

The Element of Water in the Tales and Stories of Ferda İzbudak Akıncı*

Esma Dumanlı Kadızadeⁱ
Mersin Universty

Ayşe Tahtaⁱⁱ
Ministry of Education

Abstract

This is a study conducted on the works in the field of children's literature by Ferda İzbudak Akıncı who has achieved important goals and created works in the field of children's literature. It has become necessary to conduct the study due to the fact that the author and her works had not been studied with a comprehensive analysis, and the element of water used frequently and functionally in her works has reached remarkable dimensions. We determined the sample group randomly selected among the works of the author in the field of children's literature, in order to determine with which functions the element of water appeared or did not. In the study, we used document analysis as a qualitative research method. We obtained various codes related to the element of water in the documents analysed. These are; rescue, revival, relief and entertainment. In the traditional sense, we observed that mother figure was created based on the element of water; missing parents were replaced with the nature. However, given that the mother figure is not just any random mother, her attributes reach up to supernal dimensions; we believe that the author intended to create a "mother goddess" from a species existing in the form of "Kybele". Since the works contain not only the good aspects of water, but also the destructive sides, we have concluded that god-like aspect of water is completed by using a punishing structure. Water's having protection and auxiliary elements bonded to it, and accepting the natural formations hosting water as sanctuaries can be listed among grounds of our conclusion.

Keywords: Water, Story, Children Literature, Ferda İzbudak Akıncı

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ⁱ **Esma Dumanlı Kadızade**, Assoc. Prof. Dr., Turkish Education, Mersin Universty

Correspondence: esmakadizade@mersin.edu.tr

ⁱⁱ **Ayşe Tahta**, T Turkish Education, Turkish Teacher

INTRODUCTION

Water, which is defined as “a colourless, odourless and tasteless substance in liquid form” (TDK, 2011, p.2163), is at the same time one of the four elements, which are believed to be at the basis of the universe and the all beings. While it has been discussed, in the theory of evolution, that the first living organism appeared in water, the religious sources, on the other hand, imply that water was prior to all creatures, and all life was built upon water and the essence of all created beings is water. Water, which comprises almost 70% of the body of humans and which is a requisite for living, has been at the centre of human life in every era. In ages, when the technology was not developed, humans established their settlements near water banks. Water has always brought along life.

Humankind, who has to bow down to the power of water in natural events such as torrents, freshets and floods, encounters with the destructive force of water as well as its constructive aspects. At this point humankind resorts to sacralising water and enshrines it. “... This conception goes as far as deifying water in some non-divine religions, and in some of them water is used as a means of religious cleansing.” (Erbaş, 2004, p.242) The concept of water, which exists theologically in beliefs in multifarious religions, represents redemption and cleansing from evil. The use of water as a religious cleansing means is seen in baptism and ritual purification. In Christianity, it is “believed that the individual becomes a new person with baptism, which represents the burial and revival of Jesus Christ after he was killed.” This new individual is redeemed from the sins he or she brought from birth and accepted as reborn with the Holy Spirit. (Akalm, 2014, p. 47) In Hindu mythology, water shows up as the symbol of birth. The life on earth begins with a piece of land, which is brought from the depths of water, which is thought to cover the whole world. The formation of life in the universe is represented with birth, which is the beginning of human life. “The boar, which plunges and brings a piece of soil to the surface, is acknowledged as the symbol of the emergence of the form (embryo) in Hindu mythology” (Türkmen, 2013, p.14).

In Turkic mythology, water appears with its healing property. It is thought, in Turkic mythology, that the ‘water of eternal life’ even cures death. The water of eternal life, which is believed to be at Mount Alburuz (Elbrus) means sweet and tasty water with drops granting eternal life, elixir of life. Water has a holy place in folk beliefs with healing and supernatural powers.” (Büyükyıldırım, 2013, pp.37-38) Water of eternal life, which attracts attention with its healing property, is deified with its properties to give immortality, resurrection and to grant life. Water, which has a significant place in Greek mythology, is seen with its revitalising, exhilarative aspects. Bull’s blood, poured down to the soil by mixing with water for bringing abundance, is a poison without water. “Cretans and Mycenaeans used bull’s blood mixed with water as sorcery to bring abundance to the trees and the crops. Drinking of the pure blood was unique to the priestess of Mother Earth (Gaia); only she had the privilege for not being poisoned for drinking it.” (Graves, 2010, p.810)

Abundance granting feature of water is attributed to earth in the Anatolian culture. Earth is deified in the form of Cybele (mother earth, mother goddess). “Cybele”, which was born in Anatolian culture, but which carried its effects to wider areas, “was brought to Italy as Magna Mater (the great mother) by the Romans, and was respected in all of Europe under this name...” (Ersoy, 1996, p.2) Mother earth / mother goddess, which is referred to under different names in various cultures, embodies features, which are attributed to water, such as protectiveness, wealth and abundance granting, creation, fertility, nurturing, etc. It inevitable for water, which has been penetrated to the consciousness of the societies to this extent, to have a substantial place in the literary works pertaining to those societies. Water, which has been mentioned in poems, epics, folk tales and legends in Turkish literature, is generally reflected with its mythological, religious and cultural aspects.

When the literature is reviewed, it is seen that there has not been any study with the theme “water” on children’s literature, but the following studies are present. Kardaş (2012), in his master’s thesis titled “Spring Motive in Turkish Folk Poetry”, investigated the use of spring motive in folk poetry with regard to its meanings and functions. Türkan (2012), in her paper titled “Water Cult in the Folktales of the Turkish World”, scrutinized first the water owner and the reflections of water in the

culture in terms of mythology and religion. In the light of these, she discussed the water elements in folktales of the Turkish World. Çiftçi (2013), in his paper titled “Water Cult in Turks from Past to Present” scrutinizes the water cult in Turks over the works selected from different eras of Turkish history and also prayers and rituals which have permeated to the consciousness of the people. Batıslam (2013), in her paper titled “Water and Water Related Elements in Ottoman Poetry”, investigated the work of Ottoman poets with reference to the use of water as an element of harmony in the poems, and to its use in figures of speech. Öztekten (2013), in his paper titled “Fuzuli and Water Qasida”, scrutinised the Water Qasida by the Ottoman poet Fuzuli to praise his holiness Mohammad, and he found that there is an intonational structure in the poem with the alliteration and rhythm elements as well as the use of the water element. Yeniterzi (2013), in her paper titled “Reasons for Fuzuli Selecting the Water Radif in Water Qasida” investigated the semantic relation between water and his holiness Mohammad, in the work, which was written to praise the prophet. Erbaş (2004), in his paper titled “Water Motif in Different Religions” investigated the meanings and functions of water owner in different religions.

In this study, the element of water in the works of Ferda İzbudak Akıncı will be examined. Akıncı, who is one of the children’s literature authors, informed the children by using the denotational meaning of water, and gave coverage to the perception of water in mythological, religious and cultural dimensions by using symbolic expressions. The author, who organizes various educational activities and talk shows, also reflects her didactic characteristics in the works. She informs the reader sometimes via water or wind, which she personified, or sometimes she does this through the agency of the heroes. In this respect, the following works of the author are analysed: Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales), Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower), Su Masalları (Water Tales), Sokak Kuşu/Uçurtmanın Gözleri (Dead-end Bird/The Eyes of the Kite), Işıklı Ayakkabılar (Light-up Shoes), Çuvaldiken Kasabası (Sackstitch Town), (The Child Nobody Understand is at Home), Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls), Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalcı (Taleteller on the Nettle Tree), Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night), Bisiklet Yarışçıları (Bike Racers).

METHOD

The data in this study, which is a qualitative one, is evaluated via content analysis by conducting an examination of documents. The study is conducted using stories/tales and a novel of Ferda İzbudak Akıncı. The writer’s stories and tales are (Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales), Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower), Su Masalları (Water Tales), Sokak Kuşu/Uçurtmanın Gözleri (Dead-end Bird/The Eyes of the Kite), Işıklı Ayakkabılar (Light-up Shoes), Çuvaldiken Kasabası (Sackstitch Town), Kimsenin Anlamadığı Çocuk Evde (The Child Nobody Understand is At Home), Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls), Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalcı (Taleteller on the Nettle Tree), Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night). The novel of the writer which is also selected with simple random sampling method is Bisiklet Yarışçıları (Bike Racers). The other novels of the writer is Kış Ülkesi Çocukları (Winter Country Children), Bergamalı Simo (Simo from Bergama), Mutluluk Sokağı (Happiness Street), Üç Yapraklı Yonca (Three Leaf Clover), Aynalı Göl (Mirrored Lake), Süpürge Bebek (Broom Baby), Sudaki Ateş (Fire in Water), which are not included in the sample of study. Simple random sampling is a sampling method where every item in the population has an even chance. In this method the selection of the items is entirely based on chance or by probability.

This study that aims to detect the water elements in works of Akıncı, one of the writers of the children’s literature in Turkey, was analyzed with “document analysis” method that is one of the qualitative research methods. Document analysis is defined as follows: “A research approach that aims to describe a past or current situation (work, source, etc.) as it is.” (Karasar, 2007, s.77). Taking this approach into consideration, the works (documents) in the study area were examined with content analysis method. Researchers and experts of the field examined the works in accordance with the document analysis and presented their analysis while carrying out the data analysis.

The purpose of the content analysis is to achieve helpful concepts and relations in explaining the obtained data. The basic process done in the content analysis is to gather similar data within certain

concepts and themes and to interpret them by arranging in a way that the reader can understand. In the works analysed, the functions of water elements are investigated, and nine codes are formed considering these functions. These are reunification, relaxation, entertainment, substitution for mother, rejuvenation, salvation, deification, vitalisation, and instruction-arousing curiosity. The data in the works were matched with codes.

FINDINGS

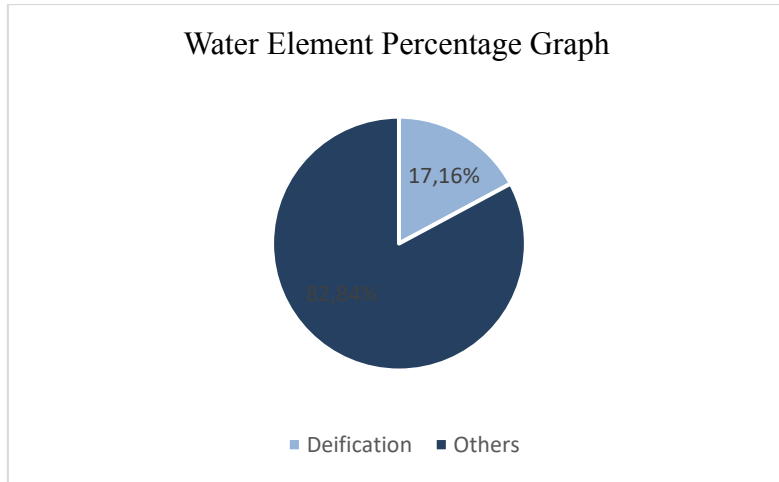
When the use of the element of water in the works is examined, nine separate codes are found as reunification, relaxation, entertainment, substitution for mother, rejuvenation, salvation, deification, vitalisation, and instruction-arousing curiosity. It is seen that 'deification' and 'vitalisation' are used the most among these codes.

A-Deification

Water has been seen as a divine power and sacralised in numerous cultures and mythologies. In the works of Akıncı, motherhood and femininity are attributed to water along with the deification of water. The motherhood structure is preserved in water image along as well as the divine functions. In this case, it can be thought that water becomes visible in the form of the 'mother goddess'. The deification via the element of 'water' by the author is done through 'earth' in the Anatolian culture. 'Mother earth' expressed as 'Cybele' exhibits the characteristics of protection, nurturing and accepting offering with the altar structure. These features of 'mother earth' corresponds to the 'mother water' structure seen in the works of Akıncı.

In the book titled "Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls)" the doe-gazed girl becomes further isolated with the death of her father and after her mother. The animals who visit her garden every night resolve her loneliness. The girl offers water from the fountain in the garden to these animals, who are thirsty. One night, the animals turn up in the garden with different things they found in the forest in return for the water: "There were some stack of flowers, a pinch of herbs, a piece of branch or a forest fruit in the mouth of each animal. They left what they had brought to the fountainhead... In the small hours, all of them fell asleep." (Ç.B, Akıncı, 2007, pp.30-31) The 'altar', the structure where the animals offered to the God are sacrificed, the gifts are presented, is represented as the fountainhead in the work. The fountainhead, reflected as an altar, reminds us the rock stairs of the Anatolian Goddess Cybele. Because "these stairs climbing towards a kind of seat are believed to be used as an altar." (Birecikli, 2010, p.6) The gifts being placed, not in front of the girl or in her hand, but on the fountainhead, supports the altar conception that can be explained as the "stone table in the temples on which animals are sacrificed, sweetgum incenses are burnt and religious rituals are performed." (TDK, 2011, p.2171) In addition, the animals, visiting the girl every night, either come directly to the fountainhead or they rest at the fountainhead after drinking water. This incident that repeats every night in a similar fashions appears ritualistic.

In the tale, in the book "Su Masalları (Water Tales)", the help of a lighthouse to two little girls is told. At the beginning of the tale, detailed information is given about the lighthouse. In this information, the lighthouse becomes prominent as a protective element. The lighthouse can be thought to have similarities with the one-eyed creatures in mythology. These one-eyed creatures mentioned in Odyssey and called the Cyclops are the children of Poseidon, the god of sea, and the sea nymphs. (Homer, 1994) The one-eyed creature, which is present in different cultures under different names, does not represent evil in the works of Akıncı, to the contrary to mythology; it represents a form related to good in accordance with the 'divine water' imagery: "Not only waiting for ships was its duty. It watched over the town too. Its light is the eye of the lighthouse. It kept its weather eye open when darkness fell." (S.M, Akıncı, 2010c, pp.7-8) The one-eyed creature, which we encounter as Tepegöz (Fore-Eye) in Turkish mythology and as the children of the sea of god and sea nymphs in Greek mythology, is impersonated as the 'lighthouse' in the tale. The high interaction of the lighthouse with the sea strengthens the 'divine water' imagery, and represents the lighthouse as a foot soldier/help mate to the sea.



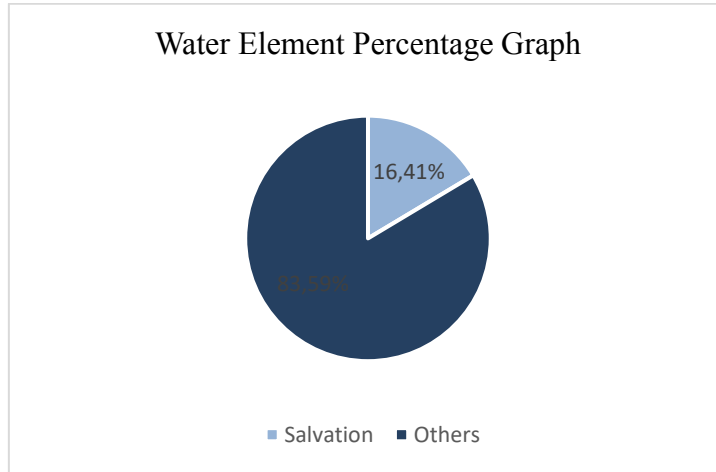
Deification is the most used code with 17.16% among other codes. Among the works analysed, deification code is encountered in stories/tales titled “Su Masalları (Water Tales) (f:7)”, “Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls) (f:7)”, “Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales) (f:3)”, “Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalcı (Tale-tellers on the Nettle Tree) (f:3)”, “Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower) (f:2)” and “Sokak Kuşu (The Dead-End Bird) (f:1).” In the works titled “Uçurtmanın Gözleri (The Eyes of the Kite)”, “Işıklı Ayakkabılar (Light-up Shoes)”, “Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night)”, “Bisiklet Yarışçıları (Bike Racers)”, “Çuvaldiken Kasabası (Sackstitch Town)” and “(The Child Nobody Understand is at Home) deification code is not found. The books titled “Water Tales”, which comprises of the tales the author wrote basing on the element of water, and “The Mud dolls”, in which water is used as a means of ritual, are the works in which the deification code is intensely used.

B-Salvation Aspect

It is seen, in Akıncı’s books, that water has the role of helping people, rescuing them from dire situations. Water brings salvation, sometimes by helping a broken girl to find the talent of her hands, or sometimes by being the beacon hope for a whole town.

In the story called “Çuvaldiken Kasabası (Sackstitch Town)”, a small town is told, which is self-supporting, productive and which eats its fill and earns its keep with what it produces. However, this situation changes with a vendor coming to the town one day. The town leaves producing and starts to trade with the vendor. The townspeople, who became poor as they made trade with the vendor, decide to start producing again to get rid of this dire situation. Because, the means to subvert the vendor’s order based on consumption is to work and to be productive again: “Beforelong, a never-before-seen work started in the town. They ran about for days. The fields were ploughed, sown, and irrigated.” (Ç.K, Akıncı, 2010a, p.47) The recommence of production by the townspeople have the characteristics of a silent revolt against the system of exploitation, and the return of the town to its life before the arrival of the vendor. Water has a salvation role, albeit it is indirect, in the townspeople recommencing to produce by cultivating.

In the book titled “The Mud dolls”, the doe-gazed girl makes babies from the earth, which is dampened by the rain, while she is waiting for her animal friends at the fountainhead: “One night, the lonely girl was sitting at the fountainhead in the garden again all by herself. The earth was wet for it rained a couple of days. She started to play with the mud where the water ran. She took a lump of mud in her hand. She turned it up and down, back and forth. She kneaded and shaped it.” (Ç.B, Akıncı, 2007, p.32) When the girl was losing her hope for discovering her ability, suddenly water appeared and shaped the girl’s future. It can be thought that water, offered to the thirsty animals, saved the girl’s life by changing dimension and by appearing as the rain.

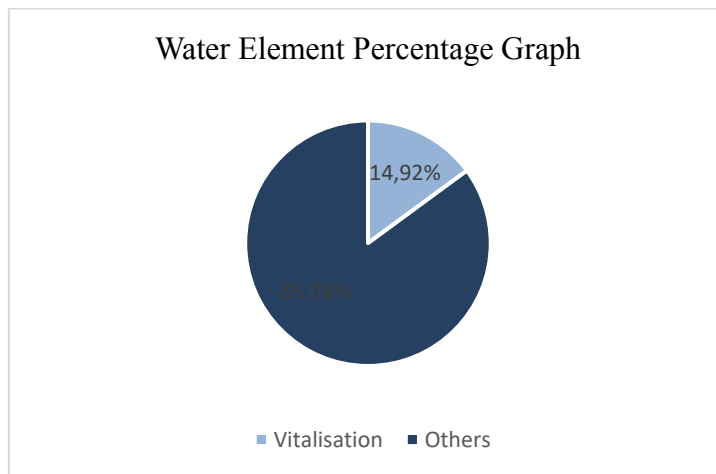


Salvation comprises 16.41% of the water elements determined in this study. The salvation code intensely used in the book titled “Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls) (f:10)” is also seen in the works titled “Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalçı (Tale-teller on the Nettle Tree) (f:5)”, “Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night) (f:2)”, “Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales) (f:2)”, “Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower) (f:1)”, “Su Masalları (Water Tales) (f:1)”, and “Çuvaldiken Kasabası (Sackstitch Town) (f:1). In the works titled “Sokak Kuşu (The Dead-end Bird)”, “Uçurtmanın Gözleri (The Eyes of the Kite)”, “Kimsenin Anlamadığı Çocuk Evde (The Child Nobody Understand is at Home)”, and “Bisiklet yarışçıları (Bike Racers)”, any examples of salvation could not be found.

C-Vitalisation

Water gives life to living things with its nurturing structure as well as offering a habitat for these living things. Water gives life, in the works, sometimes to a quince tree, sometimes to the leaves and gardens.

In the story titled “Ayva Ağacı (The Quince Tree)” in “Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower)”, Ezgi and her mother go and visit a relative who live in a house with a large garden. Ezgi loves the thing in this garden so much that she decides to become an agricultural engineer and has a dream about this garden that night: “She was spudding the bases of the trees, pouring water on the ground. The flowers of the quince tree were increasing as she watered and spudded the soil. Among these lowers the golden quinces were falling down.” (K.K, Akıncı, 2012, p.61) In Ezgi’s dream, the blooming of the quince trees and bearing quinces, are related to the pouring of water on the ground. This reflects the abundance and fruitfulness bringing features of water.

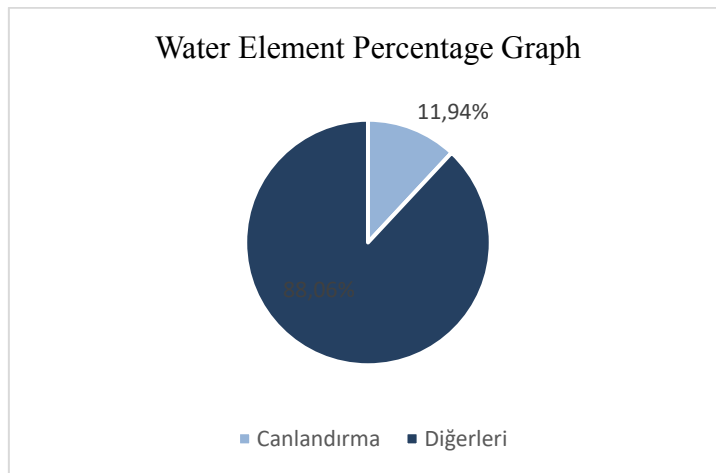


The vitalisation code has a 14.92% share among the determined elements of water. The vitalising feature of water is seen intensely in the books “Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower) (f:6)”, “Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales) (f:6)” and “Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night) (f:4)”. The vitalisation of water is also observed in the books “Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalcı (Tale-tellers on the Nettle Tree) (f:2)”, “Uçurtmanın Gözleri (The Eyes of the Kite) (f:1)” and “Sokak Kuşu (The Dead-end Bird) (f:1). Among the analysed works, vitalisation code is not found in “Su Masalları (Water Tales)”, “Işık-lı Ayakkabılar (Ligh-t-up Shoes)”, “Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls)”, “Kimsenin Anlamadığı Çocuk Evde (The Child Nobody Understand is at Home)”, “Çuvaldiken Kasabası (Sackstitch Town)”, and “Bisiklet Yarışçı-ları (Bike Racers)”.

D-Rejuvenation

One of the elements in the works is the rejuvenative feature of water. It is possible to mention the effect of water on humans to maintain and increase their livingness. The organism’s contact with water increases the life potential and contains the feature of rejuvenation.

In the narrative titled “Kış Kulesi (The Bird Tower), the children in the city does not accept Mustafa among them, who was newly moved to the city from the village. They leave Mustafa in an olive grove and set for their way. Mustafa, who is curious about the thing the other children are hiding from him, follows them secretly. The children are planning to have fun in the river on their way. “He envied as the children take off their shoes and jumped into the water. He felt like to join them in the water. The children splattered water to each other and washed their faces. They drank water. They cooled off. Mustafa sweated buckets.” (K.K, Akıncı, 2012, pp.74-75). While water is quenching the thirst of children, it also replenishes and rejuvenates them.



The rejuvenation code has a percentage of 11.94% in the works analysed. The rejuvenating feature of water is seen in the works titled “Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalcı (Tale-tellers on the Nettle Tree) (f:5)”, “Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower) (f:5)”, “Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales) (f:1)”, “Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night) (f:2)”, “Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls) (f:1)”, “Kimsenin Anlamadığı Çocuk Evde (The Child Nobody Understand is at Home) (f:1)”, and “Bisiklet Yarışçı-ları (Bike Racers) (f:1)”. The rejuvenation code is not seen in the books titled “Su Masalları (Water Tales)”, “Sokak Kuşu (The dead-end Bird)”, “Uçurtmanın Gözleri (The Eyes of the Kite)”, “Çuvaldiken Kasabası (Sackstitch Town)”, and “Işık-lı Ayakkabılar (Light-up Shoes)”.

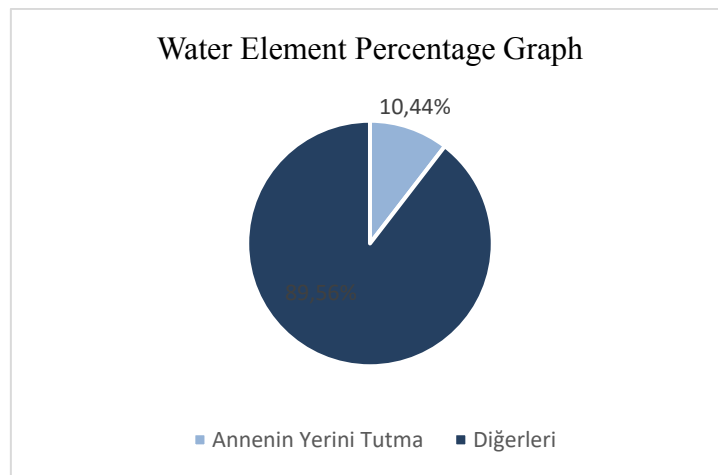
E-Substitution for Mother

The element of water in the works of the author reflects all the qualities a mother could have. These are qualities like nurturing, lulling, and teaching. The author completes the lives of children who are experiencing the lack of a father and/or mother by impersonating the element of water. Water

turns into a compassionate mother who mothers the children with its protection sometimes, and who lulls them to sleep some other time.

The element of water, which is acknowledged to have a feminine nature and which is related to birth in mythology, "... is the uterus, in other words it is female and fertile, it is the sum of all concealed powers, within the cosmology forming around it." (cited from Eliade by Türkan, 2012, p.136) Akıncı completes the fertility feature of water with other features such as nurturing, showing affection, lulling, and singing lullabies.

In the tale titled "Kırmızı Balık (The Red Fish)" in the book "Su Masalları (Water Tales)", the story of a youngster who lives with his grandmother and earns their lives by fishing. As it can be understood from the young fisherman's living with her grandmother, there is a deprivation from parents. The sea, which the young fisherman meets every night, fulfils the young fisherman's longing for a mother: "He dipped his hands into the sea and slept hand by hand with the sea. The water was soft as velvet. And the sea, too, knew how to make herself loved. She was rocking his small boat swiftly like a cradle. She was caressing his goldilocks with her sweet breeze. She was giving him plenty of fish for him to feed and to live. (S.M, Akıncı, 2010c, s.19) In the story, the motherhood of water to the young fisherman is described. The sea lulls the young fisherman by holding his hands with her velvet swift touch, and by rocking his boat like a mother rocking her baby's cradle with mother's affection. Water uses her breezes for caressing the hair of the young fisherman. The sea does not fail in doing the most divine work a mother would do for her children. She feeds the young fisherman as a mother feeds her babies.

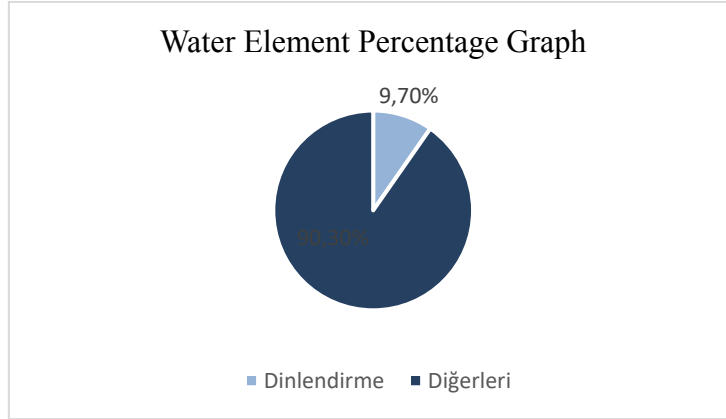


The substitution for mother code has percentage of 10.44% among other codes. The substitution for mother code is used the most in the book "Su Masalları (Water Tales) (f:9)". It is thought that the element of water is used as a substitute for mother in the books "Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales) (f:2)", "Işıklı Ayakkabılar (Light-Up Shoes) (f:1)", "Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night) (f:1)", and "Kimsenin Anlamadığı Çocuk Evde (The Child Nobody Understand is at Home) (f:1)". The substitution for mother code is not found in the books "Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower)", "Sokak Kuşu (The Dead-end Bird)", "Uçurtmanın Gözleri (The Eyes of the Kite)", "Çuvaldiken Kasabası (Sackstitch Town)", "Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls)", "Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalcı (Taleteller on the Nettle Tree)", and "Bisiklet Yarışçıları (Bike Racers)".

F-Relaxation

Water exhibits a relaxing effect with its soothing and refreshing characteristics. Batur (2016, p.281), who explains the soothing and refreshing features of water over 'blue' colour, asserts that cold colours like blue recalls positive emotions such as confidence, calmness, comfort, peace, and freedom. He also states that blue colour, which is close to the colour of the sea and the sky increases the effect of relaxation. He mentions that water is used in the Ottoman Empire for its therapeutic effects for neurological diseases with its sound, apart from its colour.

In the tale titled “Küçük Tohum (The Small Seed)” in “Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales)”, a small pistachio seed carried by the wind is dropped near the brook. The sound of the brooks functions as a lullaby for the small seed which tries to sleep where he is carried by the wind to sprout and to grow: “In the nook, the seed has got sleepy. The splash of the brook was like a lullaby.” (R.M, Akıncı, 2010b, s.45) The brook can be compared to a mother who is singing a lullaby to lull her child.

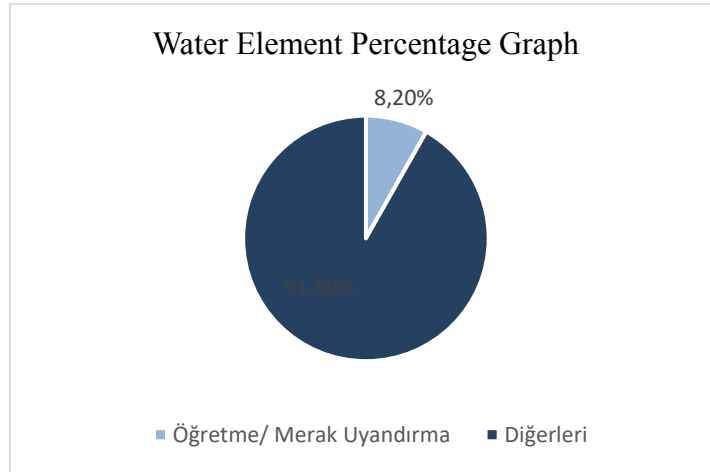


The percentage of the relaxation code among others is 9.7%. The relaxing feature of water is found in the books *Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales)* (f:3), *“Su Masalları (Water Tales)”* (f:2)”, *“Kimsenin Anlamadığı Çocuk Evde (The Child Nobody Understand is at Home)* (f:2)”, *“Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower)* (f:1)”, *“Uçurtmanın Gözleri (The Eyes of the Kite)* (f:1)”, *“Işıklı Ayakkabılar (Light-up Shoes)* (f:1)”, *“Çuvaldiken Kasabası (Sackstitch Town)* (f:1)”, *“Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalcı (Taletheller on the Nettle Tree)* (f:1)” and *“Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night)* (f:1)”. The relaxation code for water is not seen in the books *“Sokak Kuşu (The Dead-End Bird)”*, *“Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls)”*, and *“Bisiklet Yarışçıları (Bike Racers)”*.

G-Instruction-Arousing Curiosity

The instruction feature, which is quite rare to be attributed to water in mythology or in other sources, appears directly in water’s or in water related elements’ personalities in Akıncı’s works. Instruction is performed by either real or symbolic uses of water. The author uses water in a material sense with the water cycle, or may question water via a ‘red fish that speaks’.

In the tale ‘The Red Fish’, the curiosity arousing and instructing features of water are expressed in the narrations of the fisherman and the red fish. In the tale, one night, a red fish jumps into the boat of a young fisherman who lives with her grandmother. This fish asks questions to the fisherman every night and arouses curiosity and desire for learning. The questions of the red fish are mostly related to the sea: “Why is the sea blue?” (S.M, Akıncı, 2010c, p.22) The young fisherman learns the answers to this question by the red fish from the old fisherman: “It takes the colour of the sky, it’s why. The sky is blue. So is the sea... The sky turns to smoke-colour when it’s covered with rain clouds. Then take a good look at the sea. The sea also becomes smoke-colour.” (S.M, Akıncı, 2010c, p.26) The questions of the red fish orient the young fisherman to think, to question and to be more curious. The author performs the informing feature via the heroes, while instruction is performed in between the lines.



The percentage of the instruction/arousing curiosity feature of water among other codes is 8.20%. The instruction code is intensely seen in the book “Su Masalları (Water Tales) (f:8)”. Water is attributed with instructive features in the books “Uçurtmanın Gözleri (The Eyes of the Kite) (f:2), and “Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night) (f:1)”. In mythological and religious sources water is attributed with various duties; however, in these sources the information that water exhibit instruction feature is not present. The instruction/arousing curiosity structure of water poses a difference with this new mission imposed on water, although it remains in the background among other codes.

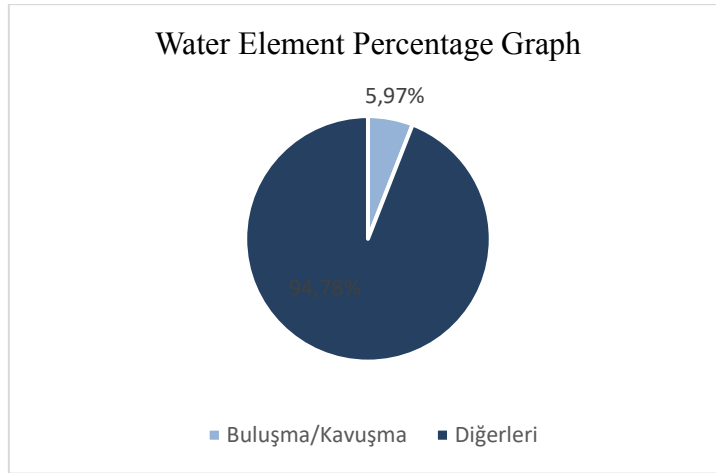
H-Reunification Element

‘Water’ effects the lives of humans by various means in the works of the author. One of these to reunite people either in real life or in fantastic or associative dimensions, who had to separate from each other even though they loved each other.

1. The Real Dimension: In the narrative “Gökyüzü Masmavi (The Sky is Deep Blue)” in “Işıklı Ayakkabılar (Light-up Shoes)”, the meeting point for a child, living with his grandparents, with his parents, who are living in Germany, is the campsite near the sea. The sea is the place that reunifies the heroes in the real world. This situation shows up in the expressions of the child who yearns for his parents: “In the summers, my parents come. They set up a tent big, even bigger than our alcove.” The sea becomes a place for reunification for the family members who cannot see each other too often.

2. Fantastic and Associative Dimension: In the books, heroes who could not reunite in the real world wish to reunite with their beloved ones in the fantastic dimension. In the narrative “Gökyüzü Masmavi (The Sky is Deep Blue), the hero who misses her mother, this time prefers a well for the place. The hero who has a difficulty in remembering her mother’s face, see the dream of her mother in the water as he looks at the surface of the water: In my dreams, my mother’s face is not present. Because she takes her face too, when she goes to Germany. I feel faint when I catch a glimpse of her. Tears start to fall down from my eyes one by one...” (I.A, Akıncı, 2009, p.42) The little girl who tells her sorrow and her joy to the well, in this way feels the presence of her mother via association. People, who have to separate from each other reunite either in the real world or in the fantastic dimension. However, water stands out as the common point for the two dimensions.

However, we see that both concepts have the ‘element of water’ in common.

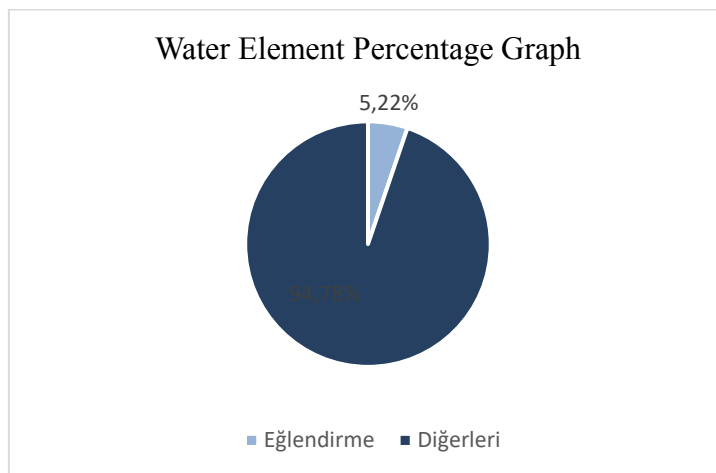


The percentage of the Reunification code is 5.97%. The reuniting feature of water on the people who had to separate from each other is seen in the books “Işıklı Ayakkabılar (Light-up Shoes) (f:3)”, “Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales) (f:2)”, “Su Masalları (Water Tales) (f:1)”, “Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalçı (Tale-teller on the Nettle Tree) (f:1)” and “Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night) (f:1)”. Reunification code is not seen in “Kimsenin Anlamadığı Çocuk Evde (The Child Nobody Understand is at Home)”, “Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower)”, “Uçurtmanın Gözleri (The Eyes of the Kite)”, “Çuvaldiken Kasabası (Sackstitch Town)”, “Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls)”, “Sokak Kuşu (The Dead-End Bird)”, and “Bisiklet Yarışçıları (Bike Racers)”.

I-Entertainment

Water appears in different forms in the books analysed, and especially in the form of ‘sea’, it symbolises vacation and entertainment. Especially, when the heroes are children, the entertainment aspect of water is apparent.

In the story title “Sevgili Rita (Dear Rita)”, our hero Emre moved from Germany to Turkey with his parents. Emre, who couldn’t get used to his new life, says that the only good side of this new place is the ‘sea’. “There is nothing beautiful here, other than the sea. But I have to wait for the summer to go to the sea. There’s nothing else except for watching it for now. How bad it is that there is not a swimming pool here.” (I.A, Akıncı, 2009, p.47) The entertainment feature of water is expressed via ‘sea’ and ‘swimming pool’.



The entertainment code is the least used code for the element of water in the works analysed with the percentage of 5.22%. The entertainment code is found in the books “Kuş Kulesi (The Bird

Tower) (f:2)”, “Işıklı Ayakkabılar (Light-up Shoes) (f:2)”, “Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalcı (Taleteller at the Nettle Tree) (f:2)”, and “Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night) (f:1)”.

CONCLUSION

In this study, conducted using eleven books out of twenty-one books of Ferda İzbudak Akıncı, (Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales), Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower), Su Masalları (Water Tales), Sokak Kuşu/Uçurtmanın Gözleri (Dead-end Bird/The Eyes of the Kite), Işıklı Ayakkabılar (Light-up Shoes), Çuvaldiken Kasabası (Sackstitch Town), (The Child Nobody Understand is At Home), Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls), Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalcı (Taleteller on the Nettle Tree), Kuğu Gecesi (Swan Night), Bisiklet Yarışçıları (Bike Racers)) selected with simple random sampling method, the functions of the element of water is investigated. The water motifs in the works analysed are categorised with regard to mythological, cultural and religious aspects, into nine codes (reunification, relaxation, entertainment, substitution for mother, rejuvenation, salvation, deification, vitalisation, and instruction-arousing curiosity).

When the codes are examined, it is seen that deification is the most used code with 17.16%, and it is followed by salvation (16.41%), vitalisation (14.92%), rejuvenation (11.94%), substitution for mother (10.44%), relaxation (9.7%), instruction-arousing curiosity (8.2%), reunification (5.97%) and entertainment (5.22%).

The literary works are affected by the values and lifestyles of societies. The most used deification code in the works is operative in understanding the mythological and religious characteristics of the society in which the work is produced. The intensive use of deification can be explained by the believing potential of a society. The structures used in the works of the author, such as ‘altar’ and ‘tepegöz (fore-eye)’ are the bases of the deification code. The deification code is intensely present in the books “Su Masalları (Water Tales)” and “Çamur Bebekler (The Mud dolls)”.

It is also seen that the salvation aspect of water is used frequently in the works. Water, which helps the heroes or to whole town’s people, appears at dire situations and fulfil the salvation task. It is seen that the salvation aspect of water is intense in the books “Çamur Bebekler (The Mud Dolls)” notably, and also “Çitlembik Ağacındaki Masalcı (Taleteller on the Nettle Tree)”.

Vitalisation code is analysed in the works via the power of water to give life to the plants, flowers, trees and their leaves. This situation becomes apparent with the example of the quince tree which gives fruits as soon as it is watered. The vitalisation feature of water is frequently seen in the books “Kuş Kulesi (The Bird Tower)”, and “Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales)”.

Water is an indispensable source of life for human beings as other living things. The situations in which water enables humans to maintain or increase their liveliness are examined under the vitalisation code.

Another frequently used structure of water element is seen as the substitution for mother. In situations, where the parents are separated from their children or behave uninterested in them for whatever reason, nature, water in particular, plays the ‘mother’ role to the child heroes in the works. It can be thought that these impersonalisations are warnings for the parents. The substitution for mother code is seen the most in the book “Su Masalları (Water Tales)”.

In relaxation code, there are the relaxing, soothing, and refreshing features of water with its sound, smell and colour. Water, which finds its place in the works with these features, would fulfil the relaxation task for the reader through the child heroes. Together with the heroes, who are alone with the smell of the sea, the sound of the river, the splash of the rain, the reader also reaches to serenity. The relaxation code is observed the most in the book “Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales)”.

The instruction feature, which is not frequent in mythological and religious sources, is examined under the instruction/arousing curiosity code. The instructor water motif, used in the works of Akıncı, is remarkable since it brings a new perspective to water. The elements of nature such as the wind and water, and the heroes are used in the works to inform the reader and arouse curiosity in them for the unknown. This attitude of the author can be attributed to the purpose for arousing curiosity and forming a motivation for research in the children. The work, in which the instruction/arousing curiosity code most intensely used, is “Su Masalları (Water Tales)”.

The meeting of the heroes or fulfilling their longing via the water element is analysed under the reunification code. In the examples, which reflect the opinions of the author on separations, we witness the obligation of the children to be separated from their beloved ones. In order to fulfil the longings of the heroes who fell apart, the water element would be used. It can be argued that the author wishes to transfer a pedagogical message about the separation and isolation the children experience. Because the author does not look on the separations the children experience. The element of water provides the meeting up of individuals in both the real world and in the fantastic dimensions. The reunification code is most frequently observed in the books “Işıklı Ayakkabılar (Light-up Shoes)” and “Rüzgar Masalları (Wind Tales)”.

The entertainment feature of water is the least frequently used code; however, it provides both the child heroes and the child readers an escape, a relaxation. The presence of the entertainment and instruction features of water at the same time could be assessed as the author reflecting a pedagogical perspective.

In the works, reflecting the significance of water in human life, water is sometimes deified, sometimes it becomes a saviour, sometimes it grants life, rejuvenates or it functions as an element of instruction/arousing curiosity, sometimes it becomes the element of reunification, sometimes it vitalises, sometimes it is a substitute for mother, sometimes it is the one that reunites, and sometimes it becomes prominent with its entertaining feature. Akıncı’s works contain important messages for both children and parents via the codes comprising various effects of water. Human beings, as a whole in various dimensions, are surrounded in all aspects from entertainment to instruction.

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