**Group C: the family and gender**

* **In what ways are family roles determined by gender in the novel?**

-Man’s role is to work, Timur drinks when he’s younger but joins his father in his work and becomes more responsible, finds a purpose

-Later on Fuat (Gül’s husband) drinks and gambles because his job is unfulfilling, it doesn’t give him the same purpose

-Whilst Timur is a blacksmith and produces things in his profession (like the wedding bed), Fuat is a barber in someone else’s shop, he can’t be master over anything, nothing to be proud of

-Female role is to stay at home, look after the children, cook, clean, typical domestic duties

-However in contrast to the father in ‘Karawanserei’, Gül’s father still plays a role in their upbringing, especially in Gül’s as he welcomes her into his workshop and they bond over his trade

-The concept of ‘mother’ is intrinsically linked with household duties, as when Gül’s real mother dies, her father replaces her almost immediately because of the pressure of needing someone to look after the kids and households. The children begin to call her ‘mother’ straight away although they’re aware that she isn’t really their mother, but because she fulfils all the same duties as their actual mother she is given this label

-There is evidence that the family roles begin to shift throughout the novel as time geos on and Turkey is modernised. As Gül is the oldest child, it is impressed most strongly upon her that her role is to do housework, get married, have children, and she accepts this as her fate

-Whereas Melike and Sibel become more educated and move away from the village to pursue careers

-There is a vicious cycle which Gül embodies, she can’t learn enough because she’s so busy helping at home, meaning she eventually loses hope/interest in finishing school and confines herself to the domestic role. By taking on this role she is further perpetuating the role of women as being uneducated and staying at home. Her sisters represent the breaking of this cycle

* **In what ways does gender condition the personal expectations of individual characters?**

-Because of their gender men have expectations of achieving materialist wealth and autonomy, this is seen by Fuat who is obsessed with cars, the image of drinking whiskey, moving away somewhere, and his drinking/hanging out with his mates numbs the disappointment of his failure to fufill this

-The prospect of this is what ultimately leads him to move to Germany for new opportunities

-A similar situation with Suzan’s husband who leaves prison and moves to Germany to work, the chase for financial prosperity is depicted as a male desire and expectation, it is the men who want to move away instead of the women

-Gül on the other hand never contemplated being rich, her family is much more important to her, she wants to stay near her sisters and look after her children

-The sisters in the book have various strengths, Güls seems to be to carry pain, whether physically (when she breaks her nose) or emotionally. As she embodies a traditional image of the Turkish women, it is implied that there is an expectation for her to be able to do this her whole life.

-Gül’s expectations of herself are ultimate obedience, she never stands up for herself or does anything wrong, even when the boy she likes (Recep) hands her a lottery ticket (I think??) and she wins a load of money, she’s so worried that its something naughty that she throws it into the river. This unexplainable fear of transgressing her role shows the social pressure which she feels to conform to her role, but which her sisters demonstrate as being outdated.

* **How are male figures represented in the novel?**

-They sometimes drink/smoke/do bad things but this is because of the burden on their shoulders to provide for their families and make something of themselves

-Even Timur, who ends up being a good father who provides for his family spent his younger days in Istanbul getting drunk and having a good time because (page 72) he says its an escape from death, marriage, birth, illness, young men don’t want this responsibility but they mature and take it on, like he did

* **To what extent are family roles and structures represented in a differentiated manner?**

-We follow several families which have similar elements such as women performing housework, men going out to work, however they are distinguished by small things, such as the way in which Gül’s father is so loving towards her, calls her affectionate nicknames etc, whereas in her in-law’s household she doesn’t see any of this. This puts an emphasis on how kind her father is in comparison. However similarly to her last household, she says that all her hard work is never praised and nobody respects her for it.