, the story of Koca Yusuf contains information about many other wrestlers and detailed explanations of their matches. For example in the story of Kavalalı Çolak Mümin, there exist some information about the wrestling of Kurtdereli and Katrancı¹⁰⁴; Hergeleci İbrahim and Koca Yusuf¹⁰⁵, etc.

These texts also include the replies of the author to the reader letters. For instance, in the story of Koca Yusuf, Eski Bir Pehlivan frequently interrupts the narration to reply the reader letters and he even referees for the readers who bet on the events on the life stories of wrestlers.¹⁰⁶

4.1.3.b. The Comparisons Between The Styles of Authors

Although Wrestler Serials written by different writers contain similar narrative and textual properties, we can also notice certain differences in the styles of authors. Especially, the manner of telling of T. P. Piremehmetoğlu must be distinguished from the others. Piremehmetoğlu gives much more importance to the use of language. Wrestler Serials are written by him with the language of a literary text. He sees the Wrestler Serials as certain literary texts and does not interrupt the flow of the narration

¹⁰³ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 24. 3. 1986, *Tercüman*

¹⁰⁴ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 22. 9. 1992, *Tercüman*

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 6. 10. 1992

¹⁰⁶ See for example Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 5. 2. 1963; 3. 5. 1963

for some further informations or to indicate his own ideas about the subject. Unlike the texts written by M. Sertoğlu, Eski Bir Pehlivan or, Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, his Wrestler Serials are not interrupted by so called extra-informations. The reader letters are replied, or certain terms about wrestling are explained by Piremehmetoğlu in the end of the episodes, as footnotes.¹⁰⁷ And at the beginning of each episode, there exists a summary of the already published parts. We can also see this part of summary in the story of Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, though there does not exist a similar attention to add the summary at each episode, in the writings of Eski Bir Pehlivan or M. Sertoğlu. The above mentioned writers give the summary of the already published story, only at times.

The language used by T. P. Piremehmetoğlu differs considerably from the others. He prefers long sentences embellished by definitions, metaphors, adjectives. These sentences take often a paragraph. For example, to define the arrival of Katrancı and Kurtdereli to the field of wrestling, he uses the metaphors such as "the clash of clouds", "the mix of plains", etc.: "It was, as if an affair of an instant, the clash of two clouds, the mix of the Balıkesir plains."¹⁰⁸

He announces the rise of Kurtdereli by these words :

And, that fly about, fluttering wings over the historical field of Balıkesir's fair, without a sound to be heard, were the birds of good news, proclaiming the future, the unknown exalted epoch of Kurtdereli.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ See for example, T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 16. 1. 1968; 28. 1. 1968. *Tercüman*

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 21. 1. 1968.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 16. 2. 1968

He defines the spectators taking part of Kurtdereli and Katrancı in this way:
"The people is divided into two part in the middle, like an apple."¹¹⁰

However, in the narrations of other Wrestler Serials, one cannot see such kind of literary use of language. The sentences of these writers are short and far from literary arts. Although these writers also tend to use the terms "to flutter" or "to dance in a harmony" to define "peşrev" of wrestlers, T. P. Piremehmetoğlu is not pleased with such definitions. He prefers to use the following words : "They began to tack about as to reach to the clouds rising like giants, like mountains on the emerald-green meadows."¹¹¹

Although it is enough for other writers to say that "cazgır began to pray", Piremehmetoğlu says : "The motionlessness of the great crowd without any voice in the field gave a divine sense of the tremulous voice of the old men."¹¹²

The tenses used by T. P. Piremehmetoğlu are generally "past continuous" and "present continuous", whereas M. Sertoğlu, Eski Bir Pehlivan and Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, use the simple past and simple present. The style of narration of these authors are much more direct than that of Piremehmetoğlu. Their sentences are short, easy to understand; their definitions are direct. They do not use much metaphors to explain the situation. It can be claimed that in these texts, the language is not a literary one but everyday speech. Their style is much more similar to that of other mass media texts. They are easy to understand. They say directly what they mean by short sentences.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 17. 2. 1968

¹¹¹ Ibid 13. 1. 1968

¹¹² Ibid, 13. 1. 1968

Nevertheless, in the narrative structure of the story of Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, some differences can be noticed. His story begins with a part of presentation called: "Before Starting..." In this part, it is explained that the text the readers were going to read was formed by the memories of Ali Ahmet Pehlivan written in 1947, and some information about the writer and the hero of the text, Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, are given. Despite its being written by the help of the memories of Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, this text is taken as our sample since, in effect, it contains the textual properties of Wrestler Serials. The only main difference of this text from others is that it is written by "the first singular person". Although this text was claimed to be the memories of the writer, it is not written in the memory form. One can see the dialogues among the spectators and the reactions of the people to wrestlers as it was in other texts. Contrary to the stories written by other writers, the wrestling matches are not detailed and only the games and the results of the matches are narrated, whereas the feelings of wrestlers and such other details are not mentioned. Meanwhile, the story is frequently interrupted as in other stories. For instance, the matches of other wrestlers are also mentioned.¹¹³

Besides, there does not exist any important difference between the styles of Eski Bir Pehlivan and M. Sertoğlu. While analysing the same stories written by the two writers, we have noticed that M. Sertoğlu had taken the stories already written by Eski Bir Pehlivan and published them under his name. For example, the stories in our sample, namely "Koca Yusuf" and "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin" contain the same sentences, the same events in the writings of these two authors. M. Sertoğlu, must be copied these from Eski Bir Pehlivan and changed them only by adding some headlines

¹¹³ See for example, Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 19. 8. 1975, *Tercüman*

in the beginnings of episodes and some illustrated pictures. The other parts of stories are exactly the same. He took out only the replies of reader letters and certain extra-information projecting Eski Bir Pehlivan's own ideas. For example, the 40th episode of "Koca Yusuf" written by Eski Bir Pehlivan in 19. 3. 1962 is the same with which is published by M. Sertoğlu, the 33th episode, in 21. 10. 1991. Or, the 276th episode of "Koca Yusuf" published in 25. 4. 1963 by Eski Bir Pehlivan is copied by M. Sertoğlu as the 102th episode of his story, in 21. 3. 1992. And, the 365th episode of the story written by Eski Bir Pehlivan is published again by M. Sertoğlu under his name, as the 146th episode, in 6. 5. 1992.¹¹⁴

In a similar way, the 13th episode of "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", written by Eski Bir Pehlivan in 30. 3. 1973, is published by M. Sertoğlu as the 9th episode in 19. 5. 1992. Nevertheless, M. Sertoğlu published the same story written by Eski Bir Pehlivan by dividing it into two. The story of the match between Mümin and Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan is published under the name of "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin against Kurtdereli" and the number of episodes is renumbered by him beginning from "1". Consequently, the 477th part of the story written by Eski Bir Pehlivan in 11. 7. 1974 is published by M. Sertoğlu, as the 11th episode of the newly beginning story, in 5. 3. 1993.

4.1.4. The Characters of Narration

The heroes of Wrestler Serials are stereotypes. They are not personalities but the total of the same repeatedly exalted values and properties underlying the beliefs and

¹¹⁴ The gap of the number of the episodes published by the two writers derives from the fact that the story published under the name of M. Sertoğlu takes a larger place on the page and that the extra-informations in the story of Eski Bir Pehlivan are not given in the other story.

views about the social world. The heroes of these texts do not have basic differences of personality. They rather reflect the exalted and mythic properties of social totality. They both contain the characteristics attributed to the moral ways of "wrestling" as a sportive activity and the traditionally and socially acceptable modes of attitudes.

The main personal properties given importance in these texts can be categorized in such a way: The heroes above all are very powerful in the sense of both mental and physical capacity. Accordingly, the wrestlers like Koca Yusuf, Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan, Bursalı Koca Rüstem, Aliço, Adalı Halil are the representatives of unchallengeable wrestlers, whose power derives from their physical superiorities. Kavalalı Çolak Mümin, Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, Hergeleci İbrahim are the examples of wrestlers who are relatively small in body sizes, and whose superiority derives from their mental dominance in game. These wrestlers represent certain personal qualities. They are courageous and also modest. They hardly ever lose a match if they are the hero of the story. For example, though Adalı Halil is portrayed as a really modest person in the story of "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", he is defined as someone proud and cruel in other stories. The story of Koca Yusuf begins with the wrestlings in Kırkpınar, where Adalı Halil guesses the power and future of wrestlers by measuring the thickness of their nape by the help of a rope.¹¹⁵ This kind of self confidence of the "rival" in the text and the humility of the hero is characteristic of the narrative structure. Even Koca Yusuf, who is mostly portrayed as a mythic character, has a great self-confidence in the story of "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin" and because of this, he loses the match.

¹¹⁵ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 7. 2. 1962, *Tercüman*

The emphasized personal qualities are often related to the nationality of the wrestlers. They are reliable, and far from cheating since they are Turk. There exist more important values for the heroes such as honor or proud, other than money. The hero of the text is always obedient to the game rules. However, when the mentioned hero is the "rival" in another story, he may easily break the rules and can be fraudulent, etc. For example, in spite of Adalı Halil's being portrayed as someone hypocritical and intriguer in other stories, he is shown as a reliable person in his own story. All of these qualities given to the heroes are in fact the components of a stereotypic characterisation. In effect, Koca Yusuf, Kurtdereli, Çolak Mümin, Koca Rüstem etc. reflect the same personality: "the Goodness". They are mythified through these values repeatedly emphasized under their names and the power and unchallengeability attributed to them. Koca Yusuf is one of the most explicit example of the mythified character. He never loses a match. It is noticeable that, in the story of Koca Yusuf, the author never narrates any story of defeat. The only match he lost is explained from Mümin's side as if he was the hero.¹¹⁶ In foreign matches, Koca Yusuf is the representative of "Turkish superiority". He is a good willing person as not to "wrestle" with his rival, because he thinks that Kurtdereli will be ill-treated in his youth.¹¹⁷ Or, he continues to wrestle, in spite of his being injured, because he does not want to disappoint people betting on him.¹¹⁸ Even in his death, Yusuf gives the example of his "superior" personality: While the ship he was in is about to founder, he does not get on the safety boat: "But the Turkish Wrestler did not do so... Would he sacrifice the lives of others in order to save his life?"¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ See Ibid, 29. 4. 1962-1.5. 1962

¹¹⁷ See the match between Koca Yusuf and Kurtdereli. Ibid, 28. 6. 1962 and, Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 27. 10. 1974, *Tercüman*

¹¹⁸ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 30. 4. 1963, *Tercüman*

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 30. 8. 1963

Aliço is another example of these mythified characters with his strong personality, and unbreakable authority. The only match he has ever lost in his life is the one with Koca Yusuf. He has a faithful past. He was the wrestler of Sultan Abdülaziz, and he even wrestled with "Padişah". Unlike Yusuf, he is merciless. In all the stories, he has an absolute authority as the wrestler of "Padişah", the "master" of Adalı Halil and the head of referees.

The examples of stereotypic characterisations and the attribution of mythic properties to these characters can be increased. In these stories, the "rivals" have the same components of stereotypes like the "heroes". They are mostly hypocritical and trickster. The non-moslems are called "giaour" and often defined as trickster, liar, and coward. They always have a false self-confidence and are unjust. The Rums, the Bulgarians and the Russians are the most characteristic examples of this stereotypicality. The Americans, the Frenches, the Britons, the Germans, etc. are defined in the same way. For example, Romanof, the Russian wrestler lies by saying that he has lost the match, because he had a stomach ache.¹²⁰ Or Hans, the German wrestler, pretends that his leg was injured.¹²¹ The Italian wrestler stops the match to say that he was injured.¹²² However, Yusuf continues to wrestle even if he was really injured.¹²³

Manol, the Rum wrestler, elbows Mümin during the match and tries to enjure him.¹²⁴ The African Tom pretends that he was strangled. The Bulgarian Petrof lies

¹²⁰ Ibid, 30. 9. 1962

¹²¹ Ibid, 11. 9. 1962

¹²² Ibid, 30. 7. 1962

¹²³ Ibid, 30. 4. 1963

¹²⁴ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 12. 3. 1993, *Tercüman*

to deceive Kurtdereli by begging him so that he does not overcome him in 15 minutes. Therefore, the rivals, like the heroes, are stereotypes in each story. Only the names of the heroes and the rivals change and the stories seem to be the same.

4.2. The Analysis Of Ideological References

The discourse of a narration contains some points of ideological references which are important for the analysis, since they compose the ways of defining the world for the reader.

4.2.1. References to Reality and Rationality

As the example of popular media texts, Wrestler Serials include an inherent claim to reality. The fact that some of them are written by old wrestlers and contain certain similarities in content with the "memory form" supports this claim. However, they are rather imaginary. They are the fictive stories of wrestling adorned with details that enforce the illusion of reality. Here, this claim to reality will be exemplified and discussed.

In these stories, the author's style of narration is formed by a sense of reality enforced by the attribution to the writers a role of witnessing the actions. Accordingly, the life story of wrestlers are projected by the authors of these texts, as they had witnessed them or as they listened to all the stories in details, even what the wrestlers or their rivals think about during the matches. The dates, the days and hours of the matches of wrestlers are generally given. For example, in the story of his life, Ali Ahmet Pehlivan not only gives the exact dates of his wrestlings, but also that of the

other wrestlers he recorded.¹²⁵ Or, in the story of the match between Koca Yusuf and Adalı Halil, Eski Bir Pehlivan says : "At about the 30th minute of the match, Adalı Halil Pehlivan was able to force down Yusuf."¹²⁶

In a similar way, the author tries to prove his objectivity and impartiality by indicating the resources the information were taken, and by giving some quotations from the witnesses. Eski Bir Pehlivan, telling the story of the match between Koca Yusuf and Kurtdereli, uses this expression: "We will write this incidental wrestling with an objective look, for the first time. The persons we have taken the full explanation of the famous Rami Wrestling from, are these..."¹²⁷

The quotations from the witnesses and the "hero" are utilised to forcify the sense of reality. These quotations and some extra-information in the texts are projected as "documents" for the future book of "Turkish Wrestling History". Especially, in the story of Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan, Eski Bir Pehlivan frequently uses the quotations from himself; he explains the story over and over again by the words of Kurtdereli and other witnesses of the wrestling. Or, in the story of Çolak Mümin, M. Sertoğlu explains the match of Katrancı and Kurtdereli, referring to İsmail Hakkı Eroğlu who listened to the story from Kurtdereli. In his own story, Ali Ahmet Pehlivan sometimes uses such expressions: "I will narrate this part of my souvenir, by the words of my foster brother, Mehmet Şakir Pehlivan."¹²⁸ Accordingly, the claim that these texts represent the true stories of wrestlers is very apparent. In his essay on Aliço and Adalı

¹²⁵ See for example, Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 20.7.1975, *Tercüman*.

¹²⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 19.2.1962, *Tercüman*

¹²⁷ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 28. 4. 1962, *Tercüman*

¹²⁸ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 19. 8. 1975, *Tercüman*

Halil, M. Sertoğlu notes that: "There is not any serious mistake in these serials. If it were so, the readers would just notice it and refuse to read them."¹²⁹

This objected sense of reality is enforced by an effort to rationality. Accordingly, the narration contains rationally ordered connections between events and characters. In this form, the events are tied to a logical flow. They are structured into a beginning, a middle and a conclusion. In most cases, the wrestler's story begins from his childhood or the years of his adolescence when he began wrestling and it develops by his rise as a wrestler. Finally, the wrestler proves his superiority to everybody and he gives an end to his life of wrestling or dies. In these stories, the events are tied to the cause and effect relation. The texts are based on a claim to rationality. Finlay argues that "means/end logic is the procedure of rationality which legitimate their statements and positions. This is an instrumentalist reality that has a logical and ordered presentation"(1987:3). Accordingly, the hard working, the powerful and the cleverer wrestler wins the match. The wrestler who conspires or who recourses to artifice loses the match.

The claim to rationality is enforced in most cases by the exaltation of intelligence with the physical power. In these texts, it is frequently indicated that the wrestler have to use his brain in order to win. For example, in the story of Aliço and Adalı Halil¹³⁰, who are strong wrestlers, the intelligence is emphasized. It is cited that the body power cannot be sufficient to defeat. We can see a similar attribution of importance to the intelligence in the story of Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan written by T.P. Piremehmetoğlu. It is said in this story that the unintelligent wrestler can never

¹²⁹ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Adalı Halil", 16. 4. 1981, *Tercüman*

¹³⁰ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 21. 10. 1981 - 20. 2. 1982
Tercüman

attain success.¹³¹ Especially, in the stories of wrestlers who are not as big as others on account of their body sizes, the intelligence is of much more importance.¹³² Besides, the people who do not act insolently are defined as the serious-minded majority.¹³³ In these texts, the sense of reality is enforced by some details such as the conversations of the spectators or the comments on newspapers in foreign wrestlings.

When Wrestler Serials are examined from the perspective of the "realist narration", the statements of Abercrombie et al. (1991:121) should be considered. Accordingly, "realist forms ... are fictions but do not present themselves as fictions." The texts we have examined do also refuse to be "fiction". There exists an inherent claim to reality, though these are in fact some fictive narrations. Especially, we can see this, when we compare the same stories written by different writers, or, the stories written by the same writers in different times. For example, Eski Bir Pehlivan writes in the story of Koca Yusuf that Yusuf let Kurtdereli wear another "kışpet"¹³⁴, though he had won the right to declare his predominance by tearing the other's "kışpet". In his story, Kurtdereli tries to find another "kışpet", but he is not able to find one fitting to his enormous body sizes.¹³⁵ However, in the story of Kurtdereli, the same writer refuses the hearsay that Yusuf tore Kurtdereli's "kışpet" and indicates that Kurtdereli was taken out from the match by his "master", since his strings of trousers were unfastened.¹³⁶ There is also some noticeable contradictions in the story of Kurtdereli

¹³¹ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 23. 2. 1968, *Tercüman*

¹³² See for examples the stories of Çolak Mümin, Hergeleci İbrahim, Alamet Ali Pehlivan.

¹³³ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço Adalı Halil", 27. 1. 1981 *Tercüman*

¹³⁴ "Kışpet" is the special shorts of Oriental Wrestling made of leather.

¹³⁵ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 30.6.1962, *Tercüman*

¹³⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 21. 10. 1974, *Tercüman*

written by Eski Bir Pehlivan and T.P. Piremehmetoğlu. For example, Piremehmetoğlu, while defining the arrival of Kurtdereli into the wrestling field talks about the wrestler's servants.¹³⁷ However, according to Eski Bir Pehlivan, Kurtdereli is a really poor wrestler.¹³⁸ Besides, in the story of Koca Yusuf, written by Eski Bir Pehlivan who claims that he relies his writings on the documents, the "master" of Kurtdereli, Cincili Mehmet Pehlivan wrestle with Koca Yusuf instead of Kurtdereli.¹³⁹ But, in the story of Kurtdereli written by the same wrestler, Cincili Mehmet Pehlivan dies before the wrestling of Kurtdereli and Koca Yusuf.¹⁴⁰ In a similar way, if we peruse the story of Kavalalı Çolak Mümin written by M. Sertoğlu, we see that Çolak Mümin does not defeat Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan, since he noticed that the wrist of Kurtdereli was injured.¹⁴¹ However, in the story of Kurtdereli written by T.P. Piremehmetoğlu, it is not Kurtdereli whose wrist was injured but Çolak Mümin. In the story of Aliço and Adalı Halil, M. Sertoğlu writes that Mümin wrestled with Adalı Halil, the day after he was married, whereas, in the story of Çolak Mümin written by the same author, the person who wrestled with Mümin after his marriage is not Adalı Halil but İboş Pehlivan. While in the story of Aliço and Adalı Halil, it is written that Adalı Halil acted as if he were ill because his "master" asked him to do so, in the story of Koca Yusuf, it is indicated that Halil acted as if he were ill since he was afraid of being defeated by Yusuf. And, in the story of Koca Yusuf, Çolak Mümin defeats Adalı Halil, who is also the rival of Koca Yusuf, twice, though in the story of Adalı Halil, they were not able to beat one another.

¹³⁷ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 20. 1. 1968, *Tercüman*

¹³⁸ Eski Bir Pehlivan, Ibid, 11. 8. 1974

¹³⁹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf", 5. 6. 1962 , *Tercüman*

¹⁴⁰ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 8. 9. 1974, *Tercüman*

¹⁴¹ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 3. 3. 1993, *Tercüman*

All these examples prove that these texts claiming to rely on reality are fictions. In most cases, even the persons in these texts are not real. For example, the names of foreign wrestlers reflect some fictive persons: "Cimi", "Caki", "Coni" for Briton wrestlers; "Tom", "Tomson", "Sam", "Burton", "Harri" for Americans, etc. Similarly, the wrestlers who lived in different places and different times come together in the same matches and the results differ on account of the hero of the text.

Therefore, Wrestler Serials narrate same stories with different information about wrestlers and their matches cannot be considered as documentary texts, though they claim to be so. Nevertheless, they represent simultaneously a stereotyped view of reality (Fluck, 1987:44), concealing alternative views. They present the world they defined as the only real one. The inherent claim to reality and rationality in these texts emphasize these functions of them as the popular cultural text.

4.2.2. References to Relations of Powers

The ways in which the relations with the representatives of the authority, the struggles of power between the wrestlers taking place, and the place attributed to violence in this respect contain some ideological implications. Therefore, the discursive analysis of the narration necessitate to disclose the ideological references to relations of powers.

4.2.2.a. Relations With Authority

In Wrestler Serials, the main sources of authority are projected under two main categories. The former consists of the wrestlers' relations with the representatives of

political and social powers and the way the authority of these powers are projected: Pasha, Agha, Sir, Land-owner and Padişah are the examples of these sources of authority. The personalities attributed to the latter group own their power and authority, not from the political but the social and traditional positions in society. The "master" of wrestlers, the referees and sometimes "cazgır", form this kind of authority.

4.2.2.a.i. Relations With Agha, Sir, Pasha, Padişah

Agha, Pasha, Sir and Padişah own their powers from their legal and social positions. Their relations with wrestlers are sometimes defined as the relations between the protector and its follower and sometimes the relations between the orderer and the subordinator or contradictor .

Accordingly, Agha, Pasha, Sir and even Padişah are mostly projected in these texts as the protectors of wrestlers. For example, as indicated by Eski Bir Pehlivan¹⁴², the rich land-owners, the pashas or sirs, the aghas of villages used to own wrestlers wrestling for their name. These persons used to meet all the needs of wrestlers. They used to protect them, give money and food, buy their clothes, provide them shelter, etc. Therefore, we come across very often with the relations of wrestlers and the representatives of authority, in these stories. These persons help the hero to rise. They protect the wrestlers and help their education by providing them certain masters. The wrestlers wrestle for their faith, and are respectful against them. Their authority as the protector is unbreakable. For example, Mümin is trained by a "master" in the farm of Arif Agha.¹⁴³ Kurtdereli is protected by Ethem Pasha who

¹⁴² Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan" 14. 7. 1975, *Tercüman*

¹⁴³ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 22. 5. 1992, *Tercüman*

bought him clothes and a new "kışpet". Similarly, Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan is always kept under observation by such kinds of persons: Ali Agha helped him, when he was a child.¹⁴⁴ Afterwards, in İstanbul, he was protected by Colonel İsmail Bey, who gave him a house in the garden of his villa.¹⁴⁵ He stayed in Salih Pasha's villa as a guest¹⁴⁶ and he was helped by İsmail Bey to get the permission to wrestle, when he was a soldier.¹⁴⁷ When he was in Selanik, he was protected by a cavalryman of cruiser.¹⁴⁸

The wrestlers take part in the struggle of hegemony between the sirs or pashas. These persons are liable to settle their domination over others by the help of the wrestlers they took care of. Therefore, the success and the superiority of the wrestler they support is important for them.¹⁴⁹ For example, Bursalı Koca Rüstem begins to stay in the mansion of the pasha, after he defeats his wrestlers.¹⁵⁰ Pasha gives Rüstem some money to get a new "kışpet" sewed for him.¹⁵¹ In the story of Koca Rüstem, we can frequently see that Aghas talk among themselves commenting on the wrestlers. Accordingly, each of them defends the wrestler they protect.¹⁵² This is a source of struggle between the pashas. One can also notice it in the story of Koca Yusuf.¹⁵³ Kamil Pasha says in this story: "To mock with my wrestler is to mock with me".¹⁵⁴ The "protectors" even interfere in the matches for this purpose:

¹⁴⁴ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 5. 3. 1975, *Tercüman*

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 14. 4. 1975

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 27. 4. 1975

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 30. 4. 1975

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 29. 6. 1975

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 7. 9. 1975

¹⁵⁰ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 11. 4. 1986, *Tercüman*

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 27. 5. 1986

¹⁵² Ibid, 5. 9. 1986

¹⁵³ See for example, Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 4. 2. 1963, *Tercüman*

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 19. 2. 1963

The Governor (Vali) of Bursa orders "cazgır" to change the wrestling couples , because he wants Adalı to win the match.¹⁵⁵ Or, in the story of Kurtdereli, Ethem Pasha gets angry since Kurtdereli and his friend dared to wrestle with his wrestlers. He orders his wrestlers: "Boys, I give you two foreign lambs. Swallow them totally!"¹⁵⁶ Similarly, in the story of Kurtdereli written by Eski Bir Pehlivan, Ethem Pasha orders "cazgır" to interrupt the match. And "cazgır" declares that the match is finished.¹⁵⁷

We can see from these examples that the governors and other representatives of authority have an unescapable power over wrestlers, since they protect them and give them money and food. Therefore, they are projected in the stories as respectful. Especially, in the story written by T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, we can notice that Ethem Pasha is given importance. His reactions to the matches are narrated in much more detail than that of other spectators: "Ethem Pasha falls into his seat with no breath, he can not say any word, since he has not enough strength to talk."¹⁵⁸ And the authority attributed to him is emphasized by people's respect for him :

The trouble had broken out. Everybody was looking at his face. They were waiting for any sign from him. If pasha was to make any little sign, the field of wrestling would turn to the battlefield and perhaps the young foreigners would be beaten.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 20. 9. 1986, *Tercüman*

¹⁵⁶ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 12. 1. 1968, *Tercüman*

¹⁵⁷ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 27. 9. 1974, *Tercüman*

¹⁵⁸ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 15. 1. 1968, *Tercüman*

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 18. 1. 1968

Ethem Pasha uses his authority by ordering the gendarmes to disperse the people assembled before his tent.¹⁶⁰ A similar sign of authority of the governors over the wrestlings can be seen in the story of Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan.¹⁶¹ Pasha forbids the wrestlings of wedding feast in İstanbul and its surroundings, since Cemal Pehlivan, who was overcome by Alamet Ali Pehlivan, swore to spectators acclaiming his rival.

The wrestlers are subjected also to the authority of Padişah. His authority is indisputable and unbreakable. He can forbid wrestling. For example, in the story of Koca Rüstem, the soldiers bring the order of Padişah and interrupt the matches. Padişah forbids the wrestlings in İstanbul and its surroundings: "It was surely impossible to resist this order or to ask the reason. Was it possible to oppose the "firman" of padişah?"¹⁶² Similarly, in the story of Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, the gendarmes interrupt the wrestling, since someone denounced Sultan Hamid that people had assembled in Biga to raise a rebellion.¹⁶³ In the story of Koca Yusuf, it is claimed that: "The fearful Padişah used to hate the crowds, even if for the purpose of wrestling. In effect, he was afraid of them. Should this crowd walk towards palace?"¹⁶⁴ This attitude of Padişah is defined as a disaster for the wrestlers in the text. Sultan Abdülhamit forbids wrestling and accuses the wrestlers of killing Abdülaziz. This is defined as a ridiculous claim. "According to this ridiculous claim, the wrestlers of Abdülaziz killed him by the order they had taken from Mithat Pasha."¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 17. 1. 1968

¹⁶¹ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 1. 5. 1975

¹⁶² M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 27. 6. 1986, *Tercüman*

¹⁶³ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 17. 3. 1963, *Tercüman*

¹⁶⁴ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 26. 5. 1962, *Tercüman*

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 11. 4. 1962

Nevertheless, there exist also certain contradictions about the absoluteness of the authority. Above all, it is indicated that the protection of pasha, sir, agha and even the padişah who has the most famous wrestlers of the empire in his palace does not refer to a relation of ownerships. The wrestlers obey the orders of Padişah like other subjects in the country. However, Aliço, who is the first wrestler of Padişah, can say: "What about me from Padişah? He should know himself, even if he is Padişah and we must know ourselves if we are wrestlers!"¹⁶⁶ In this way, the wrestling is taken out from the political relationships with the governors, just like a sportive activity. We come across with the similar reactions in various situations. For example, Mümin tells the Egyptian Wrestler: "I don't care anybody's order. There is not slavery for us. I wrestle if I want, and do not if I don't want."¹⁶⁷ Or, in the story of Koca Yusuf, he refuses the order of pasha who want him not to wrestle with the Russian wrestler. He says: "I cannot do what Pasha asks, even if I die. I cannot escape from a Moscovit wrestler."¹⁶⁸ And he tells the representative of Pasha, who despised him and the wrestling activity: "Be you, or Pasha, I forgive you since you cannot even distinguish wrestling from portage." Such resistances exist also in the story of Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan. For example, he opposes Vali Pasha, who protects Çorlulu İbrahim and who interfered with the match ordering the wrestlers to continue to wrestle, although Alamet Ali Pehlivan had won the match. He says: "This is the contest field. Vali Pasha cannot interfere with it."¹⁶⁹ Or, when the superintendent of police told him that he was obliged to obey Vali Pasha's order, Ali turns to people and says: "O,

¹⁶⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 17. 3. 1963, *Tercüman*

¹⁶⁷ M. Serotğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 14. 2. 1993, *Tercüman*

¹⁶⁸ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 11. 8. 1962

¹⁶⁹ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 10. 7. 1975

people, look, they want to finish the match in a dead heat. I please you not to do an injustice to me."¹⁷⁰

The people, as well as wrestlers, may oppose the governors: "But the people of Selanik were lovers of freedom. They would not even listen to Vali. ... Nobody would like the government."¹⁷¹ The gendarmes supporting the people, say that Vali could not meddle with the affair. Then, the match continues. But finally, the man of Padişah, Arif Bey interferes and uses force against İsmail Bey, the protector of Ali Ahmet. Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, who doesn't obey even Vali Pasha's order, submits to his protector and accepts to finish the match in a dead heat.

Consequently, the relations of power between the wrestlers and the representatives of power is not unilateral. This relation does not only include the submission of the wrestlers to the power, but at the same time, their opposition to the authority and their claim to be independent from power. This claim is related to the nature of the wrestling activity itself.

4.2.2.a.ii. Relations With The Master, Referees And Cazgır

There is another type of authority which includes the wrestler's relation with his "master". That kind of authority is exactly unchallengeable. The wrestler cannot disregard the master's advice. A word of the "master" is an order for him. Especially, the authority of Aliço in this sense is unescapable. Nobody can object him. His novice, Adalı Halil does whatever his "master", Aliço says. Aliço is never wrong at his predictions. Halil gets what he deserves when he disregards his master's words.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 13. 7. 1975

¹⁷¹ Ibid, 13. 7. 1975

He loses the match he has done with Koca Yusuf, since he lied to his "master". And he repents later, for it: "It is the most proper attitude to listen to the advice of the "master" in the contest field."¹⁷² In a similar way, Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan suffers much from disregarding the advice of his "master". Katrancı crushes him.¹⁷³ The authority of the "master" is also apparent in the story of Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan. He says: "I have dressed myself when my master ordered me to do so."¹⁷⁴ And his "master" slaps Ali Ahmet when he disregards his advice: "My master slapped me, because he wanted to protect me."¹⁷⁵

Furthermore, the masters have great respect in the society. They watch the matches by the side of the governors or the referees. They sometimes take place in this committee. For example: "Aliço was sitting together with Mahmut Agha and other notable guests in the area of honor seperated for them."¹⁷⁶

The referees too, have mostly the same power and authority. For example it is said in the story of Aliço and Adalı Halil: "Is it possible to oppose the decision of referee. Does the finger that 'Şeriat' [Islamic Code of Law] cuts off hurt?"¹⁷⁷ Or, Aliço says in the story of Koca Yusuf: "If we are referee here, you must consent our decision."¹⁷⁸ Accordingly, the referee treats in an objective manner.

¹⁷² M. Sertoğlu, "Usta Çırak Aliço- Adalı Halil", 2. 10. 1981 *Tercüman*

¹⁷³ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 11. 10. 1974, *Tercüman*

¹⁷⁴ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 15. 4. 1975, *Tercüman*

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 15. 4. 1975

¹⁷⁶ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 20. 10. 1986, *Tercüman*

¹⁷⁷ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 17. 5. 1981, *Tercüman*

¹⁷⁸ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 25. 5. 1962, *Tercüman*

However, there is also the claim that the referees treat unjustly, and certain resistance to their decisions. For example, in the story of the wrestling of Koca Yusuf and Çolak Mümin, it is claimed that Aliço, the referee, declares the defeat of Koca Yusuf, although it is not so: "Many people claim that Koca Yusuf was not defeated but the decision was taken by Kel Aliço, the referee in this match, because he wanted to take revenge from Yusuf."¹⁷⁹ What is important about this situation is that Koca Yusuf did not object to the decision. He submitted to the judge of the referee. In these stories, Aliço is in most cases unjust. For example, he scolds Koca Yusuf who injured Cincili Mehmet Pehlivan, by headlocking him in the match. Though everybody knew that Yusuf was not guilty, nobody said anything against Aliço since they were afraid of him.¹⁸⁰ Similarly, the committee of referee which was afraid of the anger of Aliço takes the part of his novice, Adalı. Because of this, Pomak Süleyman decides not to wrestle in İstanbul, once again.¹⁸¹ His decision reflects an opposition to the judge of referees. Yet, he cannot change the result. We can also see the partiality of the committee of referee in favour of Adalı Halil, in the story of Çolak Mümin.¹⁸² This having sidedness of the referees for Aliço's novice, Adalı Halil, can be also exemplified in the story of Kurtdereli: "If another wrestler were to do what he did, they would have already interfered and even thrown him out of the wrestling field."¹⁸³ It is said in the same story: "When the master of a wrestler takes place in the committee of referee, all the things go smoothly."¹⁸⁴

The lack of confidence to the referees appears especially in the stories of foreign wrestlings. In the narrative structure of these stories, the referees are projected

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, 25. 5. 1962

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 7. 6. 1962

¹⁸¹ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 16. 10. 1992, *Tercüman*

¹⁸² Ibid, 19. 10. 1992

¹⁸³ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 6. 1. 1975, *Tercüman*

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 25. 8. 1975

as the source of tension. They are always described as unjust and subjective. They form one of the important points of contradiction. Although they always do injustice, the hero manages to be successful. For example, the jury always take the rival's part in the story of the matches of Adalı Halil in America. Koca Yusuf, too, has to deal with many injustices in his foreign wrestlings.¹⁸⁵ Yusuf is mostly considered as defeated in these stories, although he has fallen into his shoulder. The jury pretended not to see the wiles done by his rivals. Yusuf says: "The wrestler wrestling in the foreign countries should consent in advance, to be cheated one half of his right. But here, all of the rights of wrestlers are disobeyed."¹⁸⁶ It is not only the referees who do injustice to the hero, but also the policemen. For example: "The policemen were indifferent when Koca Yusuf was attacked. They waited him to be knocked on the head... and even to be killed."¹⁸⁷

"Cazgır" is sometimes also considered as the representative of such an authority. His work is to pair the wrestlers and to watch the match among them. It is indicated in the text¹⁸⁸ that in the wrestlings of Kırkpınar, nobody could object Cazgır's decision. Nevertheless, they are frequently attributed partiality: "Cazgır did not want to permit the two wrestlers even to gather money from the spectators, since he wants to protect Hergeleci."¹⁸⁹ Or, Aliço challenge "Cazgır"s decision and says: "The wrestlers who are serious-minded do not submit to the nonsensical decisions of "cazgır"; they wrestle as they know."¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁵ See for example, Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 20. 7. 1962; 26. 8. 1962; 30. 1. 1963; 2. 2. 1963; 3. 6. 1963; 17. 7. 1963 etc., *Tercüman*

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, 29. 3. 1963

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, 13. 1. 1963

¹⁸⁸ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 14. 2. 1968, *Tercüman*

¹⁸⁹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 20. 4. 1962

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 22. 5. 1962

4.2.2.b. Power Struggle Between Wrestlers

The textual narration of Wrestler Serials is settled upon the power struggle of the wreslers. The wrestlers, who were frequently defined as giants, are the heroes of this struggle. The exaggeration of their body size is clear: "They both were indifferent to a young giant."¹⁹¹ Or their immense power is defined in such a way : "Aliço was like a lion preparing to break its hunt into pieces."¹⁹² This struggle between wrestlers is thus a murderous fight : "The "forearm-smash" (elense) facing each other was falling like a sledge-hammer. Their "trepan" (tırpan) were just shaking the ground. Even the elders confessed that they have never seen such a wrestling in their life."¹⁹³

The relationship between wrestlers is projected as a rivalry: "Each wrestler wants to overcome his adversary and does whatever he can, to do so."¹⁹⁴ Even the brothers like Mümin and his brother are defined as adversaries while wrestling with one another.¹⁹⁵

This struggle between wrestlers focuses on the feeling of revenge. To take revenge is natural, if it stays in the perspectives of wrestling. A wrestler who is overcome by another has a legitimate right to take revenge of that defeat. To do so, he must ask his rival for another match. For example, Kurtdereli who was badly injured by Katrancı says that he was waiting impatiently, the day he would completely recover

¹⁹¹ Ibid, 12. 3. 1962

¹⁹² Ibid, 14. 3. 1962

¹⁹³ Ibid, 16. 3. 1962

¹⁹⁴ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 7. 7. 1992, *Tercüman*

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, 3.9.1992

and take his revenge on Kurtdereli.¹⁹⁶ And after he overcomes him, the two wrestlers become friends. Similarly, Ali Ahmet Pehlivan who was defeated by Hüseyin Pehlivan by a cheating says: "After having defeated Hüseyin, all my grudge and enmity for him ended."¹⁹⁷

Nevertheless, sometimes, the revenge may be taken by the wrestler, in a way against the rules of wrestling. For example, Koca Yusuf throws his Black rival who was doing foul during the match, out of the stage, since the jury do not interfere anymore.¹⁹⁸ Similarly, he throws his another rival who was hitting with the fists and head.¹⁹⁹ We can also see the same method of taking revenge on the wrestler, in the story of Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan.²⁰⁰ He throws Çakır Pehlivan to the space behind the hedges, since he was trying to injure Kurtdereli by pushing him to the hedges.

4.2.2.c. The Place of Violence in Power Struggle

Another component of power struggle between wrestlers is "violence". The violence of the wrestler is usually acknowledged as acceptable, while it stays in the perspectives of the wrestling rules. Accordingly, the cheatings such as kicking, hitting with the fists or head are excluded, while other kinds of violence, even the murder, is seen legitimate. The severe attitudes of wrestlers are many times legitimated in

¹⁹⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 11. 10. 1974, *Tercüman*

¹⁹⁷ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 20, 6, 1975

¹⁹⁸ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 28. 11. 1962

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 21. 7. 1963

²⁰⁰ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 23. 10. 1974, *Tercüman*

Wrestler Serials. For example: "The struggle was continuing with all its violence."²⁰¹ Or : "Yusuf's wild power was not trained".²⁰² Alamet Ali Pehlivan defines his struggle with his rival in such a way: "We were fighting with each other, antagonistly but in the recognized way".²⁰³

From this perspective, the wrestling activity is very often defined as a "war" or "fight". The wrestler can suffocate his rival by headlocking him in this war. The wrestling of "Pomak" renders headlocking acceptable under all conditions, until his rival accepts his defeat; And in the wrestling of İstanbul, this is seen acceptable, only when the rival catches the wrestler's trotters and until he releases them.²⁰⁴ The wrestler can crush his rival. For example, Aliço tries to crush Yusuf, who was considered as a future rival for his novice, Adalı. We can see this very clearly, in the text: "Once Aliço saw the newly growing wrestler's capacity and once he noticed that he meant trouble for him in future, he did whatever he could and injured him absolutely in an incorrigible manner."²⁰⁵

The grudge the wrestlers are bearing for their rival is well dramatised in the story of Koca Yusuf by Aliço's attitudes. Aliço says that he should crush the wrestler named Yusuf and having told that he began to rub the knife over the stone with a great anger.²⁰⁶ He tells his novice that he will wrestle with Koca Yusuf, instead of him. He wants to crush Koca Yusuf, so that he cannot be a rival for his novice. To do so,

²⁰¹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 30. 8. 1963, *Tercüman*

²⁰² Ibid, 30. 7. 1962

²⁰³ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 10. 5. 1975, *Tercüman*

²⁰⁴ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 15. 2. 1962, *Tercüman*

²⁰⁵ Ibid, 20. 2. 1962

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 1. 3. 1962

he asks Adalı Halil to act as if he was ill, in the wrestling day. Here, to tell lie and to do harm to another wrestler are legitimated under the conditions of the relation of "master" and "novice". The "master" sacrifices himself for his novice, and the violence is dissimulated in this way.²⁰⁷ Similarly, the greed is naturalised too: "It would not be easy to find another pair who had a bitter grudge against each other and who had such an ambition to overcome."²⁰⁸ Or, "At Kırkpınar, the father has no pity on his son and the brother on the brother. ... There is no compassion in this wrestling."²⁰⁹ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan defines the grudge he and his rival bore for each other in such a way : "What a big day it was, my God! ... Our eyes were in a blaze; we were looking at each other as if we had plotted against our lives."²¹⁰

The wrestling activity is merely seen as a war. For example, in the story of Çolak Mümin, it is said that the elders used to define wrestling as a kind of war: "As a state must always have an army ready to fight so that it can survive, a wrestler too, has to be always ready to wrestle, even if he does not wrestle."²¹¹ Or, as it is indicated in the story of Aliço and Adalı Halil: "The wrestling means a kind of war. A person who goes to war has to know the power of his enemy before all, mustn't he?"²¹² We can also see this kind of definition of wrestling, in the story of Koca Yusuf :

Does a soldier think the number of enemies against him.
Wrestling is like a war. If they do not dare to wrestle with me

²⁰⁷ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 1. 2. 1981, *Tercüman*

²⁰⁸ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 2.3.1968, *Tercüman*

²⁰⁹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 13.2. 1962, *Tercüman*

²¹⁰ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 9. 7. 1975, *Tercüman*

²¹¹ M. Sertoğlu, Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 7. 3. 1993, *Tercüman*

²¹² M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 15. 1. 1981 , *Tercüman*

one by one, I will challenge them like a soldier who was face to face with the enemy without thinking the death .²¹³

To die in the "war" is seen as an honor for the wrestler : "There are many dead men in the contest field. 'Ulema' say that they are considered as martyr. It can only be a source of happiness for me to die for the sake of wrestling."²¹⁴ Therefore, wrestling is blessed as a celestial activity. Similarly, to be injured in this "war" is also natural. Once Hergeleci İbrahim's nose bled in his match with Koca Yusuf, the author says: "This was natural. When the headlock (boyunduruk) a person comes across with is hard, his nose bleeds, and even his lips parch... This is wrestling... Everything can happen while a man wrestle... To wrestle is a job of man."²¹⁵

Consequently, Reşat Bey interrupts the match of Hergeleci and Koca Yusuf in order to explain the foreign spectators that it was natural to be injured in the wrestling. He indicates that the Turkish wrestling is very hard and says that there is even the wrestlers who died in the field. This is considered as a martyrdom.²¹⁶

The violence is thus an inherent element of the power struggle. For example, in the story of Kurtdereli, Ethem Pasha orders his wrestlers to crush Kurtdereli who dared to wrestle with them.²¹⁷

²¹³ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 24. 10. 1962, *Tercüman*

²¹⁴ Ibid, 13. 11. 1962

²¹⁵ Ibid, 13. 1. 1963

²¹⁶ Ibid, 23. 12. 1962

²¹⁷ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 11. 1. 1968, *Tercüman*

The violence of wrestlers is also supported by the reactions of the spectators. For example, the followers of Çakır Pehlivan was shouting at him to suffocate his rival. They called out to him: "Do not release him, Çakır! Hurt his nose! Collapse his nose!"²¹⁸ And the situations the wrestlers were in are defined in such a way: "If Kurtdereli's nose was to be hurt, Çakır's ribs too, were about to be broken, and it gave him a horrible pain as if his body was to be divided in the middle."²¹⁹ And the match continued while the Çakır Pehlivan's nose was bleeding. This is shown as a natural result of wrestling activity by these words of Çakır Pehlivan: "This is the contest field. The blood sheds as well as the arm is dislocated"²²⁰ Moreover, the majority of the spectators gave an ovation by the words "Hit!"; "Break"; "Kill", etc. The supporters of the rival of Alamet Ali Pehlivan tell him to suffocate the other.²²¹ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan too, does not hesitate from telling that he was suffocating his rival to death with all his power. He says: "The people took my part and shouted with all their voice: Suffocate, attack!"²²²

In Wrestler Serials, the violence is also naturalised to some extent, on the areas outside the wrestling activity. For example, while explaining the source of the name of "Kazıklıbağa", M. Sertoğlu says that the Turks impaled the pirates there and the people watched them die; he indicates that the piracy ended there due to this.²²³ Similarly, Çolak Mümin violently kills three Bulgarian raiders who kidnapped his brother. He catches the one who tried to escape. He lifts him up and throws down to the ground. He does this again and again until the raider dies.²²⁴

²¹⁸ Ibid, 29. 2. 1968

²¹⁹ Ibid, 29. 2. 1968

²²⁰ Ibid, 10. 3. 1968

²²¹ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 7. 9. 1975, *Tercüman*

²²² Ibid, 9. 4. 1975

²²³ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 28. 4. 1986, *Tercüman*

²²⁴ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 23. 1. 1993, *Tercüman*

Consequently, the power struggle of wrestlers in Wrestler Serials depends on the violence they acted upon each other which is supported by the physical or mental dominance of the wrestler. Wrestling activity is a war between wrestlers which is full of violence, malice, grudge and vengeance.

4.2.3. References to The Notion of "People"

The people in Wrestler Serials are defined as the mass of spectators. Their identity is settled only in this way. They have no social relations or economic positions. They are usually male, except the wrestlings in foreign countries and they exist as the source of tension in the narrative structure. For example, in the story of Çolak Mümin, M. Sertoğlu says :

Human beings are strange creatures. They search for and find a point of criticism in everything and everywhere. Just for example, a philanthropist, a well-to-do man gave the poor people one scale of wheat for nothing. However, some of them said to criticize him that: "Well, he has given one scale of wheat to all of us without money. It is true... But was his scale right? Who can claim that he did not cheated in scale". So, there was also someone criticizing Mümin in such a way, and wishing to devalue his wrestling, in spite of everything.²²⁵

This view of men as a strange creature is also emphasized in other examples: "It has always been this way and will always be so".²²⁶ This idiom is used by the

²²⁵ Ibid, 27. 11. 1992

²²⁶ Ibid, 10. 7. 1992

writer, since the people who accused Mümin of being escaped does not seem to be contented with seeing that Mümin had not escaped.

According to these texts, people do not understand the value of 'hero'. They usually despise him. They are unjust against the hero. People are commonly defined in Wrestler Serials as one sided, partial, unjust, impatient, inconsistent. They cannot accept the defeat of the wrestler they support. They often despise the young wrestlers and the foreigners. For example, in the story of Aliço and Adalı Halil, the people acclaim the wrestler they know. They wish good luck for him.²²⁷ In the story of Koca Rüstem, it is dramatized in such a way :

It must be admitted that, Koca Rüstem Pehlivan had deserved to be acclaimed for his perfect wrestling. But, they did not do so. People preferred to scold the wrestler who was the native of Macedonia, instead of acclaiming.²²⁸

They do not know to distill, also in the story of Aliço and Adalı Halil. And in the story of Koca Yusuf, taking part of spectators is shown as the typical attitude toward wrestlers :

The ones acclaiming Katrancı just a moment ago when he had taken his rival in a clinch, did not acclaim here this nice equivalent game of the Bulgarian Wrestler here. There exists, here, a psychological reason. The spectators always want the wrestler they support to be dominant. All of the wrestlers wandering about the places away from home know this and,

²²⁷M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak, Aliço Adalı Halil", 3. 3. 1981, *Tercüman*

²²⁸ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 2. 11. 1986, *Tercüman*

show no reaction to some demonstrations against them, and even to the injustices they come across with.²²⁹

Or, this attitude of the spectator is projected as natural in such a way : "People always want the wrestlers they know and recognize to overcome. The people wish the wrestler they know and recognize to overcome even if they see that a foreign wrestler is better."²³⁰

And sometimes, the wrestler challenges the unjust spectators: "I understand the people acclaiming the wrestlers they like, to encourage them. However, a wrestler could deserve to be acclaimed only if he shows a mastery ... Nevertheless, there was not such a thing."²³¹ The spectators in the story of Çolak Mümin are seen as incapable of seeing the truths.²³² They do not acclaim Kurtdereli who defeats his rival: "Especially, bewilderment and anger were to be read from the faces of them."²³³

The people is defined also as impatient and insensitive to wrestlers : "The wrestlers can be patient for themselves but the people are always impatient and want that the wrestlers finish their match as quickly as possible."²³⁴ Or, as indicated in the story of Aliço and Adalı Halil, they cannot comprehend the position in which the wrestlers are : "How cruel were these spectators? They do never consider what kind of rival the wrestler they are supporting, wrestle with; they only want him to defeat his

²²⁹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 16. 2. 1962, *Tercüman*

²³⁰ Ibid, 19. 4. 1962

²³¹ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 1. 7. 1975, *Tercüman*

²³² M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 18. 5. 1992, *Tercüman*

²³³ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 5. 11. 1974

²³⁴ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 8. 6. 1986, *Tercüman*

rival without fail, and they expect this from him".²³⁵ Similarly, in the story of Kurtdereli it is claimed that: "People were not behaving according to the position of the wrestler they support, but according to their own attitudes, and they were destroying without mercy when they got excited."²³⁶ The unjust attitudes of the spectators are projected in the story of Koca Yusuf, in such a way: "They give nobody the opportunity to do injustice for Adalı and of course, they do not say anything when something happens in favour of him."²³⁷

The struggle between the wrestlers sometimes turns out to be a struggle between spectators: "Not the wrestlers, but the spectators were wrestling: they were fighting with their dresses".²³⁸ Or "the supporters of Kurtdereli and Katrancı were ruthlessly fighting."²³⁹ They shout in the foreign wrestlings in such a manner : "Kill the Turk"; "Hit Yusuf", "Lynch the Turk", "Death to the Turk".²⁴⁰ The people may sometimes become uncontrollable. For example, Adalı's supporters rush to the field just as Koca Yusuf was about to defeat him.²⁴¹ Or in the story of Kurtdereli they are agitated as to not obey the gendarmes : "They were about to make an attack."²⁴² Especially, the spectators in foreign countries are defined as much more aggressive. For instance, in the story of Aliço and Adalı Halil, the people rushed to the field,

²³⁵ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 14. 12. 1981, *Tercüman*

²³⁶ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 11. 2. 1968, *Tercüman*

²³⁷ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 13. 2. 1962, *Tercüman*

²³⁸ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 11. 2. 1968, *Tercüman*

²³⁹ Ibid, 18. 2. 1968

²⁴⁰ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 13. 1. 1963, *Tercüman*

²⁴¹ Eski Ber Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 22. 2. 1962, *Tercüman*

²⁴² T. P. Piremehmetoğlu "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 18. 1. 1968, *Tercüman*

because they thought that there was a cheating. And they were stopped by the police using a fire hose. This kind of aggressivity of the spectator is clear in the story of Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan: "It was an ordinary thing that the people supporting the two wrestlers start quarrelling after the wrestling, by knives and beatings."²⁴³

The fact that wrestling is a spectacular activity attributes the spectators an important place in the narrative structure. Accordingly their reactions are very important for wrestlers. For example, his "master" advises Koca Rüstem:

Try to get along well with the people! They can sometimes do injustice to a wrestler. The wrestler should not be angry about that. The injustice of people for a wrestler is not continuous. In the end, the people understand their injustice and change their attitudes. Briefly, a wrestler may sometimes offend people. However, the wrestlers do never have the right to sulk to the people.²⁴⁴

Yet, the wrestlers scold or despise the people at times. For example, the sentiments of Adalı Halil for the people are described in such a manner :

It was a feeling of jealousy confused with anger. But this anger was not for the newly famous wrestler but for the people acclaiming him and approving his wrestling. The people who used to praise him to the skies and acclaim him ... in the past, were now insensitive, incapable of seeing the truth and unable to appreciate the right person.²⁴⁵

²⁴³ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 25. 9. 1975, *Tercüman*

²⁴⁴ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 27. 4. 1986, *Tercüman*

²⁴⁵ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta Çırak Aliço Adalı Halil", 28-29. 7. 1981, *Tercüman*

Similarly, the wrestlers are sometimes bothered of the interferences of spectators. For instance, Aliço who was wrestling with Koca Yusuf, scolds the people acclaiming him : "No acclamation. What are you doing? Is the wrestler I am going to wrestle an enemy?"²⁴⁶ Besides, as indicated in the story of Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, the people object to the decision of his "master" who ordered Ali Ahmet Pehlivan to wrestle again with his rival, though he had defeated him: "Do not cheat the child's right. How would he overcome in another way?" And the "master" replies them: "If you are wrestler, come to the field to wrestle. If not, stop talking and do not interfere."²⁴⁷ In this story, although the wrestling is a spectacular activity, the spectators are often warned not to interfere with the wrestling. Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan tells the people who do not show any reaction against İsmail Pehlivan's cheatings : "We came here not to fight but to wrestle. Do not interfere, for God's sake."²⁴⁸

4.2.4. References to Wrestling as a Sportive Activity

The wrestling activity consists of some ceremonies. The wrestlers oil each other before the match. In the texts, this is projected as the indicator in the degree of civilization of Turkish wrestling.²⁴⁹ The match begins with the prayer of "cazır", who pairs the wrestlers and introduce them to the people. The ceremony continues with "peşrev", the preliminary movements of wrestlers. Then the wrestlers put their hands to each other's nape. The winner declares his victory by saluting the crowd, in the end.

²⁴⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", "2. 4. 1962, *Tercüman*

²⁴⁷ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 20. 3. 1975, *Tercüman*

²⁴⁸ Ibid, 7. 5. 1975

²⁴⁹ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 3.2.1968

Furthermore, wrestling activity, as defined in *Wrestler Serials*, is a spectacular sport. Its legitimacy is related to the approval and reactions of spectators. The wrestler's main aim is to acquire the respect and support of the people. They earn their livings most often by the money they gather from the crowd. And the struggle between wrestlers tends to continue, until one of the two overcomes or the crowd watching it is sick of their match. The spectators take an important place in the narration of stories. They frequently interfere with the matches and comment on the wrestlings. We can often see that the wrestlers' match are interrupted and obliged to be ended, because of the statement of reasons that the people is sick of their wrestling.²⁵⁰ That interaction between the wrestlers and the spectators is well defined by Eski Bir Pehlivan:

Wrestling is a sport. And the sport can acquire spectators, only if it motivates their curiosity and excitement . Therefore, there must always be wrestlers in the field who are similar or close in power and one of them must defeat in a match, and lose in another and they have to finish in a dead heat at the third. Sometimes, they should even quarrel with each other and the level of curiosity and excitement must thus be exalted.²⁵¹

These statements emphasize the importance of spectators and the inseparability of wrestling activity from them. Ali Ahmet Pehlivan indicates this relationship in such

²⁵⁰ See for example, Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 9. 12. 1974, *Tercüman*

²⁵¹ Ibid, 14. 1. 1975

a way: "There may be nothing as pleasant as to wrestle and win against the thousands of people. It gives one man an immense excitement and joy."²⁵²

Besides, the wrestling field is considered as the area where the justice for the wrestlers is prevailed. They get what they deserve, through wrestling. All of the injustice done to the wrestler before or during the match is reversed by the result, that is when he proves himself as the champion. The struggle between wrestlers is withdrawn to the perspectives of the sportive activity in this way. The struggle and violence stay in the contest field or it is hoped to be so, in Wrestler Serials :

In any case, the good moral qualities and the training the ancient wrestlers had, were wonderful. These murderous fights they had in the wrestling field used to stay there. Moreover, the wrestlers used to find the way to get along well with each other.²⁵³

Therefore, the inner structure of wrestling includes and internalises the violence. The struggle between wrestlers is legitimised under the name of sportive activity and morality. It is thought as a war and the wrestlers see each other as the adversary. Wrestling is considered as a "fight" between wrestlers: "Wrestling is a kind of war. A person that goes to the war has to know the power of his enemy, mustn't he?"²⁵⁴ Therefore, to lose is projected as a natural result of wrestling activity, as well as to win : "The contest field is not different from the battle-field. Many things can

²⁵²Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 11. 4. 1975, *Tercüman*

²⁵³ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 13. 1. 1993, *Tercüman*

²⁵⁴ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço Adalı Halil", 15. 1. 1981, *Tercüman*

happen to one, there."²⁵⁵ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan explains his defeat in his story in such a way :

I thought the world around me as dark as the night. There was a bad echo in my ears. My world was about to go all to pieces. Still, I was a wrestler and there may not be any wrestler who did not taste the defeat.²⁵⁶

Besides, the reason of the Turkish wrestlers' being hesitant to do the first attack is related with the tradition of war:

The moral reason of this is that Turks see the wrestling as a war. A Turkish wrestling often leaves the first attack to his rival so that he wouldn't be a killer and he stays at defense in many times, shouting "make an attack, you, the heretic". Then he responds repeling the attack done by his enemy with the aim of killing.²⁵⁷

And the idea of retaliation is essential in the struggle. The wrestlers' main purpose is to retaliate their rivals. Similarly, the wrestling morality is defined in this respect. According to this morality, the wrestlers do not talk about the matches they won : "It was a high example of the wrestling morality that the two wrestlers remind each other not the wrestlings they won but they lost".²⁵⁸ Or, they do not talk about

²⁵⁵ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 10. 3. 1962, *Tercüman*

²⁵⁶ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 24. 5. 1975, *Tercüman*

²⁵⁷ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 5. 9. 1962

²⁵⁸ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 24. 11. 1974, *Tercüman*

the result of the match before wrestling: "to win or to lose happens in the field and a wrestler in the field cannot guess beforehand if he will win or not."²⁵⁹

In this respect, the wrestlers do not escape from wrestling even if they know that they will be overcome. For example, Çolak Mümin says that he would prefer to die than escaping from the wrestling and the rival.²⁶⁰

4.2.5. References to Traditionalism and Religion

In Wrestler Serials, the wrestlers' life styles and their world view are widely defined from the perspective of religious attitudes. The wrestling activity itself, contains certain rituals related with religion. For example, the match begins with the prayer of "cazır". The wrestlers come into the wrestling field, taking firstly their right steps.²⁶¹ They pronounce "besmele" before wrestling.²⁶² In the foreign countries, the wrestling activity projects a struggle of religions. The non-moslem makes the sign of the cross, while the moslem pronounces "besmele". The worship and the training for the wrestlers are attributed a similar importance: "He did not neglect his training as well as his worship".²⁶³ Besides, as indicated by T. P. Piremehmetoğlu in the story of Kurtdereli, the wrestling takes an important place in Islam. It is seen as sacred. Accordingly, "melaike-i kiran" is present in the rivalry of the wrestlers, and the

²⁵⁹ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 18. 7. 1975, *Tercüman*

²⁶⁰ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 20. 6. 1992, *Tercüman*

²⁶¹ See for example, M. Sertoğlu, "Usta -Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 18. 6. 1981, *Tercüman*

²⁶² See for example, M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Kocal Rüstem", 3. 3. 1986; 28. 5. 1986; M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 13. 9. 1992, *Tercüman*

²⁶³ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 6. 3. 1993, *Tercüman*

wrestlers thus perform an ablution as well as they did so, before going to the war.²⁶⁴ Eski Bir Pehlivan, by answering the readers' questions claims that the prophet of Islam was a wrestler too :

The Apostle and the Prophet of the God had wide shoulders and a healthy body. He used to fight with the enemies with sword, in many wars like the war of Uhut. ... If the prophet Hamza is regarded as the patron saint of wrestlers in his place, I think that this is probably because he was older than him.²⁶⁵

The wrestlers explain their success or fail by referring to the God. For example, Çolak Mümin who was in danger in the match is sure that the God would help him.²⁶⁶ Or, Koca Yusuf indicates that he has defeated his Russian rival by the help of the God.²⁶⁷ When he is asked how he was able to overcome three wrestlers at the same time, in America, he says: "The God helped me."²⁶⁸ He believes that his power is given by the God. He says: " I will not use the power given by the God for bad things." ²⁶⁹ In a similar way, Ali Ahmet Pehlivan thinks that the God will not make him ashamed while he takes risks.²⁷⁰ He claims that he can wrestle even with one arm and be successful, if the God wants to be so.²⁷¹ He says : "The God has always protected me from all dangers and will do so. I have nobody but He. I do only

²⁶⁴ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 10. 1. 1968, *Tercüman*

²⁶⁵ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 6. 12. 1974, *Tercüman*

²⁶⁶ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 8. 11. 1992, *Tercüman*

²⁶⁷ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 7. 10. 1962, *Tercüman*

²⁶⁸ Ibid, 22. 11. 1962

²⁶⁹ Ibid, 17. 8. 1963

²⁷⁰ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 22. 7. 1975, *Tercüman*

²⁷¹ Ibid, 23. 7. 1975

believe in the God."²⁷² And he praises the God, so He did not asham him but He raised his honor, instead.²⁷³ These words of Ali Ahmet Pehlivan proves us how the wrestlers relates the positions they are in, to the God: "I am not afraid of anybody but God. Therefore, do not worry anymore! Whatever the God appreciates happens."²⁷⁴ Besides, Çolak Mümin is defined in the story of Koca Yusuf, as someone created by the God to become a great wrestler.²⁷⁵

These kinds of approaches towards the activities of the wrestlers relate all the results to the divine dispensation and attribute an active role in their daily lives to the notion of the God. Even the quality of the year's crop is related to the God : "The God gave a perfect crop that year".²⁷⁶ Since the physical power of wrestlers are seen as a blessing of the God, it is said in the story of the match between Adalı Halil and Kurtdereli, that it is a sin and thoughtlessness to the God's blessing, to continue to wrestle and to maltreat each other, when the two wrestlers cannot defeat each other.²⁷⁷ Similarly, Adalı Halil tells the doctor who indicated that he cannot wrestle while he is ill : "The God will help me".²⁷⁸

Therefore, a concrete belief into the fate is strongly emphasized in these texts. For example, it is said that it was a matter of destiny to wrestle with a powerful or a weak wrestler, in the wrestlings of Kırkpınar, since no challenge was acceptable there.²⁷⁹ Or, in the story of Aliço and Adalı Halil, it is indicated that people cannot

²⁷² Ibid, 26. 6. 1975

²⁷³ Ibid, 29. 9. 1975

²⁷⁴ Ibid, 1. 9. 1975

²⁷⁵ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 30. 4. 1962, *Tercüman*

²⁷⁶ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 26. 10. 1986, *Tercüman*

²⁷⁷ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 30. 3. 1981, *Tercüman*

²⁷⁸ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca rüstem", 23. 10. 1986, *Tercüman*

²⁷⁹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 14. 2. 1962

get more than their fate, no matter what they do²⁸⁰. The belief in destiny is emphasized in the story of Koca Yusuf, by the words of "cazgır" who told Adalı Halil: "You have given up the match you could win. You cannot avoid your destiny! People cannot get more than their destiny, no matter what they do."²⁸¹ We can often come across with such statements: "You must be contended with the destiny"²⁸²; "What the God wants will surely happen"²⁸³ ; "We should thus yield to the fate"²⁸⁴ or, "I submitted to my destiny".²⁸⁵ Similarly, in the story written by Eski Bir Pehlivan, Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan declares that he is a believer of destiny. He says before the match that whatever was his fate will happen. Thus the wrestlers do not challenge their defeat. The submission to the destiny internalizes any challenge and make them unnecessary and ineffective.

Furthermore, there is a sense and belief of divine justice in Wrestler Serials. In the end, the wrestlers get what they deserve. "The bad" loses and "the good" always wins. For example, Aliço who has crushed many wrestlers and ended their wrestling lives in his youth gets his share in his old age through his match with Koca Yusuf. He admits that: "All comes from the God. I know why all these happened to me ... Let's do not talk about this. It is better now to forget everything I deserved."²⁸⁶ Or, it is indicated that : "Has Aliço never crush any wrestler in his wrestling-life. By now, his being faced with such an outcome is a kind of an atonement for these sins."²⁸⁷

²⁸⁰M. Sertoğlu, "Usta Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 21. 9. 1981, *Tercüman*

²⁸¹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 8. 5. 1962, *Tercüman*

²⁸² M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 21.11.1992, *Tercüman*

²⁸³ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 18. 7. 1962

²⁸⁴ Ibid, 2. 4. 1963

²⁸⁵ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 2. 8. 1975, *Tercüman*

²⁸⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 30. 3. 1962, *Tercüman*

²⁸⁷ Ibid, 10. 4. 1962

We can also see certain mystic beliefs in these texts. For example, the people relate Mümin's success to a written charm. His mullah identity is emphasized in his story and it is indicated that the spectators were apt to believe that he overcomes his rival due to his written charm.²⁸⁸ Mümin tells his father : "Do not worry, father! Nothing happens to me... I have a written charm. It protects me."²⁸⁹ His power is considered as related to something divine and mystic : "Orelse, does this mullah know a strong prayer which confuses and tires the wrestler he wrestle... Did he learn this prayer in the medresse?"²⁹⁰ Nevertheless, the dominance and success of Mümin is in fact seen by the writer as something not related with prayer or with a written charm but rather an extraordinary martyrdom given by the God : "The spectators who appreciate wrestling began to understand that this mullah has an extraordinary power and mastery."²⁹¹

The traditions are also given an important place in Wrestler Serials. The social relations are defined according to them. The respect for the elders, the family and the "master" is essential for these relations:

The wrestlers who have confidence only in their power, who do not act by the advice of the people who are superior to him due to the age and experience, have without fail worsened in the result and they have lost the opportunity to be a good wrestler.²⁹²

²⁸⁸M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 2. 7. 1992, *Tercüman*

²⁸⁹ Ibid. 6. 7. 1992

²⁹⁰ Ibid, 15. 9. 1992

²⁹¹ Ibid, 15. 9. 1992

²⁹² Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 15. 5. 1975, *Tercüman*

Accordingly, certain activities such as gambling or drinking alcohol are frequently considered as unacceptable. Especially, in the stories written by Eski Bir Pehlivan and M. Sertoğlu, we can hardly see the Moslem and Turkish people gambling. To gamble is defined as religiously unacceptable and a sin. For example, Mümin says to his friend Kara Toma who bet on him: "The wager, according to me, is a kind of gamble and our religion forbids gambling"²⁹³ Similarly, Koca Yusuf states that to wager for wrestling means absolutely to gamble. He says: "To gamble is a sin. No sin is more terrible than drinking and gambling."²⁹⁴ He also claims that : "To put gamble into the wrestling is a sin! That attempt to do so is bad."²⁹⁵ Or, Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan warns his manager who wagers on the wrestling, to stop it. He says that his religion forbids gambling. However, the manager replies him by saying that it is not forbidden in his religion.²⁹⁶ In effect, we can see that the gambling ones get what they deserve in these stories. In America, Yusuf's translator loses all his money in gambling.²⁹⁷

However, in the story of Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan written by T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, gambling and wagering are seen as a much more natural and acceptable thing even for Moslem and Turks. He clearly indicates that the people gamble over wrestlings and that they quarrel not because of their interest in the wrestling but rather in the gambling. He distinguishes the people as the gamblers and the amateur spectators.²⁹⁸ Here, we cannot see the effort to conceal this social action,

²⁹³ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 17. 7. 1992

²⁹⁴ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 18. 7. 1962

²⁹⁵ Ibid, 19. 1. 1963

²⁹⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 7. 2. 1975, *Tercüman*

²⁹⁷ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 27. 1. 1963, *Tercüman*

²⁹⁸ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 18. 2. 1968, *Tercüman*

as it was in other stories. According to Piremehmetoğlu, to wager is a custom of the time :

To get excited, the riches and the great village headmans used to bet regarding the prize for the match and to quarrel loosening the purse strings by the condition of not going too far and gambling ... The persons who wager on the results were laying destructive wagers that may give great earnings or losses.²⁹⁹

These words of the writer for the spectators wagering on the wrestlings are very interesting :

People were right in their excitement ... Who knows what kind of gamblers were shouting, among people? The people who were trying to appreciate the gamble over the wrestlers, as in horse races ... were feeling a great pleasure by each movements of wrestlers ... If not, the people yelling at the top of their voices were shouting not just for the love or the profit of "Kızılay".³⁰⁰

Nevertheless, there exist also certain contradictions about the subject in the story written by T. P. Piremehmetoğlu. He at the same time speaks ill of gambling, while projecting it as a natural matter and the custom of the time. He says that the quarrels provoked in the end of wrestlings were caused by these gamblers.³⁰¹

In essence, other writers cannot avoid talking about wagers, whereas they especially try to hidden this. For example, in the story of Koca Yusuf, Eski Bir

²⁹⁹ Ibid, 29. 1. 1968

³⁰⁰ Ibid, 1. 3. 1968

³⁰¹ Ibid, 2. 3. 1968

Pehlivan who has already indicated that gambling and wagering were forbidden in Islam, says at the same time that there was not few people betting over the wrestlers among the sirs.³⁰²

Furthermore, taking alcohol is similarly seen as unacceptable. For example, in the story of Kavalalı Çolak Mümin it is argued that: "Good wrestlers grew up from Greeks, from Bulgarians, from Serbians. But their body is rotten since they drink wine."³⁰³ Nevertheless, there is some contradiction in Wrestler Serials: Eski Bir Pehlivan, telling a memory of him, indicates that Tamburacı Osman Pehlivan drinks so much raki.³⁰⁴ Or, Alamet Ali Pehlivan says without hesitation that İbrahim Bey drinks with the joy of wedding feast.³⁰⁵

Similarly, the wrestlers do never eat pig-meat . They are very afraid of eating accidentally the meal cooked by the pig-fat.³⁰⁶

4.2.6. References to Regionalism, Nationalism and Racism

The feeling of belonging to a nation is of a great importance in Wrestler Serials. The concept of nationality puts one main contradiction in these texts. Accordingly, the struggle between wrestlers becomes the area of struggle between nations. The wrestlers are considered as the representatives of the national identity. Their effort to dominate their rival is projected as an effort to exalt their nation. In

³⁰² Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 9. 5. 1962

³⁰³ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 25. 6. 1992

³⁰⁴ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 22. 5. 1963, *Tercüman*

³⁰⁵ Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 1. 5. 1975

³⁰⁶ Ibid, 25. 1. 1975; Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 15. 8. 1962, *Tercüman*

effect, this kind of contradiction between the national identities is settled on the basis of regions, above all. The wrestler's identity is at first, presented in respect of the region they are from. For example, Koca Rüstem is called "Bursalı"; Mümin, "Kavalalı"; Halil, "Adalı"; Koca Yusuf, "Şumnulu", when they wrestle with someone from another region. It is also noticeable that Mümin is called "Zigoşlu" when his rival is from the same country, Kavala, but from another village.³⁰⁷ Or, Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan is called as "Balıkesirli Mehmet Pehlivan", when he arrives in İstanbul.³⁰⁸ The struggle between wrestlers become the quarrel and rivalry between regions in this way. The wrestlers from the provinces are despised in this quarrel, by the people and wrestlers living in İstanbul. For example, Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan, who is called "Balıkesirli" in İstanbul, proves his power to the important wrestlers of İstanbul.³⁰⁹ He says: "The natives consider themselves having much more right than us. Only the emigrants can know what does it mean to be emigrant."³¹⁰ This is also emphasized by T. P. Piremehmetoğlu. We can often see the statement like that: "To be wrestler in the provinces is easier than being a carrier in İstanbul".³¹¹ Aliço believes that in Anatolia there cannot be trained wrestlers in the standards of the Rumelia.³¹²

When the struggle happens on the basis of country, but not regions, the tension and contradictions is carried to the level of nationalities. Then, the wrestlers get far away from their regional identity. They are not "Kavalalı", "Zigoşlu", "Kurtdereli", "Balıkesirli", "Adalı", "Şumnulu", "Bursalı", etc. anymore. They are only "the Turk" or at least "the Ottoman", while their rivals remains to be only certain

³⁰⁷ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 17. 8. 1992, *Tercüman*.

³⁰⁸ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 1. 12. 1974

³⁰⁹ Ibid, 16. 11. 1974

³¹⁰ Ibid, 8. 10. 1974

³¹¹ For example, see, T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 11. 1. 1968; 18. 1. 1968, *Tercüman*

³¹² Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 23. 2. 1963, *Tercüman*

foreigners: Tom, Cim, Tomson, Caki, Coni, Hans, Toma, Hakişmit etc. For example, "The Ottoman does not seem to accept the defeat."³¹³ Or: "Hans feel on his knees before the Turk."³¹⁴ In this way, the sense of "we" against "the others" is aimed at being constructed. When the foreign matches are concerned, the wrestlers are not the representatives of a city, village, region but of the country as a total, and of the national characteristics. Therefore, when the Turk dominates his Russian, Bulgarian, Greek, Briton, etc. rival, it is not only the sportsman that wins but also the national identity. We can see it well by the words of Kurtdereli, who were appreciated by Atatürk. Accordingly, explaining the secret of his success in Eupore, Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan says: "In all my wrestlings, I used to think the Turkish nation that was supporting me and the honor of the nation."³¹⁵ The good willing, the brave, the enormously powerful, the reliable one, The Turk wins; but the trickster, the liar, the coward, the foreigner loses. For example, "The terrific Turk has proved his terrific power."³¹⁶ while, "The first deceit of the African is seen."³¹⁷ Or, while Yusuf proves his power by helping the workers trying to take a hard stone away, the American workers escape, leaving him under the stone. "He was across with a great treachery."³¹⁸ But, "the stone helped him, as if it had comprehended that it could not overcome the Turk".³¹⁹ The Bulgarian wrestler too, appreciates the power of the Turk. He says: "The God has given you a strange power." ³²⁰ Therefore, as it is

³¹³ Ibid, 19. 7. 1962

³¹⁴ Ibid, 14. 9. 1962

³¹⁵ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 11. 8. 1974, *Tercüman*

³¹⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 2. 10. 1962, *Tercüman*

³¹⁷ Ibid, 31. 10. 1962

³¹⁸ Ibid, 6. 8. 1963

³¹⁹ Ibid, 7. 8. 1963

³²⁰ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 2. 2. 1975, *Tercüman*

emphasized in the story of Mümin: "Only a Turk can defeat another Turk", or "It is the Mullah's duty to show who the Turkish wrestlers are".³²¹

Furthermore, the Turkish wrestlers, who are the heroes of Wrestler Serials, never go back on their words. For example, Adalı Halil Pehlivan says that he will never go back on his word since he is Turk.³²² Koca Yusuf indicates it in this way: "We, the Turks do never go back on our words."³²³ Or, "Once the Turks have promised something, they keep their words."³²⁴ Yusuf's manager says: "We know that Turks are very brave and loyal to their words."³²⁵

In effect, together with this emphasized sense of nationality, there exists a contradictory approach to racialism. We can in most cases see that the racist attitudes of the foreigners towards the Blacks are criticized: "In Britain, as well as in America, the Blacks were considered in a bad manner. A White wrestler or boxer used hardly ever to make match with a Black, in the time. Even, they used not to eat together with a Negro."³²⁶ Or else, to convince the French spectators, the "Black wrestler" says: "I am Negro but also a Christian. ... But the Turk is Moslem. By defeating him, I will take the revenge of the wrestlers he has defeated, as well as to have the victory of Christianity."³²⁷ Besides, the "Black Tom" implored the White people, to let him wrestle with the Turk who is White but Moslem.³²⁸ As a Black, Tom accepts his

³²¹ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 6. 10. 1992, *Tercüman*

³²² M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 25. 11. 1981, *Tercüman*

³²³ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri" 25. 11. 1962, *Tercüman*

³²⁴ Ibid, 19. 7. 1962

³²⁵ Ibid, 5. 10. 1962

³²⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 23. 11. 1962, *Tercüman*

³²⁷ Ibid, 26. 11. 1962

³²⁸ Ibid, 14. 4. 1963

subordinate position, and considers it natural : "There is nothing to do, the God has created us as Negroes, to be despised ... We, who are insulted are afraid of the Whites in this country, as we are afraid of a wild animal."³²⁹ But the Turks do not despise the Blacks. Yusuf wrestles with them without any hesitation. It is repeatedly indicated in these texts that the Turks are not racist as the Christians. They do not despise the Blacks : "We do not see any difference between the Whites and the Negroes. Are they not the God's creature, too?... There exist many Negroes living in the Ottoman lands. There is not any difference between a White and a Negro."³³⁰ And Koca Yusuf replies his manager who says that the Blacks are not considered good: "Are the Negroes not the God's creatures?"³³¹ Similarly, when it is said to him that the people in America would not like to watch the wrestling of a White wrestler defeated by a Black, Adalı Halil says that to observe the race difference is a sin in İslam.³³²

Nevertheless, this criticism against racism, we come across within Wrestler Serials is insincere. As it is cited in the story of Adalı Halil: "These Negroes can even sell their fathers if they see the money".³³³ Or, "You cannot understand how much these Negroes are avaricious and enemy for the Whites."³³⁴ In the story of Çolak Mümin, the Egyptian wrestler is defined by his rival as "a fellow as black as coal".³³⁵ And it is said: "The sentiments of these Negroes can never be known."³³⁶ A similar contradictory attitude for racialism is much more apparent when the subject is not Blacks who are rare in Turkey, but the gypsies. While it is often indicated that the

³²⁹ Ibid, 23. 4. 1963

³³⁰ Ibid, 24. 11. 1962

³³¹ Ibid, 7. 4. 1963

³³² M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 25. 12. 1981, *Tercüman*

³³³ Ibid, 22. 1. 1982

³³⁴ Ibid, 11. 2. 1982

³³⁵ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 23. 1. 1993, *Tercüman*

³³⁶ Ibid, 6. 2. 1993

gypsies are also human and the God's creature, that statement itself includes a sense of exclusion and despise: "But, it is very hard for man to be defeated by a gypsy."³³⁷ To wrestle with a gypsy is to be despised. The wrestler is free to do any foul if his rival is a gypsy. Even to beat a gypsy who wants to share the prizes is seen as natural.³³⁸ Furthermore, Eski Bir Pehlivan strongly denies the claim of Eşref Şefik who said that Mümin was a gypsy. According to the author, these claims of Eşref Şefik who was making a radio programme are nonsense.³³⁹ And it is argued that Mümin has not any relation with gypsies. Accordingly, he is the son of a very rich and noble family from Kavala.³⁴⁰ We can also see a similar attitude for the gypsies in the story of Kurtdereli : "I would have already accept my defeat if there was not a gypsy against me. But being defeated by a gypsy injures my self-respect."³⁴¹

4.2.7. References to Gender Relations and The Place of Women

In Wrestler Serials, the gender relations, and the place of women in society is projected from the perspectives of what is socially acceptable and wishable. Thus the places and roles attributed to women and men in a traditional manner, characterise and differentiate their social positions. Accordingly, while the womanhood is identified with beauty, purity and naiveté, the masculinity is seen directly related with the physical power and rationality. For example, the women watching the violent struggle between the wrestlers feel faint.³⁴² Orelse, the modesty and purity of the wrestler is

³³⁷ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 11.6. 1962, *Tercüman*

³³⁸ Ibid, 10. 6. 1962

³³⁹ Ibid, 29. 4. 1962

³⁴⁰ Ibid, 30. 4. 1962

³⁴¹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 8. 4. 1975, *Tercüman*

³⁴² M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 7. 10. 1992 *Tercüman*

likened to that of a girl. In the story of Mümin, it is indicated that Celal Pehlivan is well-behaved like a girl.³⁴³ Or, the author identifies the Hero's beauty, with that of a young girl, by defining him deprived from sexual identity. Accordingly, with his unmuscular, unfeathered and rosy flesh body like that of girl, Koca Yusuf is highly innocent. He is no longer the symbol of the wild and violent component of the power struggle between wrestlers but rather a myth of innocence, beauty and purity.

Besides, the wrestling is projected as a masculine activity the spectators of which are mostly male. The values attributed to the wrestlers are related to manliness. For instance: "Wrestling is a sport of men. To escape from wrestling does not fit for manliness."³⁴⁴ In a similar way, to be brave, just and reliable are the manly characteristics.³⁴⁵ Koca Rüstem promises his rival to come to wrestle with him when he says: "You will come if you are a man..."³⁴⁶ The only exception of the wrestler's sexuality is seen in the story of the match of Sicimoğlu Halil Pehlivan, with a Russian girl. Accordingly, Sicimoğlu Halil Pehlivan wrestles with this beautiful female wrestler who overcomes all the men she comes across with when he was a prisoner of war in Russia. Halil Pehlivan does not want to wrestle with this girl, but he is accused of being afraid of her. He accepts to wrestle with her because he thinks that "the glory of the manly world was in danger". Consequently, "the man" and "the Turk" defeats "the woman" and "the Russian" at the first hand.³⁴⁷

³⁴³ Ibid, 22. 2. 1993

³⁴⁴ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Halil", 5. 1. 1982, *Tercüman*

³⁴⁵ See for example, Ali Ahmet Pehlivan, "Alamet Ali Ahmet Pehlivan", 16. 7. 1975; 5. 8. 1975, *Tercüman*

³⁴⁶ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 9. 3. 1986

³⁴⁷ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 5. 5. 1963, *Tercüman*

Except from this, the women are especially defined through their traditional roles in family as the mother or the wife of a wrestler. It is indicated in the story of Mümin that : "The women as the wife and especially the mother of a wrestler are always proud of their men".³⁴⁸ Therefore, the women are attributed an identity, only if they play a role related with a situation of belonging to the man, the hero.

The women's identity as the wife is mostly seen as passive and subordinate in her relations with the man. For example, while defining his wife, Kurtdereli uses these words: "My mother used to need a helper in house ... We easily got along well with my young wife. She never disobeyed my advice."³⁴⁹ Or, Aliço's wife cannot resist her husband who decides to kill their ox : "Poor woman was to know better than everybody, how a calamitous person her husband was. Therefore, willingly or not, she did not go forward and was contented only with sighing."³⁵⁰ And Mümin's wife, the most beautiful girl of the village, helps her mother in love's decisions on their marriage life. Orelse, Muharrem Pehlivan talks about her wife as "the wife at home" who frowns her husband since he is defeated to a wrestler crippled in one hand.³⁵¹

However, as the mother, the woman has an active authority over her son. Mümin's mother supports her son, in the family meeting assembled to decide whether he will continue wrestling or not.³⁵² The son subordinates his mother who decides to get him married.³⁵³ Moreover, Mümin's mother prevents her son from entering into the nuptial chamber, for the reason that he has an important match in the next week.

³⁴⁸ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 26. 8. 1992, *Tercüman*

³⁴⁹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 9. 10. 1974, *Tercüman*

³⁵⁰ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Hayatı ve Güreşleri", 28. 2. 1962, *Tercüman*

³⁵¹ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 28. 8. 1992, *Tercüman*

³⁵² Ibid, 2. 11. 1992

³⁵³ Ibid, 31. 10. 1992

She takes the bride-groom into her own bedroom and lays her husband's bed into another room.³⁵⁴ "Mümin was no longer going around the sofa, at nights, since he knows well that he cannot deal with his mother."³⁵⁵ Similarly, Kurtdereli's mother controls his son's life :

My mother interfered with all my affairs. She organized even my relations with my wife. I lived under an absolute control and did not neglect my trainings ... she was trying to separate my wife from me, taking her into her own room when she saw me tired. My wife understood well, why she behaved so.³⁵⁶

And Kurtdereli's mother says to her son who was defected: "You have a lot amused yourself with your wife, in the last days. I have just interrupted this. I will not show you your wife's face, at nights."³⁵⁷

However, this authoritarian and determinant position of the woman is limited with the field of family. Out of it, the woman can hardly ever take an active place in social world. Except from the writings of T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, she is not apparent as the spectator if she is Turk and moslem. She cannot watch the match, among other spectators. Mümin's mother and wife watches his match, from the window of the farm building : "There were the wives and daughters of many notables of Zigoş in the house. They were watching the wrestling with a great emotion, from the place they stay."³⁵⁸ Or:

³⁵⁴ Ibid, 2. 11. 1992

³⁵⁵ Ibid, 3. 11. 1992

³⁵⁶ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 10. 10. 1974, *Tercüman*

³⁵⁷ Ibid, 21. 10. 1974

³⁵⁸ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 10. 11. 1992, *Tercüman*

The people of Istanbul were to take by convoys the way of Kağıthane with their wives and children. While the women and children were amusing themselves, the great part of men began to wait for the beginning of the wrestlings that were already settled.³⁵⁹

Nevertheless, in the story written by T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, the women play an active role between the spectators. They are not interested with the matches, but the wrestlers' bodies and manliness. They come to see the bodies of wrestlers they are filled with admiration: "The giggling and chuckling of the young girls and beautiful women of Balıkesir, wrapping around their silk coats was noticeable."³⁶⁰ Or :

It aroused curiosity, what kinds of words the young girls and adult women were whispering to each other and what kinds of ideas and sentiments they were indicating against the manly beauty that even arouse the jealousy of statues.³⁶¹

The women spectators talk among themselves about the sexual attractiveness of the wrestlers: "If I were young, I would have felt my heart excited for them. ... I don't know why I sigh when the wrestlers wrestle."³⁶² Or , "I do like the roaring of the wrestler rather than their wrestling."³⁶³

However, in foreign countries the woman takes a much more active role as the spectator. The Rum spectators watch the match together with men and women. The

³⁵⁹ Ibid, 10. 9. 1992

³⁶⁰ T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 20. 1. 1968

³⁶¹ Ibid, 20. 1. 1968

³⁶² Ibid, 30. 1. 1968

³⁶³ Ibid, 3. 3. 1968

majority of the spectators is constituted by the women who come to see the bodies of the wrestlers :

Yusuf was an exactly beautiful man... He was the one making the European women crazy. He had learnt how much the women liked the wrestlings done in Europe... As though he was powerful, an ugly and ill-shaped wrestler could not get enough spectators.³⁶⁴

The women spectators in America show Koca Yusuf their half-naked photos. Yusuf throws them to the ground and says : "Do these women have not fathers, husbands, brothers? How shameless they are? How can they present themselves to a man in such a way."³⁶⁵ Thus, the contradiction between the women in Turkey and the foreign countries is constructed on the basis of morality.

4.2.8. References to Economic Relations

As well as the social ones, the economic relations in society are widely concealed in Wrestler Serials. The social life is not detailed within the economic relations of social classes. But although there exist the sirs, aghas, pashas, land-owners and the peasants and citizens in the narrative structure, no economic relation among them is projected. Accordingly, the people are defined only as a mass of spectator approving and supporting the wrestlings or the wrestlers, giving them some money or prizes. The wrestlers earn their livings by the prizes they won from the matches and the money they gathered from spectators. The life for the wrestler is hard,

³⁶⁴ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 11. 7. 1962, *Tercüman*

³⁶⁵ Ibid, 7. 6. 1963

since the survival depends on the approval of the spectators and the money they give. Thus, the money is of importance for them:

The situation is not so easy for a poor young man. Above all, he must earn his living. Then, he must look after ... the girl he is married ... The wrestling season in Rumelia and especially in Deliorman, takes not more than five months. However, the life goes on twelve months.³⁶⁶

Koca Yusuf, who cannot find any rival to wrestle with him in Turkey, and so, who cannot earn enough money to survive, decides to go abroad. And he stays much longer in America for money, though he misses his country and he wants to return.³⁶⁷ Orelse, as it is frequently indicated in *Wrestler Serials* "the more the prize's are, the greater the wrestler has the will for wrestling."³⁶⁸ The vital importance of the money the wrestler earns from the match is stressed in this way : "There is no harm in having much more money."³⁶⁹ Thus, the money is not necessary only to stay alive but also to insure the wrestler's future : "The end of the wrestler who did not save and invest the money he earned in his youth is a catastrophe."³⁷⁰ Consequently, the wrestling is rather a commercial thing. It is stated in the story of Koca Yusuf that all things depend on advertisement in America. The advertisement is told to be much more important than the wrestling power.³⁷¹ Moreover, to stress the importance of the money, it is said : "Leave aside all sense of

³⁶⁶ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 13. 2. 1986, *Tercüman*

³⁶⁷ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 12. 12. 1962, *Tercüman*

³⁶⁸ See for example, T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 18. 2. 1968; 23. 2. 1968, *Tercüman*

³⁶⁹ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 27. 6. 1992, *Tercüman*

³⁷⁰ Ibid, 14. 1. 1993

³⁷¹ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 18. 1. 1963, *Tercüman*.

shame where one's interest is concerned."³⁷² Or, in the story of Mümin, we come across with the allusion of the spectators to the money given to Katrancı so that he is defeated : "The gold opens any door."³⁷³ Adalı Halil and Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan who have declared their fraternity and thus who cannot wrestle with each other according to the traditions, break their promise and accept to wrestle because of the money they are offered: "Let's take 50 gold coins from these heretics."³⁷⁴ The story of this match between these two wrestlers that declared their fraternity is explained by M. Sertoğlu in such a way :

They were offered exactly 50 British gold coins for the wrestling ... These 50 gold coins badly muddled up their minds. It was clear that to refuse such an unexpected luck, just before returning to the country, would be foolishness.³⁷⁵

However, in these stories there exists another effort to conceal the importance of the money for the wrestlers. While Adalı Halil's manager argues that to make advertisement and to earn money is much more important than everything, Halil declares that he cannot go back on his word since keeping promise is much more important than money.³⁷⁶ Accordingly, he says: Prize, prize, prize... Everybody's all thoughts are fixed on money. However, the love is much more important for man than money and fame. What does it mean to live without the love of people.³⁷⁷

³⁷² Ibid, 5. 10. 1962

³⁷³ M. Sertoğlu, "Kavalalı Çolak Mümin", 27. 11. 1992, *Tercüman*

³⁷⁴ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 13. 2. 1963, *Tercüman*

³⁷⁵ M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 24. 10. 1986

³⁷⁶ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 25. 11. 1981, *Tercüman*

³⁷⁷ Ibid, 4. 1. 1981

Therefore, in the story of Koca Rüstem, the Bulgarian Wrestler who wrestle not for the faith or name but money is to lose.³⁷⁸ Halil's manager tries to convince him to wrestle again with Koko by offering him money. He says: "The Turks like the yellow golds much. You will see, he will not resist."³⁷⁹ However, Halil indicates once again that the honor is much more important than money for Turks.³⁸⁰ And he says: "Your belief and faith, all your thought is money. But we, thanks God, we consider our honor superior to everything."³⁸¹ Therefore, it is frequently indicated that there exist certain values much more important than money. Defining the wrestling tradition of the ancient times, Piremehmetoğlu claims that the wrestlers of that time did not even talk about the cheating and wrestle only for fame and honor. Accordingly, they did not hesitate from sacrificing their lives for this sake.³⁸² This characteristic is identified with the national properties of the wrestlers: "I know that Turks do not give any importance to the money. They surely do whatever they put into their head."³⁸³ Or: "He knows that the Turkish wrestlers do not give any importance to money and that they often wrestle for a glass of water."³⁸⁴ This property attributed to Turks is perceived by the foreigners as something strange: "These Turks are strange. They do not give any importance to money."³⁸⁵ To prove it, the wrestlers often give the money they earn to the poor and ex-wrestlers. In his advanced ages, Aliço, who used to be Padişah's wrestler in his youth, has to kill his ox and take its

³⁷⁸M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 23. 2. 1986

³⁷⁹M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 13. 1. 1982 , *Tercüman*

³⁸⁰ Ibid, 13. 1. 1982.

³⁸¹ Ibid, 3. 1. 1982 .

³⁸² T. P. Piremehmetoğlu, "Kurtdereli Mehmet Pehlivan", 29. 1. 1968, *Tercüman*

³⁸³M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 31. 1. 1982, *Tercüman*

³⁸⁴ Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 9. 7. 1962, *Tercüman*

³⁸⁵Ibid, 15. 7. 1963

place in the land, for he had given all the money he had earned to the poor.³⁸⁶ Similarly, Koca Rüstem helps with the money he earned from wrestling to his emigrant fellow countrymen.³⁸⁷ Adalı Halil gives the money he earned from his last match in America to the poor Turks living there³⁸⁸ and Koca Yusuf declares that he will give the money he earned in his match with his foreign rival in America, to the old wrestlers.³⁸⁹ In the story of Koca Yusuf the poverty and generousness of the wrestlers is thus related with the fact that Hamza, the wrestlers' patron saint, was a poor and generous man, too.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁶M. Sertoğlu, "Bursalı Koca Rüstem", 15. 9. 1986, *Tercüman*

³⁸⁷Ibid, 12. 4. 1986.

³⁸⁸ M. Sertoğlu, "Usta-Çırak Aliço-Adalı Halil", 13. 2. 1982, *Tercüman*

³⁸⁹Eski Bir Pehlivan, "Koca Yusuf, Avrupa ve Amerika Güreşleri", 11. 10. 1962, *Tercüman*

³⁹⁰Ibid, 28. 2. 1962

CONCLUSION

This study on "Wrestler Serials" aims at finding out the relationship between the popular narrative discourse and the ideological activity of the dominant social powers to maintain and reproduce their hegemony. Accordingly, Wrestler Serials are claimed to function as an agent of the hegemonic activity and the discursive characteristics of Wrestler Serials were assumed to favour a particular construction of the world by legitimating, naturalising and rationalising the interests of the dominant powers. Therefore, this discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials focused on the analysis of the ideological components structured in the narration and studied the formal and contextual characteristics of the narration in order to discover how the hegemonic dominance of the powerful groups is maintained and reproduced through the popular cultural narrations. In this respect, the frame developed for the discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials consisted of two main headings: the analysis of the narrative structure and the analysis of ideological references.

Through the analysis of the characteristics of their narrative structure it is aimed in this study to disclose the ideological role and function performed by the Wrestler Serials. For this purpose, the common sequence of events, the distinctions and oppositions made or assumed by the text, the style of narration and the characters are studied. Besides, the main ideological points of references which define the acceptable and desirable attitudes, positions and values in the narration are clustered under the heading of ideological references. Thus, eight categories of the analysis of the ideological references are developed according to contextual properties of Wrestler

Serials. They are namely and respectively, the references to reality and rationality; the relations of power; the notion of "people"; the wrestling as a sportive activity; traditionalism and religion; regionalism, nationalism and racism; gender relations and the place of the women; and the economic relations in society.

The conclusions drawn from the discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials justifies the assumptions of the study. The discursive characteristics of Wrestler Serials show that these narrations include certain ideological preferences which favour the interests and values of the dominant-hegemonic powers. The ideological references to the acceptable and desired values and attitudes define the social relations in the narration and reproduce the dominant definitions about the social world. In this respect, the hegemonic relationships in the society are maintained and reproduced through the narrative structure and the ideological components of Wrestler Serials' discourse. Yet, this hegemonic activity has a conflictual nature: It contains both the dominant and oppositional elements. The voluntary consent of the subordinate groups for the dominant order is acquired by internalising the oppositional views and showing the dominant interests and values as the common interest of the society as a whole. Therefore, the "polysemic" nature of Wrestler Serials can be attributed to the conflictual nature of the hegemonic activity. As a matter of fact, the discourse of Wrestler Serials carry the resistant views as well as the dominant ones. Here, the elements of resistance are drawn to the desirable boundaries of the existing establishment and they are internalised through the sequences of events in narration. The consensus in society is acquired by articulating the dominant and oppositional views. In other words, through the polysemic nature of Wrestler Serials which renders them "open" to alternative readings, the oppositional views are internalised and transformed in favour of the reproduction of the hegemonic relations.

In such a context, the sequence of events in Wrestler Serials and the references to the reality and rationality in narration imply that Wrestler Serials are the realist cultural forms. Their structure of narration depends on a logical flow of events having a beginning, a middle point and a conclusion. The sequence of events in Wrestler Serials contains rationally ordered connections formulated by the cause and effect relation and their discourses include references to the rationally-functioning social processes and practices of everyday life. The rational behaviour and the intelligence are attributed importance in most cases and the intelligence is thought as superior to physical power. The value attributed to the rational behaviour in Wrestler Serials and the place of the cause and effect relations in the narrative structure refer to a process of legitimization of the existing establishment in society on the basis of the "rational act" of the "rational individual". Therefore, the status quo in the social order is conceived as the natural result of the rational processes. Similarly, the references to reality in the discourse of Wrestler Serials support the rationalisation and legitimization of the existing establishment. In this respect, the authors of Wrestler Serials claim that they record the real stories of the wrestlers, though the comparisons of the stories show that they are mostly fictive narrations. From this perspective, the Wrestler Serials are presented as the reflection of the actual world and the readers are asked to trust this given sense of reality. In this way, the world defined in Wrestler Serials is projected as the only possible one and the hegemonic ideology is made to appear as the product of the reality or nature.

Nevertheless, the discourse of Wrestler Serials includes contradictory elements in respect of the values attributed to intelligence, rationality and rational behaviour. For instance, on the one hand the intelligence and the rational behaviour are emphasized, on the other hand, the physical power overcomes the intelligence. Or else the intelligence can easily be identified with "cheating". In the discourse of Wrestler

Serials, the cheating is legitimated as a natural component of wrestling activity. In this way, the resistance to the rationally functioning order is internalised in narration, in the name "playfulness", by projecting the "cheating" as an affair of intelligence. It refers to the contradictory nature of the narration: Cheating may be read as a point of resistance to the logically functioning rules of the game. Nevertheless, this resistance is internalised and rendered ineffective for the society by drawing it to the desirable boundaries of the "game" and justifying as "playfulness".

Besides, the binary oppositions which formulate the narrative structure of Wrestler Serials contain certain situation definitions of ideological nature. Accordingly, the socially desirable or unacceptable values and attitudes are defined through oppositional attributes. In this respect, the values and attitudes which favour the maintenance of the social order are identified with "the good" while the rejected and unacceptable ones are defined as the characteristics of "the bad". Consequently, in Wrestler Serials, the characters are usually stereotypical representatives of "the good" and "the bad". Therefore, they are attributed the function of producing a relationship of similarity and differentiality that is constructed in terms of common meanings, myths, rituals, etc. For example, the heroes are attributed the values such as bravery, kindness, justness, honesty etc. In this respect, "the good" is always Turk and Moslem; he is the man of his word, and loyal to traditions. He has also a great respect for his family or "master". He is a believer in the fate as a true religious man. As for "the bad" he is generally non-Moslem, liar, trickster, nervous, swaggerer, rough, malicious, etc. Thus, the legitimacy of the existing order is secured through religious, mythical or metaphysical interpretations of the world and through the traditional or religious references.

The values exalted in this way are projected as the points of identification for the reader. They are mainly associated with the national and religious characters. The nationalist discourse is reproduced in *Wrestler Serials* by the distinction between "us" and "the others". So, the national identity is constructed by the sense of "belonging to" which motivates imaginary national or ethnic divisions. This complements the association of the Turk and Moslem with "the good" and the non-Moslem with "the bad". In this way, certain sense of unity is imposed upon society as a whole, an imaginary coherence is produced in the name of the national unity and the potential internal differences and conflicts are suppressed.

However, the values emphasized in *Wrestler Serials* do not always display a linear form. The narration includes contradictory elements on the base of exalted and/or rejected values: The discourse of *Wrestler Serials* is never consistent and coherent. For example, racialism is rejected clearly in the narrations when the black are mentioned whereas an overt racist attitude towards the gypsies living in Turkey is dericted as natural. Similarly, whereas lying is mostly represented as unacceptable in respect of the rationality and religious beliefs, it is considered as natural and acceptable when the hero lies. Again, the money is despised on one occasion and is exalted on the others. There are also contradictory attitudes in the narration about the gambling which is religiously refused. Consequently, the definitions of morality and the societal values display a contradictory nature in *Wrestler Serials*. But this does not change their nature favouring the vested interests in the society.

In this connection, the discourse analysis of *Wrestler Serials* shows that the power relations in *Wrestler Serials* refer mostly to the subordination and submission to the authority. The governors, the referees, the "master" of the wrestler and the family are the main sources of power whose authority are usually projected as

unchallengeable. Especially, the revolt against the "master" and the members of the family always results by the repent of the wrestler. In this way, the resistance to the authority is projected as unacceptable and harmful for the "the individuals". However, there exists also a certain place for the revolt against the decisions of the governors. The governors are mainly challenged when they are thought to act unjustly. Similarly, in some cases, the referees are accused of being unjust. Nevertheless, one important point to note is that the resistance to authority may take place only within the confines of wrestling. The challenge never implies a societal connotation.

In addition, the struggle of power between the opponents is represented as a war and the violence is acknowledged as acceptable and natural if it rests within the rules of wrestling. The violence is internalised in the inner structure of wrestling. But, the social meaning of violence is never taken into account in Wrestler Serials. Therefore, the struggle is withdrawn to the perspective of sportive activity: It is never a social conflict involving social partners. It is imaginary since it projects a struggle between the "hero" and the "villain" or the "good" and the "bad". And, the sequence of events shows that the main aim of the "hero" is to prove himself to the spectators, since he is mostly despised by them in the beginning. In this account, the power struggle in Wrestler Serials is also a struggle for justice: The hero always bewilders the ones who despised him and proves his latent power in the end. The good gets what he deserves. The only condition to justice is to fit in with the defined values of being "good". Consequently, once the narrative structure of Wrestler Serials is considered, one can notice that the will to justice, and the sequence of events in the narration imply a hope for a better future. In other words, the one despised in the beginning (the hero who cannot reach to the place and respect he deserved) bewilders everybody. The victory of the "hero" refers to the hope of the "subordinate" for a better future where he will be "powerful": All the injustice inflicted to the wrestlers

before or during the match is compensated by the result, when he proves himself as the champion. Nevertheless, the main area where the justice prevails is only the wrestling field. The will to justice stays in the boundaries of wrestling activity: It does not represent a challenge to the societal rules even if it may sometimes turn out to be a revolt against the decisions of referees.

Moreover, the world defined in *Wrestler Serials* functions mainly through traditional and religious determinants. The ritualised structure of Oriental Wrestling fits in with the religious rituals. In this respect, the results of the matches are related to divine dispensation. The God is attributed an important position in the daily life and many events are explained by the notion of "destiny". Thus, the belief into the fate which is associated with a sense of divine justice is essential to the narration of *Wrestler Serials*. Similarly, the traditional attitudes such as respect for the elders, family or the "master" are projected as determinant in the social world. The ideological references to traditions and religious beliefs work to maintain the status-quo.

Once the place given to the women is considered, one can notice that the traditional roles and places of the women in society are emphasized through the discourse of *Wrestler Serials*: The spectators are usually defined as male. The women are widely excluded from the social relations. They are identified mainly with beauty, purity, naiveté, whereas the men are defined in the case of rationality. In this respect, Turkish or Moslem women can hardly take place among the spectators. Their acceptable and approvable social role is taken into family. The woman has an active position in family as the mother, whereas she is mostly defined as passive in the role of the wife. Therefore, in the discourse of *Wrestler Serials*, the gender relations are settled on the basis of the traditional roles attributed to the feminine and masculine characteristics and the patriarchal conceptualisations of the world: The women are

especially defined in a familiar position through their expected roles in family or the private area.

Furthermore, the social and economic relations are concealed in the discourse of Wrestler Serials. The social life is not defined in detail within the economic relations of social classes. The people are defined out from social relations, only as the masses of spectators who are mostly attributed unjustness, one sidedness, partiality, impatience and inconsistency. They are mainly the source of tension in the narrative sequence. However, the fact that the wrestling is a spectacular activity renders the people an indissoluble component of the narration. Their feelings and comments about the wrestling compose an important element of the narration. Moreover, it is the people who revolt against the unjust decisions of the referees and governors. They are presented as the guarantees of the justice. Nevertheless, this notion of people stays only within the boundaries of "wrestling" and the existing social relationships are reproduced in this way. In the texts, the positive values about the people are side by side with the negative ones. In most cases, they are defined as "unjust", "one-sided", "impatient", "inconsistent" etc., and the contradictory nature in the discourse of Wrestler Serials becomes also clear on the base of the place given to the notion of people.

Consequently, the discourse analysis of Wrestler Serials confirms that these popular narrations which are situated in the mass media context play an important role in the process of hegemony formation. Accordingly, the narrative structures of Wrestler Serials and the ideological references of their discursive characteristics function in favour of a particular construction of the world. By doing so, the voluntary consent of the subordinate groups for the interests and values of the dominant ones is taken essential and the consensus in society for the interests and values of the

dominant powers is constructed. Accordingly, the Wrestler Serials are the agents of hegemonic activity and they contain the conflictual nature of the hegemony formation process. The discursive characteristics of Wrestler Serials include contradictory elements about the definitions of social events, positions and values. From this perspective, they are in a polysemic nature which is open to different readings. Nevertheless, this conflictual nature does not mean that a similar importance and place is given to the resistant and dominant values in the narration. The resistant values and ideas are rather internalised through the discourse of the narration, they are articulated with the dominant ones and in this way, the values and ideas which favour the dominant hegemonic powers are projected as the common interests of the society as a whole. Therefore, by the discursive processes of Wrestler Serials, the common sense in society for the dominant order is produced in favour of the maintenance and reproduction of the existing hegemonic relations.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: The List of the Sample of the Analysis

KOCA YUSUF, HAYATI VE GÜREŞLERİ

AUTHOR: AN OLD WRESTLER (ESKİ BİR PEHLİVAN)

6. 2. 1962-20. 6. 1962

AVRUPA GÜREŞLERİ KOCA YUSUF

AUTHOR: AN OLD WRESTLER

8. 7. 1962-31 8. 1963

KOCA YUSUF

AUTHOR: MURAT SERTOĞLU

19. 9. 1991-8. 12. 1991

AVRUPA VE AMERİKA GÜREŞLERİ, KOCA YUSUF

AUTHOR: MURAT SERTOĞLU

9. 12. 1991-10. 5. 1992

KURTDERELİ MEHMET PEHLİVAN

AUTHOR: TEVFİK PARS PİREMEHMETOĞLU

10. 1. 1968-14. 3. 1968

KURTDERELİ MEHMET PEHLİVAN

AUTHOR: AN OLD WRESTLER

11.8. 1974 -2. 3. 1975

KAVALALI ÇOLAK MÜMİN

AUTHOR: AN OLD WRESTLER

18. 3. 1973-10. 8. 1974

KAVALALI ÇOLAK MÜMİN

AUTHOR: MURAD SERTOĞLU

11. 5. 1992-2 4. 1993

ALAMET ALİ AHMET PEHLİVAN

AUTHOR: HIMSELF (Kendisi)

3. 3. 1975-9. 10.1975

USTA ÇIRAK ALİÇÖ ADALI HALİL

AUTHOR: MURAT SERTOĞLU

21. 10. 1980-20. 2. 1982

BURSALI KOCA RÜSTEM

AUTHOR: MURAT SERTOĞLU

13 . 2. 1986-2. 12. 1986

APPENDIX B: Examples From Wrestler Serials

The Story of the Match Between Aliço and Koca Yusuf

8. 2. 1981

Kıyafetlerinden Deliormanlı oldukları anlaşılan bazı kişiler de soyunmasına ve kışbetini giymesine yardım ediyorlardı.

Peki ama Adalı nerede idi?

Ne o, ne de ustası ortalarda görünmüyordu.

Herhalde arka taraflarda bir yerde soyunuyor olmalı idi..

Cazgır bu arada ortaya çıkan başaltı pehlivanlarını eşlendirmiş, onlar da peşrevlerini yaptıktan sonra kapışmışlardı.

İşte Yusuf pehlivan bu arada hazırlıklarını tamamlayarak ortaya doğru yürüdü.

Bu dev vücutlu, yakışıklı genci görenler kendisini alkışlamaktan geri kalmadılar:

"—Yaşa Şumnulu!"

"—Yaşa arslan!"

"—Talihin açık olsun!"

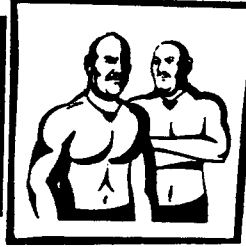
"—Maşallah deyin pehlivana!"

Yusuf kendisini nezaketen alkışlayan İpsalılarla selâmlar vererek yağ kazanının yanına vardı ve hemen de yağlanmaya başladı.

Halbuki Adalı hâlâ görünmemişti. Ve halk şimdi onun işinin çok zor olacağını düşünüyor bu konuyu konuşuyordu:

"—Bu Yusuf pehlivan yaman birşeye benziyor vallahi. Adalı'nın işi zor olacak!"

"—Hem de pek zor!"



ALIÇO

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"—Dağ gibi pehlivan bu Şumnulu yahu!"

"—Adalı değil, kimse yenemez onu.. Şu yapıya baksanıza!"

"—İyi ama, Adalı nerede kaldı?"

"—Ammma da yavaş hazırlanmış!"

Derken bütün bu konuşmalar ve tahminler bıçakla kesilir gibi kesiliverdi birden. Hakem heyetinin bulunduğu yere dikilen gözler faltaşı gibi açıldı.

Evet gördükleri o idi..

Aliço'nun ta kendisi..

Hakem heyetinin önüne dikilmiş başhakemle birşeyler konuşuyordu..

Halkı büyük bir şaşkınlığa düşüren şey, onun bu davranışı değil, Aliço'nun soyunmuş ve kışbetini ayağına geçirmiş bulunması idi..

Başhakem ona şaşkın şaşkın bakarken Aliço şöyle konuşmuştu:

sta-Çırak
ADALI HALİL
Murat SERTOĞLU

"—Adalı gecedan soğuk alıp hastalanmış, yatıyor.. Güreşecek halde değil.. Onun yerine ben tutmaya karar verdim! Bunun sizin için bir mahzuru var mı?"

"—Aman Aliço ağa bizim için ne mahzuru olabilir. Aksine senin güreşini görmek herkesi daha da sevindirir. Ancak Şumnulu belki razı olmak istemez.."

"—Neden istemesin?"

"—Adalı ile tutacağı ilân edilmişti de.."

"—Çağırın onu buraya, kendisiyle ben konuşayım.."

"—Başüstüne!"

Az sonra Şumnulu Yusuf pehlivan da yanlarına gelmiş bulunuyordu. O da Aliço'yu o halde görünce öbürleri gibi şaşırılmıştı:

"—Hayır ola. Ne var?" diye sordu.

Aliço, çırağının hastalanmış olduğu masa-

lını ona da tekrarladıktan sonra şu sözleri söyledi:

"—Adalı hastalanınca onun yerini baş bırakmamak için ben soyundum. Elbet Adalı kadar güreşemem. Onun yerini tutamam. Yaşımız altmışa yaklaşmış bulunuyor.. Sana onun yarısı kadar dayanmam ama, olsun.. Kurtlarımı dökmüş olurum! Ustan İsmail pehlivanla en iyi zamanlarımda güreş tuttum. Şimdi de onun çırağı olan seninle güreş tutmak, benim için zevkli birşey olacaktır."

Sonra birden ciddileşir gibi oldu:

"—Senin için bir mahzur var mı benimle tutmakta? Hani dobra dobra konuşayım. Bu ihtiyarla tutmaktan çekinir misin?"

Şumnulu Yusuf buna şu cevabı verdi:

"—Madem bana açık açık sordun; ben de sana açık açık cevap vereceğim usta.. Geçen yıl gelirken ustam bana herkesle güreş tutabileceğimi, yalnız seninle hiçbir şekilde tutmamamı söylemişti. Ama bu yıl yola çıkmadan önce ustam beni görünce, sana hiç bir şekilde meydan okumamamı, şayet sen eğer bana meydan okuyacak olursan seninle güreş tutmaktan kaçmamamı söyledi! Onun için güreşe hazırım!.."

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Aliço and Koca Yusuf

9. 2. 1981

Aliço'nun gözleri parlamıştı:

"—Tamam öyle ise.." dedi. "Şimdi yağlanırım."

Aliço yağlanmak üzere ortaya doğru yürürken bir hayli düşünceli görünüyordu. Cazgr da durumu, olup bitenleri anlamamış bulunan halka kısaca anlattı:

"—Adalı hastalandığından onun yerine ustası Aliço güreşecektir. Şumnulu Yusuf pehlivan da bunu kabul etmiştir!"

Böylece Adalı'nın yerine Aliço'nun güreş tutmaya karar vermiş olduğuna öğrenen halk heyecanlanmış, kendisini hemen coşkunun bir alkışına tutmuştu:

"—Yaşa Aliço!"

"—Yaşa pehlivanlar pehlivanı!"

"—Hey be koca arslan!"

"—Göster ustahgını!"

Aliço'yu bu halde, idmanın zirvesinde görenler ve Şumnulu pehlivanın, Edirne'de Adalı ile yapmış olduğu son güreşi seyretmiş olanlar, yavaş yavaş birşeyler sezinlemeye başlamışlardı. İşin içinde başka şeyler olduğu ortaya çıkıyordu. Bunlar durumu aralarında şöyle değerlendiriyorlardı:

"—Bana kalsa Adalı'nın hastalığı falan hep



masal! Aliço'nun bir oyunu bu! Şumnulu ile tutmak için bunu uydurmuş olmalı."

"—Öyle! Bu güreşe de iyice hazırlanmış benzer.. Sen son yıllar içinde Aliço'nun böylesine idman tutmuş olduğunu hiç gördün mü?"

"—Doğrusu görmüş değilim."

"—Karan ortada.. Çırağının Şumnulu'ya bişey yapamıyacağını, yenilmekten kurtulamayacağını biliyor. Bunun için çırağının yerine kendisi çıkıyor.."

"—Maksadı da ortada.. Şumnulu pehlivanı yalnız yenmek değil, ezmek kararında!"

"—Yapabilir mi bu işi?"

"—Yapar, yapar. Bundan hiç kuşkun olmasın.. Aliço demişler ona.."

"—Desene ki yazık olacak fukaraya"

sta-Çırak ADALI HALİL Murat SERTOĞLU

"—Oldu bile.."

"—Ama o da çok sağlam birine benziyor. Tam bir pehlivan vücudu ve çalım var.."

"—Orası öyle! Bizim Adalı'dan çok üstün... Zaten Aliço da bunun için onu ezmek ve er meydanlarından uzaklaştırmak istiyor ya.."

"—Çırağını rahatlatmak için.."

"—Ha şunu bileysin.."

Aliço çabucak yağlanmış bulunuyordu. Bu arada sürekli olarak Koca Yusuf'un ustasından naklederek söylemiş olduğu sözleri düşünür duruyordu. Kel İsmail'i yakından tanrıyordu. Kurnazın biri idi.. Boşuna konuşmazdı. Demek çırağına bu derece inanıyor, bu derece güveniyordu.

Anlayacaktı sonunda elbet buna inanmak-

la ne kadar aldandığını Kel İsmail..

Yanında duran genç rakibine döndü. Onu ürkütmemek için sesine alabildiğine bir yumuşaklık vermişti:

"—Benim yaşlılığıma falan bakarak bana karşı öyle gevşek davranma! Güreşin hakkını vermelisin! Biz ihtiyarladık ama gene de ancak pehlivanca güreş tutmaktan hoşlanırsın.."

Genç pehlivan da şu karşılığı verdi:

"—Senin ve pehlivanlığın, nasıl güreş tuttuğun hakkında ustamdan o kadar çok şeyler dinledim ki hiç merakın olmasın! Tam da istediğin gibi güreşeceğim.."

Genç rakibinin bu sözleri de Aliço'ya iyiden iyiye mânâlı gelmişti. Tuhaf bir şeydi bu. Kendisi nasıl onunla tutmaya altı ay evveliden karar vermiş ve büyük fedakârlıkları göze alarak kendisini bu güreşe hazırlamış ise, bu genç pehlivan da sanki altı ay önce döndüğü zaman çırağı Adalı ile değil de kendisi ile tutacağını biliyor ve ona göre hazırlanmış bulunuyordu.

O'nun söylediği son sözler, bu bakımdan da Aliço'yu hırslandırmıştı.

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Aliço and Koca Yusuf

10. 2. 1981

İki pehlivan yağlanmış olarak yan yana durunca cazgır bir işaretle davul zurnaları kestirdi. İki pehlivanı usulüne uygun bir şekilde tannıttıktan sonra güzel bir dua okudu.

Şimdi davul zurnalar yeniden vurmaya, başaltı pehlivanları güreşlerine devam etmeye, Aliço ile Koca Yusuf pehlivanlar da peşrevlerini yapmaya koyuldular.

Aliço çok güzel bir peşrev çıkarmıştı. Tam bir huzur peşrevi idi bu.... Peşrevini bitirince şiddetli bir alkış yeniden ortalığı inlettirdi:

"-Yaşa arslan!...."

"-Allah, Allah.... Bu ne yiğit pehlivan ya-hu?...."

"-Yaşa Aliço usta, çok yaşa!...."

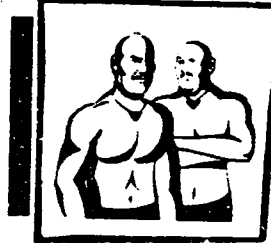
"-Peşrev dersi verdin millete!...."

"-Gösterdin kim olduğunu!...."

O kadar güzel ve ahenkli bir biçimde peşrev yapmış bulunuyordu ki, rakibi bile bunu iyice görmek için kendi peşrevini kesmiş, onu seyre koyulmuştu.

Peşrevden sonra kapıştılar!....

Güreş herkesin beklediği gibi başlamış bulunuyordu.. Aliço hafif elenselerle güreşi açarken, Koca Yusuf da dikkatli bir biçimde müdafaaya geçmiş bulunuyordu.



U
ALIÇO
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Bu fasıl şöyle böyle bir çeyrek saat kadar sürdükten sonra Aliço'nun her zaman olduğu gibi elenselerini kuvvelendirmeye başladığı görüldü.

Şumnulu ise hâlâ müdafaada idi. Ve Aliço'nun hamlelerine hiçbir şekilde karşılık vermiyordu. Sadece kendisini hasmının elense ve şimdi başladığı tırpanlarından korumaya bakıyordu o kadar...

Güreş ilk saatini bu şekilde doldurmuştu. İkinci saate girerken Koca Yusuf'un da hasmına yavaş yavaş karşılık vermeye başladığı görüldü. Böylece güreş bir çeşit denkleşmeye doğru gitmeye başladı.

Güreştten anlayanlar şimdi ilk defa bu Şumnulu gencin kolay yutulur bir lokma olmadığını anlamaya başlamışlardı. Bu gerçeği de aralarında şöyle konuşuyorlardı:

sta-Çirak
ADALI HALİL
Murat SERTOĞLU

"-Bu Şumnulu yavaş bir pehlivanmış Allah için... Çok akıllıca güreşiyor...."

"-Kolları çok uzun bir kere.... Aliço'nun göğsüne dayanınca koca ustanın çektiği elenselerin yarısı boşa gidiyor...."

"-Çok sağlam, çok yapılı bir genç...."

"-Bana kalsa, Aliço eğer onu ezmeye niyet etmiş ise bunu kolay kolay başaramayacaktır!...."

"-Doğru!.... Eğer nefesi tükenmezse Aliço usta onu ezemez!...."

"-Görmez misin be, en ufak bir yorgunluk alameti yok Şumnulu'da... Aliço onu yenmesine yener elbet ama bana kalırsa ezmeye kalacak olursa bilin ki bu işi çok zor başarır...."

"-Görünüş öyle!"

Güreş aynı sertlikte ikinci saatini doldururken başaltı güreşleri çoktan sona ermiş, baş-

pehlivanlar da ilk rakiplerini yenmiş bulunuyorlardı.

Aliço, üçüncü saatte, artık varını yığını ortaya koymuş bulunuyordu. Hamle üzerine hamle yapıyordu. Genç hasmında ise hâlâ bir sarsıntı, bir gerileme görünmüyordu. Aliço'nun hamlelerini hâlâ başarı ile karşılıyordu. Üstelik kollarının uzunluğundan hakkıyla faydalanmakta devam ediyor, bu sayede Aliço'nun elenselerinin şiddetini boşa çıkarırken kendisinin çekmekte olduğu sert elenseler tam yerini buluyordu.

Birkaç kişi Aliço'yu uyarmak isteyerek ona seslenmekten geri kalmamışlardı:

"-Güreşi karıştır koca usta!"

"-Yeter çektiğin elenseler!"

"-Hele bir çapraz gir!"

"-Haydi be Aliço!"

"-Güreş üç saati geçti!"

"-Hâlâ bıkmadın mı elense çekip tırpan vurmaktan?"

Fakat güreşte bir değişiklik olmuyordu.

Dördüncü saatin ortalarına doğru öbür güreşlerin hepsi bittiği gibi bazı seyirciler de heyecanını çoktan kaybetmiş bulunan bu güreşi seyretmekten bıkarak meydana çekilip gitmişlerdi.

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Aliço and Koca Yusuf

11. 2. 1981

Aliço'nun gireşten anlayan taraftarları ise şimdi sonuçtan ilk defa endişe etmeye başlamışlardı. Bunun sebebi de Aliço'da görül-meye başlanan yorgunluk alametleri idi... Büyük ustanın hızı yavaş yavaş düşmeye başla-mıştı. Bu durumda Şumnulu gireşi bindirmek yolunu tutmuştu.

Ne oluyordu?

Aliço gireşi kayıp mı edecekti?

Yok, hayır! Böyle şey olamazdı!... Aliço hiç yenilir mi idi? Hem kim oluyordu bu Şumnulu genç?

Bununla beraber telaşları gitgide artmaya başlamıştı.

Bu sırada içlerinden biri bir formül buldu.

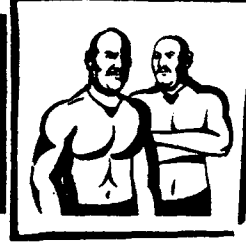
"—Vakit çok gecikti.. Güneş battı. En doğ-rusu gireşi berabere ayırmaktır... Dört buçuk saat oldu be!...."

"—Allah için çok doğru, çok yerinde bir söz.. Hakem heyetinin vazifesi ne? Güreşi he-men durdurmaları gerekir..."

"—Gidip söyleyelim..."

"—İyi olur..."

Birkaç kişi hakem heyetinin yanına giderek durumu, düşüncelerini söylediler. Aliço hesa-bına aynı endişeyi duymakta olan hakem he-



yeti hemen cazgın çağırarak durumu bildirdi-ler.

Cazgır da hiç vakit kaybetmeden ortaya yünüyerek önce davul zurnaları kestirdi. Arka-sından iki pehlivanın arasına girerek gireşi durdurdu.

Bunu gören Aliço?

"—Ne var? Ne oluyor? Güreşi neden kestir-din?" diye homurdandı..

Cazgır yutkunarak cevap verdi:

"—Şey usta!.... Hakem heyeti bu kadar gü-reşinizi yeterli buluyor da... Güneş de battı. Vakit pek gecikti..."

"—Ee, ne olacak yani?"

"—Hani izin verir, razı olursan hakem heye-ti güreşinizi berabere ayırmak istiyor..."

Koca usta acı acı gülmeye çalıştı:

sta-Çırak ADALI HALİL Murat SERTOĞLU

"—Şumnulu gireşi bindirdikten sonra mı bunu düşünmüşler?"

"—Bunu da nereden çıkardın usta..."

"—Beni kurtarmak istersiniz hâ? Yok be!... Böyle birşeyi kabul edemem!..."

"—Az sonra ortalık karmaya başlaya-cak..."

"—Kararsın... Karanlığa kalmış güreş gör-mediniz mi? İki yerde ateş, meşale yakarsınız olur biter..."

"—Seyirciler de gitmeye başladılar.. Yorul-dular güreşinizi seyretmekten..."

"—Onları zorla tutan mı var ki?"

"—Çingenelerin dudakları çatladı!"

"—Gebersinler! Bırakıp gitsin onlar da! Ha-kem heyeti de isterse çekip gitsin! Sen de gi-debilirsin!... Kimseye ihtiyacımız yok bizim... Biz kendi kendimize ayırırız güreşimizi!"

Bu sözleri söylemesi ile de hasmının ensesi-ne yapışması ve güreşe devama başlaması bir oldu.. Tabii bu durum karşısında cazgıra da ortadan çekilmek kalmıştı. Doğruca hakem heyetinin yanına giderek onlara durumu ve konuşmalarını olduğu gibi söyledi.

Durum apaçık ortada idi.

Beşinci saatine giren bu müthiş güreşi Ali-ço kaybetmekte olduğunu anlamıştı...

Bunu anlamış olduğu gibi onların kendisini kurtarmak için bu teşebbüste bulunmuş ol-duklarını da pek güzel farketmişti..

Ve bunu anladığı, farketdiği için güreşin berabere ayrılmasına, Şumnulu gencin hakkı-nın yenmesine razı olmuyordu.

Bu çok büyük bir işti.. Çok büyük bir şey-di.. Değme babayığit böyle birşey yapamazdı. Başhakem yaşaran gözlerini sildi:

"—Bu dünyaya Aliço'dan büyük pehlivan ne gelmiş, ne de gelecektir!" dedi.

Öbürleri de kendisini doğruladılar:

"—Çok doğru söylersin!"

"—Mert diye buna derler!"

"—Hem de sapına kadar mert!"

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Aliço and Koca Yusuf

12. 2. 1981

"—Aliço bu güreşi kaybedecek olursa ka-
zanmış olmaktan yüz defa daha çok şeref ka-
zanacaktır!.."

Cazgır doğru söylemişti.. Zurnaları çalan
çingenelerin dudakları gerçekten çatlamıştı.
Ve bunlar artık çalamıyorlardı.. Sadece da-
vullar gümbürdeyip duruyorlardı..

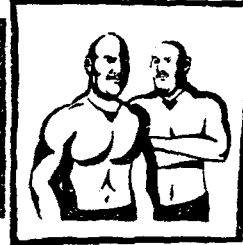
Tokmaklar sanki davulları değil de göğüs-
leri tokmaklıyor, göğüslere iniyordu..

Şumnulu genç pehlivan ise her geçen daki-
ka güreşe daha da hakim oluyordu.. Sanki bir
kat daha irileşmiş ve devleşmiş gibi idi.. Ali-
ço'dan zaten daha uzun boylu idi.. Ve şimdi
bu karanlıkta daha irileşmiş görünüyordu.

Aynı zamanda Aliço'nun bitkin hale gelmiş
bulunmasına karşılık çok daha iyi durumda
görünüyordu.

Güreş bu şekilde daha bir çeyrek saat ka-
jar sürdükten sonra, güreş güreş olmaktan büt-
tün çıktı. Yusuf, çektiği elenselere, sayur-
duğu turpanlara karşılık alamamaya başlayın-
ca hemen durdu. Aliço'da artık bunlara cevap
verebilecek kudretten eser bile kalmamıştı..
Hatta değil bunlara karşılık vermek, ayakta
durmakta bile zorluk çekmekte olduğu açık-
ça belli oluyordu.

Aliço'dan sonra Yusuf da durunca çinge-



neler de davullarını kestiler.. Ortalık tam mâ-
nâsiyla alacakaranlık olmuştu..

İşte o zaman teklifi bu sefer Yusuf yaptı:

"—İstersen güreşimizi berabere bırakalım
usta!.." dedi..

Aliço bir dakika kadar cevap veremeye-
rek sadece derin derin nefes aldı. Sonra da ba-
şını salladı:

"—Olmaz böyle şey! Beraberliği bana sa-
daka olarak mı vermek istersin? Bana acıdın
la? Yok, hayır, kabul etmiyorum bunu.. Kim-
senin bana acımasına izin vermem, veremem..
Çünkü, çünkü ben de bugüne kadar hiç kim-
seye acımış değilim! Bırakıyorum sana güre-
şi."

Herkes ayağa kalkmış, bu acıklı manzarayı
seyrediyordu. Aliço pes ediyordu.. Yenilmiş
olmayı kabul ediyordu.. Bu, ulu bir çınar ağa-

sta-Çırak ADALI HALİL Murat SERTOĞLU

cının birdenbire devrilmesi, bir dağın çöküşü
gibi birşeydi. Güneşin batışı gibi birşeydi.
Onun kadar ihtişamlı ve hüznü verici, ruhları
karartıcı birşey!.

Sallana sallana soyunduğu yere doğru gi-
derken Koca Yusuf kollarını kavuşturmuş,
güreş meydanının tam ortasında öylece, bir
neykel gibi duruyordu..

Az sonra yanına cazgır yaklaştı:

"—Aliço'nun sana pesetmiş olduğunu ilân
etmemi ister misin?" diye sordu.

Beriki kısaca:

"—Buna gerek yok!" dedi.

"—Ama birşey söylemem lâzım.."

"—Bunu da sen olursın!."

Cazgır halka dönerek sonucu şöyle ilân
etti:

"—Aliço pehlivan beşbuçuk saat süren gü-
reşi yeterli bularak meydanı bırakmış, güreş-
ler de böylece Allah'ın izni ile sona ermiştir.."

Cazgırın durumu bu şekilde ilân etmesi ile
güreşler kapanmış bulunuyordu.. Aynı zaman-
da sesleniş şekli ile Aliço'nun yenik olduğunu
da belirtmiş bulunuyordu..

Şumnulu pehlivan bir galibiyet temennası
çakmış ve sessizce ortadan çekilmişti. Pek gü-
zel tahmin edileceği gibi hiç kimse kendisini
alkışlamış falan değildi. Herkes hüzünlü idi..
Hatta Şumnulu bile öyle görünüyordu. Ali-
ço'yu yenmek gibi pek büyük bir başarı ka-
zandığı için iyiden iyiye sevinmesi gerektiği
halde bu sevinci hissedemiyordu. Aksine, bir
çeşit suçluluk duygusu içinde idi..

Hakem heyeti olsun, halk olsun dağılmaya
başlamıştı. Kimse konuşmuyordu. Sanki bir
güreş alanından değil de, bir mezarlıktan ayrı-
lıyorlardı. Oraya dünyaya eşi gelmemiş bü-
yük bir pehlivanın pehlivanlığının gölülüşünü
seyrettikten sonra..

Burada izninizle iki pehlivan arasında bir
karşılaştırma yapalım..

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Adalı Halil and Koko

25. 12. 1981

Güreşten önce iki pehlivan tanıştırıldılar. Koko onu gülümseyerek şöyle bir inceledi. Sonra da tercüman aracılığı ile aralarında şu konuşma geçti:

"-Sana herşeyden önce teşekkür etmek isterim Türk pehlivanı.."

Adalı bu sözlerin mânâsını anlayamamıştı:

"-Neden durup dururken bana teşekkür ediyorsun?" diye sordu.

Beriki başını salladı:

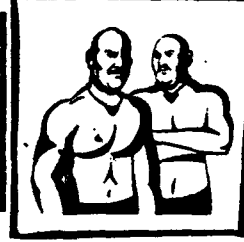
"-Hani beyaz derili olan birçok kişiler derileri beyaz olmayanlarla güreş tutmak istemezler de.. İşte sen bunlardan biri olmadığın için teşekkür ediyorum.."

"-Derisi beyaz olmayanlarla neden güreşmek istemiyorlar?"

"-Elbette kendi derilerinin de kararacağından korktukları için değil.. Amerika'lılar biz kara derilileri aşağı bir ırk sayarlar! Hele hele bizlere yenilmeyi hiçbir şekilde göze alamazlar.."

"-Çok yanlış bir düşünce bu.. İnsan değil misiniz? Allah sizleri kara, bizleri ise beyaz yarattı. Başka ne fark var aramızda?"

"-Çok doğru konuştun Türk. Ama buradaki beyazlar senin gibi düşünmüyorlar. Sizin memleketinizdekiler hep böyle senin gibi



ALIÇO
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mi düşünürler?"

"-Evet... elbette böyle düşünürler.."

"-Sizin orada da bizim gibi kara derililer var mı?"

"-Var ama sayıları buradakiler kadar çok değil.. Hem bizim dinimize göre de Allah'ın gözünde siyah beyaz bütün insanlar eşittir. İslâm dininde ırk ayrımı gözetmek günahıdır.."

"-Ne güzel dinmiş bu sizin dininiz?. Bugün burada seninle güzel bir güreş atarız. Bana karşı serbestçe güreşmekten çekinmemelisin.. Nasıl olsa bugün seni yenmeyeceğimi biliyorsun değil mi?"

İşte bu söz Adalı Halil pehlivanı iyiden iyiye şaşırtmıştı.

Ne demek istiyordu bu zenci?

"-Sözünü anlamadım," dedi. "Beni yenmeyecek misin?"

İsta-Çırak -ADALI HALİL Murat SERTOĞLU

"-Yenmeyeceğim!"

"-Ama niçin?"

"-Öyle anlaşmış menacerlerimiz.. Senin bundan haberin yok mu?"

"-Yok elbette. Benim bildiğim ciddi güreş tutacağımızdır. Oynaş güreşe benim hiç aklım ermez.."

"-Belki bunu sana bildirmeye gerek duymamışlardır. Evet, bu olabilir. Zararı yok.. Sen gene beni yenmek için elinden geleni yap! Ama ben seni yenmiyeceğim! Güreşimiz berabere sona erecektir.."

"-Böyle pazarlıkla güreş olur mu? Ben seni yenmek için elimden geleni yapacağım. Sen de öyle davranmalısın!"

Daha fazla konuşmaya fırsat bulamadılar. Güreş başlamak üzere idi. Perde nerede ise açılacaktı. Jüri heyetini oluşturan üyeler, iki tarafın menacerleri, hep sahnenin arkasın-

daki yerlerini almış bulunuyorlardı. Hakem ortaya gelerek tercümanı uzaklaştırmış ve pehlivanları küşelerine yollamıştı.

Aynı anda da verilen işaret üzerine pek geniş olan sahnenin perdesi yavaş yavaş kalktı...

Bu ânı heyecanla ve sabırsızlıkla beklemekte olan o büyük kalabalık da hemen alkışlarını yükseltmekten geri kalmadı...

İki bin beşyüz kişilik o salon inliyordu şimdi! Sesler, uğultular, alkışlar ve teşvik nâraları birbirini takip ediyordu.

Adalı Halil salonu tıklım tıklım dolduran seyircilerin yüzde sekseninin zenci olduklarını hemen farketmişti.

Bunlar durmadan kendi renklerinden olan pehlivanı alkışlıyorlar, ona başarılar diliyorlardı:

"-Haydi Koko!"

"-Göster üstünlüğünü!"

"-Yaşa arslan!"

"-Ez beyazı, ez!"

"-Bir silindir gibi yere yapıştır onu!"

"-Bir daha siyah renklilerle güreş tutamayacak hale getir!"

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Adalı Halil and Koko

26. 12. 1981

"—Öğret ona siyahların acı kuvvetini!"
"—Pişman et karşına çıktığına!"
İşte bu sesler, bu nâralar, bu bağırışlar ve gürültüler arasında Adalı Halil'in kulağına ilk defa Türkçe bazı sözler de çarptı. Sade-
rin geldiği tarafa baktı. Sağ tarafta bir arada
oturmakta olan ve yüzlerinden Türk olduk-
ları kolaylıkla anlaşılan on on beş kişilik
bir kalabalık kendisine el sallayarak ses-
lenip duruyorlardı:

"—Haydi Adalı!"

"—Haydi Halil pehlivan!"

"—Ezdirme kendini Arap'a!"

"—Haydi Allah kolaylık versin!"

"—Yaşa arslan!"

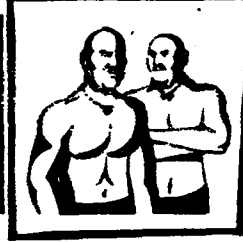
"—Türklüğünü göster sunlara hele!"

Adalı şaşırılmış kalmıştı.

Aklına herşey gelirdi de, memleketin-
den bu kadar uzakta yapacağı bir güreşi sey-
retmeye gelenler arasında Türklerin de bulu-
nabileceği gelmezdi doğrusu...

Ne işleri vardı onların burada?

Tabii bunu kestiremiyordu. O devirde
dünyanın dört bir tarafından olduğu gibi,
Türkiye'den de çıkmak ve oraya yerleş-
mek için Amerika'ya birçok Türklerin göç
etmiş olduklarını bilmiyordu. Oraya giden
ilk Türkler, çoğunlukla Harput tarafından
göçmüşlerdi. Bunların hemen hepsi sonradan



çok başarılı olmuşlar, zenginleşmişlerdi.
Aralarından pek azı tekrar Türkiye'ye dön-
müştü. Hemen hepsi de Amerikalı kadın-
larla evlenip çoluk çocuğa karışmış, Ameri-
kalılarla kaynaşmışlardı.

Ancak bunların bugün hayatta olan torun-
larının yüzde doksanı Türklüklerini hiçbir
zaman unutmuş değillerdir.

Konumuzdan ayrılmayalım.

Kendisine Türkçe seslenen ve başarı dilek-
lerinde bulunan bazı seyircilerin de orada
bulunmakta olmaları, Adalı'yı hem sevindir-
miş, hem de moralini kuvvetlendirmişti.

Onlara iyice döndü. Bir kandilli selâmla
selâmladı hepsini..

Kısa bir törenden sonra ise iki pehlivan
arasında merakla beklenmekte olan güreş de
fiilen başladı.

Adalı, zenci Koko ile ense bağlayarak gü-

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reşe başladığı anda, gene onun güreşten önce
söylemiş bulunduğu son sözlerini düşünüp
duruyordu.

Kendisini yenemeyeceğini söylemişti.
Menacerleri böyle anlaşılmışlar. Ama o
elinden geliyorsa kendisini yenebilirmiş!

Ne demekti bu?

Onun bu biçim konuşmasını, herşeyden
önce kendisine olan yüksek güvenini ve onu
ne kadar ufak görmekte olduğunu göstermi-
yor mu idi?

Kendisini bu derece yüksek görmesine bir-
şey diyemezdi elbette Koko'nun...Ama onu
bu derece küçük bir pehlivan olarak görmeye
ne hakkı vardı?

Daha ilk elenselerde zencinin söylendiğin-
den de kuvvetli olduğunu hissetmişti. Çekti-
ği orta kuvvette bir iki elense, üzerinde en
ufak bir tesir yaratmamıştı.

Ancak kendisini yenmeyeceğini önceden
haber vermiş bir pehlivanla güreş tutmakta
hiç bir tad olmadığı da ortada idi. Bunun
için Adalı onunla güreş tutarken bir çeşit ra-
hatsızlık hissediyordu.

Sonra aklına başka bir şey geldi:

Acaba zenci böyle konuşurken doğru mu
söylemişti? Gerçekten gücü yetse ve eline
aradığı fırsat geçse de onu yenmeyecek mi
idi?

Yoksa bu sözü onu uyutmak için mi söy-
lemiş bulunuyordu?

Onu yenmeyeceğine inandırarak serbest
güreşmesini ve ona açık vermesini mi plânla-
mıştı?

Güreş bir oyun değil mi idi?

Her oyunda olduğu gibi bu oyunun için-
de de bazı gizli oyunlar olabiliirdi...Menaceri
Mister Conson'un da kendisine herhangi bir
anlaşmadan bahsetmemiş olması ise bu ihti-
mali kuvvetlendiriyordu.

Üstelik bir vakitler başından da böyle bir
olay geçmiş bulunuyordu ve bunu unutabil-
mesine de imkân yoktu.

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Adalı Halil and Koko

27. 12. 1981

Beş yıl kadar oluyordu...Çorlu'da yapılacak bir düğün güreşine davet edilmiş bulunuyordu. Güreşler zengin bir ağanın, Çorlu'nun hemen yanbaşındaki çiftliğinde yapılıyordu. Başa da üç yaşında bir doru at konmuştu... Hayvan yepyeni bir eyer takımı vurulmuş halde oldukça geniş olan güreş meydanının arkasındaki ağaçlardan birine bağlanmıştı.

Adalı atı pek beğenmişti. Ortalarda öyle dişe dokunur bir başpehlivan da görülmediğinden atı rahatça alıp gideceğine inanmıştı.

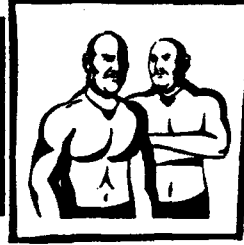
Sıra baş güreşlere gelince ortaya Adalı ile sadece dört pehlivan çıkmıştı.

Bunların arasında sıyrılarak doru atı alıp gitmek, Adalı'ya bir bardak su içmek kadar kolay görülüyordu.

İlk hasmını yarım saat dolmadan yendi attı...Öbür çiftin güreşi de öyle fazla uzun sürmedi. Daha iri ve gösterişli vücudu olduğu halde, üçüncü pehlivan kara kuru denilen yarıdıştaki hasmına pesetmişti.

Adalı son güreşi bu tanımadığı kara-kuru pehlivanla yapmak üzere yağlanırken, adam Adalı'ya şöyle demişti:

"—Ben sana beş dakika bile dayanabilecek pehlivan değilim! Üstelik sağ kolum da sakattır!...Ortada başka pehlivan olmadığın-



dan cazgırın zoru ile soyundum. Bana bu hizmetime karşılık ağanta üç beş kuruş vereceğini söylediler...Ne olur, beni bir elde yenecek rezil etme! Şöyle bir çeyrek saat kadar oynasalım. Sonra da ben sana pesederim... Sen de güzel güzel şimdiden hak etmiş olduğun atına biner, güle oynaya memleketine dönersin."

Bu sözleri öylesine yalvarıcı bir eda ile söylemiş bulunuyordu ki Adalı bu kara-kuru fukara pehlivanın ricalarına dayanamayarak kabul etmiş ve güreşi oyalama olarak sürdürmeye koyulmuştu. Her ân için hasmının pes etmesini bekliyordu.

Böylece bir on dakika kadar geçmiş geçmemişti ki, pehlivan bozuntusu:

"—Bırakıyorum güreşi!" diye konuşmuş, o da bu durum karşısında hasmını bırakarak doğrulmuştu. Hasımı pes etmiş olduğuna göre galibiyet temennasını çakmak üzere idi ki

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o kara kuru pehlivan bozuntusu bir anda dalmış, iki budundan rahatça kavrayıp yüklen-diği gibi kendisini açık düşürmüştü.

Tabii davul zurnalar hemen kesilmiş, hasmı da galibiyet temennası çıkıvermişti.

Adalı Halil ancak o zaman nasıl bir oyuna getirilmiş bulunduğunu anlamıştı ama ne fayda?

O hırsla hasmını dövmeye kalkmış ama bu sahtekâr pehlivanı etraftakiler atık davranarak elinden almışlardı. Onun kendisine pes ettiğini ve "bırak!" dediğini tabii hiç kimse duymamış, Adalı bunu ileri sürdüğün-de de adam hiç utanmadan bunu inkâr etmişti.

Somunda Adalı kendisini kahretsin dursun, kara kuru adam bıyık altından gülererek güzelim atı alıp gitmişti.

Bu olay haklı olarak Adalı'nın çok canını

sıkmıştı ama aynı zamanda kendisi için asla unutamayacağı bir ders de olmuştu.

Onun için Koko'nun sözlerine ve davranışlarına hiç kulak asmamak ve son derece dikkatli olmak gerektiğini biliyordu. Onun sözleri ve gevşek davranıp kendisini yenmeyeceğini ileri sürmüş olması, hep tasarlanmış bir oyun gereği olabildi. Böylece nasıl olsa hasmını beni yenmeyecek diye onun da gevşek davranmasını sağlamak amacı ile söylenmiş olabildi. Böylece fırsattan yararlanarak onu kolayca yenivermek gayesini gütmekte olması ihtimali pek yüksekti.

Güreş başladıktan beş dakika kadar sonra zencinin müdafaaya çekilir gibi gerilediği görülmeye başladı. Koko güreşi yapma işini ona bırakmış görünüyordu...Hamleleri Adalı yapıyordu. Hasmına dikkatli sokuluyor ve sağlı solu elenselerle zenciye yokluyordu.

Ne var ki, gerçeği söylemek gerekirse rakibi taş gibi idi!

Adalı çektiği elenselerin pek bir faydasını göremiyordu. Bu da herşeyden önce Koko'nun ne derece dayanıklı, ne derece yaman, ne derece kuvvetli olduğunu gösteriyordu açıkça.

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Adalı Halil and Koko

28. 12. 1981

Güreşin bu şekilde sürmekte oluşu büyük çoğunluğunu zenci seyircilerin oluşturduğu topluluğun pek hoşuna gitmemiş olmalı ki sağdan soldan sesler gelmeye başladı:

"—Haydi Koko, harekete geç!"

"—Acıma beyaza!"

"—Güreşe gir Koko!"

"—Yen şu Türk'ü!"

"—Onu ezmeden, hesabını görmeden bırakma!"

"—Siyah ırkın kuvvetini ispat et de herkes bir daha anlasın bizim ne olduğumuzu Koko!"

"—Türk'ü senin karşına çıkaranlar, az sonra bunu yaptıklarına pişman olmalılar kara arslan!"

"—İşi fazla da uzatma..."

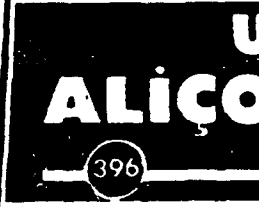
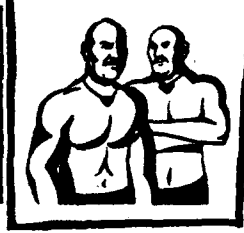
"—Haydi bastır!"

Bu seslenişler üzerine zenci de harekete geçer gibi yaparak bir kaç karşı hamlede bulundu.

Ancak bunlar zayıf hamlelerdi. Ve Adalı bunları kolaylıkla çelmeyi başarmıştı.

Koko gene müdafaaya çekilince bu sefer güreşten anlayan zenciler daha kuvvetli bir biçimde kendisini uyarıya koyuldular:

"—Hey bu da ne demek oluyor kara arslan?"



"—Niçin hep müdafaaya çekiliyorsun?"

"—Neden doğru dürüst güreşmiyorsun Koko?"

"—Anlaşmalı güreş mi yapıyorsun yoksa?"

"—Ne uzatıp duruyorsun güreş?"

"—Haydi gir güreşe, temizle Türk'ü, bitsin bu iş!"

Zenci herhalde işi bu biçimde daha fazla sürdüremeyeceğini anlamış olmalı ki güreşe hareket vermek için birden Adalı Halil'in kolunu kaparak arkasına dolandı ve savurarak onu altına alıverdi!

Bunu gören seyircilerin yüzleri gülmüştü. İşte tuttukları pehlivan gerçek kuvvetini göstermeye başlamıştı nihayet...

Ve hemen alkışlar yükselmekte gecikmedi:

"—Bravo Koko!"

İsta-Cırak -ADALI HALİL —Murat SERTOĞLU

"—Yaşa kara arslan!"

"—Böyle güreş işte!"

"—Haydi yapıştır Türk'ün sırtını yere! Saydır yıldızları ona!..."

"—Koko gibisi görülmemiştir... Ne yaman bir oyunla koskoca adamı altına alıverdi be!..."

"—Demek ki şimdiye kadar hasmınla oyun oynuyordun Koko?"

"—Sakın altından kaldırma..."

"—Onu buralara gelip geleceğine pişman et!"

"—Şuradaki küçük kalabalık da Türk'ü tuttuklarına pişman olsunlar!"

"—Ez onu Koko, ez beyaz Türk'ü!..."

Adalı doğrusu hasmından böylesine çevik bir hareket beklemiyordu. Ağır pehlivanların aynı zamanda bu derece çevik olmaları nadir görülen bir şeydi. Adalı da Koko denilen bu

pehlivanın bu derece ağır ve kuvvetli olmakla beraber aynı zamanda son derece çevik olduğunu anlayarak onu içinden takdir etmekten kendisini alamamıştı. Deyme pehlivanlar bu derece çevik olamazlardı. Adalı şimdiye kadar çok pehlivanla tutmuştu ama, bu ağırlıktaki bir hasmının bu derece çevik olmasına rastlamamıştı...

Şimdi zencinin kendisini bastırdıktan sonra sırtüstü çevirmek üzere zorlamaya geçmesini bekliyordu.

Kendisini yenmeyeceğini söyleyerek başlatmış olduğu oyun artık sona ermiş olmalı idi.

Fakat hayır!

Koko birden yeniden gevşemişti.

Sanki kendisini yere yaymak ister gibi görünüyordu ama bu iş için harcaması gerekli olan kuvvetin zerresini bile gösterdiği yoktu.

Bu şekilde oyalanıp dururken kendisine hafif bir sesle birşeyler de söylüyordu ama Adalı Halil'in bu sözlerin tekini bile anladığı yoktu tabii...Ne diyordu, ne anlatmak istiyordu? Bunu çıkaramıyordu.

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Adalı Halil and Koko

29. 12. 1981

Ancak böyle gevşek davrandığına göre ona ayağa kalkması için harekete geçmesini söylemekte olduğunu tahmin etti nihayet.

Acaba tam bu sırada mı bir hamle ile kendisini yenmeyi plânlıyordu zenci?

İhtiyatı elden bırakmadan zorladı ve kolayca ayağa kalktı. Rakibi onu yerde tutmak için hiç bir harekette bulunmamıştı.

Adalı ayağa kalkınca kulağına ufak çapta alkışlarla gene Türkçe seslenişler geldi:

"—Aferin Adalı!"

"—İyi kalktın!"

"—Düşme bir daha sakın arabın altına ha!"

"—Haydi Halil pehlivan!"

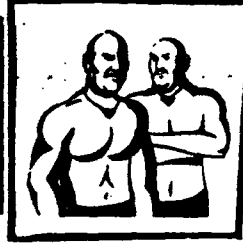
"—Dikkat et sana oyun oynamasın!"

Evet, orada bulunan bir avuç Türk kendisine gayret vermeye çalışıyordu.

Güreş başlayalı aşağı yukarı yarım saati de doldurmuş bulunuyordu. O zaman Adalı uygun bir durum görerek birden bir çaprazla girerek Koko'yu sürmeye başladı.

Zenci bu durum karşısında ne direnmeye, ne de çaprazdan sıyrılmaya kalkmadan hemen dönüp kendini yüzükoyun yere attı. Adalı da vakit sektirmeden yetişerek onu bastırdı.

Az önce kendisini alkışlamış bulunan bir



avuç Türk şimdi seslerini daha kuvvetli bir biçimde yükseltmişlerdi:

"— Yaşa Adalı Halil pehlivan!"

"— Yaman bastırdın Koko'yu, yaman!"

"— Yaşa oızim pehlivan!"

"— Haydi göster kendini!"

"— Kaldırma kefareyi yerden!"

Görüldüğü gibi bunlar da Adalı'dan pek fazla birşey ummuyor ve beklemiyorlardı. Onun sadece hasmını bastırmış olmasını yeterli bir başarı olarak görüyorlar ve sadece onun Koko'yu yerden kaldırmamasını istiyorlardı.

Bu kadarcık bir başarı bile onlara yeterli görünüyordu.

Adalı hasmının ayağa kalkmasına meydan vermemek için önce ona acele tarafından bir sarma vurdu ve böylece hasmının ayağa kalkmak için zorlamaya geçmesini beklemeye

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koyuldu.

Ancak zencide böyle bir hareket yoktu!

Yerde dört ayak üstünde duruyor ve etrafı seyredip duruyordu.

Adalı, o böyle dursa bile taraftarlarının hiç de aynı şekilde durmayacaklarını pek güzel biliyordu.

Nitekim çok geçmeden zenci seyirciler yeniden tuttukları pehlivana seslenmeye başlamışlardı.

"— Bu ne demek oluyor yahu?"

"— Ne biçim güreş tutuyorsun Koko?"

"— Maksadın bizimle eğlenmek mi yoksa?"

"— Harekete geç artık be!"

"— Kalk yerden ve Türk'e dersini güzelce ver!"

"— Neyin var, yoksa hasta mısın Koko?"

"— Alayı bırak güreşe bak Koko, güreşe!"

Zenci bu ihtarlar üzerine bu sefer ciddi bir biçimde ayağa kalkabilmek için harekete geçti. Bunun için ilk olarak tabii hasmının sarmasını çözmek gerektiğini biliyordu. O da vakit kaybetmeden bu işe girişti. İşte ilk olarak o zaman bunun hiç de sandığı kadar kolay olamayacağını anladı.

Kuvvetini gitgide arttırmış, zorlamış, ne var ki Adalı'nın sarmasını çözememiş, ayağını kurtaramamış ve ayağa kalkmaya muvafak olamamıştı.

Türk güreşçisinin bu derece kuvvetli çıkabileceğini, kendisine karşı bu kadar direnebileceğini doğrusu hiç ummamıştı. Gerçekten de Adalı denen bu pehlivan, aklının ucundan geçiremediği kadar güçlüydü.

Koko'nun sarmayı sökerek ayağa kalkabilmek için var kuvveti ile zorlamaya geçtiğini hisseden Adalı da var gücü ile ona karşı koyuyordu.

Böylece iki pehlivan arasında belki ilk defa böyle alabildiğine sert bir güç çekişmesi oluyordu. Ve zenci güreşçi ne yaparsa yapsın yerden bir türlü ayağa kalkamıyordu!

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Adalı Halil and Koko

30. 12. 1981

Zenci seyirciler hâlâ işin farkında değillerdi. Bunlar kendilerini hâlâ Koko'nun bir oyunu karşısında olduklarını sandıklarından seslerini gitgide daha da şiddetlendiriyorlardı:

"— Oyun mu oynuyorsun Koko?"

"— Bırak bu numaraları! Ciddi güreş!"

"— Haydi kalk artık yerden!"

"— Bu kadar oyalandığın yeter!"

"— Sabrımızı taşıma!"

Zenci güreşçi ne yapacağını şaşırmişti. Seyircilerin, durumunu anlamadıkları ortada idi. Ve onları buna inandırabilmeye imkân bulunmadığını da çok iyi anlıyordu. Bu durumda ne yapmalıydı? Daha doğrusu bu durumda ne yapabiliirdi?

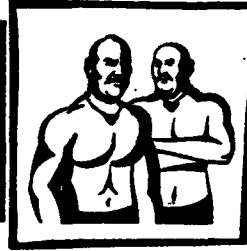
Artık hasmının bu bacak oyunundan kurtulabilmek için boşuna uğraşmaktan, kuvvet harcamaktan da bıkmış bulunuyordu. Faydası olmadıktan sonra neden kuvvet harcasındı?

O bunu düşünür ve yerde öylece dururken kendisini bu zor durumdan kurtaran hasmı Adalı Halil oldu.

Sarmayı kendiliğinden boşaltarak kendisini bırakmış ve yanından çekilmişti.

Durup dururken niçin bunu yapmıştı?

Güreşten anlayan hiç kimse bunu çöz-



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mezken, Koko bir hamlede yerden kalkıvermiş ve ferahlamıştı.

Ancak hafifçe de olsa aksamakta olduğu gözden kaçmıyordu. Bu da sarmada uzunca bir süre kalmış bulunan ayağının az çok uyuşmuş olmasından ileri geliyordu. Az sonra geçecekti elbet.

Adalı'nın hasmını sarmada tutması bir çeyrek saat kadar sürmüş olduğundan şimdi güreşin ilk devresinin bitimine on dakika kadar birşey kalmış bulunuyordu. Ve Koko'nun taraftarları, pehlivanlarının güreşin ilk devresi tamamlanmadan hasmını mutlaka yenmesini istiyorlardı. Ne şekilde olursa olsun bir defa ayağa kalkabildiğine göre de bu işi artık yapmalı idi.

Bunun için şimdi salonda şöyle sesler ak-sediyordu:

"— Çok güzel daldın kara arslan!"

"— Haydi süplese al!"

"— Sırtını yere getir Türk ün!"

Hemen herkes güreşe artık bitmiş gözüyle bakıyordu. Zencinin çok geçmeden Adalı'nın sırtını yere yapıştıracağına inanıyordu.

Yükselen sesler arasında gene Türkçe sözler de geliyordu:

"— Aman Adalı dikkatli ol!"

"— Yenilme şu kefereye!"

"— Seni yerden kesip üstüsti vurmak isteyecek!"

"— Gözünü açık tut!"

Tabii kendisine böyle seslenenlerin şu bir avuçtan bile az olan Türk hemşehrileri olduğunu anlıyordu.

Koko, Adalı'yı böylece birinci devrenin sonlarına doğru ikinci defa olmak üzere bastırdıktan sonra kendisini bizim çırpma dediğimiz oyunla yenmek ister şekilde hamlelere girişti.

Ancak Adalı bunların hiç te öyle tehlikeli olacak biçimde kuvvetli hamleler olmadığını farketmekte gecikmedi. Zenci işi gene gevşek tutmaya başlamış, maksadının kendisini yenmek değil de oyalamak ve vakit geçirmek olduğunu apaçık bir biçimde ortaya koymuştu.

Devamı Var

İsta-Çırak -ADALI HALİL Murat SERTOĞLU

"— Haydi Koko, yen artık!"

"— Çok uzattın güreşi, çok!"

"— Devre neredeyse bitiyor yahu! Yoksa bizi burada daha fazla bekletmek mi istiyor-sun?"

"— On dakika kaldı!"

Zenci güreşçi ortada birkaç dakika oyalanıp sağ ayağının uyuşukluğunu giderdikten sonra iri cüssesinden hiç bir şekilde beklenmeyecek bir çeviklikle birden dalarak Adalı'nın bacaklarını kaptı. Adalı bu hiç beklemediği olağanüstü dalış üzerine nasıl olup da üstüsti yenik düşmediğine, yere düşerken nasıl olup da havada dönebildiğine ve yere yüzükoyun düşebilmiş bulunduğuna belki de herkesten çok kendisi şaşı.

Salon ise şimdi alkıştan çinliyordu:

"— Bravo Koko!"

The Story of the Match Between Adalı Halil and Koko

31. 12. 1981

Adalı'nın başına hayatında ilk defa böyle bir şey geliyordu. Kendisi, hasmına eline fırsat geçtiği anda onu yeneceğini söylemiş bulunduğu halde, hasmı ona elinden geleni yapmasın, ama bu akşam onu yenmiyeceğini ve güreşin beraberlikle biteceğini söylemişti.

Görünüşe göre de bu sözünde gerçekten de duruyordu.

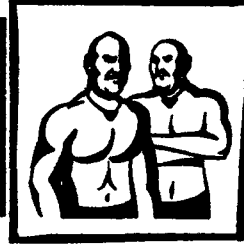
İşte Adalı'yı fena halde rahatsız eden de bu idi.. Koko denilen bu güçlü zenci pehlivan eğer ciddi güreşip kendisini yense doğrusu ya çok daha rahat edecekti.

İşte güreşin ilk devresi bu oyalanmalar içinde sona erdi. Hakemin uzun düdüğü ilk devrenin sona ermiş bulunduğunu ilân ederken, pehlivanlar da güreşlerini bırakarak ayağa kalktılar. Perde ağır ağır inerken, halkı eğlendirecek olan bando çalmaya başladı.

Güreş kurallarına göre iki pehlivanın dinlenip nefeslenmeleri için onbeş dakika izin verilmiş bulunuyordu.

Tercüman İzak efendi ile antrenör meneceri Mister Conson hemen onu alarak dinleneceği yere götürürlerken Adalı, İzak efendiyeye:

"— Şu Koko denilen pehlivanın güreşten önce söyledikleri, yani bu geceki güreşin berabere biteceği yolunda anlattıkları doğru



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mu değil mi? Sor bir kere bakalım bizim çorbacıya!" dedi.

İzak durumu Mister Conson'a anlatınca, beriki inkâr etmeye gerek görmedi:

"— Evet doğrudur!"

"— Ama benim bundan haberim yok!"

"— Sana söylemeye gerek görmemiş olabilirim. Fırsat da olmadı. Çünkü bu anlaşmaya son anda vardık."

"— Neden böyle bir anlaşma yapmaya gerek gördünüz?"

"— Güreş gördüğün gibi çok fazla bir ilgi uyandırdı. Bütün biletler kapış kapış gitti. Berabere kaldınız mı, yapılacak ikinci güreş de aynı ilgiyi ve seyirciyi çekecek, bize iyi para bırakacaktır. Buna karşılık Koko bu akşam seni yendi mi, ne kadar reklam yapsak bu seyircinin yarısını bile toplayamayız. Anladın mı şimdi?"

"— Tabii bir zenciye yenildiğin için sana kızacak beyazları tatmin etmek için bu güreşten sonra gene bir zenci ile tutman ve çorbuluğa yenmen gerekir. Ben bunu da ayarlayacağım."

Hem böyle konuşuyor, hem de Adalı'ya masaj yaparak katılan adalelerini gevşetmeye çalışıyordu.

Adalı'ya söyleyecek söz kalmamış bulunuyordu. Lâfla ona cevap vermek boş, beyhude bir iş olacaktı. Onun için de böyle boş yere çenesini yormakta bir mânâ yoktu.

Cevabı ancak güreşi ile verebilirdi.

Pehlivanlara nefeslenmeleri için verilen onbeş dakikalık süre bitmiş, iki pehlivan yeniden sahneye davet edilmişti. Pehlivanlar ringe çıkıp da perde yavaş yavaş yükselip bandonun sesi kesilirken, yine dört bir taraftan bağırışmalar yükseldi:

"— Haydi bakalım Koko!"

"— Kara arslan, bu sefer hemen yen Türk'ü!"

"— Göster karaların aklara neler yapabileceğini!"

"— Yeteri kadar eğlendin şu beyaz Türk'le!"

İsta-Çırak
-ADALI HALİL
Murat SERTOĞLU

"— Peki ya ben zenciyi yenecek olurum?"

"— Bak bunda olduğu gibi hareket etmek te serbestsin dostum. Yenebilirsen yen! Ben buna beyaz olduğun için sevinirim de. Ama buna imkân göremiyorum. Her iki güreşte de bir zenciye yenildin mi sana Amerika'da başka güreş bulabilmek de hemen hemen imkânsız olur. Fakat bir tek güreşinde olsun onunla berabere kalabildin mi iş değişir. İkinci güreşini hasta hasta yapmak zorunda kalmış olduğunu, bu yüzden yenildiğini ileri sürebiliriz. Koko'nun şöhreti çok büyük olduğundan onunla yenilemeyerek berabere kalmış bir profesyonel güreşçiye yeni rakip bulabilmek kolaylaşır."

Adalı şaşkın şaşkın onun yüzüne bakarken Mister Conson şöyle devam etti:

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Adalı Halil and Koko

1. 1. 1982

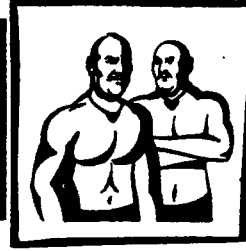
Adalı Türklerin toplu olarak oturmakta oldukları tarafa baktı. Hemşehrileri gene orada idiler. Kendisine birşeyler sesleniyorlardı. Ancak gürültüden ne dedikleri anlaşılmıyordu. Herhalde ona başarı diliyor olmalıydılar. Gülmseyerek onlara el salladı..

Birkaç dakika sonra ise sert bir düdük gürüşün başladığını bildiriyordu.

Köşelerine çekilmiş bulunan iki pehlivan önce birbirlerine yaklaştılar. Kısaca el sıkıştıktan sonra da hemen kapıştılar. Böylece gürüşün ikinci devresi başlamış oldu.

İki pehlivan ense bağlamış, ağır ağır birbirlerinin etrafında dönüyorlardı. Adalı zenci pehlivanın ilk hücumu kendisinden beklemekte olduğunu güzelce anlamış bulunuyordu. Halil pehlivan bu durum karşısında gürüşe girmek işinin kendisine düştüğünü hissetti ve hemen elenselerle hasmını yoklamaya koyuldu.

Bu durum karşısında Koko kendisini hasmının elenselerinden korumak üzere vücut hareketleri ile manevralar yapmaya başladı. Oldukça da bu manevralarında başarılı oluyordu. Adalı onun belden yukarısının gerçekten çok kuvvetli olduğunu daha ilk devrede anlamış bulunuyordu. Anlamış olduğu diğer bir gerçek ise, bacaklarının hiç de fazla kuvvetli olmadığı idi. Zaten derisi kara, zenci



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aslından gelen pehlivanların genel olarak bacak ve çatı kısımları ince ve zayıf olduğunu biliyordu. Gürüşün birinci devresinde de Koko'nun bacaklarının, belden aşağısının belden yukarısı kadar kuvvetli olmadığını fark etmişti.

Hem bunları düşünüyor, hemde gözlerini hasmının bacaklarından ayırmıyordu.

İkinci devrenin ancak onuncu dakikası doluyordu ki Adalı birden bire aradığı fırsatı yakalayarak daldı ve tekten kapıldığı gibi zenci hasmını altına alıverdi.

Alırken kaşla göz arasında sarmayı da vurmaya unutmadı.

Şimdi Türk'lerin seslenmelerini daha açık bir biçimde duyuyordu.

"— Yaşa be arslan Adalı!"

sta-Çırak -ADALI HALİL Murat SERTOĞLU

"— Sağlam tut bu sefer altında!"

"— Kaçırma arabı!"

"— Haydi arslan Adalı!"

Koko'nun taraftarları ise seslerini hiç çıkarmıyorlar, pehlivanlarının harekete geçerek yerden kalkmasını ve gürüşe hakim olarak Türk'ü yenmesini bekliyorlardı.

Ne var ki dakikalar geçiyor, Koko ayağa kalkmak için uğraşıp durduğu halde bir türlü bunda başarılı olamıyordu.

Güzelce bağlamıştı zenciye Adalı Halil pehlivan. Onun ne yaparsa yapsın hasmının sarmasını sökmemesi ve ayağa kalkamaması, taraftarlarını yeniden sinirlendirmeye başlamıştı.

Nitekim çok geçmeden bunların sesleri yeniden duyulmaya başladı:

"— Haydi Koko!"

"— Kalksana ayağa!"

"— Ne biçim gürüşyorsun?"

"— Ne yapmakta olduğunun farkında mısın?"

"— Yeter artık, yeter!"

"— Biz buraya senin galibiyetini seyretmeye geldik, maskaralıklarınızı değil!"

"— Haydi davran hele!"

"— Senin yavaştan alışıñ Türk'e cesaret veriyor!"

Koko bu sefer hasmının sarmasını sökebilmek ve ayağa kalkabilmek için var gücü ile zorlamaya girişti. Bunu sezen Adalı da hemen kuvvetini arttırmakta geri kalmadı. Böylece iki pehlivan birbirlerini var kuvvetleri ile zorlamaya giriştiler.

Bu mücadele hemen hemen bir çeyrek saat kadar sürdü. İki pehlivan da nefes nefese kalmıştı ama durum gene de hiç değişmemişti. Koko bir türlü bu müthiş sarmayı sökerek ayağa kalkamamıştı.

Güreşten anlayanlar ve iki pehlivanın durumlarını yakından takip edenler, Adalı'nın rakibine göre çok daha avantajlı halde olduğunu anlıyor ve buna şaşıyorlardı.

Devamı Var

The Story of the Match Between Adalı Halil and Koko

2. 2. 1982

Koko iyice yorulduğu ve nefeslenmek için zorlamaktan vazgeçtiği sırada ise Türk güreşçisinin sarmayı kendiliğinden boşalttığı görüldü.

Evet, Adalı sarmayı boşaltmıştı.

Ama, hasmını bırakmış değildi. Şimdi kemanelere geçmiş bulunuyordu.

Seyirciler Türk güreşçisinin ne yapmakta olduğunu, ne yapmak istediğini anlayamıyorlardı. Ancak kemanede güreş kurallarına aykırı bir nokta da bulamıyorlardı.

Koko da onlar gibi düşünüyordu. Ve bu hareketleri yapmakta olan hasmının ne maksat gütmekte olduğunu bir türlü anlayamıyordu.

Hemen davranıp ayağa kalkacaktı. Ancak bunun için biraz uzun nefeslenebilmesi gerekiyordu.

Ama.. Ama nefeslenemiyordu ki..

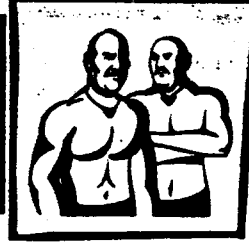
Hatta nefeslenebilmek, toparlanabilmek şöyle dursun, takatinin gitgide tükenmekte olduğunu hissediyordu.

Ne oluyordu?

Bu duruma neden düşmüştü?

Bu derece nefessiz kalmış olmasının, bu derece yorgun düşmüş bulunmasının sebebi ne olabilirdi?

Bunu bir türlü kestiremezken, kendisine yapılan seslenmeler bir hakaret derecesine



varmış bulunuyordu:

"— Geberdin mi Koko?"

"— Neden kalkamıyorsun yerden be adam?"

"— Para mı aldın yoksa böyle ölü bir at gibi güreşmek için?"

"— Rezil oluyorsun be!"

Koko o zaman bütün gücünü toplayarak ayağa kalkmak için bir hamleye giriştiği anda Adalı Halil pehlivan hemen kendisini gerdanlayarak sırtını yere yapıştırdı ve bütün ağırlığı ile üzerine çöktü.

Kendisini yenmiş olmak için hasmının sırtını yerde üç saniye tutmak zorunda olduğunu biliyordu.

Bu iş için Adalı'nın hiç de uzun boylu zorlamasına gerek yoktu.. Koko, değil öyle

sta-Çırak -ADALI HALİL Murat SERTOĞLU

Üç saniye, üç saat bile yerinden kıpırdayabilecek halde değildi.. Bu yüzden köprü kurmaya da kalkışmadı.

Hakem, Adalı'nın galibiyetini belirten düdüğü çaldığı anda da salonda bir vaveyladır koptu! Hasmını bırakarak ayağa kalkan Adalı Halil galibiyet temennasını çakmış ve hemen Türk seyircilerin bulunduğu tarafa bakmıştı.

Türkler de ayağa fırlamışlar, büyük bir heyecan içinde var kuvvetleri ile kendisini alkışlayıp duruyorlardı.

Bir selâm da onlara çaktı. Sonra da kollardan birine Mister Conson, birine de tercümanı İzak efendi girerek geri çekilirken, iple tutuna tutuna doğrulabilen zenci güreşçiye en ağır hakaretler yağmakta devam ediyordu.

Derken hakem güreşin resmî sonucunu ilân etti:

"—Türk Halil, zenci şampiyon Koko'yu, ikinci devrenin otuzbeşinci dakikasında tuşla yenmiştir!."

Bu ilânı yapması ile perdenin kapanması bir olmuştu. Ancak salondaki gürültü bir türlü bitmek, dinmek nedir bilmiyordu. Amerika'lıların "Negro" dedikleri zenci seyirciler bağırıp çağırarak devam ediyorlardı. Eğer daha önceden gerekli tedbirler alınmasa, bir kaç düzine polis stratejik yerlere yerleştirilmese idi, gözü dönmüş bazı zenci seyircilerin Koko'yu dövmek üzere sahneye saldırımları işten bile olmayacaktı.

Perde kapanırken Koko'nun menecer ve antrenörleri de hemen yanına gelip halâ bitkin ve nefes nefese olan zenci güreşçiye de soyunma odasına götürmüşlerdi.

Koko halâ kendisini toparlamış değildi. Ve ancak onbeş dakika süren bir masajdan sonra kendisine gelebildi.

Menecerinin en çok korktuğu şey, onun kalp sıkışması gibi bir hastalık geçirmekte bulunması idi. Bunun için bir de doktor getirmiş bulunuyordu.

Devamı Var

— Benim muskayı yazan hocanın ad-resini soruyordun.
— Ne dedin?
— Öldü dedim.
— Sahiden öldü mü?
— Ne bileyim ben? İnşallah hayattadır. La! olsun diye öldü dedim.
— İyi söylemişsin Tutar onu bulur, kendisine de senin muskanın kuvvetine eşit bir muska yazdırırdı.
— Mümîn, ağabeysinin de muskaya güvenmekte olduğunu anlayarak gü-lümsedi:
— Canım hoca kıtlığına kıran girmeye-di ya... Nice derin hocalar var. Bulsun birini, yazdırın kendisine istediği gibi bir muska... Belli olmaz, belki de bulacağı hocanın nefesi daha kuvvetli olur.
— Olur tabii... Olmayacak şey yok-tur bu dünyada... Şimdi kendini nasıl bu-luyorsun?
— Allah senden razı olsun ağabey! Bütün yorgunluğumu aldın.
— Yenilmemek istiyorsan çok dikkatli gürleşmelisin. Bakın ki zorlandın gidi-yorsun, hemen bir kavgaya çıkarmaya hak... Biz de hemen yetişiriz. Burada herkes senin tarafını tutar. Güreş de ya-rida kalmış olur. Yenilmeden işin içinden çıkarsın.
— Kusura bakma ağabey. Bu dediğin şeyi yapamayacağım.
— Neden be?
— Çok ayp olur da onun için... Adam üstelik misafirimiz.
— Ama yener seni...
— Varsın, yensin...
— Sen de tuhaf çocuksun vesselâm.
Halk arasında da hararetili konuşma-lar oluyordu.
— Molla İboş'u çok iyi yendi.
— Öyle... Bugün hiç olmazsa bir peh-livan yenmiş olacaktı.
— Yoruldu ama... Dellormanlı pehli-van, Katrancı'nın işini kolaylaştırdı.
— Yok bel! Katrancı onu her zaman için yenebilir.
— O da doğru... Kimse bunun aksini



Kavalalı Çolak Mümîn

Murad SERTOĞLU

“Yenilmeden işin içinden çıkarsın”

söyleyemez. Ama İboş kendisini yorma-saydı daha iyi güreşebilirdi belki. Yani daha fazla dayanabilirdi demek is-tiyordum.

— Orası yanlış değil... Ama ha bir da-kika önce yenilmiş, ha bir dakika son-ra... Bundan başka söz aramızda fazla yorulmuş da sayılamaz. Bu yetmiyor-muş gibi cazgir da kendisine yarım sa-at dinlenme payı verdi. İyice dinlenmiş olacaktı.

Bütün bu konuşmalar sırasında caz-gırın Mümîn'e vermiş olduğu dinlenme izni de tamamlanmış oldu.

Cazgir:
— Mümîn pehlivan! Katrancı! Yağ- nızı tazelemek üzere yağ kazanının ya-nına geliniz! diye seslenince durulmuş gibi olan o heyecanlı hava birdenbire ye-niden arttı.
İki pehlivan yerlerinden kalkarak ka-zan dibine doğru yürürlerken halk Mü-mîn'e yeniden seslenmeye başlamış bu-lunuyordu:
— Haydi molla göster kendini!
— Talihin açık olsun molla!
— Bir çeyrek dayan, yetişir sana!
— Haydi Mümîn!

İki pehlivan yağlarını çabucak taze-lemiş bulunuyorlardı.
Yan yana durdukları zaman ise, Mü-mîn'in bir şey yapabileceğini uman ta-ratları bile bu ümitlerini kaybettiler.
Mümîn Katrancı'nın yanında pek ufak kalmıştı.

Değil onu yenebilmek, böyle bir peh-

la tutmakta olduğunu çok iyi bildiği içe-gözünü dört açmıştı. Ona istediği, de- ha doğrusu gözlediği fırsatı vermediye- yeti yoktu.

Abdi Ağa, daha güreş on dakikası- bile doldurmadan kararını verdi:

— Katrancı çok ağır basıyor.

Mümîn'in babası ister istemez on-doğruladı.

— Farkındayım.

— Fena ezeceğe benzer senin ça- ni.

— Öyle!

— Boşuna kürek çekiyor. Ezdirmek fazla kendisini...

— Daha güreş yeni başladı sayılı-

— Orası öyle ama görünen köy ba-vuz istemez. Ben onun yerinde öze- irrar etmezdim. Boşuna ezdiriyor ka-disini...

— Canım elbet onun da bir düşünc- gü olmalı...

— Ne olabilir ki? Ne yapabilir bu- san zamanına?

— Vallah orasını ben de biliyorum.

— Hiçbir şey yapamaz. Ezilip gide- Yazık olacak senin oğlana...

Mümîn'in babası cevap vermez- Ama içinden ister istemez kendisin- vermiyor da değildi. Mümîn'in düne- nu o da hiç parlak görmüyordu.

Abdi Ağa devam etti:

— Fukara galiba ezilmekte oldu- bile farkında değil. Güreşten sen de- larsın. Çok pehlivanlar ezilmekte ol- ların, nın güç far-ına varırlar.

— Daha kaç dakika oldu ki?

— Kaç dakika olursa olsun. Ne za- önce pes ederse kendini o kadar az- dırılmış olur. Ben senin yerinde ol- ona güreşi bırakması için haber ge- rirdim.

— Hele biraz daha bekleyelim. Be- te onun da bir düşündüğü vardı.

— Sen bilirsin.

Güreş ilk onbeş dakikası de- muştı. Fakat ortada değişen bir- yoktu. O zaman bazı seyircilerle- rini yükselttikleri duyuldu.

(Devamı)

—Yeter bu elenseler be!
—Yeneceksen yen mollayı? Ezmek mi iste:sin kendisini?
—İnsaf yok mu sende?
—Elenseden başka şey bilmez misin sen?

Bu çeşit sesler yükselince, Mümin sağ elini kaldırdı.

Onun bu davranışını herkes pes ettiği mânâsına almıştı. Davul-zurnalar da hemen kesildi.

O zaman Mümin'in halka dönerek şu sözleri söylediği duyuldu:

—Sevgili hemşehrilerim! Sizden ricam güreşe katılmamanızdır. Elense çekmek de güreş kaldelerinde vardır. Bırakın Katrancı istediği gibi güreşsin. İsteddiği gibi elenseler! Çeksin. Dayanamaz hale gelecek olursam ben kendim pes ederim. Bundan merakınız, kuşkunuz olmasın!

Onun bu sözleri derin bir sessizlikle karşılanmıştı.

Mümin bu sefer Çingene'ler'e dönerdi:

—Vurun cenk havasını! diye seslendi ve yeniden Katrancı'nın karşısına geçti.

Çingene davul-zurnacılar cenk havasını vurmaya başladıkları vakit ortadaki hava bir kat daha heyecanlı olmuştu. Herkes adeta vejinde duramaz hale gelmişti.

Güreş yeniden başlamıştı. Başlar başlamaz da Katrancı bütün acı kuvvetini ortaya koyarak yeniden sert elenselere girmişti.

Mümin hep müdafaa idi. Esasında hasmının bu elense faslından vazgeçeceğini ve güreşe gireceğini umuyordu. Ama istediği olmamıştı.

Güreşi karıştırmak işi ister istemez yine de ona düşüyordu.

Katrancı'dan yine sert bir elense ve bunu tamamlayan bir trıpan yer-yemez dengesini kaybetmiş gibi görünerek yücükoyun yere kapandı.

Katrancı da hemen yetişerek kendi-



Kavalalı Çolak Mümin

MURAD SERTOĞLU

“Katrancı neden yerden kalkmıyor?..”

sinli güzelce bastırdı.

O zaman meydana bir uğultu yükseldi.

Herkes güreşe bitmiş gözüyle bakıyordu şimdi. Konuşmalar bunu gösteriyordu:

—Bu iş bitti.
—Olacağı bu idi zaten...

—Bu kadar dayanması bile Mümin için büyük başarı!

—Bir k'ndelik canı kaldı.
—Kolay k'ndeler.

—K'ndelemesine ne lüzum var? Koluğun altına sepet gibi takar, onu evine kadar götürür.
—Yapar mı yapar...

—Hem de nasıl...

Bir taraftan da gözler ortaya çevrilmiş bulunuyordu. Herkes Katrancı'nın Mümin'i nasıl yeneceğini görmek istiyordu. Bu anda Mümin'in birden sola doğru döndüğü ve dönmesiyle beraber hasmının paçasını eline geçirerek doğrultulduğuna gördü.

Katrancı paçasını kurtarmak için hemen budadı. Ama Mümin'in pençesinden paçasını kurtarmadı. Mümin de bu anda trıpanı birden vuruyordu. Katrancı da dengesini kaybetmişti. O anda bu ünlü pehlivan cüdesinden asla beklenmeyecek bir çeviklikle birden dönüverdiği ve kendisini yücükoyun yere atıverdiği görüldü.

Eğer bu işi yapmakta daha bir saniye gecikseydi, yere bozuk olarak düşeceğinden ve yenileceğinden şüphe edilemezdi.

Mümin'in bu harika oyunu koca Katrancı'nı altına alışı üzerine adeta yer yerinden oynatmıştı.

Müthiş bir alkış koptu:

—Yaşa Mümin!

—Yaşa arslanı!

—Vallah bastırdı.

—Aşkolusun molla!

—Katrancı'yı bastırdın ya bu kadar sana yeter.

—Aferin Mümin pehlivanı! Mehmet Ağa da dayanmamış, bulundugu yerden doğrularak avazı çıktığı kadar bağırarak oğlunu teşvik etmeye koyulmuştu.

Katrancı bu akla sığmaz oyun sonundaki kendisini yerde bulunca hiç acele etmeden yerde dörtayak üstünde durdu. Bütün dikkatine rağmen işte yine de bu şeytan gibi kurnaz molların oyununa gelmiş ve alta düşmüş bulunuyordu. Demek molla, o elenseyi yediği zaman kendisini mahsusan yere atmıştı.

Nasıl olmuştu da böyle bir oyuna gelmişti? Evet, evet, suç kendisindeydi. Halbuki işe ne kadar iyi başlamıştı. Mümin yere düşünce üzerine girmeyecekti. Molla o zaman ister istemez ayağa kalkmak zorunda kalacak, o da elense ve trıpanlarına rahatça devam edecekti.

Ama olmamıştı işte...

Bütün hesapları bir defa daha ters çıkmıştı.

Herkes şu anda Katrancı'nın istediği anda rahatça ayağa kalkabilecek kudrette olduğundan şüphe etmiyordu.

Onun için hemen harekete geçemedi ne de bir mânâ veremiyordu.

Ama Katrancı böyle düşünmüyordu. Bu işin hiç de kolay olmayacağını biliyordu. Mümin'le ilk güreşi değil ki bu... Onun ne Allah'ın belâsı bir pehlivan olduğunu kimse kendisi kadar bilemezdi.

Mümin'in daha önce Deliormanlı'nın dünyaya boş pehlivanla yapmış bulundugu güreşi dikkatle izlemiş bulunuyordu. Hiç de fena bir pehlivan olmaya Deliormanlı'yı ne kadar rahat yemiş bulundugunu da fark etmişti. Bu da kesin'in tam idman üstünde olduğunu gösteriyordu.

O bunları düşünüp dururken hatta Mümin'le lehinde yaptığı korkunç teşvikler gösteriler de yavaş yavaş durulmuştu.

Şimdi güreşten anlar geçinler arasında şöyle konuşmalar oluyordu: —Doğrusu Mümin'in Katrancı'yı bastırması büyük bir başarı...

—Hem de nasıl? Ustelik bastırınca az kalsın yere bozuk da düşüyordu! —İşte o zaman hayatında bir defa asla tekrarlayamayacağı bir başarıya erişmiş olacaktı.

—Öyle! Mümin belki de pehlivan hayatının en büyük fırsatını kaçırmıştı. —Katrancı oradan bu oyuna gelmesinin acısını fena çıkaracak.

—Hakkı da yok değil... Yarın katrancı pehlivan tarafından bastırılmış olma haysiyetine fena dokunmuştur. —Şimdi ayağa kalkar kalkmaz elense ve trıpanlarına bir kat daha kuvvetle recek.

—Yandı molla!

—Yi ama Katrancı neden hâlâ yerde duruyor? Neden ayağa kalkmıyor? en ufak bir gayret göstermiyor?

—Anlaşıyor şey değil. Herhalde Mümin'e oynayacağı oyunu düşünmüyor malı...

—Doğru... Fena kızmışa benziyor! (Devamı var)



Kavalalı Çolak Mümin

Murad SERTOĞLU

"Katrancı'nın intikamı fena olacak!"

Katrancı alita beş dakika kadar hareketsiz kaldı. Ayağa kalkmak için hiçbir hareketle bulunmadı. Mümin de onu bastırması olduğu halde arkasında hareketsiz duruyordu. Mümin de onu kavraya-tına toplamıştı. Mümin de onu kavraya-bildiği kadar kavramış, aynı zamanda kışbetinin de kasnaklarından tutmuştu. Ayaklarını kılığa falan gelmemek için gerebildiği kadar germiş bulunuyordu.

Nihayet Katrancı'nın kalkmak üzere harekete geçtiği görüldü. Bir anda doğrularak yerden kalkmak istedi. Fakat Mümin hemen köstekeleyerek onu yeniden yere düşürdü. Katrancı tekrar davranı. Ama Mümin ona yine de bu imkânı vermedi.

İki pehlivan arasındaki mücadele bu şekilde gittikçe şiddetlenerek sürüp gidiyordu.

Seyirciler ise gittikçe daha da şaşarak bu inanılmaz mücadeleyi seyrediyorlardı.

Mümin, hasmının ayağa kalkmak için girişmiş olduğu her davranışını boşa çıkardıkça kuvvetli bir alkış yükseliyordu.

—Yaşa Mümin!

—Aşolsun molla!

—Kaldırma yerden...

—Ne pehlivanmışın?

—Aferin arslan!

—Aferin Mümin pehlivan!

Yerde gittikçe sertleşen mücadele on dakika kadar sürdükten sonra Katrancı ne yapıp yaptı ve ayağa kalkmaya muvaffak oldu.

O zaman alkış ve teşvik sesleri birden kessildi.

Mümin onu bu kadar süre altında tutmaya muvaffak olarak kendisinden beklenenin fazlasıyla yerine getirmeye muvaffak olmuştu.

Şimdi artık sıra Katrancı'ya gelmiş bulunuyordu. Katrancı elbette onun kendisine oynadığı oyuna karşılık gösterecek, ondan intikamını çok acı bir şekilde alacaktı.

Ortalıkta tam bir sessizlik vardı. Hani

bir sinek uçacak olsa kanadının sesini herkes duyacaktı.

Katrancı ağır elenselerine yeniden başlamıştı. Ve güreşten anlayıcılar bu elenselerin son derece sert ve amansız elenseler olduğunu kolayca anlayabilirlerdi.

Abdi Ağa o zaman Mümin'in babasına döndü:

—Katrancı fena kızmışa benziyor.

—Evet!

—Büsbütün de insafsızlaştı. Mümin'in onu bastırma muvaffak oluşu ona fena dokunmuş olacak...

—Öyle!

—Hakkı da yok değil... Az kalsın açık da düşürüyordu üstelik.

—Farkındayım. Mümin büyük bir fırsat kaçırdı.

—Ömründe de bir daha böyle bir fırsat ele geçiremez.

—?!

—Katrancı görünüşe göre ondan fena bir intikam alacak. Hani şimdiden acımaya başladım senin oğlana!

—?!

—Ne diye ezdirir, durur kendisini? Ne diye bırakmaz güreşi?

Mümin'in babası o zaman içerledi:

—Görüyorum sen de Mümin'in hep yenilmesini ister gibi konuşursun. Onun İstanbul'da Katrancı'yı yenmiş olduğunu unutuyorsun galiba hiç kendisine güvenmese güreşe devam eder mi? Elbette onun da bir düşündüğü vardır.

—Ne olabilir ki?

Ama Mümin ona aradığı bu fırsatı vermiyordu.

Bu yüzden ortada hafif tertip bir idvalamaca başlamıştı. Her geçen dakikada Mümin'in güreşe bir kat daha aştığı görülmüyordu.

Güreş böyle bir şekil almaya başladığı zaman seyircilerde de bir şaşkınlık başladı:

—Ne oluyor Katrancı'ya?

—Vallah Mümin güreşi bindirmeye başladı.

—Evet, görünüşü öyle!

—Şaşılacak bir şey bu...

—Vallah gözlerime inanmıyorum.

—Farkında mısınız, Katrancı yorulmaya başladı.

—Nefesi sıkıştı ama, yorgunlukta...

—Hi, hırstan mı orası belli değil...

—Tam bir saat oldu güreş başladı.

—İster misiniz Mümin alısın güreşi?

—Berabere bile kalacak olsa kendisi için büyük bir başarı olur...

—Evet, evet! Hakem heyeti bu kadar güreşlerini yeter görürse Mümin her-

tinin sonuna kadar Katrancı gibi bir pehlivanla berabere kalmış olduğu içine rurlanabilir.

—Ve gururlanmakta haklı da olur.

Evet, güreş başlayalı bir saat oldu-

muş bulunuyordu ve Mümin artık Ka-

trancı'nın karşısında zebun olma-

çoktan çıkmış bulunuyordu. Ve de-

miş gibi güreş denkleşmiş, hatta Mü-

minin güreşi bindirmek yolunu tutmuştu.

Tam bu sırada Mümin'in birden şa-

şek hızıyla dalarak tekten kaplığı ve Ka-

trancı'yı ikinci defa bastırma muvaffak-

olduğu görüldü.

O zaman meydana yeniden alkışlar

de kaldı:

—Yaşa Mümin!

—Yaşa arslan!

—Aşolsun molla!

—Yaşa molla!

Mümin bu sefer Katrancı'yı bas-

bastırmasa hemen sarmayı da vama-

muvaffak olmuştu.

(Devamı)



Katrancı sarmayı sökmek ve ayağa kalkabilmek için elinden geleni yapıyordu. Fakat bu işi bir türlü başaramıyordu. Mümin kendisini yenden kaldırmıyordu. Katrancı'nın nefesi bütünü sığaştırmış, iki karnı şiddetle inip kalkmaya başlamıştı.

Seyircilerin Mümin'i durmadan alkışlamaları ve teşvik etmeleri, onu bir kat daha şaşırtıyordu. Ne yapacağını bilemez bir haldeydi. Ve tam o bu şekilde bocalar dururken, Mümin arkasından yüklendiği gibi kendisini yere yaymaya muvaffak oldu.

Bunu görenler kendisini yeniden şiddetle alkışlamaya koyuldular. Durum son derece heyecanlı bir şekli almış bulunuyordu. Mümin, Katrancı'yı güzelce yaymış, bütün ağırlığını da üzerine vermişti ve Katrancı artık kımıldayabilecek halde bile bulunmuyordu.

Mümin'in babası sevinç ve heyecan içinde bulunuyordu. Yine Abdi Ağa döndü:

—Görüyor musun Mümin'in yaptıklarını?

—Vallah hem görüyor, hem de şaşıyorum. Söyleyecek bir lât bulamıyorum.

—Elbet bulamazsın. Yeniye Katrancı'yı.

—Görüyorum ağa... Ama nasıl yenebilecek? Künde atamayacağı o da biliyor. Boyunduruk takip çeviremez.

—Bulur o bu işin de yolunu.

—Doğrusu buna bir türlü, ama hiçbir türlü aklım ermiyor.

—Biraz daha bekleyelim. Ama bu işten bir şey çıkacağı ummuyorum. Yalnız aklım ermiyor da...

—O anda Mümin'in birden sarmayı söktüğü ve hasmını kucakladığı gibi yerden kestiği ve üç-dört adım taşıyarak kendisini yere attığı görüldü.

Katrancı, Mümin'in kendisini yenden keşmiş olduğunu ve taşıdığını farkedince aklı gibi olmuş ve çırpınmaya başlamıştı.

Ne var ki, bu son gayretleri hiçbir so-

Kavalalı Çolak Mümin

Murad SERTOĞLU

“Bir de Katrancı'nın haline bak!”

nuç vermemişti. Ne yapmış ise de kurtulmaya muvaffak olamamıştı.

Çingeneler Mümin'in, kendisinden iki kat iriliğinde bir buğday tanesini taşıyan bir karınca gibi Katrancı'yı yenden keserek yürümeye başladığını, görür görmez davul-zurnaları kesmişlerdi ve şiddetli bir alkış ortalığı yeniden inletmeye başlamıştı:

—Yaşa Mümin!

—Yaşa arslan!

—Yendi.

—Vallah üç adım taşıdı koca Katrancı'yı!

—Aşkılsun molla!

—Aşkılsun Mümin pehlivan!

Bu sefer yükselen alkışlar her seferinden çok daha kuvvetli idi. Güreş meydanlarında her zaman soğukkanlılıklarını bırakmamakla tanınmış olan, güreşten, güreş seyretmekten kanıksamış bulunan Çingene davul-zurnacılar bile bu alkışa can ü yürekten katılıyorlardı.

Kavala ve Zigoş'un en yaşlıları bile ömürleri boyunca böylesine heyecan verici, akıl durdurucu bir güreş seyretmiş bulunduklarını hatırlamıyorlardı.

Şimdi Katrancı da irtı cüssesiyle nefes nefese ayağa kalkmış bulunuyordu. Gözüne ilk olarak kendilerine yaklaştan cazgır ilmişti:

—Oldu mu? diye sordu.

—Evet, oldu.

—Beni şahiden üç adım taşıdı mı?

—Fazla bile taşıdı.

—Ah, ahi! Bana aynı oyunu İstanbul'da da oynadı. Adalı'yı da aynı şekilde yenden kesip taşımakla yetindi.

min'in bu sırada en büyük ihtiyacı hava idi.

Mümin'in babası da, Abdi Ağa ile birlikte orada idiler. Mehmet Ağa hayalinde bu derece mutlu olduğunu asla hatırlamıyordu.

Abdi Ağa'ya:

—Merakın geçti mi? diye sordu. Mümin'in Katrancı'yı nasıl yeneceğini merak ediyordum.

—Evet, yendi ama, kendisi de bitirdi. Bak ayakta duramıyor.

—Kolay mı böyle bir devle bir saat bir çeyrek süre ile cebelleşmek?

—Demek bu oyunu alamasaymış ya, niliyormuş.

—Sen bir de Katrancı'nın haline bak! Asıl tükenen o... Nasıl sallana sallanıyor.

—Ama yine de Mümin'den daha iyidir. Mümin'de ayakta duracak hal kalmamış.

—Hâlâ mı Mümin'in galibiyetini çekemezsin?

—Öyle söyleme Mehmet Ağa... Bette onun bu yabancı pehlivani yenmiş olmasına çok sevindim. Ama şimdi güreşiyor ve anlıyorum ki Katrancı'da yalnız okka var, pehlivanlık yok. Beiki de çok bozuktu. Yahut hasta hasta güreş tuttu. Çok rahat bir şekilde kazanacağı güreşten yenik çıktı. Eğer bugün Katrancı ile benim boş tutsaydı; onu çok daha kolay, çok daha rahat ve çok daha açık şekilde yenerdi.

Onun hâlâ böylesine bir inat göstermesi karşısında artık söyleyecek bir söz bulamayan Mümin'in babasının ağzı bir karışık kalmıştı.

Abdi Ağa da zaten orada fazla kalmamış, ayrılmış gitmiş bulunuyordu.

Şimdi biraz kendine gelmiş bulunan Mümin de ayağa kalkmış bulunuyordu. Vücudunu geniş bir havlu ile sararak getirilen bir arabaya yerleştirilmiş ve heminin yolu tutulmuştu. Orada Katrancı ile beraber güzelce yıkanıp temizlendi. Kendisini iyice toparladı. Gıyırde hamamdan çıktığı zaman orada hâlâ bükük bir kalabalığın kendisini beklemekte olduğunu gördü.

(Devamı var)

KURTDERELİ MEHMET PEHLİVAN

Eski bir pehlivan



The Story of the Match

Between

Kurtdereli

and Koca Yusuf

24. 10. 1974

- 72 -

Geriye bir tek mesele kalıyordu: Kime kimi vermek doğru olurdu?

Cazgır bunu da sorunca Kel Ali-ço omuz silktili:

- Kimi kime istersen verebilirsin. Bu sana kalmış birşey.. Farketmez.

Cazgır bu cevabı aldıktan sonra ortaya doğru yürümeye başladı ve pehlivanların yanlarına varınca kadar kararını da verdi.

Hemen hemen aynı boyda olan Koca Yusuf la Kurtdereli Mehmet pehlivanı ve aynı irilikte görünen Adalı ile Katrancı'yı eşlendirecekti.

Pehlivanların yanına varınca da kararını uyguladı.

Kurtdereli'yi kolundan tutarak Koca Yusuf'un yanına koydu. Katrancı da Adalı'ya kalmış oldu.

İlk itiraz eden de Katrancı oldu.

- Bizim Kurtdereli Mehmet pehlivanla görülecek hesabımız vardı.

Bizi birbirimizden ayırma!

Cazgır ona ters ters baktı:

- Bana işimi sen mi öğreteceksin?

Tabii bunun üzerine beriki hemen sesini kesti.

Kurtdereli'ye gelince, tam bir şaşkınlık içinde kalmıştı. O kendisini Katrancı ile güreşecek şekilde hazırlanmış bulunuyordu. Cazgırın işi bozması ve kendisini Koca Yusuf pehlivana vermesi karşısında fena şaşmıştı. Böyle bir durum karşısında kalacağını hatırlar ve hayalinden bile geçirmiş değildi.

Ama ne yapabiliirdi? Aynı itirazı yapan Katrancı'ya cazgırın vermiş bulunduğu cevabı duymuştu.

Kazaya rıza göstermekten başkasından ne gelirdi ki?

Koca Yusuf'a baktı. İki pehlivan ilk defa gözüğe geldiler. Kurtdereli onun kendisine gülümsediğini görünce rahatladı.

Bu ünlü pehlivan:

- A be senin adın ne? diye sordu.

- Mehmet..

- Nerelisin?

- Kurtdereli..

- Muhacirlerdensin desene?

- Evet!

- Hangi köyden?

- Rava'dan..

- Ustan kim senin?

- Küçük Hüseyin pehlivan.. Te hakem heyetinin arasında oturuyor.

- Öyle mi? Tanırım kendisini.. İyi bir ustadır. Herhalde seni iyi yetiştirmiş olmalı..

- Orasını bilemem.

- Ne ise.. Ne pehlivan olacağını şimdi göreceğiz.

Cazgır söze başlayınca konuşmayı kesti. Cazgır önce pehlivanları halka teker teker tanıttı. Arkasından da güzel bir dua okudu. Nihayet davul zurnalara işaretini verdi.

Dört pehlivan da davul zurnalara uyaraktan peşrevlerine başladılar. İçlerinde en kötü peşrev çıkaran Kurtdereli olmuştu. Tu da böyle büyük bir güreşe ilk defa katıldığı için duyduğu heyecandan ileri geliyordu.

Peşrev faslından sonra ise ikişer ikişer kapıştılar.

Pehlivanların neden bu şekilde eşlendirilmiş olduklarını halk da anlamış ve bunu akla uygun bulmuştu. Ortada Adalı ve Koca Yusuf ayarında, hemen hemen aynı ünde ve kuvvette iki pehlivan varken başka türlü davranmak doğru olmazdı. Nasıl olsa şimdi Adalı da Koca Yusuf da ellerini çabuk tutarak genç hasımlarını kısa zamanlarda yenecekler, asıl büyük güreş de o zaman başlayacaktı.

Seyircilerin çoğunluğu Koca Yusuf ile Kurtdereli arasındaki güreşi seyretmeyi daha uygun buluyordu. Bunun sebebi de Koca Yusuf'un genç hasmını daha kısa zamanda yeneceğine inanmaları idi.

Koca Yusuf'un güreş usulü böyle idi. O ne hasmını ezmeye, ne de yıpratmaya bakardı. Onu kısa bir zaman içinde yenmekten başka birşey düşünmezdi.

Adalı öyle mi idi ya? O, tıpkı ustası Kel Aliço gibi hangi pehlivanla tutarsa tutsun onu biraz ezip hıpalamadan yenmeye kalkışmazdı.

Onun için en doğrusu birinci güreşi seyretmekti.

Pek güzel tahmin edileceği gibi, Koca Yusuf gibi adı dillerde destan olan ve memleketin en büyük pehlivanı olarak tanınan bir pehlivanla tutmuş olmak Kurtdereli'ye büyük bir heyecan vermiş ve hemen müdafaa çekilmişti. (Devamı var)

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Neden sonra duyduğu heyecan yavaş yavaş sona erecekti.

Koca Yusuf da sanki onun duyduğu heyecanın geçmesini bekler gibi güreşe yavaş girmişti. Çektiği elenseler, daha çok bir çeşit okşamayı andırıyordu.

Sonradan genç hasmının toparlandığını hissedince bunları yavaş yavaş kuvvetlendirmeye başladı.

Öbür güreş de Adalın sert elenseleri altında geçiyordu.

Böylece bir on dakika geçince Koca Yusuf'un birden çaprazla girerek hasmını sürmeye başladığı görüldü.

O zaman taraftarları hemen koşular. Güreş sona eriyor demektir. Koca Yusuf'u teşvike koyuldular:

- Haydi Yusuf Ağa!
- Vur çangalı!
- Bitir işini!
- Yen gayrı şu delikanlıyı!

Ne var ki herkesin beklediği bu şey olmadı.

Kurtdereli kuvvetli hasmını savurarak kendisini çaprazdan kurtarmanın yolunu buldu.

O zaman sesler kesildi. Güreşten anlayanlar bu genç pehlivanın hiçte boş olmadığını sezer gibi oldular. Değme pehlivan Koca Yusuf'u bu şekilde savuramaz ve çaprazından kurtulamazdı.

Tabii bunu Koca Yusuf da anlamış ve birden uyanmıştı.

Şimdi ense bağladığı hasmını ağır ağır sürüyordu. Derken birden iki eli ile hasmını öne doğru kuvvetle çekerek eğdi ve aynı anda çevik bir hareketle arkasına dolanverdi.

Bu beklenmedik haber karşısında Kurtdereli hemen kendini yüzü koyun yere atarken çok kimseler güreşe artık sona ermiş gözü ile bakmaya başlamışlardı.

Nitekim hemen sesler yükselmeye başlamıştı:

- Haydi Yusuf Ağa!
- Künde!
- Saydır yıldızları şuna!
- Haydi arslan!

Koca Yusuf'un da maksadının bu olduğu, genç hasmını kısa bir zamanda yenmek istediği açık açık anlaşıyordu. Kendisini biraz daha yormak ve yıpratmak için kemâne-ye filân geçmeden künde aramaya başlamış olması bunu açık bir şekilde ortaya koyuyordu. Herhalde Kurtdereli'nin dakikaları sayılı olmalı idi.

Taraftarları bir taraftan Koca Yusuf'un genç hasmını kündelemesini

beklerlerken bir taraftan da şöyle konuşuyorlardı:

- Bu iş burada biter..

- Evet, hasmı pek hafif geldi Yusuf Ağa.

- Fena bir genç değil ama karşı-ındaki Koca Yusuf.

- Yirmi dakika oldu. Kendisine bu kadar dayanması da büyük bir şey doğrusu..

- Evet.. Bununla her zaman ögünebilir.

- Hem de haklı olarak..

Koca Yusuf dediğimiz gibi künde almak için çabalıyordu ama istediği oyunu bir türlü alamıyordu. Kurtdereli onun zorlamalarına pek güzel karşılık veriyordu.

Tuttuğu bu genç pehlivanın ne derece kuvvetli olduğunu Koca Yusuf ilk defa görüyordu. Kendisini kolayca, istediği anda yenebileceğini sanırken durumun hiç de böyle olmadığını görüyordu.

Bunu anlamak kendisine bir şaşkınlık verirken Kurtdereli'nin birdenbire tekten kaparak kalktığını gördü.

Hemen budayarak kaptırdığı paçasını kurtardı ama hasmını da altından kaçırmıyordu.

Kurtdereli'nin bu şekilde alttan kalkmaya muvaffak oluşu herkesi şaşırtmıştı. Şurada burada hemen konuşmalar başladı:

- Bu Kurtdereli denilen pehlivan yamanmış be!

- Ne rahat kalktı yerden?

- Vallah gözlerimle görmesem inanmazdım.

- Aşkolsun demek gerekir..

- Hiçde boş bir pehlivan değilmiş.

- Orası doğru ama Koca Yusuf onu gene de çabuk yener. Ehemmiyet vermiyordu kendisine.. Şimdi onun zorlu bir genç olduğunu anlayınca işi ciddi tutacaktır.

Nitekim bu görüşün ne kadar doğru olduğu hemen anlaşıldı. Koca Yusuf şimdi cedit kendisinininki gibi Deliormanlı olan bu gence karşı pek sert, pek sıkı hamlelere girmişti. Fakat bu hamleleri karşı-ındaki gencin üzerinde pek de beklediği tesiri yapamıyordu. Genç Kurtdereli bu sert hamlelerden kolayca sıyrılmanın yolunu bulabiliyordu. Böylece de dakikalar ilerledikçe güreşte adeta bir denkleme oluyordu.

(Devamı var)

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Koca Yusuf'un bazı müfrit taraftarları bu durum karşısında sabırsızlanmaya başlamışlardı. Şuradan buradan sesler aksediyordu:

- Haydi be Yusuf Ağa!
- Çok uzattın işi..
- Yarım saat oldu.
- Yeter artık!

Ne var ki bütün bu seslenmeler durumu değiştirmiyordu.

İki pehlivan arasındaki güreşi en büyük dikkatle izleyenlerden biri de başhakem Kel Aliço idi. Koca Yusuf'a düşen pehlivanın hakemlik arkadaşlarından Küçük Hüseyin pehlivanın çırağı olduğunu öğrenmiş olduğundan bir ara kendisine dönerek:

- Bu senin çırakta çok iş var Hüseyin pehlivan, dedi.

Çırağının güreşini büyük bir heyecan içinde izlemekte olan Küçük Hüseyin pehlivan Aliço'nun onu beğenmiş olmasına pek sevindi:

- Daha çok genç Koca usta! diye karşılık verdi. İlk defa Yusuf gibi bir pehlivanla tutuyor.

- İyi ama Yusuf'un ona birşey yapabildiği yok.

- Belki de ona kıymet vermediği için gevşek davranıyor.

- Başlangıçta öyle idi ama şimdi değil.. Aferin senin çırağa!

- Sağol!

- Ona iyi bak! Allah bozmasa çok geçmeden adını her yerde geçirecek bir pehlivan olacaktır.

- İnşallah!

Kel Aliço doğru konuşuyordu. Koca Yusuf artık ilk defa tuttuğu bu genç pehlivan karşısında varını yığını ortaya koymuş bulunuyordu. Hamlelerini sertleştirmediği kadar sertleştirmişti.

Buna rağmen karşısındakinde hiçbir gevşeme yoktu. Kendisine başarı ile karşı duruyordu. Girişmek istediği bütün oyunları da vaktinde sezip bunları boşa çıkarmaya muvaffak oluyordu.

Hamleleri hep Koca Yusuf yapmakta olduğu halde güreş denkleşmiş sayılırdı.

Bir kısım seyirciler bunu başka şekilde yorumlamaya başlamışlardı şimdi. Bunlar şöyle diyorlardı:

- Koca Yusuf hasmını istediği anda rahatça yenebilir. Yenmemesinin sebebi, Adalı'yı beklemesidir. Adalı Halil pehlivanın hasmını kolay yenmesini bilmediğini biliyor ve onu bekliyor.

Bu sözlere inananların sayısı gitgide de artıyordu.

Güreş bu şekilde kırkbeş dakika kadar sürdü. Sonra da o beklenmeyen şey oldu.

İki pehlivan karşılıklı olarak ense bağlamış, birbirlerini zorlayıp duruyorlardı. Bir ara Kurtdereli sol ayağını fazlaca ileri alınca Koca Yusuf, kolunun uzunluğundan faydalanaarak uzanıp hasmının paçasını sağlam bir şekilde eline geçirmeye muvaffak oldu.

Kurtdereli bunu sezince bir taraftan ayağını gerekten bir taraftan da hasmına abanmaya başladı. Paçasını Koca Yusuf'un pençesinden ancak bu şekilde kurtarmaya muvaffak olabilecekti.

Ne var ki Koca Yusuf'un pençesi idi bu pençe.. Yapıştığı yerden kolay kolay sökülebilecek gibi değildi.

Kurtdereli'nin de kuvveti ortada.. O da gittikçe artan bir kuvvetle ayağını germekte devam ediyordu.

Sonra birdenbire Koca Yusuf'un pençesinin hasmının paçasından ayrıldığı görüldü. Ancak Koca Yusuf'un parmakları arasında birşeyler vardı ve Kurtdereli'nin de sol paçası sarkmıştı.

Bu durum karşısında güreş birdenbire durmuştu. Koca Yusuf'un elindeki, Kurtdereli'nin kşbetinin köşebent denilen çuhası idi. Pehlivanlar paçalarını bağlarken kşbetlerinin iç tarafına çuha sararlar ve ipi bunun üzerinden dolayarak hasmının parmakları içeri giremeyecek şekilde sıkıca sararlar. Böylece çok sıkı bağlanan paça ayağı kesmez. Damarları boğmaz. Kan dolaşımını engellemez.

İşte Koca Yusuf zorlama sonunda bu çuha parçasını sökmüş bulunuyordu. Ve Köşebent elinde kalmıca da Kurtdereli'nin paçasını bağladığı ipler gevşemiş, paça sarkmıştı.

Bu duruma düşen bir pehlivan, kendi ayarında bir hasm ile güreşiyorsa bu güreşi kaybetmeye mahkum kalırdı. Çünkü hasmı her zaman gevşeyen paçasını ele geçirebilir ve hatta kşbetini bile dikmiş yerinden yırtabilirdi.

Küçük Hüseyin pehlivan bu talih-sizlik karşısında yerinden kalkmış, ortaya doğru yürümüştü. Cazgırla birlikte aynı zamanda iki pehlivanın yanına ulaştılar.

Şimdi güreşin sonucu Koca Yusuf'a kalmış bulunuyordu. İsterse hasmına paçasını yeniden bağlaması için izin verebilirdi. O zaman da güreş yeniden başlardı. İstemezse hasmının pesetmesi gerekirdi.

(Devamı var)

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Kurtdereli ona bakarak:

- Paçamı yeniden bağlamama izin verecek mısın usta? diye sordu.

Yüzünden uğramış bulunduğu bu talihsizlik karşısında ne derece üzgün olduğu pek kolay anlaşılabilir.

Yusuf cevap vermeden önce başını öbür güreşe çevirdi. Bu sırada Adalı Halil Katrancı'yı bastırmasından durmadan kemaneleri çekiyordu. Belki de hasmını bu durum karşısında fazla dayanamadan pesederdi.

O ise ilk defa tuttuğu bu genç pehlivanın ne derece çetin olduğunu pek güzel anlamış bulunuyordu. Evet, herşeye rağmen onu yenbilirdi ama iyiden iyiye yorulmak zorunda kalacaktı. Asıl rakibi olan Adalı Halil pehlivan karşısında bu derece yorgun bir halde çıkmak tabii onun ekmeğine yağ sürmek olurdu. Üstelik başhakemlik yerinde Adalı Halil Pehlivanın ustası ve kendisinin baş düşmanı olan Aliço oturuyordu.

Kendisini tehlikeye atmak istemedi.

Ve Kurtdereli'ye değil de yanlarına gelen ustası Küçük Hüseyin pehlivana dönerek şu sözleri söyledi:

- Maşallah çok iyi bir çırak yetiştirmişsin. Bu delikanlı kısa bir zaman içinde çok büyük bir pehlivan olacaktır. Onu fazlasıyla beğendim. Ona istediği izni de eğer sen de istersen vermeye hazırım. Ama o zaman çok daha sert güreşmek zorunda kalacağım. Başka türlü kendisini yenemeyeceğimi anladım çünkü. Bu körpe delikanlıyı bana ezdirmesene çok daha iyi olur.

Küçük Hüseyin pehlivan onun ne demek istediğini hemen anlamıştı. Koca Yusuf gibi dobra dobra konuşmasını seven bir pehlivanın sözlerindeki manayı pek güzel kavramış bulunuyordu.

Hemen çırağına döndü:

- Öp Yusuf ağanın elini! dedi. Bu, aynı zamanda kendisine pes etmek manasına geliyordu.

Demek ustası güreşi bırakmasını uygun buluyordu.

İtiraz etmeden dediğini yaptı. Koca Yusuf da onu alından öptü. Ve şu sözleri söyledi:

- Dedğim gibi maşallah çok iyi pehlivan olmuşsun. Ne benden, ne de Adalı'dan geri tarafın yok. Haf-taya Çanakkale'de güreşler var. Ortaya güzel bir deve koymuşlar. Bu güreşe mutlaka gelmelisin.

- Olur gelirim.

Durum bu şekilde gelişince ve Kurtdereli güreşi Koca Yusuf'a bırakınca cazır da sonucu bu şekilde ilân etti:

- Kurtdereli Mehmet pehlivan güreşi bırakmış, Koca Yusuf pehlivan galip gelerek sona kalmıştır.

Şimdi ortada sadece bir çift güreş kalmıştı. Ve Adalı, Katrancı'yı durmadan zorluyordu.

Bu, Kurtdereli'nin ciddi olarak güreşe başladığından beri uğramış bulunduğu üçüncü mağlubiyetti. Ve pek tabii olarak üzgündü. Uğramış olduğu talihsizlikten dolayı nerede ise ağlayacaktı.

Koca Yusuf gibi bir pehlivana böyle davranmak hiç yakışık alır mı idi? Sanki kendisine paçasını yeniden bağlaması için izin verecek olsa ne kaybederdi?

Ustası onun bu üzgün halini farkedince:

- Üzülmene sebep yok Mehmet! dedi. Koca Yusuf'un seni nasıl takdir ettiğini gördün. Pehlivanlığını Aliço bile takdir etti. Ezilmeden güreştin. Koca Yusuf çok efendi bir pehlivandır. Göreceksin, alta kalmayacaktır. Sana her zaman paçanı bağlayan için izin verirdi. Ama onun asıl hasmını Adalı Halil pehlivandır. Onunla güreşirken iyi durumda olmak, fazla yorgun düşmemek istedi. Bunda da yerden göğë kadar hakkı var.

Kurtdereli bu sözlerin haklı olduğunu anlıyordu ama gene de üzüntü duymaktan geri kalmıyordu.

İşte Çardak güreşinin aslı budur. Bazıları bu meşhur güreşte Koca Yusuf'un, Kurtdereli Mehmet pehlivanın kusbetini boydan boya yuttuğunu, bazıları da parça parça kopardığını ileri sürerler ki bu doğru değildir. Tabii bu arada paçayı saran iplerin iki pehlivanın kuvvetine dayanamayarak çatır çatır koptuğunu da ileri sirenler vardır.

Halbuki İngiliz sicimi denilen bu son derece sağlam ve onbeş yirmi kat olarak sarılan ip hiçbir şekilde insan kuvveti ile koparılamaz. Doğru insan pençesi, bir çift mandanın kuvveti bile buna yetmez.

Bugün hayatta bulunan ve bu güreşi çok iyi bilen meşhur Manisalı Rifat pehlivan bana durumu aynen bu şekilde anlatmıştır. Doğru olan ve akla uygun gelen de budur. Öbür rivayetler sadece birer masaldan ibarettir.

(Devamı var)