Individual, organization and structure: Rethinking social construction of everyday life at workplace in tourism industry

Mustafa Yıldırım

Faculty of Business Administration, Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University, Alanya, Antalya, Turkey

A B S T R A C T

This article analyzes the social construction of everyday life at workplace using the novel of Hakan Günday about a touristic jewellery shopping center. It utilizes research propositions drawn from the theories of symbolic interactionism, structuration and habitus. It is suggested that the results invite a need for rethinking the concepts of the Corrosion of Character by Sennett and of Zombie-Machine by Harding in the context of workplace studies. It is also concluded that the study provides a provocative but integrative understanding of the ideologies, paradigms, traditions and theories of action within a workplace generally and also specifically for the tourism industry within the context of structured agencies.

A R T I C L E   I N F O

"The smile behind the counter is a commercialized lure... 'Sincerity' is detrimental to one's job, until the rules of salesmanship and business become a 'genuine' aspect of oneself."

C. Wright Mills

"We are rather scornful of the attitude of salesmanship which modern business emphasizes—salesmanship which seems always to carry with it hypocrisy, to advocate putting one's self in the attitude of the other so as to trick him into buying something he does not want"

G. Herbert Mead

"To be a sales clerk, one need to have a large imagination and a small personality. Every talent has its downside. A large imagination leads to madness, a small personality to invisibility. The price of setting up a good scam is not knowing oneself and to wear a tie around your wounded throat. Tourism is a kind of acid. It melts everything. One becomes nothing but memories and finds out what he has become by looking in the mirrors of the shopping centers."

Hakan Günday

1. Introduction

The workplace has been studied from several aspects in the tourism literature. From a micro perspective, various studies with a positivist epistemology have focused on enterprises in the accommodation and travel sectors. These studies have investigated subjects like the influence of workplace relationships on work-related attitudes and behaviors (Ross & Boles, 1994), stress in the workplace (Faulkner & Patiar, 1997), workplace bullying (Bentley et al., 2012), deviant workplace behaviors (Yen & Teng, 2013), racialized workplace discourse (Brewster & Rusche, 2017), innovative workplace behavior (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2018), workplace spirituality (Milliman, Gatling, & Kim, 2018), and workplace theft (Goh & Kong, 2018). However, they can be criticized for having been conducted with the paradigm of effective management of enterprises and the financial use of resources and often neglecting macro context ((Ladkin, 2011); (Baum, 2015)) directed to human resources studies in tourism. In 2007 and 2015, Baum, adopting an integrated approach, opened up human resources research in tourism for discussion by asserting that, within the macro context, the effects of economic, social, cultural, and technological transformations on workplaces and the qualities of the labor force in tourism industry

were becoming increasingly significant (Baum, 2007, 2015). Besides this view of employment relations, other studies have focused on the blind spots of existing workplace research from various perspectives, such as hotel room attendants' employment experiences (Kensbock, Jennings, Bailey, & Patiar, 2016) or flexibility and gender in tourism labor from a socialist-feminist perspective (Costa et al., 2017). However, there are still gaps in this subject, such as the lack of research from a structure-agency perspective into how the social construction of everyday life in a touristic workplace consists of individuals' self-presentations, job practices, and working culture within the individual-organization-industry triangle. Such a discussion can provide a functional view that reveals many norms accepted within tourism workplaces and expose the assumptions embedded in this industry (Hughes, 1997).

There is a strong social constructivist approach in organizational theory that raises this question. According to this approach, individuals produce collective practices, habits, meanings, emotional modes, identities and selves in terms of the job and organization (Harrison & Corley, 2011; Hochschild, 1979, 1983; Kuhn, 2006; Wagner & Wodak, 2006; Weber, 2005; Weick, 1995) within the context of the culture they participate in (DiMaggio, 1997; Swidler, 1986; Weber & Dacin, 2011). This production of the stock of knowledge of the social structure (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; Schutz, 1967) turns into the organizational ethnography of the workplace, which has layers of agency, structure, and context (Rosen, 1991; Van der Waal, 2009; Ybema, Yanow, Wels, & Kamsteeg, 2009). Ultimately, this ethnography can gradually institutionalize in the organizational field (DiMaggio & Powel, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1977). Hence, "a careful examination of work practice will deepen our understanding of both the relations of employment and the role of the work in the constitution of the worker's identity" (Orr, 1996, p. 1). In this context, a social constructivist approach enables understanding of the multi-layered structuration between the industrial dynamics that the micro perspective neglects and the everyday life of the workplace that lies beyond the macro perspective's focus. This study adopts an integrative approach to analyze the social construction of one touristic workplace within the individual-organization-industry context to contribute to the literature for workplace studies in tourism.

The study focuses on a novel to achieve its aims. In organizational studies, there is a strong tendency of treating novels as organizational subjects reflecting the ethnographic depth of organizations in a "lively" way (Czarniawska-Joerges & De Monthoux, 2005; Phillips, 1995; Knights & Willmott, 1999; Czarniawska, 2009). Analysis of a novel reveals the relationship between everyday life at workplace and social context to develop new viewpoints for future empirical studies (De Cock & Land, 2006; Kelemen & Bunzel, 2008; Manoukian, 2005; Monthoux & Czarniawska-Joerges, 2005).

In this context, the novel *Malafa* [The Mandrel] (2005) by the Turkish novelist Hakan Günday was analyzed hermeneutically. The novel narrates the everyday life of a touristic jewellery shopping center with 254 employees that serves European tourists. The story is set in Antalya, one of Turkey's important tourism cities. The novel's main subjects are the job practices of the sales clerks, their self-presentations in the workplace, working in tourism, and the general structure of the tourism industry in Turkey. Within this framework, the novel narrates a fictional representation of shopping tourism in Turkey, which is an important travel motivation (Butler, 1991; Timothy & Butler, 1995; Turner & Reisinger, 2001; Yüksel, 2004; Tosun, Temizkan, Timothy, & Fyall, 2007; Sirakaya-Turk, Ekinci, & Martin, 2015; Li & Ryan, 2018). Previous research on this subject has focused on various topics, such as tourist shopping experiences and habitat (Tosun, Temizkan, Timothy, & Fyall, 2007; Yüksel, 2007), customer satisfaction (Heung & Cheng, 2000; Lin & Lin, 2006), perceived value and risk (Lloyd, Yip, & Luk, 2011; Sharma, Chen, & Luk, 2018; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2007), tourist guides' performances (Chang, 2014), and service perception and quality (Hurst & Niehm, 2012; Yüksel, 2004). However, there are still gaps on

this subject (Jin, Moscardo, & Murphy, 2017), particularly a lack of social constructivist research into job practices, the workplace ethnography of touristic shopping centers, and the characteristics of the industrial field. Thus, this study will also contribute to the shopping tourism literature as well as workplace studies.

While analyzing the novel to interpret everyday life at workplace the assumptions by Goffman (1959; 1963) were benefited from and social construction of the workplace was analyzed through the self-presentations and job practices of its sales clerks. Shopping tourism is a field with frequent ethical violations and counterfeiting (Correia & Kozak, 2016; Wang, 2004). In grey zones constituted by informal workplace rules (Anteby, 2008; Land, Loren, & Metelmann, 2014; Paine, 1994), this kind of counterfeiting can be legitimized. Hence, workers can make their self-presentations and work practices (Crang, 1997; Weaver, 2005), which are evaluated as an important part of the touristic product suitable for the rules of these grey zones. The individual outcomes of the job practices in the grey zones of the jewellery shopping center described in the novel are unpacked for discussion within the framework of Sennett's "corrosion of character" (1998) and Harding's "zombie-machine" (2013). According to Baum, "some attributes of tourism work remain a stubborn stain on the reputation of the sector" (2015, p. 210). Thus, this study offers a third contribution in order to rethink the social construction of "some attributes of tourism work" and the outcomes of the "stubborn stain" from individual, organizational, and industrial angles.

Finally, the theoretical framework of Giddens (1976; 1979) and Bourdieu (1994) was benefited from and the multi-layered social construction of everyday life was analyzed with a point of view within the context of structure-agency. In this way, it was aimed to understand the organizational and industrial logic behind the everyday life at the shopping center. This approach can contribute to understanding the social context behind the cheats at workplace that originate from job qualities rather than individuals' personal traits (Mars, 1982). The study findings provide a provocative but integrative perspective concerning the necessity of a social constructivist approach centered on everyday life for studies of tourism workplaces.

2. Theoretical framework and research questions

2.1. Social construction of everyday life at workplace

Studying an organization requires understanding the everyday ethnography of the workplace and its social construction, besides defining its formal outlines and structure (Samra-Fredericks & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2008; Manning, 2008; Rawls, 2008; LeBaron, Christianson, Garrett, & Ilan, 2016). Individuals' self-presentations regarding the job or the way their job practices become collective are important indicators of everyday life at workplace (Raz & Fadlon, 2006). Symbolic interactionism, which originated in the studies of Cooley, Mead, Dewey, and Blumer (Stryker, 1987), presents a functional view for comprehending the social construction of everyday life at workplace.

According to the theory, everyday life is a product of a collective consciousness consisting of symbols, such as gestures, mimicry, and language in attitudes and behaviors. Individuals attribute meanings constituted with social interaction to phenomena. Over time, these meanings turn into collective consciousness and common practices (Blumer, 1969). Goffman also focuses on individual self-presentations, claiming that these depend on the person's role in the social relationship. For instance, workplace roles require forming an impression and producing the attitudes, discourses, and performances appropriate for the job. Self-construction and self-presentation depend on each individual's interaction conditions (Goffman, 1959; 1963; 1967). Regarding the workplace, this means learning language, habits, and practices (March, 1991) from organizational socialization and managing appropriate interactions (Manning, 2013). The self-presentations and emotional modes peculiar to the workplace can evolve into the

settled behavior models of the job and the workplace (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989), and constitute the ethnography of everyday life in time. Hochschild moved self-presentations into a different dimension through the concept of emotional labor, meaning adopting job-appropriate emotional modes, displaying gestures and mimes suitable for these emotions. Because emotional labor can be sold for money, it has a shopping value (Hochschild, 1983). The tourism literature evaluates these self-presentations, performative interactions, and emotional labor in the workplace as an important part of the touristic product (Crang, 1997; Weaver, 2005). Meanwhile, "the management of emotions in the workplace, to satisfy organizational rules within the contexts of exchange value and salary, mutates to become part of the individual's belief system and way of life" (Carnicelli-Filho, 2013, p. 199). However, the complete opposite can be possible, too. The main problem here is that: what kind of mutation may self-construction and self-presentation related to the job lead to for individuals?

Various studies have been conducted on emotional labor. Some have focused on the sources and strategies of emotional labor (Gursoy, Boylu, & Avci, 2011; Shani, Uriely, Reichel, & Ginsburg, 2014; Sohn & Lee, 2012); some have studied its outcomes, such as on service quality, visitor outcomes, job stress, burnout, or turnover intention (Jung & Yoon, 2014; Karatepe & Aleshinloye, 2009; Kim, 2008; Van Dijk, Smith, & Cooper, 2011; Wong & Wang, 2009). Whereas self-presentations and performative interactions in the workplace have evolved into the problem of a larger sociological context in a period when new employment conditions try to construct flexible selves suitable for the job (Cederstrom & Fleming, 2012; Fleming, 2015; Harding, 2013; Kuhn, 2006; Sennett, 1998, 2007).

According to Sennett (1998) new working conditions changed labor expectations. Flexible employment, varied jobs, different talents, and temporary social relations are the key features of the new working conditions. Each new situation brings different working and workplace conditions. This also affects the self-presentations and workplace environments dominated by temporariness and mistrust, which makes it difficult for individuals to construct a self with moral integrity (Sennett, 1998). Ultimately, basic moral values have been corrupted and individuals alienated from themselves while constructing selves suitable for the nature of the work and the organization's ethnography in order to be successful – ethically or not. Sennett (1998) conceptualizes this loss of self as "the corrosion of character." Harding (2013) also points out a similar situation and claims that "work encompasses activities over and above labor so that selves which are human are performatively constituted" (p. 16). According to her, the performance orientation that is increasing in today's enterprises turns individuals into a means towards organizational ends and their selves into zombie-machines. Both situations are essentially related to norms of success becoming settled through the organization's informal means of control (Harding, 2013). As a former vice chairman of a major company put it, "what is right in the corporation is not what is right in a man's home or in his church. What is right in the corporation is what the guy above you wants from you." (Jackall, 2010, p. 4). Thus, the right in the workplace may be ethical whereas the unethical *right* appears in the *grey zones* on which managers and employees agree (Anteby, 2008). If job practices in these grey zones achieve organizational success, they can be accepted as legal (Land, Loren, & Metelmann, 2014; Paine, 1994). This enables the corrosion of character or zombie-machines to spread through the workplace's symbolic interactions, thereby becoming institutionalized in the industrial field.

Within this framework, studies in tourism literature has focused on the alienation mostly in an organizational behavior context (DiPietro & Pizam, 2008; Isralowitz, Reznik, & Belhassen, 2012). But regarding the self-presentations and job practices in the grey zones of the workplace, Sennett's (1998) and Harding's (2013) approaches, which open up the effects of new working conditions for discussion, have not been evaluated enough – especially under the microscope of everyday life.

However, production in tourism has strong connections with alienation (Xue, Manuel-Navarrete, & Buzinde, 2014) because tourism work is a field that most requires self-presentation due to its intense face-to-face communication (Chu & Murrmann; 2006; Gursoy et al., 2011; Kusluvan, Kusluvan, Ilhan, & Buyruk, 2010; Pizam, 2004; Urry, 2002; Wong & Wang, 2009). This also applies to many occupations requiring face-to-face communication with tourists, from receptionists to bar staff, from waiters to tourist guides, and for the sales clerks described in the novel. Sales clerks are considered an especially important part of shopping, as a factor influencing customer satisfaction (Chang, Yang, & Yu, 2006; Yüksel, 2004). However, various deceptions (Wang, 2004) can take place in shopping tourism, located at the intersection of "counterfeiting and tourism" (Correia & Kozak, 2016), which creates "important roles" for sales clerks to play. That is, these important roles and practices appear in grey zones of workplace. Mars (1982) explains these important roles and unethical job practices in grey zones with the concept of fiddling. According to him, cheating or fiddling is often a normal aspect of the work and it is not in the category of deviant behaviors. In triadic occupations that consist of an employer, an employee and a customer, employees take care of customers directly; as cheating can be against customers with a kind of alliance between employers and employees, it can be applied on employers with an alliance between employee-customer (Mars, 1982; Thornthwaite & McGraw, 2012). These alliance practices constituting grey zones create a kind of "hidden economy" (Mars, 2008).

On the other hand, a larger *grey zone* - that is, the industrial field - emerges that can create the conditions for unethical behavior, including seasonal employment and low wages (Agarwal, Jakes, Essex, Page, & Mowforth, 2018; Baum, 2007, 2015; Baum, Amoah, & Spivack, 1997; Jolliffe & Farnsworth, 2003; Lundberg, Gudmundson, & Andersson, 2009; Wood, 1997), high employee turnover rate (Kim, 2014), long working hours (Costa et al., 2017), and brief relationships with customers (Cohen, 1984; Doğan, 1989; Holloway, Humphreys, & Davidson, 2009; Van den Berghe, 1980). These all have parallels with the working conditions that Sennett (1998; 2007) and Harding (2013) describe. This study therefore proposes that there may be a strong relationship between self-presentations and the corrosion of character in the workplace, especially given tourism working conditions in underdeveloped and developing countries. This situation can turn into the ethnography of the organizational and industrial field through the social construction of everyday life. Accordingly, the study first seeks to answer the following questions:

How do workers at jewellery shopping center form, share, and maintain the meanings related to the workplace? What kind of ethical or unethical practices, roles, and performances can they display in order to be successful? What are the individual, organizational, and social dimensions of the corrosion of character that these roles and performances cause?

2.2. Social construction of everyday workplace life at the social level

There is a strong social construction relation between individuals' self-presentations, job performances, practices at workplaces and the industrial/organizational field (Hochschild, 1979, 1983, Weick, 1979, 1995). Therefore, "to study an organization is to study not only what people do, but how they rationalize or explain the whys and wherefores of that work" (Manning, 2008, p. 684). Essentially, this approach relies on the assumptions of studies on structure-agency in social theory (Van Maanen, 2011; Weaver & Gioia, 1994).

According to Giddens, agency both constructs its own action – in accordance with the structure – and reproduces the structure as it reconstructs these structural qualities. Giddens explains this interaction through the concept of reflectivity. That is, it is impossible to understand human behaviors without the structure or the structure without human behaviors (Giddens, 1979). Giddens also points out the importance of everyday language in social structuration in that the use of language is a practical activity of social structure and a determining

tool in reproducing the structure (Giddens, 1976; 1979). Bourdieu explains structure through notions such as the field, which arranges the actions of agencies, opinion (*doxa*), interest (*illusion*), and habitus (Bourdieu, 1994). Agencies in a social environment compete with each other to be the decision-maker for production, sharing, and inspection of economic, social, and cultural capital. This approach suggesting there is a social or cultural conflict in different fields metaphorizes this competition as a "battlefield" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). In this field, individuals, for the interests (*illusio*) that they will ultimately achieve, start to learn the settled opinions of the field (*doxa*) – in other words, the practices and strategies to make them successful. After evolving into the collective tendencies of the field, these then become the habitus of the field over time (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). In organizational terms, this field determines the most suitable criteria (doxa) for success and performance (Donaldson, 1985; Knights, 1997).

Weick (1995), who focuses on structure-agency relations in organizational contexts, argues that there is an ideology in which every organization is included. He considers ideology as a framework "which combines beliefs about cause-effect relations, preferences for certain outcomes, and expectations of appropriate behaviors" (Weick, 1995, p. 111). That is, ideology expresses a kind of working logic of the industrial field. This logic constitutes the organizational paradigms, and the most suitable practices and strategies developed to adapt to them – in other words, agencies' theories of action (Weick, 1995). Likewise, within a social constructivist approach, "actions are based upon an information-processing sequence in which individuals attend to cues in the environment, interpret the meaning of such cues, and then externalize these interpretations via concrete activities" (Porac, Thomas, & Baden-Fuller, 1989, p. 389).

In this respect, in order to analyze the ideology, paradigm, and theories of action of the tourism industrial field within the context of the social construction of the workplace while drawing on Giddens' (1979) and Bourdieu's (1994) approaches, the study's second set of questions are as follows:

How are the structural qualities, opinions (doxa), and interests (illusio) of the jewellery shopping center and the industrial environment described? What kind of a structuration exists between the everyday life of the workplace and structure? What kind of an ideology and paradigm does this structuration feed on in the workplace, and what kind of a habitus can it cause?

3. Methodology

The method was based on a qualitative research design: the ethnographic approach. An ethnographic study aims to understand the ideas, beliefs, and habits of a group's members, and the collective tendencies of the group through language, daily practices, and common behavior codes so as to determine the group's cultural characteristics (Creswell, 2012; Fetterman, 2009; Patton, 1990; Wolcott, 2016). Novels are accepted in this literature as a valid resource to understand ethnographic structure (Fassin, 2014; Langnes & Frank, 1978; Marcus & Fischer, 1986; Narayan, 1999). These works are defined as ethnographic novels (Fernea, 1989; Tallman, 2003). This also applies to workplace ethnography, in that novels discussing an industry or a workplace are accepted as important ethnographic resources (De Cock, 2000; Rhodes & Brown, 2005).

Fundamentally using novels as data in different disciplines of social sciences goes back to Karl Marx's references in Capital to Robinson Crusoe and Goethe's Faust (De Cock & Land, 2006). Some various novels in 19th century are accepted as a sociological source for understanding social conditions of capitalism in that period (Patient, Lawrence, & Maitlis, 2003). For example, the novels by Balzac, Zola and Dickens have made important contributions in terms of understanding the conditions of the period about the subjects like organization of work, working class, strikes and child labor (Kelemen & Bunzel, 2008). Becker (2007) associates this function novels provide for social science

studies to strengthening sociological insight. So much so that novels present different and distinctive information about society (Hoggart, 1966) and contribute to illuminating more implicit details of sociological context (Knights & Willmott, 1999). Because novelists tell about individual and society without depending on any epistemological orientations and methodological restrictions. In a way, they are independent observers of social life and they record their impressions in a fictional and literary form. Hence, a review on novels about sociological phenomena and events can make it possible to understand social reality and historical context that escapes from the lens of abstracted empiricism criticized by Mills (2000) with an integrative approach.

In this context, this study analyzed the novel *Malafa* [The Mandrel] by Turkish author Hakan Günday. Günday has written eight novels, which have been translated into various international languages. In 2015, he won the Prix Medici award in France for his novel *More*. Hakan Günday is the member of 2016 PEN International Writers Circle. *Malafa* was first published in Turkey in 2005. By 2017, the 16th edition was published and in 2015 it was translated into French with the title *Topaz*. It was also staged as a theater play in Istanbul in 2010.

There were two reasons to choose this novel. First, it is the only fictional work to discuss the tourism industry in Turkey, which is one of the top ten countries in terms of international tourist numbers. Tourism is an important catalyzer of commercial organizations in touristic areas of Turkey. In this context, tourism industry in Turkey becomes the subject of many academic studies every year and most of these are conducted with positivist methodology (Evren & Kozak, 2014; Köseoglu, Sehitoglu, & Parnell, 2015; Çıvak & Sezerel, 2018). In this study, the novel *Malafa* was analyzed in order to understand social reality and construction of everyday life at workplace in tourism industry in a deeper sociologic insight. This analyze can provide rethinking the implicit details of social reality that have escaped from the lens of the studies conducted with mainstream methods so far. This contribution will encourage studying other workplace ethnographies in tourism industry with new perspectives.

In presenting its subject, the novel narrates the layers of social construction constituted between the individual-organization-structure in tourism through content that makes an ethnographic analysis possible. It treats the commercial relationships in the tourism industry, which is an important economic resource for developing countries like Turkey, in respect to their relatively "dark" side. The workplace described in the novel, the jewellery shopping center named Topaz that employs 254 people, has traces of this dark side in both its structure and agency. Topaz is an enterprise operating in Antalya, one of Turkey's most important tourism destinations. The novel presents sales clerkship through the protagonist *Kozan* and the other sales clerks: their job practices and techniques for making sales to European tourists, the roles they display in working life, and the relationships between them. These constitute an ethnography of everyday life at workplace. The novel's descriptions of the relationships of shopping center-travel agency show inter-organizational commercial relationships, thereby offering a kind of ethnographic "mimesis" of the tourism industry in Turkey.

The second criterion is the consistent relationship with the fictional narration of the novel and the social reality. This situation was questioned by cross benchmarking through different sources. This query aimed to determine if the novel is a work with the appropriate content for being analyzed within the scope of research and to what extent the comments and results are able to provide the criterions of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Merriam, 2009). Because the purpose in this kind of research is to shed light on the blind spots which still exist towards the social reality despite the empirical researches through a profound interpretation on the novel and to create new approaches for future studies (Czarniawska, 2009; Longo, 2015; Pick, 2017). There are several techniques in qualitative research such as triangulation, expertization, and position of the researcher and audit trail in order to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Creswell, 2012; Denzin, 1978; Lincoln & Guba, 1985;

Merriam, 2009). In this research, the audit trail method; which was suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) was utilized. As a result, as Maxwell (2012) also stated; validity of each qualitative research is related to its own purpose and conditions.

At this point, for audit trail, interviewing alternatives with sales clerks working at touristic jewellery shopping center, tourist guides and the managers of the travel agencies organizing tours to these centers were deliberated. Before the decision social desirability bias was taken into account. Social desirability bias expresses an individual's not sharing but hiding the information that they think may damage their individual impression and instead being able to discourse appropriately with norms (Paulhus, 1984; Randall & Fernandes, 1991). It was thought that sales clerks might not share objective information about provocative and relatively negative descriptions in the novel regarding their own job practices and jewellery shopping centers. For this reason sales clerks were not included in the interview process. In this stage, it was decided to interview with tourist guides for they are accompanying the tourist groups and they are active observers of sales clerks' job practices. Besides, the managers of the travel agencies that organize these tours and are the direct addressees of the complaints by tourists about the tours were included in the interview process. The interviews were done face-to-face with a group of five people including tourist guides and travel agency managers in Antalya in August 2018.

By this means, it was aimed to see the relationship between the fictional narration of the novel and the social reality. In interviews, general information about the novel was given first. In addition, the passages interpreted in this article were shared with participants and asked for their opinions with regards to their experiences. The participants in general stated that the detections, descriptions and information in the passages are similar to real people, institutions and incidents (Table 1). In this congruence between the fictional content of the novel and the social reality, the observations and experiences of Hakan Günday are also thought to have been effective, who also worked as a shop sales clerk for one and a half year. From this perspective, the novel analyzed was determined to be suitable for a confirmable and transferable interpretation towards understanding the social structuring of a workplace in shopping tourism and it was determined that it can provide new perspectives for this kind of research.

3.1. Analysis method

The relationship of literary works to social reality depends on their effects on their readers, which requires interpretation (Patient et al., 2003). In this study, the novel's multi-layered social construction of the workplace was interpreted using a hermeneutic method, which aims to reveal and interpret the meaning of the studied text to get an impression about the social reality that it portrays (Bauman, 2010). In the interpretation here, only the text's narration was considered to answer the what, how, and why questions of qualitative methods (Green & Thorogood, 2013) whereas the author's possible intention or the historical context of the text (Schleiermacher, 1998) was not included. That is, the hermeneutic approach adopted here is based on Gadamer's view that "not just occasionally but always, the meaning of a text goes beyond its author ['s aim]" (Gadamer, 1989, p. 296) and Dilthey's aim of "finding a life context within a text" (Toprak, 2016).

Before conducting the interpretation, all expressions in the novel related to everyday workplace life, sales clerkship, working in the tourism sector, and inter-organizational commercial relationships were determined. These constituted 13,372 of the novel's total of 39,650 words. These were grouped into three themes: the individual (sales clerk), the organization (center), and the structure (tourism). The parts reflecting these themes explicitly, consisting of about 5000 words, were then identified. Passages describing the sales clerks' everyday workplace lives were categorized as "The organizing of everyday life at workplace: The social construction of the self". Passages describing working conditions in the tourism industry were categorized as "The

organizing of the work: The social construction of the job". Finally, passages describing commercial relationships dealing at the same level with the individual (the sales clerk), organizations (the center and travel agencies), and the structure (tourism) were categorized as "The organizing of inter-organizational commercial relationships: The social construction of the transaction". These three themes were then presented to five academics from the related field. From their suggestions, 16 passages were added to the interpretation. During this process, the author was also contacted via e-mail and telephone and asked at what extent the parts selected for interpretation in this study represented the novel's general content. He indicated his approval by agreeing that they were representative of the novel. The hermeneutic circle emerged through the relationship of the interpretation of the three themes with each other. The hermeneutic circle, referring to understanding the whole from the part and the part from the whole (Keat & Urry, 2011), was broken by correlating passages about the individual-organization-industrial field to determine the contextual meaning (Palmer, 1969) and achieve a final interpretation. This hermeneutic circle approach, which adhered to the content of the novel, corresponded to a social constructivist analysis conducted from a structure-agency perspective (Giddens, 1976).

4. Results and discussion

4.1. The organizing of everyday life at workplace: The social construction of the self

The novel narrates one day in a jewellery shopping center named Topaz that serves European tourists brought there by travel agencies on shopping tours. The novel describes this workplace as follows:

> "Topaz Jewellery Center is the jeweler of the universe. Its foundation is in the Grand Bazaar-Istanbul and its roof in Antalya. There are four floors beneath the roof. Each one is seven hundred square meters. Topaz doesn't have any windows. Its air conditioning system is unique. The building looks like the embassy of a non-existent country. Upon entering it one leaves Turkey. From the outside, it looks like the Kaaba and from within it looks like a mother's womb. Topaz is a safe with three holes. Each hole has a different password. The first hole is the main entrance. The front of the building, colored in whale grey, has doors made from life-proof glass. On the eastern side there are their twins so they don't seem tall when entering and short when leaving. Topaz's second hole is the black glass doors on its eastern side. And on its back side, which coincides with the building's intestines, is an iron door with a knocker. Its color is the same as the whale grey wall. Those who enter Topaz use the first door, those who leave use the second because tourists that have entered Topaz must not bump into tourists who are about to enter. And those who work at Topaz come and go through the invisible hole in the back wall. Topaz Jewellery Center is the deepest pit in the universe." (p. 27)

Here then is the sales clerks' stage where they produce the collective meanings related to their job, improve their occupational skills, and display their self-presentations. Two things catch our attention in this description: The incoming tourists and the outgoing tourists never meet, and the sales clerks' exit is likened to an intestine. That is, the sales clerks are a kind of food for the center; they leave their nutritional value before leaving via the door in the intestine part.

Describing the center in an ironic tone, the novel describes the sales clerks' job practices, performances, and everyday life at workplace. It also describes the effects of this workplace's values and working culture on their self-presentations:

> "A sales clerk who wants to buy everything he desires has to make use of his idle hours by marketing himself to his co-workers. It is one of those secrets one has to know in order to rise up the ranks. To make surprising claims without presenting any evidence, to gain momentary admiration by telling sales anecdotes and to shut up when necessary. To make a sale,

Table 1
Results of interviews with the managers of the travel agencies and tourist guides.

	1. Experiences and impressions about what is told in the novel 2. General assessment about the novel
Participant 1 Age 36. Has been working in tourism industry for 19 years, is a tourist guide for 10 years.	**(1)** *The sales clerks in centers may assume different personalities in order to make sales. It is not important whether it is fake or not, the important matter is to sale. *I have witnessed people who get different business cards designed for different tourist groups with different names, either Jewish or Armenian. There are even people who wear crucifix necklaces special for different sects in order to gain the trust of the tourist group. *I think lying is all around the trade; it may be a little bit more in tourism industry. **(2)** I think the author works in tourism industry. Because what was told in the novel is really consistent with the real industry. The novel was published in 2005 but its content is still up-to-date.
Participant 2 Age 39 Has been working in tourism industry for 24 years, is a tourist guide for 14 years and travel agency manager for 2 years.	**(1)** *It is important for a sales clerk to make sales; they can adopt several roles for this purpose. This may be unethical sometimes. The sales clerks may adopt the most appropriate role for sales too. I think the high sales expectation of the company or the competition among themselves causes this. *I have seen people who get different business cards designed with Armenian/Jewish names, too. That sort of identities seems more attractive and authentic to tourists. Maybe it is making the sales easier, too. *In one of my tours, a tourist told that the sales clerks are like vultures. *There are exaggerated presentations, expressions for making sales but I am not sure if this means "lying", that's the nature of business. *If the centers tell that a piece of jewellery bought by a tourist is returned, we are investigating this as the company. Because, yes, we cannot trust them. *If the individual does not have a steady character, s/he may use every trick in order to obtain high revenue; there is such an understanding which would allow this in tourism industry. However, this won't apply for everyone. "Are the sales clerks evil?" Not all of them but I have seen that some of them are. **(2)** The book was published in 2005 and what was told is entirely true for that period. However, the businesses have been institutionalized today, the tourists have gained awareness and it is more difficult to fraud today. There are progress in some issues. There are corporate businesses. The system is inspecting itself. But unfortunately, 60% of what was told is still valid. The travel agency may shut its eyes to those sometimes, and sometimes the shopping centers do that. Sometimes, even the tourists themselves shut their eyes to that: "S/he has told so much, made that much effort, perhaps s/he is lying but what would happen if I buy?" is what is thought. Nevertheless, I would like to say this for what was told in the novel: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone."
Participant 3 Age 49 Has been working in tourism industry for 23 years, is a tourist guide for 21 years.	**(1)** *During the sales, the sales clerks become a part of this sale and they are shaping themselves. The person who is making the sale has to adopt the most appropriate role for the situation. Lying, on the other hand, is related to the personality of the sales clerk. If you have deficiency, this will appear. The one who cannot make sales will be unsuccessful? What will s/he do? Sometimes s/he has to. *I also know about that business card issue. Because being a Jewish/Armenian in jewellery business is a more appropriate ethnic identity for European tourists. *There are balloon sales in shopping tourism. There are always the ones done within the knowledge of agencies. They are ignoring it. But it is false to see the whole industry in that way. But there is still such a distrust. Everybody fights his corner accordingly. *In my opinion, every individual and company in tourism is somehow a sales clerk. Because the system is focused on money. **(2)** I have witnessed what was told in the novel for many times. Do they still exist? Yes, I mean, tourism has such a dark face. The employees and the centers are struggling for earning money somehow. I do not mean to say lies and fraud. This is a presentation; a bit exaggerated presentation. But I think, every business is alike. Banking business, real estate business. There are lies and cheating in every business. In tourism, there is a wide grey zone; people and companies are struggling to survive in that zone. Everybody is a part of this.
Participant 4 Age 32 Has been working in tourism industry for 13 years, is a travel agency manager for 6 years.	**(1)** *When I enter a center, I do not feel myself secure. I mean, they are "very good". You cannot distinguish who is real and who is fake. But anyway, we should not see them as monsters. Because the companies are setting high goals, and paying low wages. And the employee complies with that. *In tourism industry, brokerage has unfortunately got ahead of everything. Commission is being negotiated before the price. There are even the ones who steal the other's customer. *The rules and limits of tourism industry are indefinite. Being or not being ethical is up to the inner conscience of people. Working conditions are hard. People may deprive themselves of their personality. *Everyone who has face to face contact with tourists tries to sell something. Even the waiter refers to the jewellery or carpet store in order to earn more. Because he earns little and struggles to survive with commission. Therefore, everyone in tourism industry is somehow a sales clerk. Unfortunately, tourists are seen only as "money". *Tourism is not entirely a "giant trap garnished with cheese". There are also people who do their jobs properly. But unfortunately, they are not the majority. **(2)** The narrations in the novel are true. There are some exaggerations but in general they are true. These are what we have lived through. The author has especially told about the working conditions very well. The ethical violations are related to these working conditions in fact. Nevertheless, if those ethical violations are not tolerated, it would be really difficult to find someone to work in the industry.
Participant 5 Age 43 Has been working in tourism industry for 25 years and is a tourist guide for 19 years.	**(1)** *I cannot say that "all of them are the same" but the sales clerks may go into one role from another in order to make sales. He would do whatever is necessary in order to make a sale. Would he tell lies? I guess, yes. If the majority lies about something on a place and becomes successful, you can also get used to lying. *I have seen a few fake business cards. But I have witnessed that Armenian names are used as nicknames many times. It means that it makes selling easier. *I can say that it is very difficult to work in tourism industry. The wages are low, the business is seasonal and people have to make a living. This is why every means are considered as permissible. *There are some agreements between the shopping centers and travel agencies. Their purpose is

Table 1 (*continued*)

	1. Experiences and impressions about what is told in the novel
	2. General assessment about the novel
	common: to make profit. The sales clerk should be able to make sales at high volumes, so that the centers could earn more than the commission they paid to travel agencies. Such a pressure normalizes everything for the sales clerk. And the center ignores that. That commission is also a pretty earning for the travel agencies. They are also aware of what happens in centers but they do not intervene unless they overdo. They tolerate it in case of a complaint, too. **(2)** The novel was very interesting for me. He told the shopping tourism well. However, you cannot see what is told in every center. But the ones that you can see are exactly like that. I think, there is a matter in the word "lying is in the nature of tourism" upon which everybody has agreed: If you want to earn money in tourism, you have to trust people and if you do not want to lose money, you should trust no one. What would the employees and companies do in such an industry? They do whatever the conditions necessitate.

there doesn't need to be a product, it suffices that there be a client. Even if the client is unaware of it." (p. 22)

The novel reveals that marketing is built into every level of relationships at workplace. Transactions occur, not only between customers and sales clerks, but also between workers in which the main product is the sales clerk's own self. Rhetoric that is prone to exaggeration and lies are the basic practices. Pointing out the rising ambition and narcissism of the sales clerks, the novel emphasizes that they are in a workplace competition of "self-presentation". As Harding puts it (2013, p. 2), "in order to have selfhood, individuals must work on themselves, must indeed manufacture themselves, become a commodity that is to be 'consumed' by self and others".

The novel therefore shows how the sales clerks constantly reconstruct their selves so that they can adapt themselves to the conditions of organizational life. For example, the average working day of Kozan, the main protagonist, is described as follows: *"He spent around twelve to 14 h a day at Topaz but only worked for three … For 3 h he sold the goods and for the rest of the day the goods sold themselves" (p. 22)*. However, this self-presentation that forms a part of the product is not only peculiar to the sales clerks, as the following passage about Sami Çınarcıyan, the boss of Topaz Center, clearly reflects:

"There were two hundred and fifty workers at Topaz and one boss: Sami Çınarcıyan. He was lucky because he had as many sons as the number of floors remaining from the offices. The three Çınarcıyans were managers of three separate floors. From top to bottom: Hayko, Jojo, Cefi. When the first was born, Sami's interest in gold was only as much as the amount in his wedding ring. He saw fit to give the child an Armenian name: Hayko. As the cash increased, he had more children. As his cash increased, the religion of the names he gave them changed. They became Jewish: Jojo and Cefi. They were Jewish until the mention of their surnames, Armenian until the mention of their names. If both weren't mentioned, Turkish. One would always come in handy. After all, they lived in Turkey. The one who managed the biggest floor was Hayko Çınarcıyan. He was Turkish enough to think that Yerevan was a water brand and Armenian enough to rip off diamond wholesalers." (p. 19)

The cultural evolution of Sami Çınarcıyan is a clear example of self-alienation, so much so that Sami Çınarcıyan attributes his abilities in the jewellery business to being Armenian and his business competence to being Jewish. He ensures this by the names he gave to his sons. In particular, the description that *"they were Jewish until the mention of their surnames, Armenian until the mention of their names. If both weren't mentioned, Turkish. One would always come in handy,"* points out this self-construction. In Turkey, especially from Ottoman Empire era beliefs, these two businesses are considered as done best by Armenians and Jews. Sami Çınarcıyan, considering the advantages (*illusio*) it will bring, has constructed an identity for his children based on this opinion (*doxa*); thus, he adapts to the structure since *"after all, they lived in Turkey"*. The novel thereby implies that the self-presentations and roles adopted in the workplace – from the boss to the sales clerk – are means that are symbolic, fake, and Machiavellian, yet also bring success.

This approach of describing sales clerkship through Kozan and *being a boss* through Sami Çınarcıyan, recalls Sennett's conceptualization of the corrosion of character. According to Sennett (1998), an individual who works in different jobs with flexible working structures, who has superficial friendships in changing work environments, who is forced to adapt himself/herself to constant change and transformation, and who develops new, sometimes multiple selves different from each other, may become alienated from himself/herself and his/her values. The novel describes this as follows:

"By day, they (sales clerks) tell so many lies that at night, they believe whatever they are told. As they no longer care and are not cared for, their souls, speckled with white spots, are all deformed like astronauts who have been exposed to radiation for too long. Empty girls and guys relearn the definition of right and wrong at the centers and become full again." (p. 90)

The professional deformation here explains how the sales clerks turn into zombie-machines that are, in Harding's words, *"less-than-human … an organic tool designed to achieve organizational ends"* (2013, p. 6). This highlights the grey zones of the workplace and the working culture that produces them. Likewise, most of the workplace-specific practices and performances accepted as *right* or *wrong* are tools for realizing organizational purposes. This view is reflected in the following passage:

"To be a sales clerk, one needs to have a large imagination and a small personality. Every talent has its downside. A large imagination leads to madness, a small personality to invisibility. The price of setting up a good scam is not knowing oneself and to wear a tie around your wounded throat. Tourism is a kind of acid. It melts everything. One becomes nothing but memories and finds out what one has become by looking in the mirrors of the centers." (p. 106)

Thus, having a broad imagination is essential because a sales clerk must make a creative and impressive presentation to present the products to customers and to make a good sale. However, the side effect of this is insanity. These job practices collectivized through symbolic workplace interactions turn individuals' selves into a means suitable for the job. Otherwise, the sales clerk turns into an insignificant character. What attracts our attention here is the definition that *"Tourism is a kind of acid. It melts everything."* This reflects the commodification of selves, from the boss to the sales clerk, and the corruption that naturally deepens alienation due to the tourism industry. In this respect, the novel, through its approach of a structure-agency relationship, associates the artificiality in self-presentation, and the alienation and corruption it reveals, with the structural properties of the tourism industry. Ultimately, the sales clerk looks in the mirror and, while desiring to be successful at work, meets a new self because, in Harding's words (2013, p. 177), "the self that is constituted is also a product for one's own consumption and that of others".

The personal traits of those suited to being a sales clerk are highlighted in various places in the novel. Being a sales clerk is associated with "laziness, crime and treachery" (Günday, 2013, p. 89). The sales

clerks may adopt deviant behaviors, such as "drug abuse, sexual deviancy and gambling" (Günday, 2013, p. 90). Although this suggests that the novel describes the sales clerks' self-constructions from an essentialist perspective, another part describes how these qualities accord with organizational context, and accordingly its relation to the structure: *"Of course not all sales clerks are immoral and criminals. But being a sales clerk is one of the rare jobs that immoral people and criminals can do legally without having to change their personality traits. Maybe all jobs are likewise"* (Günday, 2013, p. 127). This description gives a particular impression about the congruence of the sales clerks with the workplace, of the organizational structure and commercial relationships with each other, and the ethical values that construct the workplace. Thus, the novel draws attention to the structuration (Giddens, 1979) of the working culture in the workplace.

This accordance is not only limited to the workplace, however, but also affects the sales clerks' family lives. The novel offers an understanding of family life in which affection, love, and fidelity has decreased, relationships are corrupt, and betrayal is tolerated:

> *"Tourism, which was a strange drug that allowed people to take in all kinds of betrayals, had numbed Kati [her husband, the sales clerk Jojo, is cheating on her with the sales clerk Feyza] as well. The sales clerks who were able to see their partners for sixty hours a week at best had no other choice. As they spent fourteen hours a day in these buildings, they had to find ways to satisfy their needs. Their shags, buddies, enemies, pot, gambling habits, and all their inclinations. No one was angry at anyone else. No one blamed anyone for lying or being dishonorable. Everything was done in the open. Everyone knew where the cash came from. … A minimum of peace was found only in the homes of couples who were both sales clerks. In the homes where everything was accepted and where children witnessed the end of humanity." (p. 90)*

Here the novel explains how tourism can legitimize the corrosion of character in relation to family life because the dynamics that bring the tourism industry itself into existence necessitate this. It is impossible for the sales clerk and his family to be happy without adapting to these conditions. Drawing on Bourdieu (1994), the novel interprets the industry's field, its rules (*doxa*), its interests (*illusio*), and its inclinations (*habitus*); it shows that cheating becomes legitimate for the sales clerks both at work and in their family life. Indeed, the grey zones of everyday life at workplace expand to infect their private lives. The following passage emphasizes how the institution of marriage has lost its values and how individuals have abandoned own selves for sake of work and enterprise success:

> *"In a family which has a sales clerk, whoever is the sales clerk is the one missing from the family. If it's the father, then the family misses a father. If it's the mother, then the family misses a mother. If a family consists of nothing but sales clerks, then that family does not exist. That's why those who start working at centers are told 'We are a family!' It is one way of saying 'Forget your family at home!'" (p.173).*

The novel tells that, despite everything, sales clerks who "*can haggle over a product for hours but can protect their own interests just like a child does*" (p. 90) are still partially pure. However, this purity is unsustainable under existing working conditions and corrodes the character over time. What causes this? The novel explains the sales clerks' self-construction that gradually evolves into a zombie-machine within, in Weick's (1995) terms, the paradigm of organization and the ideology of the industrial field. This is narrated through the protagonist Kozan's thoughts about Sadri, one of the child workers in the center:

> "*Kozan slowly turned his head to his right and saw Sadri. Just a kid, he thought. What will he do here? What shall become of his life? How many lies will he tell? One month he'll be hungry, another full. One month he'll be blind, one month he'll be deaf. He'll drift from one shop to another, from one center to another. If he is lucky, he'll work six days a week, if not, every day. From seven in the morning to ten at night. He'll grow old.*

He will not even realize. There will be nothing left from the kid. Will he have insurance? If he's lucky, yes. How many times will he be scolded for not having made a sale? How many times will he be fired? How many times will he apply for a job? Which drug will he get hooked on? How much will his mind and body shrink? How many times will he fall asleep on the center shuttle? For how many seasons will he wear the same suit? How many times will he have to pay out of his pocket for the stuff stolen by thieving bastards? How many seasons will he be out of work because some terrorist sons of bitches decide to bomb a bus? How many tourists will he insult for their gullibility, forgetting his own naiveté? How many Euros worth of sales will he make? Who will believe him when he confesses his love? Where will he die? Who will thank him for doing all this?" (p. 114).

Kozan's thoughts, inspired by Sadri, contain some important descriptions that bring working conditions and employment relations in the industry up for discussion. The passage criticizes the human (*working from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.*), moral (*theft*), and legal (*employment insurance*) qualities of the working conditions. This criticism stimulates a discussion about whether the corrosion of character and turning into a zombie-machine originate from personal straits of individuals or the workplace and the macro structure that surrounds it. This approach is a narration of reflexivity within Gidden's theory, according to which individuals know the existing social conditions and perform practices in accordance with them(Giddens, 1976). Working practices are a reflection of this social context. In Weick's terms (1995), the sales clerks "sense-making" organizational and environmental conditions act with emotions appropriate for this environment; as they show appropriate practices, they reproduce the structure. Hence, it would be correct to interpret the sales clerks' self-presentations and job practices in the grey zones as a kind of struggle for survival under the tough, unpredictable, and exploitative working conditions of the workplace itself and the industry generally.

4.2. The organizing of the work: The social construction of the job

One definition in the novel gives an idea about the general working conditions in tourism: *"The curse of one who serves holiday goers is that every person he serves is on holiday"* (p. 30). This *curse*, which defines different dimensions of the difference between the tourist and the worker, is narrated in another part of the novel: *"Antalya is the only city on Earth that has its own sun. This sun doesn't heat, it soaks. It doesn't cause cancer but makes you piss blood. It is a racist son of a bitch. While it tans the tourist, it evaporates the worker" (p. 27)*. This description which sees the server's position as disadvantaged is also stated that it sometimes causes conflicts between tourists and workers (Nash, 1989, p. 45). Likewise, this state of *curse* may cause envy, anger, and offence (Doğan, 1989; Van den Berghe, 1980).

However, these feelings of the workers, like envy and offence, do not last long in their everyday lives because tourism provides some "advantages" (*illusio*) for underdeveloped and developing countries:

> *"The limited amount of resources offered by the Earth have made countries natural enemies. Hot or cold wars, they are as old as man. Tourism is an ideology that proposes that mankind exist without war through natural enmity. Because, in wars, the strong wins whereas in tourism the weak have a chance too. Country A, instead of invading country B, would attract its people and damage them as it pleases. It is a cheaper and more peaceful way. Being peaceful means avoiding the scrutiny of the United Nations or the United States of America. Tourism helps to screw the people of a system that can never be beaten. … It is a small but massive calculation. Each year, millions of people go on vacation to fall for the scams of millions of people. According to the tourism ideology, the most powerful country is the one that receives the most tourists. It is not coincidental that the hotels in Antalya are copies of magnificent Russian architecture. The Russian feels at home and relaxes whereas, in fact, he is a long way from home and surrounded by Turks.*

Tourism is a giant trap adorned by cheese shining under the sun without ever melting. The only way to wound the fat rats is to say 'Hello!' to them in their own language." (p. 86)

Although the working conditions in the industry and the selves being constructed depending on these conditions are criticized in the novel, tourism is shown as in this passage an opportunity for under-developed and developing countries and their citizens. Thus, it de-scribes the industrial ideology and the basic paradigm. However, ac-cording to the novel, this opportunity does not construct an economic structure organized on ethical grounds; on the contrary, it in-stitutionalizes a social exchange relationship normalized by unwritten lawlessness. More specifically, the definition that *"tourism is a giant trap adorned by cheese shining under the sun without ever melting"* highlights a *grey zone* that becomes organized and institutionalized at the industrial level. Therefore, it would be correct to evaluate self-presentations and the corrosion of character in the workplace, from the boss to the sales clerk, and the unethical organizational ethnography of the workplace, together with this grey zone institutionalized at macro level.

So, what does the legitimacy of this grey zone depend on? The passage clarifies that, too. For example, the expressions *"in wars, the strong wins whereas in tourism the weak have a chance, too"* and *"tourism helps to screw the people of a system that can never be beaten"* define tourism as a *field of existence* (Bourdieu, 1994) of underdeveloped/de-veloping countries against developed countries, which provides a cer-tain impression about the industry's ideology (Weick, 1995). It explains how ethical violations in the workplace and the industrial field become legitimized and opinions (*doxa*) in the grey zones come into existence. Within this framework, the novel makes economical organization in tourism, commercial habitus, the social function of tourism for under-developed and developing countries, and the social construction of everyday life at the workplace congruent with these two descriptions.

On the other hand, making sales to tourists in the center not only means fulfilling a formal duty, achieving job success and earning money. For the sales clerks, making sales is an action with different meanings and having a social function. It is an indicator of superiority over tourists and a kind of "social catharsis" to overcome "the in-feriority complex" felt due to socio-cultural and economic back-wardness:

"A sales clerk who has his customer stolen feels like a husband whose wife is screwing someone else because he is impotent. Tourism, like the whole world, has been created by blokes. The tourist may be a Swedish body-building champion, but he is still considered the sales clerk's screw. The sales clerk is a bloke, and the tourist is a bird. To sell is to screw. And the guide is the pimp. And the home to all of this is the center. Tourism is pornography. That's why those younger than eighteen are not taken into account when paying the agency by the headcount." (p. 194–195)

This understanding of *"to sell is to screw"* at the workplace can be interpreted as a kind of "revenge behavior" by the sales clerks, origi-nating from "backwardness". In this respect, a deceitful sale not only brings in more money but also provides a kind of superiority over tourists. In addition, as seen in this passage, the sales clerks use various sexist words (*screw, bird, bloke*) in the communication between each other. These words in fact reflect the theories of action of the workplace (Weick, 1995). For the collective workplace meaning implied by these words essentially shows the habitus of the workplace. The expression, *"The sales clerk is a bloke, and the tourist is a bird. To sell is to screw. And the guide is the pimp. And the home to all of this is the center. Tourism is pornography",* is a typical example of it. This language, which makes the tourist passive and associates sales with sexuality, is a meaningful in-dicator, as Giddens (1976) points out, to understand the social con-struction of individual, organization, and the industrial field, and to then comprehend the meaning sales clerks attribute to themselves, their job, and tourists.

4.3. The organizing of inter-organizational commercial relationships: The Social construction of the transaction

Another subject in the novel is the social construction of commercial relationships at the organizational and industrial level. Commercial relationships are narrated through the concepts of *sale, commission, and deceit.* Workplace transactions start with an "info" when the travel agencies bring tourist groups to the center. The informer relays general information about the center to the tourists before the transactions and says "hello" in a way. The following passage presents meaningful si-miles, especially with *the documentary* metaphor, for understanding the tourist's position in the transactions cruising in the axis of guaranteed sales, commission, and maximum profit. This ironic passage, which describes the workplace as a *hunting ground,* the tourists as *antelopes,* the sales clerks as *lions,* and laughter as *roars,* is meaningful for compre-hending the organizational and industrial habitus, and the grey zones where the sales clerks' selves evolving into zombie-machines are con-structed:

"Info is the "welcome" speech of a center. Informers speak the language in which they give the info well enough to bite its head off … (p. 42). The one who has to distribute the group inspects the customers one by one as they are being informed. He classifies them based on their haircuts, ac-cessories, clothes, body language, shoes, walk, and on tips from their guide. After classifying them from hefty to pap, he assigns each class to a suitable sales clerk. Making a classification is difficult. One has to avoid being caught out by a customer who has gotten bored of the info and is looking around, and handing a client to an unsuitable sales clerk. At some centers, primeval hunting laws apply. As soon as the info is over, the sales clerks surround the group and pick out from the commotion whoever they like. That's the moment when tourism resembles wildlife documentaries the most. Only instead of animal roars there is roaring laughter." (p. 52)

Inter-organizational relationships in the tourism industry are also narrated in the novel, particularly the commercial relationships be-tween the *travel agency* and the center, and it focuses on the concept of *commission.* It is emphasized that this commission relationship is nor-malized by the understanding *"to get a piece of the sale is a center tra-dition" (p. 51).* It is institutionalized from the workers at every level to the enterprises of every size. However, an expectation of high perfor-mance, especially for the sales clerks, appears in this process, so *im-portant roles* are assigned to them: *"A tourist that doesn't work and does not save is the sales clerk's nightmare. For one to get a commission the others have to make money. The cash should be poured into the scam. Salesmanship is the second oldest job in the world. The first was discovered by birds." (p. 87).*

Sales clerkship is defined here as the second job discovered after *"the oldest job in the world",* and the qualities of these important roles are explained implicitly. This discourse is an ironic reference to the ideology of commercial relationships in the industry, the actors' posi-tions, and the role ascribed to the tourists. Ultimately, this expectation of high performance and important commission-focused roles lead to the sales clerks who evolve into zombie-machines deprived of principles and values, alienated from themselves, and accepting lawlessness as law, their characters corroded. Indeed, this situation makes the context of the grey zone and its habitus, which is institutionalized from the everyday life of the workplace to the industry in general, under-standable.

The organization of these commercial relationships is narrated within the frame of *sale,* in addition to commission. According to the novel, the most important matter for the triangle of the travel agency, the center, and the sales clerk is the sale. Making a sale is the reason that these three actors exist in the tourism industry. Any lengths can be gone to for a sale; different strategies can be developed, applied easily, and every kind of strategy is legal, ethical or not. The paradigm is that *"in tourism the profit margin is seven to one"* because *"a product worth one*

buck must be sold for seven bucks at least, or else it is a ruinous sale" (p. 32). This constitutes the paradigm of the grey zones in the workplace. The social construction of a sale is narrated as follows:

> *"A sale is the reason for the existence of agencies, centers, and sales clerks. None of them exist if there is no sale. There is so much need for a sale that on the day there isn't any, it is created. An agency that brings over ten thousand Germans to Turkey, when forming groups, would intersperse hefty customers among them. Or it would send the customers it has special deals with to Antalya. It gives them money so they can do some attention-grabbing shopping. The agency which gets average commission on their first venture, which has provided the center with good sales, would make new deals with the centers for the following season, asking for millions of Euros as an advance. The center, believing they will get wealthier clients would gladly pay, but in they will only get lousy customers. This is the agency swindling the center. The sales clerk would tell a client who doesn't have the means to buy anything, "Use it, then return it", and give him the goods. Because it looks like he has made a sale, he asks for an increase in pay during negotiations. And by the time the product is returned, he has already moved on to a new center. This is the sales clerk swindling the center. What the agency and the sales clerk do is called a balloon sale. Balloon sales are imaginary sales. But the profit margin in tourism is so high that the centers, despite having been swindled many times, open their doors in the following season and the balloon keeps on flying."* (p. 149)

Here, the novel draws attention to *pseudo sales*, the *high advance payments* that agencies have through their agreements with the centers, and various *deceits* the sales clerks practice while selling. Besides, travel agencies make a deal with some tourists and make them shop in high amounts. The purpose is to show these shopping amounts as reference and get more commission while signing a contract with centers for the next year. This situation is described with the metaphors *"balloon [and] imaginary sales."* Therefore, as Mars (1982) pointed out, the customer who is usually subjected to cheating can sometimes take part in cheating actively. All these throws into doubt the level of ethics and trust between organizations. The agency, the center, and the sales clerk, meaning people and organizations at every level, aim for the absolute sale and normalize lawlessness. For the travel agency, the center, and the sales clerk – in other words actors at every level – aim for absolute sales and normalize lawlessness. Thus, these deceits, which everybody knows about yet nobody talks about as everyone practices in a way, build social construction at the individual-organization-industry level. It is thereby institutionalized as a natural, functional, and acceptable aspect of commercial relationships. This then shapes the interests (*illusion*) and opinions (*doxa*) of the habitus in the workplace and industry. Hence, it would be correct to associate the working conditions in which *"immorals and criminals, without having to change their personality traits, legally"* can work as a sales clerk, the self-presentations of the sales clerks, and workplace ethnography in general with this *habitus*, interests (*illusio*), and opinions (*doxa*) (Bourdieu, 1994). The grey zone in the workplace is therefore not only about selling *"a fake product"* at *"a prohibitive price"*. Rather, it is a habitus spreading through every layer of the industrial field. The social construction and institutionalization of this grey zone is narrated in another passage as follows:

> *"Lying is in the nature of tourism. It begins in the brochures. In the brochure, where the sun always shines over Antalya, even during the seasons when rivers overflow and flood the streets, taking shanty houses down with them. The rare moments of fear that grip the sales clerk come from this consciousness of lying. The lie is in fact so blatant that he thinks the tourists will never fall for it. It is a temporary crisis. And after all, tourists are people who have packed their bags in order to believe anything. The sales clerk remembers this, relaxes and goes on with his show."* (p. 38)

The passage especially draws attention to the concept of *"lies"*, which are legal enough to be presented to the tourists in brochures even

before the holiday starts. As another passage puts it, *"tourism is to make people watch a mirage in exchange for cash" (p. 43)*. It can be said that the main cause of anomie of any kind and at any level, from the performance sales clerks show in everyday life to inter-organizational commercial relationships, is essentially explained in this passage, which once again highlights the structure-agency relationship. Ultimately, lies and deceit have become the habitus of the industrial field. The sales clerks adapt themselves to this habitus to be successful and survive at work:

> *"A sales clerk is a person who approaches people like an astronaut collecting samples of their emotions and thoughts. He is a collector of identities. His capital is not the product he sells but his customer. He sells his previous customer to the next one … Thus, the first and the last man is the tourist. And the sales clerk is the devil." (p. 162)*

These statements describe the degree of the corrosion of character. Sales clerks have different emotional states as part of their job, instrumentalize, ethically or not, every emotion, attitude, and behavior with a kind of emotional labor, and are ultimately *demonized*. However, the definition of *sales clerkship* metaphorized as the *devil* actually presents the actors of an economic organization in a larger context beyond the worker in a workplace. This situation is narrated in the novel as follows:

> *"Because agencies don't sell the clients through open bidding but through a sealed bid auction. As the envelopes being opened carefully with steam and the changing of their contents is just a matter of cash, nobody trusts anyone. In tourism, from the owner of the largest agency to the kid selling peg top at Sultanahmet (in Istanbul), everyone's a salesperson." (p. 23)*

In short, the novel associates the practices of all the agencies from bottom to top, the paradigm of organizational ethnography, and the ideology of the industrial field with each other through the *"devil"* metaphor within a framework of social construction adapted to and legitimizing each other from an ironic perspective (Fig. 1).

5. Conclusion

The main problem investigated in this study concerns the question of what kind of a social construction there can be between the everyday life of a touristic workplace, self-presentations peculiar to the job, job practices, working culture, and the qualities of the tourism industrial field. In this context, the novel *Malafa* by Hakan Günday was studied as the only literary work describing the tourism industry in Turkey, by focusing on the everyday working life of a jewellery shopping center.

According to the interpretation of the novel, the qualities of the job and the industrial field determine the sales clerks' self-presentations. As Goffman (1959; 1963) pointed out, sales clerks prepare their performances in the "back stages" of the workplace before displaying them on its "front stages", meaning in front of the audience. While this assumption applies to every profession and workplace, for the sales clerks, this congruence destroys their moral self-integrity. Likewise, the performance and success criteria of the workplace require Machiavellian job practices and appropriate self-presentations, such as lying, deceit, or displaying fake roles. Sales clerks are ultimately exposed to the corrosion of character (Sennett, 1998) and evolve into zombie-machines (Harding, 2013). What necessitates this state and simultaneously legitimizes it is the working conditions of the workplace. In this respect, *"lying and practicing deceit"* for sales are forbidden according to informal organizational norms; however, they are acceptable and legal within the grey zones of the workplace. In other words, as Mars suggested, this kind of practices are a natural aspect of organization rather than being an abnormality, they provide flexibility and what makes there workable for employees is this flexibility (Mars, 1982; 2008); and this is valid in terms of sales clerks. Therefore, the habitus of the workplace takes its form within this framework.

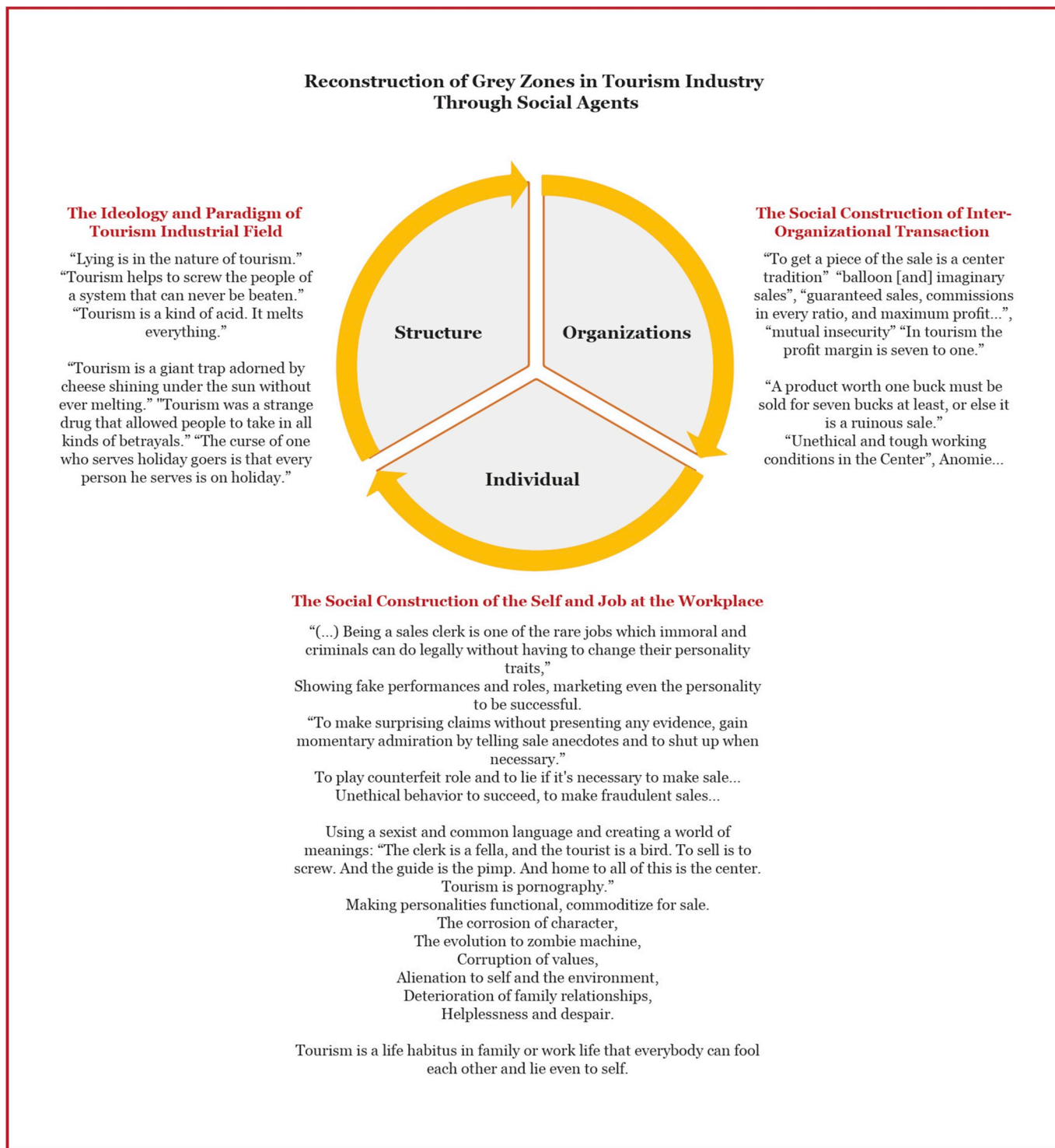However, this grey zone and informal legitimacy is not only limited

Reconstruction of Grey Zones in Tourism Industry Through Social Agents

The Ideology and Paradigm of Tourism Industrial Field

"Lying is in the nature of tourism."
"Tourism helps to screw the people of a system that can never be beaten."
"Tourism is a kind of acid. It melts everything."

"Tourism is a giant trap adorned by cheese shining under the sun without ever melting." "Tourism was a strange drug that allowed people to take in all kinds of betrayals." "The curse of one who serves holiday goers is that every person he serves is on holiday."

The Social Construction of Inter-Organizational Transaction

"To get a piece of the sale is a center tradition" "balloon [and] imaginary sales", "guaranteed sales, commissions in every ratio, and maximum profit…", "mutual insecurity" "In tourism the profit margin is seven to one."

"A product worth one buck must be sold for seven bucks at least, or else it is a ruinous sale."
"Unethical and tough working conditions in the Center", Anomie…

Structure   **Organizations**

Individual

The Social Construction of the Self and Job at the Workplace

"(…) Being a sales clerk is one of the rare jobs which immoral and criminals can do legally without having to change their personality traits,"
Showing fake performances and roles, marketing even the personality to be successful.
"To make surprising claims without presenting any evidence, gain momentary admiration by telling sale anecdotes and to shut up when necessary."
To play counterfeit role and to lie if it's necessary to make sale…
Unethical behavior to succeed, to make fraudulent sales…

Using a sexist and common language and creating a world of meanings: "The clerk is a fella, and the tourist is a bird. To sell is to screw. And the guide is the pimp. And home to all of this is the center. Tourism is pornography."
Making personalities functional, commoditize for sale.
The corrosion of character,
The evolution to zombie machine,
Corruption of values,
Alienation to self and the environment,
Deterioration of family relationships,
Helplessness and despair.

Tourism is a life habitus in family or work life that everybody can fool each other and lie even to self.

Fig. 1. The social construction of everyday life at workplace in novel.

to the working culture peculiar to a workplace. For example, according to the novel, *"Being a sales clerk is one of the rare jobs which immoral people and criminals can do legally without having to change their personality traits"* because *"Lying is in the nature of tourism".* On the other hand, the novel critically narrates the social construction of commercial relations. Every kind of deceit practiced in order to sell and make a profit steers commercial relations between travel agencies and centers; this implicit agreement can demonize every individual or organization at every level of the industry. Hence, the novel points out the powerful congruence between the grey zone of the workplace and the grey zone

of the tourism industrial field. In a way, the agency of every kind and level (sales clerks, shopping centers, travel agencies) adapt to the conditions of the structure (tourism industry) and this adaptation reproduces the structure.

Furthermore, the novel draws attention to the social construction of the work of tourism and describes working in tourism as a *curse*. It critically describes tourism working conditions in countries like Turkey and their individual/social outcomes. Working in tourism provides economic gains but distorts family relationships to the extent that the novel describes family life in terms of cheating, indifference, and

weakening of bonds. However, this corruption gains normality through *"tourism, which was a strange drug that allowed people to take in all kinds of betrayals"* because *"No one is angry at anyone. No one blames anyone for lying or being dishonorable. Everything is done in the open. Everyone knows where the cash came from."* This shows that the corrosion of character peculiar to tourism work may not only be limited to the workplace but also spread into private life. The grey zone of the workplace and the industrial field leads to a habitus that contains family life in terms of the workers. Hence, future studies could consider this subject of work-family conflict in tourism.

When evaluated in general, in the framework of Weick (1995), *the ideology* of the shopping center and the tourism industry narrated in the novel, is solely built on a profit strategy: their *paradigms* and *traditions* are based on lies, deceit, and cheating; the sales clerks' *theories of action* lead to a corrosion of character that spreads from the workplace into family life. The novel thereby draws our attention, through a fictional but organic narration, to how the social construction between individual, workplace, and industrial field in tourism can materialize.

These conclusions offer two novel understanding for studies on the workplace in tourism. The first one is the social constructionist context and interpretive research approach of the study. For example, present workplace studies are trying to explain the subjects like emotional labor, unethical behaviors, cynical attitudes and alienation with mainstream organizational behavior approach and this can lead industrial context to escape the attention. The effect of abstracted empiricism Mills (2000) opened to criticism on this is in question. This limited epistemological tendency fails to understand the social construction of grey zones in the individual-organization-structure triangle of workplace ethnography. However, as this study shows, a strong interaction between an individual's job practices and organizational field and industrial structure is in question. Hence, it is necessary to open "some attributes of tourism work" that Baum emphasized (2015, p. 210), and the outcomes of the "stubborn stain" up for discussion again with a social constructivist perspective. This can make it possible to analyze workplace crime practices (Mars, 1982) in the grey zones. In this way, the reflections of the concepts regarding new working culture such as corrosion of character and zombie-machine on tourism industry can be understood. This awareness the study provides is an important contribution in order to focus on the everyday life of other workplaces in tourism industry like hotels, travel agencies and restaurants where triadic occupations are common and to study functioning and outcomes of "hidden economy" (Mars, 2008) in grey zones.

The second contribution of the study serves as a warning for practitioners. As told in the novel, in tourism high profit margin, commission becoming widespread in commercial relationships and absolute economic profit focus are turning workplace life into "wildlife" environment. And workers develop job practices and selves appropriate for this "wildlife". This habitus making high profits in the short term leads to loss of the feeling of trust and alienation in the long term. Thus, anomie becomes widespread and grey zones that everyone considers legal appear. Yet it is not possible for economic and social capital in these industrial fields immanent in these qualities to be sustainable in the long term. In this respect, before anything else practitioners must be concerned about individual, social and financial destruction the short term "hidden economy" may lead to in the long term. However, as understood from the interview notes in the method part, it is hard to say there is such concern in the related industrial field.

In addition, this research has limitations. The novel depicts tourists as a passive figure and presents a restricted impression about their attitudes, behaviors and thoughts in the center. Hence, tourists' experience and whether they show "inappropriate or transgressive behavior towards the workers" (Chapman & Light, 2017, p. 186) in these grey zones is still a question to be answered. Besides, there may be an alliance not only between employers and workers but also between workers and customers against employers at workplaces having triadic occupations (Mars, 2008). And this may reveal different kinds of tricks

and deceptions. The novel narrates, in only one passage, that travel agencies make their contracted customers shop in high amounts and demand higher commissions from shopping centers in contracts. But it does not mention in the novel whether there is a trick alliance directly between sales clerks and tourists against the center. Hence, future studies can focus on the role of tourists in grey zones. Nevertheless, there is an interaction ritual in all human relationships and individuals develop self-presentations appropriate for the content of the interaction (Goffman, 1967). In this context, do tourists, as an agency of a shopping relationship, develop self-presentations such as discreet, uncompanionable, hard or cynical in order to protect themselves from tricks and deceptions at the workplace? Or do they show gestures, mimics and attitudes appropriate for the context of the relationship with sales clerks? If so, it means the workplace ethnography that can drive sales clerks to lie drives tourists to protection/withdrawal strategies like "alienation from interaction" (Goffman, 1967, p. 113). This is still a subject to be studied in order to understand the effect of social construction of everyday life at workplace on all actors.

Finally, even though the novel narrates tourism and the social construction of a touristic workplace specifically in Turkey, it actually brings the subject to an international context, to underdeveloped and developing countries like Turkey. In other words, Günday's novel provides quite objective study questions for rethinking the function of tourism and its socio-cultural outcomes. The responsibility this objectivity gives to future studies is stated clearly in the following passage, which draws attention to international structuration and the habitus of the tourism industry's grey zones:

> *"The inclusion of the centers into daily or weekly tours by agencies is not a Turkish invention. There are hundreds of centers in the Far East, Mexico, the Pacific Islands, Italy, Spain, Czechoslovakia, Greece, China. They are all the same. Rules, irregularities. From the sunbed renter to the guide who gets a percentage of the sale, tourism is tourism. The tongue of the parasol seller on the beaches of Monte Carlo spins exactly like the tongue of the uniformed bird sales clerks showing the products at a precious stone center in Thailand. Whatever the culture, every person treats a stranger who came to see his touristic village more or less the same. One way is to insult the clients, as do Spanish sales clerks; another is to screw them like the Italians. However, like it is everywhere, tourism is a cake shared by those who cannot find bread. That's where the roughness comes from." (p. 115)*

Author contributions

Mustafa Yıldırım: Conceived and designed the analysis, Collected the data, Contributed data or analysis tools, Performed the analysis, Wrote the paper, Other contribution.

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Dr. Mustafa Yıldırım graduated from Faculty of Commerce and Tourism Education, Gazi University in Turkey, completed his master's degree and PhD in Tourism Management at the same university. He is an assistant professor at Faculty of Business Administration, Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University. His researches focuses on organizational behavior, sociology of work and tourism management.