

PINK ANGELS: CULTURAL REPRODUCTION THROUGH THE
THERAPIES PROVIDED BY A JEWISH WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION IN
OR-AHAYIM HOSPITAL IN ISTANBUL

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ABSTRACT

PINK ANGELS: CULTURAL REPRODUCTION THROUGH THE THERAPIES PROVIDED BY A JEWISH WOMEN’S ORGANIZATION IN *OR-AHAYIM* HOSPITAL IN ISTANBUL

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Some Turkish Jewish women have been serving the elderly staying in the geriatric unit of the Jewish *Or-Ahayim* Hospital in Istanbul. Their group is recognized as ‘the Pink Angels.’ The volunteer women at the Jewish hospital founded a group in 1974, and Nuket Antebi named this group ‘the Pink Angels.’ Today this group of women is divided into three subgroups: (1) those who offer chat and art therapies, after having been trained, (2) those who distribute foods and beverages, deal with donations, are involved in the preparation process of jam jars, and offer memorial services, and (3) those who assume both duties. The Pink Angels who serve as therapists contribute to the attainment of world peace locally in Istanbul by chatting and reading various texts belonging to various world cultures in the chat therapies and making the patients create works of art and sing songs related to different cultural occasions in the art therapies by promoting global moral values. Sometimes they promote the moral values of other religious and cultural groups by celebrating different feasts and narrating stories belonging to these diverse groups by underscoring the concept unity in

diversity and imposing upon the patients that they constitute a family in the hospital.

Moreover, not only the foods and beverages the Pink Angels distribute, but also the jam jars and gift baskets they prepare carry Turkish Jewish symbols. This thesis based on fieldwork tests the hypotheses that the Pink Angels employ positive symbols in the therapies and activities they conduct, avoid talking about negative issues, such as sadness and death, not only the therapies, but also all the other activities that the Pink Angels conduct evoke happiness and joy in the patients as long as the Turkish Jewish culture is reproduced, since the patients feel as if they were at home, and several intercultural peace building techniques are employed in the therapies together with symbols and metaphorical imagery emphasizing the importance of peace between different religious and ethnic groups by mentioning the commonalities between them, and the rules obeyed by the Pink Angels provide the patients with comfort, since they conceive that they are in a serious and secure place.

Furthermore, the foods cooked everyday in the hospital and the music the patients listen to during the therapies reflect the transcultural identities of the Turkish Jews whose ancestors had lived in different countries and interacted with various cultural groups. Symbolic interactionism is employed in analyzing all of these.

Keywords: Pink Angels, Symbolic Interactionism, Turkish Jewish Culture, *Or-Ahayim* Hospital, Cultural Reproduction

ÖZ

PEMBE MELEKLER: İSTANBUL'DA *OR-AHAYİM* HASTANESİ'NDE BİR YAHUDİ KADIN ORGANİZASYONU TARAFINDAN SAĞLANAN TERAPİLER ARACILIĞIYLA KÜLTÜRÜN YENİDEN ÜRETİMİ

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İstanbul'da *Or-Ahayim* Hastanesi'nin geriatri ünitesinde kalan yaşlılara gönüllü bir Türk Yahudi kadın grubu hizmet vermektedir. Bu grup 'Pembe Melekler' adıyla bilinir. Yahudi hastanesindeki gönüllü kadınlar 1974 yılında bir grup kurdu ve Nuket Antebi bu gruba 'Pembe Melekler' adını verdi. Bugün bu kadınlar grubu üç alt-gruba ayrılır: (1) belirli bir eğitimden geçtikten sonra hastanede sohbet ve sanat terapileri verenler, (2) yemek ve içecek dağıtan, bağışlar ile ilgilenen, reçel yapımı sürecinde çalışanlar ve mevlit hizmeti sunanlar ve (3) her iki görevi de üstlenenler. Terapist olarak hizmet veren Pembe Melekler sohbet terapilerinde sohbet ederek ve farklı dünya kültürlerine ait metinler okuyarak ve sanat terapilerinde de küresel ahlaki değerleri savunarak hastalara sanat eserleri yaptırarak ve farklı kültürel durumlara ait şarkılar söyleterek yerel olarak İstanbul'da dünya barışına katkı sağlar. Bazen çok çeşitlilikte birlik kavramının altını çizerek ve hastalara hastanede bir aile oluşturduklarını empoze ederek bu farklı gruplara ait bayramları kutlayarak ve hikayeler anlatarak diğer kültürel ve dini grupların ahlaki değerlerini savunurlar.

Dahası Pembe Melekler'in dađıttığı yiyecek ve içeceklerin yanısıra hazırladıkları reçel şişeleri ve hediye sepetleri de Türk Yahudi sembolleri taşır. Alan araştırmasına dayalı olan bu tez, Pembe Melekler yürüttükleri terapilerde ve aktivitelerde pozitif semboller kullanır, üzüntü ve ölüm gibi negatif konulardan bahsetmekten kaçınırlar, Yahudi kültürü üretildiğı sürece hastalar kendilerini evde hissettiğinden ve farklı grupların ortak yönlerini belirterek farklı dini ve etnik gruplar arasındaki barışın önemini vurgulayan semboller ve metaforik imajlar ile birtakım kültürlerarası barış inşası teknikleri kullanıldığından Pembe Melekler'in yürüttüğü sadece terapiler değil, bütün diğer aktiviteler de hastalarda mutluluk ve neşe uyandırır ve Pembe Melekler'in uyduğı kurallar ciddi ve güvenli bir yerde olduklarını anladıklarından hastalara rahatlık sağlar hipotezlerini test eder.

Ayrıca hastanede her gün pişirilen yemekler ve terapilerde hastaların dinlediğı müzik ataları farklı ülkelerde yaşamış ve farklı kültürel gruplarla iletişim halinde bulunmuş olan Türkiyeli Yahudiler'in transkültürel kimliklerini yansıtır. Bütün bunları analiz ederken sembolik etkileşimciliğe başvurulur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Pembe Melekler, Sembolik Etkileşimcilik, Türk Yahudi Kültürü, *Or-Ahayim* Hastanesi, Kültürün Yeniden Üretimi

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“*Gudio ki no ayuda a otro non ay*” [“There is no Jew who does not help another”], as a Judeo-Spanish proverb says (Angel 2006:133). Jewish philanthropy in Istanbul led to the construction of a small health-care unit, and then a hospital where patients of different religions have been taken into care. The Jewish philanthropy exhibited by the Pink Angels is exemplary, since they accept that all human beings are sisters and brothers; Bernard Lewis mentions that all human beings are descendants of Noah, referring to the Hebrew Bible, as follows:

The name *Semite* comes from *Shem*, the eldest of the three sons of Noah. In the Greek and Latin versions of the Bible, *Shem* becomes *Sem*, since neither Greek nor Latin has anyway of representing the initial sound of the Hebrew name. The Bible tells us that everyone on earth was drowned except for Noah and his family and that all mankind are descended from his three sons, *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japheth*. The lines of descent from the three of them, described in *Genesis*, represent a kind of mythologized ethnology, enumerating the peoples of antiquity whose names were known at the time when this chapter was written, and setting forth the relationships between them.

According to the interpretation, *Ham* was the ancestor of the dark-skinned peoples of Africa, *Shem* of the Hebrews and their various cognates, and *Japheth* the ancestor of Medes, Persians, Greeks, and other peoples who, many centuries later, came to be known as Aryans [1999:42, emphases added].

Most of the Turkish Jews today, including the Pink Angels are Sephardim; therefore, the history of Turkish Sephardic Jews who were accepted by the Ottoman Emperor Sultan Bayezid II after their expulsion from Spain in 1492 for

refusing to convert to Catholicism should be mentioned first: the Alhambra decree issued on March 31, 1492 by Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon forced Jews to leave the territories of the Kingdom of Spain (Lipman 2011). The Second Vatican Council revoked this decree on December 16, 1968 (Strayer 2011). These Spanish Jews settled in the Ottoman Empire where Romaniot Jews, who were originally from Byzantium, were residing (Besalel 1999:151). Additionally, Rozen mentions that several Ashkenazim whose ancestors were born in Europe might have arrived in the Ottoman Empire before the Sephardim, and they are called “*kendi gelen*” in Turkish [those who came for their own will] (2002:49). The descendants of the Jews, belonging to these three groups of Jews, who inhabited the same land, known as the Ottoman Empire, have been living in the Republic of Turkey since its foundation on October 29, 1923. Moreover, today all these Jews elect the Chief Rabbi of Turkey; thus, he represents the whole Turkish Jewish Community (Altabev 2003:55). Besides, the Karaites have been dwelling in some former Ottoman cities, which currently belong to the Republic of Turkey, for centuries. However, they deny the rabbinical law, since they do not believe in the *Talmud*, which involves oral ideas about Judaism, and they refer only to the *Torah*¹: they settled in different countries, after they had rejected the rabbinical law accepted by the Babylonian Rabbinical Jews in the eighth century B.C.E. (Green 1984:170).

Besides, several Turkish Jewish charities and groups work under the guidance of the Turkish Chief Rabbinate. A Jewish women’s group called ‘*Pembe Melekler*’ in Turkish, and ‘Pink Angels’ in English is one of these groups. The group consists of approximately sixty women between forty and seventy years old that serve as volunteers in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital located in the neighborhood of Balat in Istanbul, Turkey. Here is some information about this Jewish hospital: a physician named Captain Rafael Dalmediko decided to found a small hospital;

¹ *Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy* are the five books that form the whole book of the *Torah*, revealed to Moses (Alalu et al. 2001:285-286). See the following reference:

Jewish Publication Society of America.

1963 *The Torah [Torah]: The Five Books of Moses*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America.

some other philanthropists and physicians joined him and established *Or-Ahayim* (this Hebrew name means “Light of Life” in English; originally, the Hebrew name is *Or hahayim*) Hospital as a tiny health care unit in order to serve the poor; this occurred as soon as Abdulhamit II had announced the related edict (*Balat Or-Ahayim Hospital, History* n.d.:4). Güteryüz mentions that each religious community was allowed to build their own hospitals in an edict on September 5, 1838: the Jews and the Karaim could build their own hospitals; however, they did not possess the required amount of financial resources; despite this difficulty, several people raised funds in Balat and a physician called Dr. Rafael Dalmediko worked so hard that the hospital could be established; consequently, Sultan Abdulhamit II permitted the construction of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital in an edict on February 16, 1896; it would be a three floor building with a kitchen and a laundry in the neighborhood of Karaağaç in Balat (2012:167). Moreover, all the details of the groundbreaking ceremony were published in the *Stanboul* newspaper on May 11, 1896 (Güteryüz 2012:167). A volunteer women’s group also existed in the hospital in the Ottoman period: they washed the dirty sheets, towels, et cetera (Apalaçi 2001:226). Women established a branch for the hospital in 1974; they were aiming at assisting the patients voluntarily (Apalaçi 2001:226), and Nuket Antebi, one of the ex-heads of the women’s branch changed the name of this branch into “Pink Angels” (Apalaçi 2001:231). Today the Pink Angels spend most of their time in a building known as the “Alegra Torel Geriatric Pavilion” opened in 2005, a four level building which consists of two therapy halls, twenty-six bedrooms, and forty-two beds (*Balat Or-Ahayim Hospital, Geriatrics* n.d.:20). Today this four level building, forming the geriatric pavilion, includes also a medical laboratory in addition to the huge therapy room and the dining room built in this section of the hospital.

Furthermore, the group of Pink Angels is divided into three subgroups: 1) the therapists, 2) the caregivers, and 3) those serving both as therapists and as caregivers. The Pink Angels reproduce the Turkish Jewish culture during each type of activity. La Fontaine posits that Western people must appropriate some moral and cultural values that will lead to social acceptance and appreciation, since their lives are temporary in the world (1985:124). This is also valid in

relation with the cultural productions and social reproductions of the patients and the Pink Angels. As the patients become involved in these therapies, they imitate what their friends do, and reproduce the Turkish Jewish culture together with them. The chat, game, reading, handiwork, collective work, and painting therapies conducted by this group are analyzed in this study. In this thesis, the therapies during which the Pink Angels and the patients chat, play games, or read texts are analyzed under the title of chat therapies, and the other therapies during which some Pink Angels and the patients do handiwork, draw pictures, and collaborate in the creation of ornaments, while listening to the music sometimes are depicted in a section dedicated to art therapies.

Besides, therapies have transnational origins, since some of the Pink Angels go and observe similar kinds of therapies conducted with the elderly in Israel and apply whatever they have learnt there in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital. Furthermore, as Turkish Jews have lived in various countries before coming to the Ottoman Empire, they have transnational identities reflected in their characters, culinary traditions, beliefs, and customs influenced by those other places; Basch, Glick-Schiller, and Szanton-Blanc suggest that transnationalism consists of the “processes” through which immigrants preserve their “multi-stranded” social ties “that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (1994:7). Additionally, Konrad posits that people’s personalities are shaped by cultural traditions, since personality formation is a result of various social relationships (1998:645).

Therefore, this study refers to the theory of symbolic interactionism. Herbert Blumer coined the term of “symbolic interactionism” in a book chapter he authored in 1937²; he explains the details of the theory he developed in his book entitled *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. This book was published in 1969. Blumer says that he was influenced mainly by his instructor,

² Blumer, Herbert
1937 Social Psychology, Chapter 4. *In Man and Society: A Substantive Introduction to the Social Science*. Emerson Peter Schmid, ed. Pp. 144-198. New York: Prentice-Hall.

George Herbert Mead who regarded a human being as a social entity that has a self; however, he claims that Mead did not provide any methodological bases for observing the interactions between human beings (1995:263). In symbolic interactionism, the social psychological concept of “looking-glass self,” or in other words, “reflected self” developed by Charles Horton Cooley who thinks that human beings determine who they are in accordance with how the society in which they live perceive them is present (1902:152). In fact, cultural groups impose several rules upon a person: she or he has to obey these rules in order to be regarded as normal and accepted by society. For being accepted by society, the person takes also a specific role, as a Pink Angel, a therapist, a caregiver, a cook, a donator, et cetera. Moreover, according to Denzin, Blumer (1969) posits that “human group life” can be analyzed in relation with the scientific study of the “natural social world” through the “empirical” investigation of events” (1992:56). “Symbolic interaction” involves the investigation of the symbolic meaning of an action (Blumer 1969:8).

This study aims at analyzing the cultural reproductions of the Turkish Jewish women working as members of a group called ‘Pink Angels’ during their therapies for the elderly staying in the geriatric unit of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital in the quarter of Balat in Istanbul, Turkey by interpreting the symbolic actions underlying the objects they use in therapies, the meals they order the dietician to make the cooks prepare, the foods and the gifts they distribute, and their behaviors in tackling diverse situations.

1. 1. Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study observes how the group of ‘Pink Angels’ is organized and trained, and in which activities the members of the group are involved within the framework of symbolic interactionism. Some Pink Angels refer to some therapies, and this study investigates which therapy is conducted when, why, and how. The stories some Pink Angels narrate, the songs other Pink Angels, or professional singers sing, the articles, or the essays some other Pink Angels read to the patients, the physical exercises they practice together with the patients, and the artistic

activities in which they make the patients get involved are analyzed in this study. As the Pink Angels are on duty on Sundays, the duties they perform on that day will also be mentioned. Additionally, this study investigates the symbolic meanings of the objects Pink Angels use and the symbolic interactions between them and the patients during the therapies. Thus, the physical, social, and abstract objects involved in the therapies in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital are analyzed and depicted in this study. The physical objects include the items used in the therapies, the warning signs, the decorations, the foods, and the icons used in the hospital. The social objects include the Pink Angels, the patients, and the hospital staff. The abstract objects are the ethical rules, the dress codes, and the moral and religious rules, messages, traditions, and practices; for instance, this study analyzes what kind of foods the members of the group of 'Pink Angels' distribute as physical objects, what the symbolic meanings of the foods that the group distributes are, which languages they use for being social objects, when and why they distribute specific foods for religious reasons, and which the underlying abstract objects are in this case. Moreover, the cultural meanings of the gifts that the members of the group of the Pink Angels offer to the patients will be explained. Therefore, the meanings of objects, the language uses, and the thought processes necessary for interpreting the events and the activities in which Pink Angels take part will be deciphered in this study.

Furthermore, this study tests five hypotheses. The first hypothesis of this study is that all the activities and duties performed by the Pink Angels in which they reproduce the Turkish Jewish culture lead to optimism and promote positive thinking among the patients who suffer from different diseases, since the patients perceive the Pink Angels as their true friends and they feel as if they were at home, since the Jewish culture is reproduced, and their memories are revitalized. Besides, the second hypothesis of this study is that all the foods cooked, distributed, or sold in the hospital and the gift baskets prepared by the Pink Angels eliminate negative thinking and harness positive thinking in relation with the positive symbols they involve. As well, the third hypothesis of this study is that a similar positive symbolism accompanies the dress codes, the ethical rules, and the hygienic principles applied in the hospital that make the patients take

their dreams seriously linked to this seriousness alongside the stories the Pink Angels narrate, and the works of art that they request the patients to create and that impose positive thinking upon the patients. Additionally, a fourth hypothesis is that the Pink Angels talk about the beautiful and positive aspects of life instead of illnesses and death that may lead to depression, when they are in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital. Furthermore, fifth, this study hypothesizes that some symbols used during the therapies by the Pink Angels may lead to the attainment of world peace.

1. 2. Methodology

Blumerian symbolic interactionism requires *participant-observation* as a technique (Reynolds and Metzger 1973:190), since details regarding human interaction and symbols are very crucial in understanding certain cultural acts. The data of this study were gathered via *participant-observation* from January 31, 2011 through February 13, 2011 in relation with this requisite of symbolic interactionism for a short period of time. Kiefer explains that a researcher has to live among the members of a certain community for a long time, remaining “in a setting similar to the way they live” (2006:92). Moreover, Kiefer also suggests that before joining the community that the researchers are going to observe, they have to learn the community’s language and traditions, offer their “resources” to the community members by buying them certain dishes and providing them with certain ways of “transportation, skills, advice,” and so forth, and behave “as an equal in the collective activities of life – group work, recreation, rituals and celebrations, meetings,” et cetera, while “hanging around” in the field (2006:92).

I was usually an outsider as a participant observer. However, in some occasions, I assisted some Pink Angels in their activities, including participating in conversations, bringing objects to use during the art therapies, and feeding some patients who were not able to feed themselves by using their own tableware.

Moreover, some information was required about the previous festive celebrations and activities organized by some Pink Angels. Semi-structured interviews are

ideal types of interviews successive for *participant-observation* (Cohen and Crabtree 2006). Therefore, semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with eight Pink Angels. I asked them about their ancestral origins, where they were living, how long they had been serving as Pink Angels, which languages they could speak in the hospital, what their roles were as Pink Angels, if they were participating in the therapies, which foods they were distributing when, what the requirements of becoming a Pink Angel were, how they decided to become a Pink Angel, which means of communication they were using for communicating, how they had been celebrating some Jewish and other feasts in the hospital, which foods they had wanted the dietician to order to be cooked, which gifts had been prepared for whom, how they had been reproducing the Turkish Jewish culture, what they were doing during the memorial services, what their most important life experiences were as Pink Angels, how they were choosing the texts to be read and the stories to be narrated during the therapies, how they were choosing the songs, if they had exhibited the works of the patients, and what kind of changes they witnessed in the hospital.

Furthermore, the hospital's professional therapist, who was guiding the Pink Angels during the therapies, was interviewed about the structures of the therapies. The professional therapist was approximately forty years old, and the Pink Angels that were interviewed were between forty and seventy years old. Additionally, the two cooks and the dietician of the hospital were interviewed about the foods the Pink Angels were requesting the cooks of the hospital to cook, a rabbi was asked a few questions on prayers, and an e-mail was received from a Sephardic musician on the songs that he and the members of his group sing during the therapies. Both the therapies and the interviews with the Pink Angels, the rabbi, and the professional therapist of the hospital were recorded. As Atkinson suggests, first, the interviews were designed before the fieldwork; second, the interviews were conducted, and third, these were transcribed (2001:131).

In fact, all the interviews conducted were semi-structured. "Formal" interviews were conducted from an "interview guide" that had open-ended questions; the

interviews were conducted during the lunch breaks after the therapies; thus, Cohen and Crabtree's (2006) description of semi-structured interviews fitted this research.

Moreover, Fontana refers to Marcus and Fischer (1986) who suggest that an ethnographic fieldwork researcher should choose a "dialogic" method: the dialogues between the interviewees and me (the interviewer) show "how the ethnographic knowledge develops" (2001:164). As Atkinson proposes, "life storytellers offer highly personal meanings, memories, and interpretations of their own, adding to the artful contours of their life stories" (2001:131). The interviewees declared their identities alongside their life stories, respecting the reasons why they were interviewed and they described relevant events, as de Vries and Lehman (1996) mention. Besides, according to Reinharz and Chase, "the interviewing of women is not a "one-size- fits-all" type of activity": businesswomen had a tendency to describe their duties and their contributions to the world in a more detailed manner than the timid housewives who were hesitating to talk about everything (2001:222). As Reinharz and Chase explain, strong women who have careers tend to speak up for being self-confident (2001:226). Accordingly, the Pink Angels who were running businesses or working for some companies and firms were more talkative than the housewives.

In addition to interviews, vintage photographs, books, and articles were analyzed, regarding the activities of the Pink Angels. Bateson and Mead (1942) suggested the use of photographs in anthropology. Thus, some photographs were observed, and some articles in the archives of the hospital, which belong to the Pink Angels, were read.³

³ Kiefer defends that an anthropologist should respect the informants' private life and protect them against any harmful situations that may occur as a result of the unethical uses of the information gathered from them (2006:114). Consequently, for ethical reasons, I secured the – written- permission of the chief physician of the hospital, Dr. Tunç Çelebi for conducting my fieldwork with the Pink Angels. Moreover, I wrote and signed a statement indicating that I would not distribute the photographs I had taken to the media that produce magazine news, and I always asked for the permission of the people, before taking their photographs. Besides, in this study, I do not mention the names of the Pink Angels, the hospital employees, or the patients.

1. 3. Literature Review

This section deals with some previous studies on the relationship between aging and anthropology. This section should be useful for understanding how this more recent study differs from some earlier studies. Medical anthropologists conduct studies on “the entire domain of health and medicine throughout the life-cycle”; regarding aging, they analyze the cultural ways of treatment of “the aged” and “the reasons for the differential status they are often accorded”; additionally, they observe “the relationships among physical functioning of the aged and their roles and functions in different societies,” and they are also interested in the promotion of the elderly health care within various cultural groups (Anonymous 1981:7).

This analysis demonstrates how this thesis on the Pink Angels will contribute to the elderly emotion treatment within a Turkish Jewish context where the importance of unity in diversity is emphasized. However, this thesis discovers the cultural aspects of the therapies conducted by some Turkish Jewish women in a Jewish hospital; neither the elderly health care systems nor the healing techniques are analyzed in this study.

On the one hand, a dissertation written by Yohko Tsuji, entitled *Elderly Pioneers: A Cultural Study of Aging in America* describes a senior citizens center where the elderly participate in various activities among which there are sports, handiwork, arts, and travels. The book was published in 1991. This study constituted a background for this current study that focuses on the symbolic representations of the Turkish Jewish culture alongside some universal human values in the geriatric unit of a Jewish hospital in Istanbul, Turkey.

On the other hand, Alam, who analyzed the elderly care systems in a Bangladeshi village, suggests that in Bangladesh, neighbors and villagers take care of the poor elderly; besides, Alam indicates that the elderly do not wish to live in nursery homes due to their fear of being isolated from their communities (2000:86-87). In this case, the Pink Angels assist the patients so that they can feel as if they were at home by celebrating Jewish feasts and reproducing the Turkish Jewish culture via different activities conducted during therapies. Additionally, the dishes cooked in the hospital represent the Turkish Jewish culture.

Moreover, Gelfand refers to Rosen and Kostick (1951) who suggested that the aged Jewish people live traumas, after having been separated from their communities; therefore, aged people should be allowed to visit their friends and relatives (1968:275). As it has been mentioned previously, during this study's fieldwork, it was observed that the Pink Angels were trying to do their best for making the patients feel as comfortable as if they were at home by keeping them close to their communities and maintaining a peaceful environment for some patients whose beliefs may differ from theirs.

In addition, Frida Kerner-Furman (1997) published a book entitled *Facing the Mirror: Older Women and Beauty Shop Culture*. It is about old Jewish women coming to Julie's international salon in Chicago; this book demonstrated how aging Jewish women were taking care of themselves. At this point, the Pink Angels would take care of the aging women in a Jewish hospital in Istanbul. They would cut the nails of the old women twenty years ago; as the number of members of the hospital staff increased today, some Pink Angels only offer combs and mirrors, or necklaces and bracelets as gifts to the old people who may like them. Besides, Kerner-Furman (1997) mentions that the beauty salon operates in accordance with the Jewish calendar: it is closed on *Yom Kippur*,⁴ and an electric *menorah*⁵ with shining candles is displayed on the window during the feast of *Hanukkah*.⁶ The Pink Angels do not come to the hospital on *Yom Kippur*, but they celebrate the feast of *Hanukkah* with the patients in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital by requesting them to light the candles on a *menorah*. At this point, we should refer to Katz who says the following:

⁴ It is the Jewish compensation day that involves the period that begins before the sunset and lasts until the appearance of the stars in the evening sky on the next day; Jews fast on this day for purifying themselves from their sins (Alalu et al. 2001:46).

⁵ A candleholder that has seven branches; it represents the order of God, "Let there be light!"; Moshe learned how to make it from God (see *Exodus* 25:31-40) (Alalu et al. 2001:223-224). However, the *Hanukkah* candleholder called *Hanukkiyah* has nine branches for each candle to be lit on a different day, whereas a candle is used just in lighting the others (Alalu et al. 2001:62-63).

⁶ *Hanukkah* is the Jewish feast celebrated for the victory of the Jews over Greeks saving *Beth-ha-Mikdash* from pagans; it has been celebrated for eight days beginning from the twenty-fifth day of the month of *Kislev* (Alalu et al. 2001:60).

When we consider the human species, we have to be aware of an unusual age structure and aging processes both at the lower and upper ends of the human life cycle. In general, among humans, both young and very old tend to depend on those in the middle of the age structure [1978:3, correction added].

Lamb analyzed the status of the elderly in India (1997:281). In addition, Shield mentions that she wrote a dissertation on the relationship between aging and ethnomusicology: she conducted fieldwork in an American nursing home, “applying concepts of rites of passage, performance and reciprocity to understand the behavior and the perspectives of nursing home participants” (1998:11). In addition, Deutschman depicts her study in the following way:

Culture change has a different meaning for different organizations depending on where they are in the continuum of change. Detailed observation of staff members “in action” in three long-term care facilities over a period of several months was supplemented by formal and informal interviews of organization members to gain an understanding of the culture of the nursing home organization. Four three-hour observations in each of three facilities, representing privately-held and not-for-profit organizations in urban, suburban, and rural locations yielded insights into the routine, recruitment, training, teamwork, activities, leadership, role-modeling, mentoring, staff and resident satisfaction, weekend staffing and activities, bureaucratic structure, and sharing of best practices [2005:246].

In *Or-Ahayim* Hospital, every religious group is respected. Barbee proposes the following:

A recognition of racism in the nursing profession would allow Euro-American nurses to redirect the energy that they use in denying racism toward forming alliances and organizational goals that could result in changing power relations among women. Furthermore, they need to be concerned with the implications of differences among women’s experiences and with understanding the historical and political factors at work in those differences. Euro-American women who become involved in nursing and who adopt its values with respect to homogeneity and conflict avoidance must be prepared to accept the consequences of reproducing their own traditions and the means by which these

traditions maintain racism in their profession and their society [1993:357-358].

Furthermore, De-Ortiz analyzes a Medicaid-funded home health care program for the elderly in New York City (1993:4); she conducted a survey and some interviews with people dealing with this program. Besides, concerning the similarities and the differences between the sciences of nursing and anthropology, Dougherty and Tripp-Reimer agree that nursing and anthropology have some common disciplinary approaches; these can be divided into four groups: (1) “human nature,” as nursing analyzes “human attributes, wholeness, and integrity” in the “human nature,” and sociocultural anthropology deals with the interactions between human beings; (2) “environment,” since nursing is concerned with the environmental effects on human behavior and development, whereas anthropology contributes to nursing with some “cultural assessment models”; (3) “health”; “medical anthropology” distinguishes between the concepts of “disease and illness,” while “nursing” discusses how health is perceived by the patients and the physicians; and (4) “nursing,” as “this element consists of nursing diagnosis and interventions”; anthropology was shaped by these “interventions” (1985:226-227).

Therefore, it was very beneficial to observe occupational therapy sessions where the Turkish Jewish culture was reproduced. However, this study differs from all of these previous ones, since it intends to analyze how the Turkish Jewish culture is reproduced in a Turkish Jewish hospital within the framework of symbolic interactionism. Besides, this study focuses on a volunteer Jewish women’s group conducting basic therapies with the elderly, respecting them. The symbolic structures of these therapies during which Jewish music is played, gifts are offered, works of art are constructed, et cetera play a crucial role in this study. As the elderly patients staying in the hospital witness the revitalization of their culture, they feel better, believe that they will get well soon, and regard the Pink Angels as their friends as long as they see that their own culture is reproduced and global moral values are mentioned.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

In this thesis, the therapies and other services that the Pink Angels provide are analyzed within the framework of the theory of symbolic interactionism coined by Herbert Blumer (1969). Symbolic interactionism was founded on the bases of the works by Charles Horton Cooley, William I. Thomas, Robert E. Parks, Ernest W. Burgess, Florian Znaniecki, Ellsworth Faris, James Mickel Williams, William James, John Dewey, and George Herbert Mead (Blumer 1969:78). According to Blumer, these previous scholars could not arrive at a “systematic” method for observing the human group life within the framework of the theory of symbolic interactionism, and only Mead suggested some “methodological implications for sociological study,” positing that an individual possesses “a self” (1969:78-79). Two schools of interactionism were constructed: the first one’s precursor was Herbert G. Blumer, and it is recognized as the Chicago school, whereas Manford H. Kuhn founded the second known as the Iowa school; the Chicago school of symbolic interactionism defends *participant-observation*, whereas the Iowa school “the Twenty Statements Test” as a “paper-and-pencil” evaluation tool; besides, the Kuhnians defend “the determinacy of man’s behavior,” whereas the Blumerians suggest that human beings try to act appropriately enough to be accepted by the others with whom they must interact; additionally, Blumerians accept that human beings make roles in different situations; however, the Kuhnians argue that “the organized set of internalized self-attitudes provides ready-made patterns of role-playing for the individual” (Reynolds and Metzger 1973:189-190). According to different Chicagoan symbolic interactionists, individuals shape their identities in accordance with societal norms: George

Herbert Mead (1967[1934]) proposes that an individual's personality development and character formation are certain inevitable results of social interaction: the individual must obey societal criteria in order to be accepted by society. John Dewey (1934) posits that artistic works express various situations and interactions. Moreover, Erik H. Erikson (1950) suggests that the group identities of the children shape their ego-identities, as they grow. Anselm L. Strauss (1997) interprets the concept of 'self' within an autobiographical framework. Erving Goffman (1959) posits that one's 'self' is an image created and perceived by the others just like an actor, a role-player in different settings and situations as in a drama. Blumer's (1969) approach is employed in this study, since it is concerned with the roles various adults and elderly assume in different situations during some therapies rather than with the development and identity formation of children; additionally, it deals with the significance of objects and narratives rather than with detailed discourse analyses, some people's extremely unexpected reactions to the daily acts of others, and their autobiographies.

Blumer (1969) was influenced by Mead (Becker 1988:17). Blumer posits that his professor and guide distinguishes between two different types of "social interaction in human society": 1) Mead's (1934) "the conversation of gestures" called "non-symbolic interaction" by Blumer (1969) and 2) Mead's (1934) "the use of significant symbols" called "symbolic interaction" by Blumer (1969): the former occurs, if and only if a person acts "automatically" towards the act of another person without thinking, such as "a boxer who automatically raises his arm to parry a blow," and the latter occurs, when a person interprets and reacts to the meaning of another person's "action"; for instance, "a boxer" acts thinking about his rival's gestures in a match (1969:8). Thus, "a gesture" is an act indicating what a person is going to do; it signifies something both for its maker and the individual whom it is addressed (Blumer 1969:9); for this reason, George Herbert Mead (1967[1934]) suggests that people take roles. *Role-taking* and *role-making* are two different attitudes that can be expressed as follows: *role-taking* consists of maintaining a 'looking-glass self,' thus, conceiving how the others perceive us and act appropriately (Cooley 1902 and Mead 1967[1934]). *Role-making* is the "process of improvising, exploring, and judging" how to behave in

front of and respond to the actions and words of others, as Turner (1962) indicates (Peterson 1987:241). Besides, “*role conflict*” occurs, in case a person has two or more societal roles towards a specific person or specific people and has difficulties in selecting which one to employ in a certain situation (Peterson 1987:246).

Moreover, several “premises and principles” become prominent in interpreting the actions of human beings in different situations (Blumer 1969:2). Mead suggests that one’s interaction with others leads to the formation of her or his “self” (1967[1934]:135-226).

2. 1. Foundations of Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic Interactionism is based on “three simple premises”: 1) “meanings”: “human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them”; 2) “social interaction”: “the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one’s fellows”; and 3) “interpretation”: “these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things” that she or he faces (Blumer 1969:2). Consequently, Nelson (1998) states that the core principles of the theory are “meaning,” “language,” and “thought.” According to her (1998), “meaning states that humans act toward people and things based upon the meanings that they have given to those people or things”; “language gives humans a means by which to negotiate meaning through symbols,” and “thought modifies each individual's interpretation of symbols,” and it is linked to “language” due to the silent “mental conversion” of the thinking individual that leads to the fact that she or he takes a role.

During the interpretation process, “the actor” identifies the significant “things” by thinking, as she or he “selects, checks, suspends, regroups, and transforms the meanings in the light of the situation” that this person encounters (Blumer 1969:5).

Additionally, “human groups are seen as consisting of human beings who are engaging in action” (Blumer 1969:6). “Group members” interact with each other in different situations (Blumer 1969:7). Certain objects affect the direction of the human behavior.

2. 2. Objects as Products of Symbolic Interaction

According to Blumer, three types of objects can be formed as some results of “symbolic interaction”: 1) “physical objects” (tables, “trees,” et cetera), 2) “social objects” (people who have social roles, such as teachers, mothers, rabbis, et cetera), and 3) “abstract objects” (“moral principles,” “ideas such as justice, exploitation, or compassion,” et cetera) (1969:10-11). One must understand the meanings of objects for interpreting people’s “actions,” since objects are “social creations” (Blumer 1969:11). Regarding the concept of “self,” a person “acts” in accordance with what “kind of object” she or he is for herself or himself (Blumer 1969:12).

Consequently, in other words, objects gain meanings in relation with how they are evaluated by people by interacting with them; thus, the theory is concerned with “objects” which have symbolic meanings and can be divided into three categories as (1) “physical objects,” such as the materials used and the items created in the handiwork therapies conducted by the Pink Angels; for instance, a pink ribbon alludes to love and affection towards an individual, whereas a green one to the love for nature; if the patients affix hearts onto the ribbons, the items created symbolize the love towards an individual, or the environment; (2) “social objects” include the people who are in the hospital for working, for being ill, or for accompanying or visiting a dear person who is suffering from an illness, such as the head physician of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital, the therapist Pink Angels, the patients in the geriatric unit, the dietician, the daughter of an old patient staying in the hospital, et cetera, and (3) “abstract objects,” such as ethical and religious rules and regulations (Blumer 1969:10-11); the hospital had its code of ethics for the medical staff, and the Pink Angels had to obey the rules assigned them by their group heads and the head Pink Angel. Besides, the oath they take before

serving as Pink Angels is an abstract object. Human beings take different roles in order to show themselves as social objects (Blumer 1969:13). A Pink Angel can be a therapist, a mother, and a wife during different scenes of her life. The main principles of Blumer's theory are as follows: (1) "meaning," (2) "language," and (3) "thought" (Nelson 1998). "Meaning states that humans act toward people and things based upon the meanings that they have given to those people or things"; "language gives humans a means by which to negotiate meaning through symbols," and "thought modifies each individual's interpretation of symbols. Thought, based-on language, is a mental conversation or dialogue that requires role taking, or imagining different points of view" (Nelson 1998). Blumer argues that "human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions" (1969:180). Therefore, in certain situations, the Pink Angels take roles by regarding themselves in the same way as that in which others regard them; symbolic interactionism refers to the ways in which people use symbols for interacting.

On the other hand, a person makes the suitable role in front of others' actions in certain situations and conditions for responding to these actions appropriately, as George Herbert Mead emphasizes that "cooperative behavior" may occur in human groups where some try to be accepted and welcomed by others (Saint Clair 1980:24).

During the process of 'role-taking' in terms of interpreting various objects, Cooley's (1902) concept of 'looking-glass/reflected self' works, as one interprets her or his actions as interpreted by others (Blumer 1969:13). "The roles the person takes range from that of discrete individuals (the "play stage"), through that of discrete organized groups (the "game stage") to that of the abstract community (the "generalized other")" (Blumer 1969:13). Thus, an individual is regarded as "social" for "being a member of social species," acting towards "social stimuli," or responding to the demands of her or his group membership (Blumer 1969:14).

Moreover, "group life" requires "joint actions" (Mead's "social act") as different people come together in order to complete different tasks for realizing the same

scope, such as the preparation and organization of “a family dinner” (Blumer 1969:19, 70). Mead’s (1934) suggestions demonstrate that “human group life was the essential condition for the emergence of consciousness, the mind, a world of objects, human beings as organisms possessing selves, and human conduct in the form of constructed acts” (Blumer 1969: 61).

Human society is based on a structure, since each individual belongs to a certain class and a certain cultural group and has specific societal duties. Furthermore, a society imposes certain rules upon a person to which she or he can ‘conform,’ or from which she or he can ‘deviate’ (Blumer 1969:74). The person shows her or his own attitude in front of different acts performed by others, interacting with them in different places and situations. “The attitude is conceived to be a tendency, a state of preparation, or a state of readiness, which lies behind action, directs action, and moulds action” (Blumer 1969:93).

2. 3. Culture and Symbolic Interactionism

The Polish Peasant in Europe and America by William Isaac Thomas and Florian Witold Znaniecki (1996[1918–1920]) depicts the Polish peasant community’s family life as that of immigrants in the United States in the early 1900s: the book analyses the ‘role-making’ and adaptation processes of Polish immigrants. Thus, the theory of symbolic interactionism is convenient for the analyses of cultural formations and transformations.

Ernest Burgess (1926) suggests that people who have different personalities interact in a family. Each child learns cultural habits, religious norms, and traditions in her or his family via an intense interaction process. If a person is called ‘respectful’ for performing a certain action, she or he will see herself or himself as respectful; ‘I’ is how a person perceives herself or himself, and ‘me’ is the way in which the others with whom this person interacts see her or him (Mead 1967[1934]:209); “self-concept” is “the image we have of who and what we are”; moreover, “self-fulfilling prophecy” is “the tendency for our expectations to evoke responses in others” that authorizes us to act in a certain

manner; furthermore, a symbol is “significant,” if its meaning is shared by a person and the others around her or him; additionally, a person employs “symbols” so that others can act towards these, and this is recognized as “symbol manipulation” (Symbolic Interactionism Theory: Adapted from Scott Plunkett’s Course Pack n.d.).

2. 4. Sample Studies on Health Issues, Care-Giving, and Symbolic Interactionism and the Pink Angels

Before passing to the chapter on the analyses of the actions performed by the Pink Angels, it should be appropriate to mention some previous studies on the application of the theory of symbolic interactionism to care-giving. Dupuis found out the following:

Family members who were more likely to define their caregiving as leisurelike described a perceived freedom in care rather than an obligation to care. They also described three rewards they received in their caregiving roles: sense of enjoyment in care, sense of connectedness to others in care, and sense of escape or separation in care. Leisure was much more likely to be experienced in the midphases of the institution-based caregiving career [2000:259].

Moreover, Figueroa depicts a “framework” where “symbolic interaction family theory” and “spirituality” should be helpful for the “health care professionals” and “nurses” who serve African American alcoholics or drug abusers (2008:37-40).

My study differs from all these studies in analyzing how the Pink Angels work voluntarily for giving care to the elderly staying in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital via cultural reproductions. The Pink Angels also establish their group identities and prove their “group presence” from a symbolic interactionist perspective:

1) They have a “group identity”: they have a name, and they have an angel logo in front of their door;

- 2) They “stipulate justifications for existence and operations” (they have some rules);
- 3) They have identity markers, such as uniforms, identity cards, and foulards;
- 4) They are ‘selective’ about group members;
- 5) They “establish their public presence” by appearing in articles mentioning that they celebrated a feast, visited a mayor, or won an award;
- 6) They have “credentials” for “legitimizing the group publicly”; and
- 7) They work voluntarily in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital, if we think how they ‘demarcate a territory’ (see Prus 1996:162 for the related terminology) by committing the following acts:

- * *Developing a group identity (name, logo, flag)*
- * *Stipulating justifications for existence and operations*
- * *Creating identity markers for members (uniforms, appearances, signs)*
- * *Defining exclusiveness (selectivity, oaths, codes, jargons)*
- * *Establishing a public presence (announcements, advertising, rallies, protests)*
- * *Legitimizing the group publicly (endorsements, credentials, charters, licences)*
- * *Demarcating territories and jurisdictions (buildings, places, locations) [Prus 1996:162].*

According to Prus, long-lasting groups get involved in the following for realizing the specific aims of the groups; as do the Pink Angels:

- * *Anticipating the value of collective enterprise*
- * *Involving others in the venture (recruitment, screening, minimizing reservations)*
- * *Justifying the group (developing perspectives, moral viewpoints)*
- * *Celebrating the venture (witnessing, recognizing, emphasizing-within the group)*
- * *Defining the team (membership criteria, positions, responsibilities)*
- * *Establishing communication forums (interpersonal, media)*
- * *Pursuing resources for the group*
- * *Arranging member assemblies (encounters, practices)*
- * *Providing instruction for members (perspectives, techniques)*
- * *Monitoring members*
- * *Assessing member performances*

- * *Motivating and disciplining members*
- * *Rejecting and reinstating members*
- * *Facing internal upheaval (splintering, factions, challenges from within)*
- * *Facing generalized loss of interest*
- * *Dealing with dissolution*
- * *Attempting to revitalize cooperative ventures [1996:161].*

Besides, regarding the ways in which the Pink Angels deal with outsiders, one can also refer to Prus who mentions the following:

- * *Representing the association('s interests)*
- * *Making contact with outsiders (establishing co-presence, making the scene)*
- * *Defining the theatre of operation (places, objectives, strategies)*
- * *Identifying outsiders (targets, cooperators, adversaries, witnesses, nobodies)*
- * *Pursuing associational objectives through the others (cooperation, influence work)*
- * *Confronting outsiders (challenges, competitions, conflicts)*
- * *Protecting (sometimes concealing) the association from the outsiders*
- * *Readjusting group routines to more effectively deal with the outsiders [1996:163].*

On the one hand, Goffman proposes that “primary frameworks” consist of “a system of entities,” “postulates,” “rules,” ideas, perceptions, and views, whereas “social frameworks” lead to the ability to comprehend the aims, scopes, motivations, and criteria of the performers of some actions (1974:21-22). On the other hand, scripts are “knowledge structures that are particularly designed for frequently recurring event sequences” (Ungerer and Schmidt 1996:213-214). Roger Schank, a computer scientist, and Robert Abelson, a social psychologist (1977) developed the [RESTAURANT] script that consists of four scenes: a) entering, b) ordering, c) eating, and d) exiting; the props include the table, the menu, the foods, the bill, and the money; the roles belong to the customer, the waiter, the cook, the cashier, and the owner; the entry conditions consist of the facts that the customer is hungry and has some money: in the entering scene, the

customer “enters the restaurant, looks for a table,” chooses a chair, “walks to the table and sits down on a chair,” et cetera (Ungerer and Schmidt 1996:214).

In our frame of the hospital, we have the Pink Angels as figures (agents), the seniors as patients, their acts as motions, the targets of their actions as paths, the ways how they perform their duties as manners, and *Or-Ahayim* Hospital as a unique ground, choosing the cognitive linguistic framing approach in order to apply it to symbolic interactionism. A motion event requires a direction, a path indicated via a preposition, or a postposition, a figure as the subject of a sentence, a manner depicting how the act was performed, and a ground, a place where the act takes place (Ungerer and Schmidt 1996:237-238). By referring to scripts, I summarize where I will apply the theory of symbolic interactionism.

All the therapies and philanthropic activities form a script, for instance, the [CHAT THERAPY SCRIPT], or the [PASSOVER SCRIPT]. Objects used in therapies and the foods distributed by the Pink Angels can be divided into categories, and the warning signs used in the hospital can be referred to as icons. Table 1 in Appendix A shows the symbolic interaction between certain human and non-human objects, concerning the joint actions of the Pink Angels from a cognitive anthropological perspective.

CHAPTER 3

PAST AND PRESENT OF THE TURKISH JEWS

3. 1. Jews in Anatolia

Jews have been living in Anatolia for centuries. They started to move to and settle in the Aegean parts of Anatolia under the Roman guidance in the fourth century B.C.E; they populated the Black Sea region of Anatolia in the second century B.C.E.; when the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E., they immigrated to the “central” and southeastern parts of Anatolia, and established their living in different places near the cities of Bursa and Konya (Shaw 1991:15). Galanté (1995) mentions that in 325 B.C.E., Alexander the Great transferred some Jews to today’s Izmir from Palestine; above all, some Jewish communities were existing in Ephesus, Rhodes, Antalya, Dinar, Bergama, Bursa, Ankara, Edremit, Denizli, Sardes, and several other small places in Anatolia before the common era, thus, before the birth of Jesus Christ (Besalel 1999:17-18). By the way, only twelve percent of the population of the Roman Empire was Jewish; however, some Greeks were accusing the Jews of being so dire that the Holy Temple could be destructed due to their malevolent acts (Shaw 1991:16). These accusations led to violent activities performed against the Jews.

In fact, when Romans started to convert to Catholicism successive to the Edict of Milan,⁷ they began to discriminate Jews by denying them to work as military or administrative staff or board members; besides, bigot people had attempted to assault not only them as hated human beings, thus, *personae non-gratae*, but also

⁷ In the battle at the Milvian Bridge, which occurred in 312 C.E., Maxentius who was a usurper died; as a result, Constantine the Great started to reign in the West, whereas Licinius in the East; and in 313 C.E., both “issued the Decree of Milan, by which they gave full religious liberty to the Christians” (Betten 1922:191).

their edifices; in the city of Constantinople in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire (Byzantine Empire), the Jews were bullied by radical Christians (Shaw 1991:16). Moreover, Constantine II demanded taxes from the Jews who were not also permitted to marry non-Jews, possess non-Jew slaves, or circumcise the slaves (Besalel 1999:18). Arcadius prohibited the Jews to change their religion; furthermore, Theodosius II who began to rule in 408 did not permit the *Purim* celebrations and prevented the construction and restoration of synagogues; instead, he ordered the destruction of the synagogues in the Empire; in addition, Justinian I continued to impose religious restrictions upon the Jews by declaring the superiority of the church of Hagia Sophia that was opened in 537 as a sacred space; as well, Justin II transferred a synagogue into a church in 569; Jews were killed during the reign of Fokas between 602 and 610; Justinianos II declared that Christians and Jews should have gone to different baths; during the reign of Basil I (867-886), Jews were forced to change their religion; some of the Jews found shelter in Hazaria in 944 due to some restrictions posed, when Romanus I was the king; Andronik who reigned between 1183 and 1185 employed anti-Semitic discourses against the Jews; in 1347 an epidemic of plague occurred, and Jean Paleologue and Jean Kontakuzen (1341-1391) accused Jews of causing this disease and ordered their murder (Besalel 1999:18-19; Nahum 1997:77). In the Byzantine Empire, most Jews were traders who imported goods from further lands: they imported “spices, perfumes, and pearls from India, silks from China, and precious stones and oil from Iran” (Shaw 1991:17).

The synagogue in which the Jews were attending services in Constantinople “was transformed into a church”; moreover, Emperor Theodosius II of the East Roman Empire expelled all the Jews in 422 cruelly (Shaw 1991:17). He (between 408 and 450) even forbade the Jews to celebrate the feast of *Purim*, proposing that it was damaging ‘the Christian identity’ (Shaw 1991:18; Galanté 1940:12).

If we check the Bible, Kings II (17:5-6), we see that the Jews were expelled from the Holy Land of Israel to Halah, close to Harran, Habor, some neighborhoods around the rivers of Gozan and Euphrates, and cities bordering with Assyria (Galanté 1937:245). During the reign of the Byzantine Empire, the Jews founded

communities in today's Turkey's cities of Van, Afyonkarahisar, Gelibolu, Izmit, Sinop, Amasya, Tokat, Kasaba, Tarsus, et cetera (Besalel 1999:19). Finally, the oppression caused by the Greeks and Romans would be over.

3. 2. Jews during the Reign of the Seljuks and the Ottoman Empire

The Byzantine Empire collapsed as a result of the Battle of Manzikert in 1071; the Turkomans defeated the Byzantines, and settled in Anatolia (Shaw 1978:11). The Seljuks ruled over Anatolia between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, after having defeated the Byzantines (Galanté 1940:73). Jews participated in the establishment of the Eastern branch of the dynasty during the periods in which Tuğrul, Alparslan, and Melikşah reigned; the dynasty was divided into principalities in the period of Ilkhanids; the Jews established communities in Konya, the capital city of the Principality of Caraman, Antalya, a land belonging to Hamidids, Milas, a land belonging to the Principality of Menteşe, the cities of Samsun and Sinop, and the zones near these, where Jandarids were reigning, and the town of Tire, belonging to Aydinids (Besalel 1999:20). The Ottoman principality was founded in northern Phrygia, which was between the contemporary cities of Eskişehir and Iznik, by Osman and his progenies (Shaw 1978:10-11). The founder of the Anatolian Ottoman dynasty was regarded as Ertuğrul Gazi who fought against the Byzantines and the Mongols; the Mongols attempted to enter "eastern Anatolia"; Ertuğrul deceased about 1280, and his son succeeded him in the "leadership of his portion of the *Kayı* tribe" (Shaw 1978:13, emphasis added). However, Shaw accepts that Osman was "the founder of the Ottoman dynasty" (1978:13). Orhan, the son of Osman succeeded him, and ruled over Anatolia between 1324 and 1359 (Shaw 1978:14-15). The most important contribution of Orhan Gazi is the fact that he took Bursa in 1324 (Besalel 1999:20). Orhan was the one who "created in turn endowments (*vakıf*)" in order to "support the activities of the *ahi* brotherhoods as well as Sufi mystic orders" (Shaw 1978:15). In 1357, Gallipoli was conquered, and the Byzantines lost their control over Anatolia (Galanté 1940:79). During the reign of Murat Hudavendigâr I, the Ottomans took Edirne in 1363, and declared it as the capital

of the Ottoman Empire; successively, the Jews opened a *yeshiva* in this city; Murat II (1421-1451) had armies that consisted of non-Muslims; in addition, Ishak Pasha, the physician who took care of Murat II was Jewish (Besalel 1999:20). Hungarian, French, Bavarian, and Italian Jews came to live in Edirne; as well, Karaim from Byzantium were escaping from persecution; as Fatih Sultan Mehmet (Mehmet II) was willing to increase the Jewish population in Istanbul, he transferred both groups there in 1453; however, Kanuni Sultan Süleyman sent the Jews from Budin to Edirne after the conquest of Hungary; besides, some Sephardim settled in the city after the expulsion of 1492 during the reign of Sultan Bayezid II (Haker 2006:23). The names of the thirteen Jewish communities formed in Edirne were the following: Aragon, Catalonia, Majorca, Grand Portugal, Little Portugal, Polya (Italian), Tolya (Spanish), Gerona (Spanish), Istanbul, Budin (Hungarian), Italian, Sicilian, and German (Bavarian) (Onur 2005:18).

Bayezid I was in power between 1389 and 1402 (Shaw 1978:28). However, he was not successful.

Another charismatic military genius, Temür, or Tamerlane as he is known in Western literature, unified the Turkic nomad armies to create the last of the great steppe empires, stretching from central Asia to the Black Sea and claiming the Mongol mantle of the Ilkhans. Temür conquered Iran in 1387, entered Baghdad in 1393, and sacked Delhi in 1398. Bayezid met utter defeat at the hands of Temür's forces in the Battle of Ankara in 1402 and was himself taken prisoner. Resentment of Bayezid's moves toward centralization of authority, including raising a slave army and beginning the registration of both agricultural lands and nomadic herds, drove the Anatolian Turkish begs Bayezid had so recently defeated into the arms of the central Asian conqueror [Douglas 2001:39].

Subsequently, Mehmet I who reigned between 1413 and 1420 signed "peace agreements" "with the Balkan Christian States as well as with Venice and Genoa to gain the time needed to restore the Ottoman strength" (Shaw 1978:41). Murat II who reigned between 1421 and 1451 empowered the state and the army so efficiently that his son Mehmet II could extend the borders of the Ottoman

Empire (Shaw 1978:44). Cohen suggests that in the Ottoman Empire, the Jews were recognized as members of the same “crew,” thus, *tā'ifa*; they were also called “*al-yahūd*” (“the Jews”), or mentioned as either “the *dhimmi*” (*dhimm*, *dhimma*), or “the Jewish *dhimmi*” (*al-dhimm al yahūd*)” (1982:8). However, Lewis states that people who believe in a “lawful” religion, thus, who follow “sacred scriptures” revealed to prophets, were accepted by Muslim states in the Middle East; hence, they “were admitted to the *dhimma*, a pact between the Muslim state and a non-Muslim community, by which the state conceded certain privileges and the community accepted certain duties and constraints” (1999:120). He also adds that a *dhimmī* is a person who has a *dhimma* (1999:120). Thus, the assignment of the “*dhimmi* status” to non-Muslims was based on who was reigning in that period and their negation of “the Holy Law of Islam” (Braude and Lewis 1982:28). The term *millet* can be translated as ‘nationality’: it is used for the different religious and ethnic communities in the Ottoman Empire (Olson 1976-1977:72). This community system led to the establishment of the chief rabbinate in the Ottoman Empire; Moses Capsali (1420–95) and Elijah Mizrahi (1496–1526) were the first chief rabbis (Aydingün and Dardağan 2006:320). Moreover, the Jewish congregation is explained as follows:

The Jewish community was the congregation (in Hebrew *kahal*; in Turkish *cemaat*). The *kahal* was formed by families settled close to a synagogue. It was a closed community composed of families with a common place of origin, shared cultural and religious beliefs, and a common language. Each *kahal* freely elected its religious leader (*rabbi/haham*). The *rabbi* had many duties and responsibilities towards members of the *kahal* such as conducting marriage, funeral and circumcision ceremonies [Aydingün and Dardağan 2006:322, emphases added].

Olson suggests that the Ottoman Jewish community consisted of “the Rabbanites and Karaites” before the arrival of the Sephardim from Spain after their expulsion in 1492 (1979:76). He also mentions that the Ashkenazi Jews formed another group; according to him, the Sephardic Jews became prominent for “their skills

and language abilities” among the other Jewish groups in the Ottoman Empire (1979:76).

In 1453, Mehmet II took Constantinople (today’s Istanbul), and changed the state to an Empire that became a bridge between the East and the West (Shaw 1978:56-57). “Muslims, Armenians, Jews, Greeks, Slavs, and others came from all parts of the empire” in order to rebuild Istanbul, since the city was demolished “during the later centuries of Byzantine rule” (Shaw 1978:59). His son Bayezid ruled over the Ottoman Empire between 1481 and 1512 (Shaw 1978:70).

However, we should keep in mind that the Ottoman Empire had been extending its borders continuously; in the end, it consisted of “parts of Syria, Iraq, Palestine, and the plains of Asia Minor in the east, the Balkans (today’s Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, the old Yugoslavia, and Albania) to the outskirts of Vienna in the west, and parts of North Africa and Egypt in the south” (Altabev 2003:39). Spanish Jews initiated to come to the Ottoman Empire in 1492, since the Catholic monarchs of Spain, Queen Isabella of Castile, King Ferdinand of Aragon, and their Prime Minister Torquemada forced the Spanish Jews out of Spain given that they had not accepted to be Spanish Catholic Christians (Gerson-Şarhon 2007:22). Altabev suggests that these people are recognized as Sephardim, since the word of *Sepharad* means Spain in Hebrew, and the word alludes to the people who are from Spain (2003:37). However, the name *Sepharad* exists also in the “Holy Scriptures (*Obadiah* 1:20) applied to a region around Sardis, where Jewish exiles were deported after the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar” (*Musevi Cemaati* [Jewish Community] 2011, emphasis added).

According to Gilmer, Jews from Portugal came to the Ottoman Empire in 1497 (1986:16). Besides, in the sixteenth century, the cores of Ottoman Jewish life became “Istanbul, Salonika, Edirne, and Safed” (Barnai 1990:21). At this point, some other Jews were also living in the Ottoman Empire. Romaniot Jews were its “native Jews” (Altabev 2003:41). They were descending from the Jews of the Byzantine Empire who had been living in Edirne, Tekirdağ, and Izmit (Besalel 1999:151).

Moreover, Rozen mentions that the Ashkenazi Jews who came to the Ottoman Empire from European Christian countries are recognized as “*kendi gelen*,” since they arrived to this new land “of their own will” – this is the English counterpart of the Turkish phrase (2002:49).

Concerning the Karaites, their religious beliefs are based on the Hebrew Bible and other Hebrew scriptures; however, they reject the rabbinic discussions (Lowenstein 2000:13). In fact, many Ottoman Jews introduced various novelties to the Ottoman Empire; these include “printing, medicine, arts, trade, and manufacturing industries” (Altabev 2003:43). Two brothers called David and Samuel Nahmiyas founded a publishing house on December 13, 1493; they continued to found other printing houses all around the Ottoman Empire (Besalel 1999:24). The *Tanzimat* [Administrative] Reforms realized by Mahmut II (1784-1839) were aiming at modernizing “the military and the governance”; during this period, France’s political system continued to have an impact on the modernization of the Ottoman Empire; as did it during the period of Selim III who was the previous emperor of the Ottoman Empire (Altabev 2003:46). Additionally, the Imperial Rescript of Gülhane declared in 1839 secured the legal equality of all the citizens of different religions of the Ottoman Empire (Aydingün and Dardağan 2006:323). In this period, the schools of *l’Alliance Israélite Universelle* [the Universal Israeli Alliance] played a crucial role in the westernization of the Turkish Jews and the wide-spread use of the French language by them for creating a class of highly educated Turkish Jews (Haleva 2005:97). A team that consisted of French Jews established the *Alliance* in 1860 (Angel 2006:157). It opened its first school in Tetuan in 1862; it opened also two other schools: the first in Volos (1865), and the second in Edirne (1867) (Angel 2006:158). Successively, other *Alliance* schools were founded in Istanbul, Izmir, and various smaller Ottoman cities that belong to Syria, Egypt, the Balkans, and North Africa today (Sachar 2005:144). The organization aimed at modernizing the Jews and rendering them economically successful (Abrevaya-Stein 2002:226). The *Alliance* contributed to the formation of highly educated and modern Jews “before 1918” (Laskier 1983:165).

However, conflicts between different religious groups in the Ottoman Empire occurred: in April 1885, a Greek grocer's cross hung on the doorstep was found as "polluted" in the neighborhood of Haydarpaşa in Istanbul: Greeks attacked Jews; Osman Pasha, "the minister of war," intervened the case (Dumont 1982:222). Moreover, the Jews, who had settled in the regions of Anatolia, populated mainly by Kurds, were victims of religious bigotry based on some evil superstitions due to ignorance: if it had not rained in the spring, or in the autumn in time, Kurds would "cut off the heads" of the dead bodies of the Jews buried in the cemeteries, and throw these into the river so that it could rain (Dumont 1982:224).

The Ottoman Empire collapsed after participating in the First World War (1914-1918) together with Germany, and the Empire and its allies lost the war; after the Empire's breakdown, "the Republic of Turkey" was established on October 29, 1923 (Howard 2001:80, 81, 84, 93). Before the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the Treaty of Lausanne was signed "in July 1923" (Howard 2001:89). Consequently, Turkey accepted the rights of non-Muslims living within its borders and permitted them to establish their schools, institutions, and foundations. In 1924, the Islamic schools known as *madrassas* were banned, and the Ministry of National Education was assigned the duty of managing the religious education curricula; this action was taken obeying "the law on the unification of education" ("*tevhid-i tedrisat kanunu*" in Turkish) (Bein 2006:298). In addition, Cagaptay indicates that "the 1924 Constitution" of Turkey forbade religious and ethnic discrimination among its citizens before the law; however, the government wanted to integrate the Jews into the Turkish culture, as well (2004:87): Turkey determined that the Jews living within the borders of this "new" republican country should have used "Turkish as their primary language of instruction and the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* withdrew from Turkey" (Newberry 1991:529, emphasis and correction added).

Besides, in 1926, "the Jewish Community renounced its minority status on personal rights" (Güteryüz 1996-2011). Some Turkish newspapers indicated that 300 Turkish Jews had expressed their love and gratitude for Spain in a telegraph

sent to Spain for celebrating the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus; Jews were accused of being infidel to Turkey in some news published in several newspapers; for this reason, they declared that they were faithful to Turkey literally by showing that they were Turkish citizens by giving up the rights they obtained as a result of the Lausanne Treaty (Levi 1998:70-73).

Furthermore, the racist and xenophobic political views of Adolf Hitler and the Nationalist Socialist Party, which started to govern Germany on January 30, 1933, were very alarming for the Jews, who would have been isolated from the rest of the whole world; several Jews tried to reach Palestine either legally or illegally (Bali 2004:223). Turkey assisted selected Jews to escape from the dreadful holocaust that occurred in Germany due to Hitler. At this point, we can talk about some attempts to save the Jews from death. Several Jewish immigrants escaping the Nazism were gathered from different parts of Europe, and they got on a ship called *Parita* in order to reach Palestine; the ship tried to reach the shores of Izmir, however, a war ship belonging to the Turkish Marines prevented her to reach Izmir, considering that epidemic diseases might have occurred; *Aliyah Beth*, a Jewish Czech philanthropic group, which moved to Paris, after Czechoslovakia had been invaded by Nazis, contacted the Turkish authorities in order to prevent a disaster in 1939; the ship sailed to Palestine in a safe manner (Bali 2004:226).

Furthermore, Turks saved many Jewish scholars: Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the minister of education Reşit Galip demanded German and Austrian Jewish professors to come to work for Turkish universities (Shaw 2002:246). All of these invited professors contributed to the development of Turkey; for instance, Ernst Reuter led to the creation of the field of urban planning, whereas Paul Hindemith the establishment of the State Conservatory of Music in Ankara; the Museum of Ethnography was reconstructed via the efforts of a Hittologist, namely, Hans G. Güterbock; Albert Eckstein conducted researches in the field of pediatrics, while Alfred Marchionini became prominent in the field of dermatology (Tachau 2002:243-244). George Rohde whose wife was Jewish used to teach Classics at Ankara University, after having settled in Turkey in 1935,

and together with Hasan Ali Yücel, who was the minister of education, he launched a program in relation with the translation of major works in ancient languages, including Latin and Greek, and European languages into Turkish: several works in Latin, Ancient Greek, German, French, English, Russian, and Italian were translated into Turkish from 1940 through 1950; moreover, some other works in Persian and Arabic were also translated into Turkish for the Turkish readers (Reisman 2006:70). A few Turkish diplomats managed to help Jews escape from the cruelty of Nazism; on December 13, 1989, Salahattin Ülkümen, who used to be the Turkish consul-general on the island of Rhodes was honored with the award and recognition of “Righteous Among the Nations” by the *Yad Vashem*, “the Jerusalem’s Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority” for intervening the deportation of the Jews on “the Nazi-occupied Greek island of Rhodes” to Auschwitz in order that they could not be victims of a mass murder (Reisman 2009:235-236). “As a neutral power whose friendship was valued by Berlin and Vichy, Turkey was placed in a unique position where it was able to provide assistance to Jews who were being persecuted throughout Nazi-occupied Europe” (Shaw 2002:247). Turkish diplomats in Vichy, Paris, and Marseille had saved a myriad of Jews from death camps since 1941 (Shaw 2002:247). In 1944, Turkey suspended its every type of rapport with Germany, and allowed Jews to come to Turkey from Greece, France, Italy, Belgium, and Holland; Turkey saved the lives of Bulgarian and Romanian Jews by helping them go to Palestine (Levi 1998:149). Mussolini fell in Italy, and the Germans occupied it in September 1943 (Shaw 2002:254). Turks helped Jews escape from massacres; several Turkish fishers saved a myriad of Jews, and the Jewish community of Izmir saved several Jews and placed them in the *Grand Leblebicioğlu Han* (Levi 1998:150). Hungarian Jews were saved from mass murders via efforts made in Turkey (Levi 1998:151).

The Jewish Agency was also involved in what Turkey did to help East European Jews flee from persecution in countries such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria. Right from the start of the war, Turkey permitted the Jewish Agency to maintain a rescue office at the Pera Palace and other hotels in the Tepebaşı section of Istanbul under the direction

of Chaim Charles Barlas, one of the Agency's leading officials [Shaw 2002:256].

Furthermore, as Roberto Morozzo della Rocca (1987) explains, "Monseigneur Angelo Roncalli, the papal *nuncio*, who later became Pope John XXIII" used to serve as the representative of Vatican in Istanbul between 1935 and 1944, and he issued "false certificates of baptism to save them from the Nazis" (Shaw 2002:257, emphasis added).

Chaim Barlas and *Nuncio* Roncalli played an important role in the matter of the "*Auschwitz Protocols*" which represented the first insiders' report about the mass murders taking place at Auschwitz. The report was based on information provided by two escapees from the camp in 1944 [Reisman 2009:223, emphases added].

Moreover, Salamon Adato, a Turkish Sephardic man, who studied in the *Alliance* school in Edirne and *Mekteb-i Sultani*, thus today's Galatasaray High School, graduated in 1912, and was accepted to the Law School at Istanbul University (*Dâr'ül fînûn*), and at a later time, he earned his doctorate in Law at the University of Paris; he was elected as a deputy of the Democratic Party (*Demokrat Parti*) in 1946 (Bali 2004:59). Samuel Abrevaya, the honorary president of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital, used to be an independent deputy, after having been elected on March 1, 1935; he served as a deputy until March 8, 1943 (Bali 2004:179). Bali mentions that Atatürk indicated that all the Turkish citizens could be elected as independent deputies regardless of their creed in 1935; however, Samuel Abrevaya used the surname of '*Özçelik*' due to ultranationalists at least until 1939 (2004:163). Nazism influenced some Turks in the 1930s; for example, in 1934, some anti-Semites diffused the false news that the Turkish government wanted to exile all the Jews in Thrace to Istanbul; some Jews were beaten and raped, and some money was taken from the other Jews; some Jews requested help from the Republican People's Party that asked police to protect them; after the abolishment of the protection, several attacks against them occurred in various Thracian cities by ultranationalist Turks defending Hitler, and 65 Jewish homes were pillaged on July 3-4, 1934; the prime minister İsmet İnönü organized a special meeting in Ankara on July 5, 1934 and underlined that all the citizens of

Turkey had equal rights under the law; besides, Pan-Turks defended that only a pure generation of Turks that does not have any non-Muslim roots should have been created also by Turkifying the minorities in Turkey; moreover, Cevat Rifat Atilhan who published two anti-Semitic novels entitled *Jewish Spies in the Sinai Front* and *The Diary of Suzi Liberman* was respected by the Nazis in Germany (Levi 1998:100-130).

Also some tragic events occurred: a steamer called *Struma* departed from Constanza with 769 Romanian refugees going to Palestine; its captain deceived them by saying that they would have received their visas in Istanbul, while the British rule which was a part of a League of Nations mandate was governing Palestine (Reisman 2006:289 and Bali 2001:181-183). It anchored in Sarayburnu on December 15, 1941 and was quarantined; only the Segal family was saved by contacting Vehbi Koç, the local representative of his company, the Socony Vacuum Oil Company; a pregnant woman became ill, and she was sent to *Or-Ahayim* Hospital; the steamer forgotten in the Black Sea after the order of its return to Constanza, exploded for being “torpedoed” most probably by a Russian submarine; only David Stoliar was saved and allowed to go to Palestine (Bali 2004:263-264). A book published by the ministry of defense of the U.S.S.R. (the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) in 1978 confirms that a Russian submarine caused the *Struma* disaster (Bali 2001:200). According to Shaw, Romanian refugees drowned in the Black Sea, as the *Struma* sank in February 1942 (2002:257). The ship sank on February 24, 1942 (Reisman 2006:289). Greg Buxton who lost his grandparents in the disaster and dived into the deep sea for finding out the ship wreck could not find it; however, on September 3, 2000, a religious ceremony was organized for those who lost their lives in the disaster (Bali 2004:265-267). Another ship called *Mefkûre* sank on August 5, 1944 in the Black Sea, after having been torpedoed by a Soviet submarine; it was carrying 300 Jewish immigrants from Constanza (Bali 2010:86)

3. 3. Contemporary Turkish Jews

The constitutions of the Republic of Turkey belonging to the years of 1924, 1961, and 1981 all cite that people should be regarded as Turkish citizens regardless of their mother tongues, religions, and races (Bali 2001:16). Güleriyüz (1996-2011) proposes that approximately 26,000 Jews live in Turkey today: according to him, the majority of the Turkish Jews have settled in Istanbul, and they form communities with less members in Izmir and other cities of Turkey, including these cities in an alphabetical order: Adana, Ankara, Bursa, Çanakkale [Dardanelles], İskenderun, and Kırklareli. Today there are thirty-six synagogues serving in Adana, Ankara, Izmir, Çanakkale [Dardanelles], Hatay, Bursa, Kırklareli, and Istanbul (Ercan 2008).

In addition, Güleriyüz (1996-2011) also suggests that the Sephardim constitute 96% of the Jews, living in Turkey, and Ashkenazim led to the formation of the second major group of Turkish Jews: moreover, he (1996-2011) mentions that very few Karaim live in Turkey as “an independent group” that is not based on the system of the Chief Rabbinate of Turkey. He says, “Turkish Jews are legally represented, as they have been for many centuries, by the *Hahambasi* [*Hahambaşı*], the Chief Rabbi” (1996-2011, emphasis added).

Thirty-five lay counselors of the Turkish Jewish Community are involved in the cultural and other types of irreligious work, whereas fourteen executive members of the community whose president is a lay counselor in the regular community relations and business (Güleriyüz 1996-2011). In Turkey, synagogues are regarded “as religious foundations”; most of the Jewish children and youth attend Turkish schools and universities in addition to others who attend the Jewish elementary schools in Istanbul and Izmir and the Jewish high school in Istanbul where Hebrew might be taught as a foreign language; however, young Turkish Jews cannot speak the Judeo-Spanish language that is spoken by senior Jewish citizens of Turkey (Güleriyüz 1996-2011). For preserving the Sephardic identity, the Ottoman-Turkish Sephardic Center was established in Istanbul in 2003; the center has been making various efforts for the preservation of the Turkish Sephardic heritage and the Judeo-Spanish language (Gerson-Şarhon 2007:26).

Furthermore, Ojalvo mentions that the European Day of Jewish Culture has been celebrated generally on the first Sunday of the month of September of each year in Europe since 2000; the first of these celebrations was organized in 2001 in Turkey (2007:67). The media have an important role in the preservation of cultural groups. Turkish Jews have their weekly newspaper, entitled *Şalom* (Shalom) where Turkish and Judeo-Spanish articles appear (Güleryüz 1996-2011). It has also a monthly Judeo-Spanish supplement entitled *El Amaneser* [Dawn] (Gerson-Şarhon 2007:26). Both journals have been archived digitally: for the *Şalom* Newspaper, one can check this web site: <http://www.salom.com.tr/>, and one can go to the following web site for accessing some previous publications of its monthly supplement *El Amaneser*: <http://sephardiccenter.wordpress.com/el-ameneser/>.

Moreover, Güleryüz indicates the following: “A community calendar (*Halilah*) is published by the Chief Rabbinate every year and distributed free of charge to all those who have paid their dues (*Kisbah*) to the welfare bodies. The community cannot levy taxes, but can request donations” (1996-2011, emphases and corrections added). He (1996-2011) also posits that the Turkish Jewish Community owns two hospitals, which are known as *Or-Ahayim* and *Karataş* Hospitals; the first is in Istanbul, and the second in Izmir. Individual efforts by women also prevail in the conservation of the Sephardic culinary traditions: Yıldız Krespi, who sells cookies, cakes, and Sephardic pastries from her house in Istanbul, and Oret Abulafya, who owns a small café in Izmir, are two of these strong women. Yıldız Krespi’s web site is this: <http://www.yildizkrespi.com> and an article was published regarding the success of Oret Abulafya in *Şalom* by Tufan Erbarıştıran on July 20, 2011.

3. 4. Institutions of Today’s Turkish Jewish Community

The Turkish community has some charities most of which are governed by the Chief Rabbinate in the city of Istanbul; consequently, the Chief Rabbi of Turkey represents the whole Turkish Jewish Community (Altabev 2003:55). The Jews elect their Chief Rabbi who is supported by “the Judaic court,” called “the *Beit*

Din” in Hebrew, and he oversees two Jewish councils: one is that of “religious” affairs, and another is that of “lay” (Altabev 2003:55). “The religious council” is interested in the ‘religious’ traditions of the Jews, such as religious celebrations, funeral services, weddings, and divorces, and “the lay council” in “the community’s public affairs, or the running of its institutions” (Altabev 2003:55). In addition, the councils of the Italian and the Ashkenazi communities are different from those of the Sephardim; however, they still have to obey the Chief Rabbinate (Altabev 2003:55). The Turkish Jewish community has a primary school and a high school which was established in 1994 alongside “a religious Sunday school” called “*Mahzekeh Torah*” (Altabev 2003:56). More to the point, Altabev mentions the names of the “Jewish charitable institutions” in the following manner:

- 1) Home for the Elderly: Association for Helping the Elderly (Turkish: *İhtiyarlara Yardım Derneği*);
- 2) *Or-Ahayim* Hospital;
- 3) Association for Helping the Students (Hebrew: *Mishneh Torah*; Turkish: *Öğrencilere Yardım Derneği*);
- 4) Association for Aid – Care – Charity (Hebrew: *Sadakah Umapreh*; Turkish: *Yardım - Bakım - Hayır Derneği*);
- 5) *Neve Shalom* Association’s Charity (Hebrew Name: *Matan Baseter Bikur Holim*);
- 6) Association for Protecting the Poor (Turkish: *Fakirleri Koruma Derneği*);
- 7) Charity for the Underprivileged Sick (Turkish: *Fakir Hastalara Yardım Derneği*);
- 8) Burgazada Summer Camp for Poor Children (Turkish: *Burgazada Fakir Çocuklar için Tatil Kampı*);
- 9) Drop of Milk (Turkish: *Süt Damlası*; a charity for poor children);
- 10) Charity Trust for the Preservation and Restoration of Synagogues and Religious Artifacts; (Turkish: *Sinagogları ve Dini Eserleri Onarma ve Yaşatma Derneği*), and
- 11) *Talmud Torah* (a school where Jewish religious education is provided) (2003:246).

The Pink Angels serve all the patients regardless of their religious and cultural differences by leading to the attainment of world peace. Moreover, they speak Judeo-Spanish, French, and Turkish so that the patients can understand them.

3. 5. Judeo-Spanish as a Language Spoken by the Majority of the Elderly Turkish Jews

Today Judeo-Spanish is regarded as an endangered language. However, the Pink Angels most of whom are Sephardic ladies sometimes use the language during their therapies or room visits in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital. Judeo-Spanish is recognized as “*español* or *espaniól*” in Istanbul; however, this term appears as a colloquialism, thus, it does not appear in the written texts; in addition, Molho (1950) and Djaen (1939) suggest that “*Judió*” is another name of the language that was usually known as “*Judezmo*” in Salonika; however, instead of using this term, Sephardim were referring to the language as Ladino, distinguishing it from the spoken daily language, and referring to the “translations” of Judaic texts from Hebrew, as Barocas (1976) posits (Saul 1983:328).

Harris (2005) refers to Kahane (1973), Perles (1925), Révah (1964, 1970), Lazar (1972), Sephiha (1971, 1973), and Malinowski (1979); these six scholars argue that the same Spanish language was spoken by both Jews and Christians in Spain just before the formers’ ghastly expulsion from the country in 1492 (Agiş 2007 and Agis [Agiş] 2009:5). She also cites the studies conducted by Wagner (1930), Blondheim (1925), Benardete (1982), and Marcus (1962) four of whom suppose that the Spanish Jews had already altered some lexical, morphological, and phonological peculiarities of the Medieval Spanish language spoken by the Christians on the same land (Agiş 2007 and Agis [Agiş] 2009:5).

As it was also mentioned by Varol-Bornes, religious Hebrew terms were borrowed by the Judeo-Spanish speakers, such as the “*agadah de Pesach*” (2004:12). She also emphasizes that Hebrew slang words were used for not being understood by the others, such as the word ‘*nekevah,*’ which means ‘*bobonne*’ in

French; the word is used referring to a beautiful girl passing through the street (2004:11).

Moreover, she explains that the Turkish language has an impact on Judeo-Spanish, and the use of the Latin alphabet became an indicator of modernization; she also adds that after the establishment of *l'Alliance Israelite Universelle*, French has also influenced the language, and the Italian spoken by the Levantines in the Ottoman Empire had an impact on the language linked to some commercial activities, and the contacts with the Romaniots allowed Greek to affect Judeo-Spanish (2004:12-16).

Braude and Lewis mention that diverse languages were spoken by some Jews living in the Ottoman Empire: Judeo-Spanish was spoken in the central parts of the Ottoman Empire, whereas a small number of Greek-speaking Jews were living “in the Balkans”; a huge number of people were speaking Kurdish as their mother tongue in certain regions in the Ottoman Empire where some Jews could speak Kurdish, and others could also speak a very old Aramaic dialect in the same regions; Arabic was also used by “the Jews of Aleppo, Damasus, Baghdad, Egypt, and Palestine” (1982:27). Braude and Lewis also mention that Hebrew was the language used for religious purposes, as in “rituals”; its alphabet was also applied to the languages spoken by the Jews: “Hebrew script was commonly used by Jews to write the languages they spoke” (1982:27). “*Manav*” is a Turkish word, and “*phylla*” a Greek word; “he went to *manávis* (‘a green grocer’) for dried cereals and *phylla* (‘vine leaves’)” is a good example to language contact as a sentence, since both words exist in Judeo-Spanish (Dalven and Katz 1996:91).

CHAPTER 4

OR-AHAYIM HOSPITAL AND THE PINK ANGELS

4. 1. History of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital

This chapter intends to introduce the readers to the history and organization of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital and the Pink Angels, whilst this section explains the historical background of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital which was founded by philanthropists and doctors willing to serve the poor suffering from different diseases; it was just a small “health care unit” established after an imperial edict announced by Abdulhamit II on February 16, 1898 (Tugay and Tugay 2001:70). The Hebrew phrase “*Or-Ahayim*” means “Light of Life” in English (Apalaçi 2001:82). The first modern Jewish hospitals were built and opened in the middle of the nineteenth century; as examples to these, we can cite the Jewish Hospital in New York, which was opened in 1852, and Mayer de Rothschild Hospital, which was opened in Jerusalem in 1854; the first Jewish hospitals in history were hospices, thus, “shelters for the poor and strangers and occasionally for the sick”; these were called *xenodochion* in Greek, or *xenodochium* in Latin; the words are derived from the foreign words of *xenos* (stranger) and *doche* (to receive) (Kottek 1981:636). The Hebrew Bible also mentions hospitals, and the following is said in *Genesis* 21:33: “Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba”; Rabbi Nehemiah suggests that the sentence alludes to the fact that Abraham constructed “a *xenodochion*” (Kottek 1981:636, emphasis added). In the Middle Ages, a Jewish hospital was called a “*hekdesch*” which was a single room, or a tiny hospice; rich people were given care at home, instead of going to this place; this practice of the rich was terminated before the nineteenth century (Kottek 1981:637).

Regarding *Or-Ahayim* Hospital in Istanbul, the physician Captain Rafael Dalmediko was the owner of the idea of establishing the hospital and the chief founder of the hospital; other founders of the hospital include Avramino dö Kastro, Abraham Gerson, Izak Molho Pasha, Jakob Habib, Jozef Halfon, Robert Levi, Samuel Rizo, Elia Suhami, Rafael Levi, Izidor Grayver Pasha, and Eliyas Kohen Pasha (Apalaçi 2001:82). Gülerüz mentions that the Ottoman sultan Abdulhamit II permitted the construction of the hospital by publishing an edict on Ramadan 2, 1313, thus on February 16, 1896 (2012:167). Shaul expresses that the neighborhood of Balat has hosted Jews since the reign of the Byzantine Empire, and in the past, Balat was recognized as “the Little Paris” for its vivacious ambient created by the small shops dispersed around the whole neighborhood (1991[1990]:90-91).

Additionally, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s physician Dr. Samuel Abravaya Marmaralı had worked for *Or-Ahayim* Hospital for forty years (*Balat Or-Ahayim* Hospital, History n.d.:4). Funds were raised for the hospital via different activities, such as collecting the “thrift boxes distributed” to various people, announcing international calls for assistance, and organizing social events, such as balls and theatres (*Balat Or-Ahayim* Hospital, History n.d.:4). Balls were held for raising funds for the hospital, as written in the *Stamboul* Newspaper dated March 17, 1896 and the journals of *Le Moniteur Oriental* dated August 25, 1909 and November 20, 1909 (Apalaçi 2001:235). The brochure of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital also mentions that the hospital took care of the wounded soldiers in the World War I in 1914, and not only Russian migrants, but also Polish migrants were hosted in the hospital; the Russian were hosted there in 1921, and the Polish in 1934. In the 1920s, Sir Ellie Kadoorie, a businessman from Baghdad, donated such a huge amount of money to the hospital that three huge buildings could have been constructed; two of these buildings are still used today (*Balat Or-Ahayim* Hospital, History n.d.:4). However, the newest building constructed in 2005 is recognized as the “Alegra Torel Geriatric Pavilion” which included “twenty-six rooms,” “two therapy halls,” and “forty-two beds” (*Balat Or-Ahayim* Hospital,

Geriatrics n.d.:20). The hospital serves diverse people regardless of their racial, religious, social, or sexual differences. It has also a web site.⁸

4. 2. Philanthropic Activities of the Pink Angels

The Pink Angels raise funds for the hospital, the poor patients, and the needy by selling jam jars, religious festive postcards, and gathering donations. The Hebrew Bible, the *Torah* claims the following in *Deuteronomy* 15:7-11, regarding the necessity of helping the poor; therefore, the following implies that all the human beings are sisters and brothers, and in case one of them is destitute, or indigent, another who has sufficient resources must help her or him, and this act will lead her or him to be blessed in this world and in the other world after her or his death. These sentences are the basic guides for the compassionate acts of the Pink Angels based on the teachings of Judaism on the necessity to help the poor:

7 If there be among you a needy man, one of thy brethren, within any of thy gates, in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thy hand from thy needy brother; **8** but thou shalt surely open thy hand unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth. **9** Beware that there be not a base thought in thy heart, saying: ‘The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand’; and thine eye be evil against thy needy brother, and thou give him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin in thee. **10** Thou shalt surely give him, and thy heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing the LORD thy God will bless thee in all thy work, and in all that thou putteth thy hand unto. **11** For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee, saying: ‘Thou shalt surely open thy hand unto thy poor and needy brother, in thy land’ [Holy Bible, King James Version].⁹

⁸ *Or-Ahayim Özel Balat Hastanesi* [Or-Ahayim Private Balat Hospital]. 2012 Electronic document, http://www.balathastanesi.com.tr/?_Args=Dynamic,97, accessed September/03, 2012.

⁹ Holy Bible, King James Version, Cambridge Edition: <http://kingj bible.com/deuteronomy/15.htm>

Precisely, *Deuteronomy* 15:7-11 implies that one must help another who is indigent, penurious, or destitute; when the Jews encounter a destitute human being in rags suffering from hunger, they must help her or him. The Hebrew root word of *tzedakah* (תְּצַדֵּק), “*Tzadei-Dalet-Qof*” means justice in English (Rich 1995-2011a). Thus, the word alludes to the societal financial welfare requirement and the importance of charity work in assisting the needy. In contemporary Hebrew, the word *tzedakah* (תְּצַדֵּק) refers to charity work. Consequently, Judaism condemns extreme poverty, and invites everybody to assist the ones in need regardless of their racial origins and beliefs. Financial aid can be offered to individuals or institutions:

The obligation to perform *tzedakah* can be fulfilled by giving money to the poor, to health care institutions, to synagogues or to educational institutions. It can also be fulfilled by supporting your children beyond the age when you are legally required to, or supporting your parents in their old age. The obligation includes giving to both Jews and gentiles; contrary to popular belief, Jews do not just “take care of our own” [Rich 1995-2011a, emphasis added].

Jewish hospitals accept patients regardless of their religious and cultural differences. As well, the patients and the workers of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital have different religious and cultural backgrounds. The professional therapist was a Turkish Alawi, for instance. Most of the workers of the hospital were Turkish Muslims. Peace was prevailing through the long corridors of the hospital through which friendly people were passing, greeting the Pink Angels, their friends, or their family members, although they might have been sad about their own or a dear one’s illness.

In Judaism, “charity is a religious obligation, thus a *mitzvah*. Sephardim would donate money to a religious institution, a synagogue or a study hall, or even to the poor”; these are regarded as donations to “the Temple Treasury” recognized as *hekdesh* in Hebrew in Spain in the Middle Ages; “*hekdesh* was also the name given to the charitable fund administered by the *kehilla*, the community” (Galinsky 2005:425, emphases added).

Today the Pink Angels pay an annual membership fee that is added to the funds of the hospital, and reserved for the needs of the poor. In *Or-Ahayim* Hospital, donors' names are written on transparent plastic labels and affixed on the walls of the halls and the rooms to whose decorations they have contributed. As a patient donated her flat to the hospital, her room was decorated with the furniture she had brought from her own home. All the materials the Pink Angels were using during the therapies consisted of donations. If a Pink Angel has a relative or a friend who owns a factory, she may ask this person to donate some materials to use in the therapies. The donations included the paper, the pencils, the paint, and so forth. In addition, some Pink Angels were bringing fish or artichokes, or other specific foods to the hospital so that the cooks could include these in the daily menus, since they had a wish; as did some Sephardim in Spain in the Middle Ages:

In the Babylonian Talmud, the early Palestinian authorities (second to third centuries C.E.) state, "A person who announces 'I am giving this *sela* for charity [*zedaka*] in order that my son should live, in order that I should inherit the world to come (*olam ha-ba*)-this is considered to be perfect charity (*zedaka gemura*) [an alternative reading is, 'he is considered a completely righteous man' (*zaddik gamur*)]" [Galinsky 2005:433, emphases added].

The Pink Angels offered some gifts to the patients, such as dolls, pajamas, mirrors, combs, bottles of cologne, and so on. They were also selling jam jars or baskets filled with different items and foods during the feasts; the money made from the purchases is used in providing the poor with assistance. A receipt is assigned to those who purchase these. People may also purchase jam jars after the memorial services. According to Rabbi Ishmael, donors cannot be punished in the Hell after their death (Galinsky 2005:434). In the past, *pushkes*, thus, can boxes were distributed to Jewish families in order to raise funds for the hospital. According to the theory of Cooley (1902) on social acceptance, one can say that the Pink Angels and the donators feel better and blessed as long as their benevolent charity work is appreciated, when they take into account their 'looking-glass, or reflected selves.'

However, one must remember that charity should be offered meticulously by obeying certain rules and following certain steps, according to Rambam, thus Maimonides, or Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon (Rich 1995-2011a):

1. “Giving begrudgingly,”
2. “giving less than you should, but giving it cheerfully,”
3. “giving after being asked,”
4. “giving before being asked,”
5. “giving when you do not know the recipient’s identity, but the recipient knows your identity,”
6. “giving when you know the recipient’s identity, but the recipient doesn’t know your identity,”
7. “giving when neither party knows the other’s identity,” and
8. “enabling the recipient to become self-reliant.”

Today the Pink Angels and the donators offer gifts for the relief of the patients in the hospital. A plushie, a doll, or an accessory, such as a bracelet can be sufficient to make a patient happy alongside the meals distributed in the hospital. The money donations are used not only in item purchases for the therapies, but also in the construction and formation of a better hospital. These are the physical objects used for making the patients happy within the framework of the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). At the end of the therapies, the patients become self-reliant, since they manage to do something with different materials, or items. The Pink Angels do not discriminate the patients: religious discrimination is not allowed in the hospital. Besides, in the Ottoman Empire,

aside from providing for religious institutions such as mosques, churches, synagogues, convents, and monasteries, endowments also supported educational institutions, the Islamic *mekteps* and *medreses*, equivalent Jewish and Christian schools, adult and children’s libraries, help to the poor, such as food, payments of fines or debts, dowries, clothing, tuition, help to students, and medical aid. All the public hospitals, fountains, hostels and hotels, caravansarais, market and factory buildings and animal shelters provided around the empire were established and maintained as

religious foundations rather than by the state treasury as such [Shaw 1978:161].

The Sephardic charity (*hekdesh*) mechanisms were similar to the Ottoman “*waqf*” system in Spain in the Middle Ages, “beginning in the period when the majority of Spanish Jews lived under Moslem control” (Galinsky 2005:426).

Moreover, the reasons for which some Jewish women become philanthropists are explained below; however, most Pink Angels are housewives:

There are several reasons for their increasing numbers. First, daughters have become major partners in directing family wealth to philanthropic goals. Second, many married women function as the primary decision makers in the couple’s philanthropic endeavors. Third, widows, as a result of longer life spans than men, have inherited from their husbands and taken over the reins of family foundations. Fourth, some divorced women have left their marriages with sufficient assets to become philanthropists. Finally, most recent of all, as women crack the glass ceiling, they are entering the ranks of philanthropists with wealth they have created themselves as top executives in large companies and as entrepreneurs [Kaye 2010:97].

Women take different roles in their families, communities, work places, et cetera; philanthropy is an abstract moral object in terms of the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

4. 3. History of the Pink Angels

The group known as “*Pembe Melekler*” in Turkish, thus, “Pink Angels” in English consists of approximately sixty volunteer women offering therapies to the elderly patients staying in the geriatric pavilion of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital. One of the patients narrated that her mother was serving as a volunteer in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital about one hundred years ago. However, she had to do more difficult tasks, such as washing the curtains and even the patients. Some of the Pink Angels who have been serving the elderly in the hospital for more than twenty years said that they had to cut the nails and the hair of the patients and wash them: their symbolic interactional roles have changed (see Blumer 1969 for the

theory). According to them, today the hospital has more staff members, including the nurses and the cleaners, and the hospital complex is better, since many patients had to stay in wards in the past. Moreover, some Pink Angels narrated that the icons used in the hospital, such as the yellow circle stickers put on the doors of some rooms were alluding to the possibility of an infection, whereas the red circle stickers to the possibility of an extremely serious infection. In the past, nurses used to warn the Pink Angels on the conditions of the illnesses of the patients so that they could enter the room, or not.

There was a women's committee whose members had to wash the sheets, the towels, the handkerchiefs, et cetera several years ago; in 1974, the women's branch of the hospital was founded in order to help the patients staying in the hospital (Apalaçi 2001:226). Afterwards, the name of the members of this branch was changed into 'Pink Angels,' and Nuket Antebi was elected to serve as the head of the women's branch (Apalaçi 2001:231). The Pink Angels were offered seven Jane Elkus Virtue Awards, and in 2004, they received a letter written by the Fair Play Commission of the National Olympic Committee congratulating them (Koçal 2005).

4. 4. Becoming a Pink Angel and the Training of the Pink Angels

Some Pink Angels narrated me that a person had to meet certain criteria in order to become ready to serve as a real Pink Angel; a security check is a must before beginning to work as a Pink Angel. The Pink Angels have to be patient and willing to serve the elderly for a long term. These criteria are the abstract objects in accordance with the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). One of the Pink Angels explained that she had received some training of nursing, and another narrated me that a group of Pink Angels had gone to Israel in order to visit some nursing homes and see the occupational therapy sessions held at these places. The chief nurse of the hospital Vivyan Mizrahi also trained many Pink Angels (Apalaçi 2001:226).

In fact, some Pink Angels were trained by an Israeli occupational therapist called Frida Shaanan (Apalaçi 2001:232). Other Pink Angels receive certain training before beginning to perform their daily duties. Especially, the Pink Angels, who attend the therapy sessions, are trained by a professional therapist. Many Pink Angels prefer to go to Israel for visiting nursery homes and geriatric units at some hospitals, and they can also be trained there, if they wish. The transnational character of the therapies, which is a dominant abstract object underlying the physical objects used, the music played, and the stories narrated in the therapies in terms of Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism, derives from these visits alongside the impacts of different cultures of the lands where the ancestors of today's Turkish Jews have lived on the formation of the Turkish Jewish identity.

4. 5. Organization of the Pink Angels

Today's Pink Angels are divided into groups of six, seven, or eight. The number selection is an abstract object as a rule; as well, each Pink Angel has a different role as a social object in relation to Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism. The Pink Angels elect a head every two years. Their head assigns them to daily groups, and they also choose a group leader who requires them to perform certain activities, when it is their weekly turn. The head has a general secretary, who tells the group leaders what to do on specific days, and the group leaders communicate their group members what they can do; every activity is prepared in consultation with the group leader, or the team leader. The Pink Angels usually communicate with each other by calling one another, dialing their cell phone numbers. According to most of them, this is the easiest way of communication. However, their head told me that they had also a secret group on the Internet. In addition, one of the Pink Angels explained me that also the hospital hosted an online e-group for them. Moreover, each day of the week is dedicated to a certain activity; these regulations are abstract objects, as Blumer (1969) posits: on Mondays and Fridays, the Pink Angels chat with the patients. On Tuesdays, they play games with the patients. On Wednesdays, they help patients to do handiwork individually, and on Thursdays, the patients work as a team in order to complete a

certain task. Moreover, on Fridays, a patient is chosen to light the *Shabbat*¹⁰ candles. On Saturdays, religious texts are read as spiritual therapeutic practices, and the weekly *Parsha* is read. Their messages are abstract objects (see Blumer 1969). Besides, on Sundays, two or three Pink Angels, who are on duty, come to visit the patients in the hospital and distribute them some foods which are physical objects with different symbolic meanings in accordance with the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). Thus, all the chat, game, and reading therapies should be regarded as chat therapies, since all the three aim at chatting with the patients. Furthermore, the handiwork and musical activities should be categorized as art therapies. Additionally, on each day, different Pink Angels distribute specific foods. On Mondays, they distribute pastries filled with chocolate cream, nut butter and cheese; on Tuesdays, bananas; on Wednesdays, cake and sandwiches with cheese, on Thursdays, salty and sweet cakes, on Fridays, *borekitas* (Sephardic pastries filled with potatoes, cheese, eggplants, spinach, chocolate cream, Turkish delights, et cetera), salty pastries and cake, and on Saturdays, salty pastries, cake, and *sütlaç* (milk and rice pudding); in addition, on Sundays, they may distribute bananas again. The sweetness of the foods alludes to happiness and joy, concerning Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism. Besides, the Pink Angels choose the foods to be cooked and served to the patients in accordance with the importance of the day that is an abstract object for being based on a tradition (see Blumer 1969).

The therapies are conducted between 11.00 a.m. and 12.00 p.m. by the therapist Pink Angels. These schedules are abstract objects regulating the life of the patients at the hospital, as Blumer (1969) would explain. After the therapies, Pink Angels help some patients have lunch, and afterwards, they have their lunch in the refectory of the hospital. Successively, they prepare the foods they will distribute at about 2.00 p.m. Some Pink Angels put jam in ornate jars, or prepare baskets and cards for religious feasts. In these baskets, they may put foods and books depicting the historical and symbolic importance of the day. If there is a

¹⁰ *Shabbat* is the Jewish rest day, since God created the universe in six days, and had a rest on the seventh day (see *Exodus* 20:8-11) (Alalu et al. 2001:172).

'*mevlit*' (family gathering for a dead person) in the morning, afternoon, or evening, some Pink Angels go to the special hall dedicated to such events, make the necessary preparations, and serve the dishes. The duties of the Pink Angels are usually over at about 4.00 p.m. All the activities of the Pink Angels are scheduled, underlining the fact that the Pink Angels try to do their best in order to be accepted as planned and tidy people as social objects (see Blumer 1969) that adjust themselves in order to be accepted by the others, as Cooley (1902) proposes.

4. 6. Dress Codes of the Pink Angels

The name of the Pink Angels derives from their clothing. Each Pink Angel always wears a light pink robe and usually carries a purple or a pink foulard. The Pink Angels who are involved in the therapies usually wear different robes whose belts and sleeves' edges were made of cloth decorated with pink and white small checks. The administration may change the styles of these robes. All the Pink Angels are aware of their responsibilities, which are abstract objects just like their dress codes in accordance with Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism. On the one hand, they carry tags on which their names were written, as they are in charge. On the other hand, they wear plastic gloves, while distributing foods in the afternoons. These gloves show that they take care of the health of the patients by keeping their hands clean, while distributing foods as careful and tidy social objects using these hygienic physical objects before the eyes of the patients (see Blumer's (1969) classification of objects).

Moreover, one of the Pink Angels had a *hamsa* key holder; Hebrew prayers may be written on the backs of *hamsas*, which indicate the five books of the Hebrew Bible symbolically, since they have the shape of a human hand (Pelaia 2012a). They are used against the evil eye (Nocke 2009:35). These physical objects hide abstract objects within themselves: this is the spiritual and protective meaning of these *hamsas*, if we refer to the classification of objects by Blumer (1969).

Briefly, the accessories and the robes the Pink Angels carry reveal their identities as therapists, hospital volunteers, food distributors, and believers in Judaism. Eckert says, “An individual’s bodily adornment is seen simultaneously with the individual and thus provides guarantee that the individual will not be separated from his or her social identity” (2004:209); in addition, music genres to which people listen, their activities, and their language uses prove their social identities. One can recognize a Pink Angel from her outlook easily: a pink robe, a foulard, and a name tag are the three main symbolic identifications of a Pink Angel as physical objects within the framework of the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

CHAPTER 5

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY THE PINK ANGELS

5. 1. Spaces through Which the Pink Angels Pass in the Hospital

Before explaining the details of each activity conducted by the Pink Angels, the places through which they pass in the hospital, or where they work voluntarily should be depicted for understanding the conditions in which they work and their responsibilities, such as keeping their hands clean and encouraging patients spiritually by being careful about objects placed in some parts of the hospital for warning them and others, such as the sanitary hand liquid bottles fixed on the walls in the corridors and placed in the rooms of the hospital, the *mezuzahs*¹¹ hung on the doorposts, and the “No Smoking” signs. When the liquid in the bottles expires, or finishes, a member of the hospital staff refills it. Besides, several signs used in the hospital serve as warnings, regarding the severity of the diseases of the patients. These physical objects allude to abstract objects in relation with the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969): they provide the patients with spiritual comfort for their existence in the hospital as in the case of *mezuzahs*, sanitary liquid bottles, and warnings. Additionally, the

¹¹ The following was ordered in *Deuteronomy* (6:9; 11:19): “And you shall write [the words that I command you today] on the doorposts of your house and on your gates” (Rich 1995-2011b). Therefore, one can see a *Mezuzah* on the doorpost of a Jewish home; this Hebrew word means doorpost, in fact; it may not be placed on the doorpost for bringing good luck; however, it leads to the divine protection of the household; on this parchment, all the phrases of a Jewish prayer known as *Shema* are hand-written together with *Deuteronomy*’s verses 11:13-21 in addition to “a name of G-d” written on its back; the prayer “scroll is then rolled up and placed” in the small box (Rich 1995-2011b). In general, observant Jews do not wish to mention the name of ‘God’ so that it cannot be destroyed by others, and they write it as ‘G-d,’ since they were allowed to demolish the non-believers’ imaginary gods, according to *Deuteronomy* (12:3; 12:4).

messages they transmit consist of rules which are abstract objects; for instance, regarding the *mezuzahs*, according to Van Gennep, “the kissing or touching of the *mezuzah* upon entering or leaving a house may be considered a “*rite of passage*” between two worlds”; consequently, “the Jew making *ritual contact* with the *mezuzah* while passing through the threshold of his home would therefore be marking, in effect, his symbolic passage between “safe” and “dangerous” territory” (Horowitz 1986:79, emphases added).

Moreover, the flower paintings -as physical objects- render everybody in the hospital happier through their reference to the beauty of the nature and the importance of its preservation as two abstract objects in terms of Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism. Accordingly, the hospital is rife with objects that ease the performance of the Pink Angels. The predominant qualities of the hospital include its hygiene and the kindness of its staff resulting from its soothing decorations and the colors of its walls alongside the extraordinary view of the river of the Golden Horn. All the natural beauties surrounding the hospital and the decorations lead to a positive mood in everybody working, visiting, or staying in this appealing hospital-complex as physical objects, according to Blumer (1969). All the light-shaded flower paintings allude to the necessity of positive thinking during the hard times of suffering, since flowers appear after the harsh conditions of the winter.

5. 1. 1. Room Reserved Only for the Pink Angels

In the hospital, a small room belongs to all the Pink Angels; a physical object (for Blumer (1969)), a small cherub with an arrow hung on the wall next to the door of this room alludes to the preparation process of the Pink Angels for taking part in several angelic activities within the hospital. An angel underlines the spiritual positive qualities, which are abstract objects as qualities that a good human being must have, such as patience, kindness, compassion, and empathy, if we think about the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). The phrase “*Pembe Melek Odası*” (Pink Angels’ Room) was written in fuchsia above this angel with two wings and a halo on the top of her head; this angel has a long

white dress with long sleeves and is praying with joint hands just like a Catholic Christian; it symbolizes goodness, love, kindness, and generosity. The Pink Angels respect different religious groups, while serving their members. This angel represents their benevolence and kindness towards all the human beings. It also implies the universality of the appreciation of goodness as an angelic behavior.

All the Pink Angels have the keys of this room; they leave their bags, jackets, and coats there, while working. This room is their private space where they get prepared for their angelic activities. All the interactions of the Pink Angels in this room refer to their heavenly activities in assisting the elderly and making them happy. Besides, they write down their activities and keep them in the files on the bookshelves in this room. Moreover, each file kept in this room is dedicated to a certain activity: on one of these black files, on an orange label, the phrase “*Bağ Bozumu*” (vintage) was written (this color represents the autumn leaves), whereas on another, on a red label, the phrase “*Özel Hediye*” (special gift; red is the color that attracts the attention most, and it was chosen for gifts to be offered to special people on special occasions). Two files had green labels on which the word “*Gelenek*” (tradition) was written; green alludes to old traditions. The label of the file on which the word “Junior” was written had some colors of the rainbow: red, blue, yellow, and green; these colors indicate the joy of being young. Regarding the other files, a light green label was fixed on a file on which the phrase “*Tatlı Günü*” (dessert day) was written, and on a yellow label on another file, the phrase “*Kestane Dünyası*” (chestnut world) was written. The other three files had dark blue, light blue, and yellow labels. On the dark blue label, “*Şam Fıstıklı Krokant*” (pistachio brittle), on the light blue label “*Portakallı Çikolata*” (orange chocolate), and on the yellow label “*Lokum*” (Turkish delight) were written. Thus, the labels were fixed on the recipe files in order to distinguish between different types of desserts for being physical objects leading to a certain order. All of these are prepared, or cooked in the kitchen of the hospital and distributed on festive days by some Pink Angels who own cars. Desserts imply the wishes for happiness for their sweetness as physical objects in terms of Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism.

Additionally, a huge number of transparent files and greeting cards for different Jewish feasts whose messages were printed in English or Turkish are present in the room; they were separated in different cartoon boxes. Most of the Pink Angels narrated that only the Pink Angels who had cars distributed the gifts in the neighborhoods in which they were living, or in some nearby neighborhoods. Mauss regards gift-giving as “a prototypical contract”; in fact, it is an invitation to a particular social relationship, as suggested by Van Baal (1975) (Sherry 1983:158). As physical objects, these gifts represent the social importance of the people whom they are sent, or offered within the framework of Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism.

Besides, one of the Pink Angels narrated that somebody working for the *Şalom* Newspaper could come to pick the cards and post them for greeting the feasts of Jews living all around the world. All the materials used in the creation of the gifts were donations. Additionally, there are two clipboards on which the Pink Angels can stick notes about what they have to do; this shows that the Pink Angels are well-organized social objects and they are appreciated for this from a symbolic interactionist point of view. Furthermore, the Pink Angels prepare the sandwiches, the cakes, and the pastries that they will distribute on a table in this room. They are also keeping the tea sacks they will use in this tiny room which is a private spiritual object in the universe in which the Pink Angels get prepared to appear as perfect social objects in front of the others in the hospital.

5. 1. 2. Geriatric Unit and Therapy Room

In the geriatric unit’s huge room reserved for therapies and physical exercises, there is an entertainment unit with shelves laden with books. A flat screen TV, a DVD player, a microphone, and a sound system were also placed on this entertainment unit. This unit has been serving as an archive for the Pink Angels: all the newspaper articles, photographs and books about their activities have been archived and kept in the display cabinet of this entertainment unit. These physical objects indicate how meticulous and well-prepared the Pink Angels are as social objects in terms of Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism. Furthermore, the

works of art made by the patients are decorating this entertainment unit. Moreover, there are two huge wardrobes for the daily clothes of the doctors in the room: they are changing their clothes before beginning to work in the mornings and leaving in the evenings. In this room, one can find a huge Pilates ball and a white sofa where patients who can walk can come and sit during the therapies; other patients should sit on wheelchairs. There are also white armchairs for others to sit there. Some works of art by the patients were hung all around in the kitchen of the room; the chief therapist is changing them in a two-day period. The piano of a patient who passed away is also kept in this room; he was coming here to play the piano during therapies, when he was alive. This patient was a famous composer and a journalist, called Mr. Selim Andak (*Balat Or-Ahayim Hastanesi Sağlık Bülteni, Yaşam Işığı* [Health Bulletin of the *Balat Or-Ahayim* Hospital, Light of Life], August 9, 2010:3). The piano alludes to the importance of the role of music in positive thinking. The physical objects were designed, or placed in the room for making the patients feel comfortable in the hospital on the basis of Blumer's (1969) theory of symbolic interactionism.

A specific place is dedicated to the mothers who breastfeed their babies; nothing about death is present. In the afternoons, physical therapeutical activities are taking place in the same room. Some vintage photos of most of the women who served as Pink Angels were hung on the walls of the room. There are also scenery drawings on the walls. A compact disk player was also placed on the cabinet in the kitchen. All these physical objects remind the patients of the fact that the Pink Angels take care of them and want them to feel relieved from a symbolic interactionist perspective.

Besides, a scripture and a poppy painting in a frame attracted my attention; the following was written in Italian:

“Questa casa é nelle mani di Dio: che il Signore la protegga dal fuoco e da ogni male e tutti coloro che vi entrano o che ne escono ti siano o Signore raccomandati” (“This house is in the hands of God: may God protect it from fire and each evil, and may all the people who enter in it or exit from it be protected by you, oh God”) S. Francesco [Saint Francis].

Saint Francis was born in the city of Assisi in Italy in 1181, or in 1182, and he is the person who established the Franciscan Orders of Catholicism¹²; after having lived by helping others, he passed away in 1226 (Robinson 1909). Sri Swami Sivananda (2004) depicts the saint's altruistic and magnanimous life as follows:

One day Francis was joking and laughing with his friends. A beggar came along crying for alms. Francis, who was soft-hearted, gave whatever he had in his pocket to the beggar. His companions mocked at him for his charitable act. Dispassion dawned in his heart. The sight of the beggar set him thinking about the poverty and misery of mundane life. He gave much money to the poor. His father thought that Francis was wasting his money and rebuked him.

Sometime after this, Francis was laid up in bed for many months on account of some serious disease. He was about to die. But the Lord saved him as he had to carry out a definite mission in his life. The nature of Francis was entirely changed. Francis prayed to the Lord for light and guidance as to his future. He had a vision of Lord Jesus. He made a strong determination to renounce his old way of living to tread a life of purity and to dedicate his life to the service of humanity.

Besides, he is recognized as a saint; Innocent III and Pope Gregory IX appreciated him (Murray 2008:183). Saint Francis, who is regarded as “the patron saint of ecologists and merchants,” passed away “on October 4, 1226 at the age of 45” (Matz 1996-2000). Concerning Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism, as a physical object, the framed advice of Saint Francis of Assisi indicates that nobody working in the hospital discriminates people due their religious differences; as an abstract object, it is a spiritual prayer for the protection of the whole hospital.

¹² In 1209, Saint Francis of Assisi decided to open a new chapter in his life, after having gathered various followers (Murray 2008:79). His followers, thus, the Franciscans are divided into three groups: 1) “the Friars Minor Observants (brown tunic) is the second largest order in the Roman Catholic Church— second only to the Jesuits. The Friars Minor Capuchin (brown tunic, often with long beards) is the fourth largest,” 2) the order of Poor Clares includes nuns, and 3) both lay men and women construct the Third Order (Murray 2008:180).

5. 1. 3. Hospital Rooms

On the doorposts of the rooms in the hospital a *mezuhah* was hung, as I have already explained. These objects provide the patients and the visitors with a spiritual comfort just like the sentences pronounced by Saint Francis. The doors of the patient rooms were painted electric blue. One of the Pink Angels told me that the doors of the hospital rooms used to be white several years ago. Both colors make people feel relieved as physical objects, regarding the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

Parenthetically, only the geriatric unit's dining hall and the therapy room have glass doors. Additionally, some flower drawings were hung on the walls in the rooms and in the corridors: as physical objects, these are items making the patients and visitors feel comfortable during hard times.

Some patients are sharing their rooms with another patient, whereas others have a single room. Each room has a bathroom. Some nurses are taking the custody of some patients, when it is necessary. One of the patients has been staying in the hospital permanently, since she donated her own flat to the hospital. Her room is different from those of the others: its decorations include a library and a table with an ornate lace cover. This difference implies that she is a privileged social object for choosing the hospital as her home as a physical object from a symbolic interactionist point of view, as Blumer (1969) would posit.

The Pink Angels have been working in easier conditions than those in the past, since several signs showing the conditions of the illnesses of the patients were hung on the doors of the rooms in which they are staying. If the Pink Angels saw a little yellow dot, they would notice that there might be a risk of infection, but if the dot were red, they would know that the illness might be extremely severe, and the risk of infection could be very high. Besides, a notice can be hung on the door: "*Ziyaret etmek yasaktır*" ("It is forbidden to visit the patient"). These physical objects transmit warnings which can be classified as abstract objects for Blumer (1969).

In the past, most of the patients had hard times, since a nurse had to warn them about the infection type of the patients, acting as a warner as a social object. In addition, many patients were staying in the same room, as they told me. Besides, there used to be a common bathroom, and the Pink Angels had to wash the patients there. As well, one of the Pink Angels said, “I had to wash the hair of some patients who were not healthy enough to walk, by pouring some water, while they were sitting on their beds.” As the hospital has been modernized, the work of the Pink Angels has becoming much more facile. The Pink Angels do not need to act as hairdressers or nail-cutters anymore; their social roles have changed through the course of time within the framework of the theory of symbolic interactionism. The hospital rooms were constructed and decorated via donations, and the donators’ names were written on transparent plates next to the rooms. The donators’ names were printed on these transparent plates that one could see in the places to whose establishment they had contributed. These physical objects show how the donators are venerated to have contributed to a good purpose concerning the hospital in terms of Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism.

5. 1. 4. ‘*Mevlit*’ (Memorial Service) Hall and Its Kitchen

In the ‘*mevlit*’ (memorial service) hall, one can see the vintage photographs of the founders of the hospital alongside an edict in Ottoman that was ordering the foundation of the hospital. In a window, the jam jars are exhibited; people, who come for the memorial services, can buy them; a receipt is given to those who buy them, and the money made is donated to the foundation of the hospital, called *Or-Ahayim Hastanesi Vakfi* (the Foundation of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital in English). These social interactions of donations and purchases can be regarded as joint actions performed by the hospital staff and the visitors of the hospital within the framework of Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism.

The hangers for the coats are in the entrance of the hall; the chairs are cream-colored, and there are various dining tables. All the tables have white covers; this whiteness represents the spirituality of the meals held. Awards received by some

Pink Angels were placed in a display. Besides, a portrait of Atatürk is not missing on one of the walls of this massive hall. This portrait implies that the Turkish Jews respect Atatürk, since he is the founder of the Republic of Turkey. This room was painted white; light colors were chosen in order to paint the walls in the hospital. Light colors are making everybody feel relieved as physical objects from the perspective of Blumer (1969).

In the same hall, the guests should look at the wall clock in order to learn what time it is, and the name of the family member organizing the memorial service is written on a wooden stand. This physical object indicates the respect of the organizer; besides, the donators whose names were written on transparent plates and hung on the walls were also respected in this manner. “No Smoking” signs are showing that smoking is absolutely forbidden there. According to the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969) and Cooley (1902), these physical objects emphasize the importance of respect towards others to be accepted by society.

On the entrance of the building, these words of Louis Pasteur¹³ were written: “*No se demanda a un hazino ni su pais de orijin, ni su relijion. Solo esto se dize: Tienes dolor? Te va ayudar*” (Niyego 2011). Dubos cites the same quote as follows: “One does not ask of one who suffers: What is your country and what is your religion? One merely says: You suffer, that is enough for me: you belong to me and I shall help you” (1950:85). The translation of the Judeo-Spanish text is this: “One does not ask of one who suffers what her or his country is and what her or his religion is. One just asks and says, ‘Are you suffering? I will help you.’” Therefore, this message to be conceived as a rule and an abstract object for its spirituality indicates that discrimination is not allowed in the hospital, and every religious group is respected.

¹³ “Louis Pasteur was a French chemist and microbiologist who made many important discoveries related to the immune system, vaccinations, chemistry and the nature of diseases”; he was born on December 27, 1822 and died on September 28, 1895 (Louis Pasteur Facts n.d.)

5. 2. Foods and Culture

Regarding the foods and beverages distributed to patients, or other types of meals cooked in the hospital, some of them require oxygen (air) and fire (heat) to be cooked; some are liquids, and the others are solid. Moreover, plants grow on earth, whereas animals also eat plants, growing on earth. Leschziner indicates that “disorderly humors” lead to “health problems” and specific “dietetic prescriptions of particular flavors in food” which allude to the “humoral qualities of foodstuff,” thus, the healing qualities of the foods can make a person get back to normal; in other words, after eating certain meals, a person may make a full recovery (2006:426). Therefore, as Hippocrates supposed, the balance of the body is very important (see Table 2 in Appendix A where Gill (1999) describes the functions of the four humors).

Moreover, a physician who refers to Hippocrates recommends everybody not to eat raw foods, but to “get enough physical exercises, rest, sleep, and breathe clean air” (Moncorgé 2009–2011). In the Middle Ages, these dietary rules were recognized in Spain; for instance, recipes from two cookbooks were selected: the first one was entitled *Anonymous Andalousian* and used during the period of the Moors in Spain in the 13th century, and the second was entitled *Tractatus de Modo* and was used in Italy at the end of the 13th century (Moncorgé 2009–2011). The Sephardim who lived in Spain in the Middle Ages might have espoused the food-for-health principles depicted above. However, all the Jews have their own cooking rules, known as *Kashrut*, thus, ‘the Jewish Dietary Laws’ whose meaning is explained by Rich:

Kashrut is the body of Jewish law dealing with what foods we [Jews] can and cannot eat and how those foods must be prepared and eaten. “*Kashrut*” comes from the Hebrew root Kaf-Shin-Reish, meaning fit, proper or correct. It is the same root as the more commonly known word “*kosher*,” which describes food that meets these standards. The word “*kosher*” can also be used, and often is used, to describe ritual objects that are made in accordance

with Jewish law and are fit for ritual use [1995-2011c, emphases added].

According to Leschziner, the fire is associated with salamander, phoenix, and mythological animals as a hot and dry substance, the air with birds, roosters, chickens, ducks, and geese as a hot and moist substance, the water with fish and other sea products, such as oysters and shrimps as a cold and moist substance, and the earth with fruits and vegetables for being the place where trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants, roots, and bulbs grow, and it is regarded as a dry and cold substance (2006:426). The Jews cannot eat every type of sea product and drink milk in company of a nice meal that includes meat. *Leviticus* (11:1-32, 39-47) distinguishes between eatable and uneatable meat types. Jews must not eat rabbits, pigs, clams, oysters, lobsters, and crabs; moreover, insects and worms must not be eaten (Alalu et al. 2001:121-122).

However, each Jewish menu contains liquid beverages and solid meals; soup is a hot and moist beverage, whereas lemonade is a cold and moist one. Meat dishes are served, when they are hot; however, fruits and vegetables can be served, when they are hot or cold. One can cook fruits and vegetables in various ways: ice cream is cold, whereas coffee with blue berries is hot. Culture plays a crucial role in the cuisine of different cultural groups. Rich provides the list of the 'Jewish Dietary Laws' which are abstract objects to be taken into account by the Jews socially in terms of Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism:

1. Certain animals may not be eaten at all. This restriction includes the flesh, organs, eggs and milk of the forbidden animals.
2. Of the animals that may be eaten, the birds and mammals must be killed in accordance with Jewish law.
3. All blood must be drained from meat and poultry or broiled out of it before it is eaten.
4. Certain parts of permitted animals may not be eaten.
5. Fruits and vegetables are permitted, but must be inspected for bugs (which cannot be eaten).
6. Meat (the flesh of birds and mammals) cannot be eaten with dairy. Fish, eggs, fruits, vegetables and grains can be eaten with either meat or dairy. (According to some views, fish may not be eaten with meat).
7. Utensils (including pots and pans and other cooking surfaces) that have come into contact with meat may not be used with dairy, and

vice versa. Utensils that have come into contact with *non-kosher* food may not be used with *kosher* food. This applies only where the contact occurred while the food was hot.

8. Grape products made by non-Jews may not be eaten.
9. There are a few other rules that are not universal [1995-2011c, emphases added].

Moreover, the *Torah* indicates that meat cannot be eaten together with dairy products (see *Exodus* 23:19, *Exodus* 34:26, and *Deutoronomy* 14:21). Milk represents life, whereas meat death: several Pink Angels explained this. It was not astonishing to see two different kitchens in the hospital: the first was reserved for cooking meat, and the second for cooking dairy products. Besides, the cooks were obeying the ‘Jewish Dietary Laws’ in washing the dishes. One of them narrated me that she was running the dishwasher “in between meat and dairy loads,” since in the “*mevlithane*” (the hall reserved for memorial services), there is only one dishwasher. However, her job is undemanding, since no meat is served for breakfast; however, it may be served for lunch or dinner. ‘The Jewish Dietary Laws’ are respected in every kitchen in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital. As long as the beverages and the dishes are served together from a Hippocratic point of view, and ‘the Jewish Dietary Laws’ are respected by the hospital staff and the Pink Angels, the foods served in the restaurants and refectories in the hospital, or distributed by the Pink Angels are very healthy. The Pink Angels who take different roles help the patients be in the pink, thus, hale and hearty in accordance with the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

Additionally, Delaney posits that the halls where people feed themselves, the date and the time of the meals, the vocabulary related to the cultural food stuff and cooking techniques, the socialization processes of cultural groups, while eating certain types of foods, and the posture of a person should be assessed in observing the eating habits of diverse social classes and cultural groups, and that the word of *companion* implies that one shares her or his bread with another: the Latin prefix “*com*” that implies togetherness is added to the Latin noun “*panis*” (bread) in order to form a new word indicating that some people form a group in order to share their bread or ideas literally (2004:274). All the foods should be regarded as physical objects that facilitate communication between social objects

via the rules in accordance with which they are cooked and served; these rules are abstract objects, regarding the Blumerian (1969) symbolic interactionism.

Furthermore, Roland Barthes (2012[1957]) considers that the foods are national symbols, preferred by people belonging to a certain national group. Besides, Delaney refers to “Jean Anthelme-Savarin, a French politician-gourmet” who uttered the following sentence for assessing the civilization level of his nation: “Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you who you are” (2004:274). Anthropologists are concerned with the cultural peculiarities of the meals and their symbolic meanings in deciphering people’s identities, political views, and ideologies (Delaney 2004: 277).

At this point, this study of mine depicts that the meals prepared, serviced, or provided by the Pink Angels are rich in Jewish symbols; however, these meals do not imply or support any ideologies. They are just the products of the transnational identities of the Turkish Jews who have struggled with life in different countries. Basch, Glick-Schiller, and Szanton-Blanc propose that “transnationalism” has several steps taken by “immigrants” in order to familiarize themselves with a different culture and get accustomed to a different life style, while insisting to uphold some of the traditions of the countries from which they had immigrated (1994:7). Turkish Jewish culinary traditions reflect the transnational identities of the Jews who used to cook whatever they could find during the rash wars in which a specific endemic eating behavior was formulated among the Sephardim. In other words, although the scarcity of food was inevitable and unavoidable in this hard period, they formulated nutrient recipes by using a plethora of ingredients, including skins, husks, and hulls of different vegetables and fruits that were used in cooking other meals.

The Pink Angels provide the patients with healthy foods, make them get involved in physical exercises, and get some fresh air, when the weather is nice and sunny, obeying the principles of Hippocrates unconsciously. In the sequent sections, we will see how they do this.

5. 2. 1. Daily Diets and Symbolism in the Festive Foods

Social roles of the hospital staff, the transnational, multicultural, and Sephardic foods as physical objects, and the preferences for certain foods for feasts as abstract objects are depicted in this section within the framework of Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism. The hospital's dietician chooses what to cook on each day of the week in accordance with the suggestions of the Pink Angels. If a certain feast is celebrated, a certain symbolic dish might be cooked as a physical symbolic object. Some Pink Angels can come earlier in the mornings in order to assist the ailing patients who try to have their breakfast in their common dining room. This action represents the kindness and compassion of the Pink Angels as social objects; the patients carry their light colored bibs, while eating their meals; as physical objects, the light color of these bibs incites happiness, referring to Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism. As soon as the Pink Angels will have arrived in the hospital, they say hi to the patients, and make them eat their meals; if they cannot eat them, some Pink Angels fix the foods onto forks, or take a spoon, and make them enjoy the foods they are eating. All of these make the patients feel comfortable in spite of the diseases from which they suffer as social objects in need in accordance with what Blumer (1969) suggests. Besides, as a symbol of their Jewish identity, the Pink Angels also keep a Sephardic cookbook, a physical object revealing the Jewish identity of the Pink Angels, in their archives and check it, when they have to cook a festive food.¹⁴ Moreover, the dietician is extremely strict about the *Kasruth* ('Jewish Dietary Laws') as a serious social object that respects religious differences, concerning the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). The dietician of the hospital may choose recipes from this book, if the Pink Angels want her to do so for a specific event in order to be accepted by the whole hospital, thinking about being in the shoes of the others in the hospital from a symbolic interactionist perspective. As long as Jewish foods are cooked, the patients feel comfortable and begin to think

¹⁴ Koronyo, Viki and Sima Ovadya.
2005 Sephardic Cook Book: Sefarad Yemekleri. Istanbul: Gözlem Gazetecilik, Basın ve Yayın.

positive about everything as social objects, missing their old days, and consequently, they appreciate the Pink Angels and the dietician in terms of Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism.

Concerning the dining places where the Pink Angels work voluntarily, three different dining places exist in the hospital: first of them is the dining hall in the geriatric unit: patients sit around a huge u-shaped table with a white cover and eat their meals there. The u-shape eases the communication between different people as a physical shape formed by different chairs in accordance with the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). This dining hall has also a small kitchen with a refrigerator. Sometimes some Pink Angels, taking the cook social role, prepare the foods they are going to distribute in the hospital. They put the dishes and the drinks to be distributed on a three tier trolley kept there. In addition, the patients have their lunch in this place.

The second dining room is reserved for the staff that consists of the cleaners, the physicians, the doctors, the nurses, the therapists, and the administrators. They take a tray and ask the food distributor to give them the foods they wish to eat. In general, the dishes of the Pink Angels are served on their table, since they are regarded as superior to others due to the difficulties involved in the tasks they are performing. Moreover, sliced fruits are offered to them after the meals. Their table is always reserved, and a vase of flowers is placed in the middle of the table that has a white cover on which a light pink cover is placed just like a diamond. All these physical details allude to the superiority of the Pink Angels for their severe duties in the hospital within the framework of Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism. Additionally, the third dining room is reserved for the guests, visiting the '*mevlithane*' (the hall reserved for the memorial services). This room has also a kitchen where the meals arrive in a specific food lift.

Traditional Turkish breakfast dishes are eaten by the patients, staying in the hospital. These dishes include boiled eggs and *kasher* cheese ("*kashar*" cheese; Sephardim use the term '*kasher*' for this cheese, since it is produced in accordance with the *Kashrut* ('Jewish Dietary Laws') for dairy products; in *Exodus* 23:19, *Exodus* 34:26, and *Deutoronomy* 14:21 in the *Torah*, it is ordered

not to “boil a kid in its mother’s milk” (*Kashrut: Jewish Dietary Laws* 2011). In addition, in the hospital, olives, tomatoes, cucumbers, jam, honey, and butter are eaten for breakfast. These are eaten with white Turkish bread. In addition, milk, coffee, and Turkish tea are served. Delaney describes how to make Turkish tea as follows:

Most everywhere – in teahouses, in restaurants, at home in both the city and the village – tea is made by putting two teapots one on top of the other. Tea is placed in the smaller pot on top; it is warmed as the water boils in the lower pot. When the water has boiled some of it is poured into the pot containing the tea leaves. More water is added to the lower pot and the whole apparatus then simmers for about half an hour or more – or until all of the tea leaves have settled to the bottom of the top pot [2004:378].

However, today a Turkish tea bag may be placed in a glass full of hot water, and the tea will be ready in almost three minutes: Turkish people like drinking black tea; they even satisfy their thirst with tea. Tea is a physical object alluding to Turkishness, taking into account the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). Jewish women who serve as Pink Angels have Turkish citizenship. Moreover, blatantly, the patients’ lunch and dinner menus may involve different dishes in accordance with the importance of the day. The dishes of the staff may not be the same as those of the patients. Special attention is paid to the dietary needs of the elderly patients. According to Delaney, “any discussion of meals entails a discussion of the menu,” and the foods to be served, or eaten earlier and later may differ “cross-culturally” (2004:290). For instance, Italians consume pasta before vegetables or meat; however, Turkish people prefer to eat pasta, after having digested vegetables, or meat; as do the Turkish Jews. This order proves the Turkishness of the Jews in the hospital as an abstract object in relation with the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). The menus of the meals served in the two weeks in which I conducted fieldwork in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital can be found in Tables 3 and 4 in Appendix A: the dietician of the hospital prepared them as a requirement of her social role in the hospital.

In fact, the meals cooked and eaten in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital have certain symbolic meanings. For deciphering these symbolic meanings, one must know which dishes the Jews consume for Jewish feasts. These feasts are abstract objects for their spiritual values, regarding Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism. Jewish feasts should be mentioned here together with the symbolic dishes eaten, celebrating them. The Jewish new year begins with *Rosh Hashanah* (the Hebrew word '*rosh*' means new in English, and the word '*shanah*' year; the word '*ha*' is a determiner equal to the English article 'the') (*Musevi Cemaati* [Jewish Community] 2011). After a ten-day period successive to this feast, on *Yom Kippur* ('Day of Atonement'), Jews begin to fast before the sunset, and break their fasts, when the stars appear in the dark evening sky the very next day (Alalu et al. 2001:46). Successive to this special day of repentance, the feast of *Sukkot* ('Feast of Tabernacles') is celebrated; this feast lasts seven days, and *Simchat Torah* celebrates the time when all the annual *Torah* readings are concluded; during the Jewish spiritual holiday of *Shemini Atzeret* (Eighth Day of Assembly), "prayers for rain" are recited (Hammer 2006:28).

Following these feasts, *Hanukkah*, known as the Festival of Lights is celebrated during eight days in December every year; moreover, *Purim* is celebrated in memory of Queen Esther who prevented the murder of thousands of Jews by Haman, and *Pesach* is celebrated for the fact that the Jews were saved from slavery in Egypt; after forty-nine days, *Shavuot* comes as a feast celebrated for the declaration of the ten commandments, and in the summer, there is the mourning period of *Tisha B'Av* (*Musevi Cemaati* [Jewish Community] 2011). *Pesach*, *Shavuot*, and *Sukkot* are recognized as '*Shalosh Regalim*' ('the Three Pilgrimages'), whereas *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* are recognized as '*Yamim Noraim*' ('Days of Awe') (*Musevi Cemaati* [Jewish Community] 2011). At this point, we can go into the details of the symbolic foods consumed on each of these special and hallowed events. As well, during *Shavuot*, dairy desserts are consumed (Koronyo and Ovadya 2004:113). Even a Pink Angel mentioned that white milk pudding with rice called *sütlaç* was distributed in the hospital for the feast. Rice indicates abundance, whereas milk birth: the whole dessert refers to the wishes for an abundant period as a physical object within the framework of

Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism. The following is explained on the Facebook page entitled *Jewish People around the World*¹⁵:

It is an ancient tradition to eat dairy meals during *Shavuot*, since after receiving the *Torah*'s rules for *kashrut*, people of Israel had made all their meat pots and dishes *kosher* before further use, and in the meantime, they limited themselves to dairy foods [May 25, 2012, emphases and correction added].

Jewish people eat honey and apples for the feast of *Rosh Hashanah* that lasts two days; honey symbolizes sweetness, and the apple slices are dipped into honey for depicting the symbolic wishes for a sweet new year; besides, apples have helped people recover from various diseases as remedies; therefore, it is a physical symbol of relief (Kaufman 2009). The number of pomegranate seeds is equal to the number of Jewish commandments that are totally sixhundredthirteen (ten of these are the ten commandments, and sixhundredthree are from the five books of the *Torah*: twohundredforty-eight of these order a person to do something, whereas threehundredsixty-five of them warn a person not to do anything (Seval-Vali 2011)). Quinces are also eaten for *Rosh Hashanah*. Apple or pomegranate jam is also eaten during the feast; one of the Pink Angels and the cook of the hospital narrated me that the Pink Angels were selling apple jam during the feast. In addition, the cook of the hospital told me that apple jam was sold during *Rosh Hashanah* and orange jam during the Passover. All of these foods are symbolic physical objects, according to the theory of Blumer (1969).

As Sephardim celebrate *Rosh Hashanah*, they cook and bless leeks in order to wish good luck; dates, pomegranates, and gourds are other symbolic fruits consumed in this feast (Rosh HaShana Foods | SEPHARDIC Style 2008). Berman (n.d.) suggests that the dates are regarded as “*tamri*” that means to “consume or finish.” Besides, she (n.d.) says, “this food is similar to the beets and leeks in that it is eaten with the intent that all enemies will end their detrimental wrath.” Moreover, there are various dishes cooked with leeks and

¹⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/JewishPeopleAroundTheWorld>

cabbage in the Sephardic cuisine. These vegetables have certain symbolic meanings, and are recognized “as *karsi*, related to the word *karet*, to cut off or destroy” (Berman n.d., emphases added). Thus, they allude to the defeat of the enemies as physical metaphorical objects from the perspective of Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism. Moreover, beets indicate the “removal” of “the spiritual roadblocks,” which consist of the sinful behaviors and attitudes in order to live happily in the successive year (Berman n.d.).

Rachel Bortnick (2011, *Ladinokomunita*) explains that light colored dishes are consumed during feasts. As she is from Izmir, she talks about the traditions of this city; the *baklava* to be served on *Rosh Hashanah* was made with whitened almonds, “*almendras blankeadas*,” but not with “*muez*” (walnut), as the Hebrew noun equivalent to this noun (*egoz*) means also ‘sin’; besides, white rice was eaten instead of rice with tomato sauce, as the tomatoes would darken the color of the rice; moreover, she says that desserts allude to joy. As well, while eating chocolate, they were saying, “*siempre dulces*” (“may sweet things always happen to you!”), and while they were serving Turkish coffee, they were saying, “*cafés de alegria*” that means “coffee of joy,” since these delicious products are brown. The dark colors symbolize unhappiness and bad luck, whereas the light colors happiness and good luck. Consequently, almost all the decorations, clothings, and foods are light colored in the hospital for encouraging the people to think positive in a spiritual atmosphere, where the Turkish Jewish culture is always reproduced, as physical objects for Blumer (1969).

Additionally, some Jews prepare ‘round *challah* loaves’ for celebrating the new Jewish year:

Circular *challahs* represent unending cycle of life and the prayer that another year round will be granted. From another view the round breads look like a royal crown, a reminder of the coronation of God as Ruler on *Rosh Hashanah* [Berman n.d., emphases added].

Moreover, Koronyo and Ovadya indicate that Sephardim eat season’s fruits and vegetables, salads, leek balls, chard or spinach pastries, fish (the heads of the fish

must not be separated from their bodies), meat, pumpkin desserts, apple jam, pomegranates, and dates (2004:106). Some Pink Angels narrated me that ‘*albondigas de prasa*’ (leek balls) could be consumed for this feast in addition to the foods mentioned by Koronyo and Ovadya (2004:106).

Regarding the symbolic importance of fruits for *Rosh Hashanah*, Berman (n.d.) refers to Rabbi Shimon Apisdorf who proposes that apples grow without the requirement of being protected by the leaves of their trees unlike other fruits, and for this reason, Jews prefer to eat these fruits for making good wishes during *Rosh Hashanah*. She (n.d.) also cites the following prayer of apple blessing:

*Barukh Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh HaOlam boray peh-ree
hah-aytz.*

We bless you Eternal God Sovereign of the World who created
the fruit of the tree.

Successively, “a short prayer that ties the honey-dipped apple to the wish for a sweet new year” is recited:

*Yehi ratzon Adonai Eloheinu sheh-tee-cha-daysh ah-lay-nu shana
tovah u’ meh-tu-kah.*

May it be your will Eternal God that we are renewed for a year
that is good and sweet (Berman n.d.).

Berman (n.d.) also mentions that other culinary traditions related to the Jewish new year include eating black-eyed peas, couscous with seven vegetables, fish, and fenugreeks, since they represent abundance as physical objects (regarding the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969)); besides, fish cannot be affected by the dire effects of the evil eye, being under the water all the time. Berman (n.d.) indicates that Rabbi Abaye thinks that the word of gourd’s Hebrew equivalent “*k’rah*” is underlying its symbolic significance, and gourds can also be consumed during the new year celebrations; this Hebrew word’s meaning is this: “proclaim,” and it is used in the following sentence: “May our

merits be proclaimed before God”; moreover the same Hebrew word means also ‘to tear up,’ or ‘shred’; both meanings are mentioned in the following prayer:

*Yehi ratzon milfanecha Adonai Eloheinu she'yee-korah g'zar
dee'nay-nu v'yee-kar-oo l'fah-necha zechu-yo-tay-nu.*

May it be your will Eternal God that our harsh decrees are torn up
and our merits are proclaimed before You.

Concerning the sacred day that immediately follows *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur* is a day of fast, and none of the Pink Angels comes to visit the hospital on this day. The fast lasts twenty-six hours (*Musevi Cemaati* [Jewish Community] 2011). One of the Pink Angels comes to distribute *croissants* in the hospital, after the feast is over. The destinies of the people become evident in accordance with their annual attitudes and behaviors; therefore, if a person committed good acts, she or he would have a happy life in the coming year (*Musevi Cemaati* [Jewish Community] 2011). The *croissants* are shaped as new moons which allude to the beginning of a new life after repentance. Besides, as a Sephardic tradition, the fast is broken by dipping some bread into sunflower oil, some coffee with milk is drunk, and sweet biscuits are eaten; additionally, after a while, Sephardim may drink some chicken noodle soup (Koronyo and Ovadya 2004:107). However, some Pink Angels emphasized that a person was not obliged to break her or his fast by eating a *croissant*. All these foods are physical objects with various meanings, considering the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

Furthermore, during *Sukkot*, the top of an arbor is decorated with wheat, ryes, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates; the dishes are served and eaten under this arbor during seven days (Koronyo and Ovadya 2004:108). Accordingly, as a Pink Angel depicted me, ‘*ashura*,’ the Turkish pudding that involves various fruits and vegetables is cooked and eaten for this feast in the hospital; all these fruits and vegetables symbolize abundance and allude to the compassion of the Creator.

Successively, during the feast of *Hanukkah* that starts on *Kislev* 25 and lasts eight days, people celebrate the recuperation of the temple in Jerusalem from

Antiochus IV by Maccabiaths; the olive oil left could light “the sacred fire in the Temple”; however, the oil managed to light this fire for eight days in which new olive oil could be produced (*Musevi Cemaati* [Jewish Community] 2011). Therefore, vegetables cooked in olive oil are symbolic to this feast: one of the Pink Angels explained me this. In addition, sweet muffins (*ponçikler* (*ponçik*: singular; *ponçik-ler*: plural)) and some other types of desserts cooked in oil and sautéed with some nectar are offered during the feast (Koronyo and Ovadya 2004:109). Some Pink Angels may preserve this culinary tradition. The head of the Pink Angels told me that they were cooking ‘*şekerpare*’ and distributing it for this feast. It is a dessert made up of pastry shaped as oval balls cooked in oil and served with specific syrup of sugar. These desserts underline the wishes for happiness and good luck as physical objects, taking into account Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism.

Regarding the Passover, or *Pesach*, “the eight-day festival of Passover is celebrated in the early spring, from the 15th through the 22nd of the Hebrew month of *Nissan*. It commemorates the emancipation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt” (Chabad-Ludavitch Media Center 2001-2011, emphasis added). A table decorated for this feast is known as *seder*; besides, *albondigas de prasa* (leek balls), lamb dish, eggs, *zucchini burmelikos*, and *zucchini* pastries should be served on this feast (Bepanthol 2009). For cooking *bimuelos de matsa* (*hamursuz lokması* [Turkish]: *matzot* balls), *matzot* pieces are put into water so that they can become softer, and then they are squeezed with a blender; successive to this, “beaten eggs and salt” are mixed and fried in a Passover pan that “has hallow parts in it” (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:28). Boiled eggs are known as “*uevos haminados de Pesach*” (“Passover eggs” cooked in the oven: the Judeo-Spanish word ‘*hamin*’ means ‘oven’): “the outer cover” of onions are placed “in a deep cup”; eggs are put in it and boiled with some “oil, coffee, salt, pepper, and water” (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:14). During the Passover, *masapan* (almond dish) and *sharope blanco* (white jam) are eaten, after having eaten *matzot* balls, pastries, fish, *mina*, and lamb dishes (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:112). *Minas* are also filled pastries: a specific *mina* with *matzot* flour can be

cooked for the Passover; it is called “*mina de karne*” (“pastry made of *matzot* and lamb meat”) (see Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:42).

All these products symbolize the victory of the Jews over the unbelievers as physical objects as defined by Blumer (1969). Eggs also symbolize birth and novelties. The Jews managed to escape from Egypt, after having worked there as the slaves of the Pharaoh; this escape was so abrupt that the Jews who were starving cooked some bread without leavening it (*Musevi Cemaati* [Jewish Community] [Jewish Community] 2011). Therefore, the symbolic *matzot* are eaten for remembering this miraculous event.

According to Hess, the following foods are consumed on a special plate known as “the *Seder* Plate” for Passover:

The *Matzah*- When the Jews were freed from slavery, they left in a rush and their bread did not have time to rise.

Bitter vegetable- The bitter vegetable, such as celery is dipped in salt water to represent the hardship and tears that the Jews suffered as slaves in Egypt

Haroseth- The ingredients of *Haroseth* vary according to sect of Jews, but it mainly consists of a mixture of apples, cinnamon, nuts and raisins, usually mashed. This represents the mixture that slaves used to build the buildings in Egypt

Shank bone- the shank bone represents the sacrificial lamb which was offered to God as Passover sacrifice in ancient times

Egg- The egg is a symbol of life

Bitter herb- The bitter herb, usually horseradish represents the bitterness that slavery caused for the Jews [2007, emphases added].

The Pink Angels usually wish that *matzot* ball soup, i.e., *sodra* (*matzot* soup) is cooked with beef or chicken *bouillon*, the *matzot* is mixed with the water and “cooked for ten minutes,” and two eggs are added to the *bouillon* (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:19). During the feast, some Pink Angels sell orange jam, known as ‘*charoset*.’ Ha-Levi depicts Passover *Charoset* as follows:

The basic *charošet* recipe of honey, wine, nuts, fruit, and spices is common to all Sephardim. However, Sephardic families will use a variety of ingredients that reflect the cuisines of their country or community, or what is available in their community to make *charošet*. Either one or a combination of crushed, chopped or boiled dates, figs, chestnut paste, raisins, pomegranates, apricots, or oranges might be used as the fruit ingredient, chopped pistachio nuts or chopped walnuts might be used as the nut ingredient, and a variety of spices might be used in place of using cinnamon as the traditional spice to make *charošet*. Other *charošet* combinations include the use of date honey, known as *Haleq*, or mixing figs, apples, nuts, cinnamon, and wine. *Charošet* is the Passover food that has the greatest variety of recipes of any Passover [1999-2011, emphases added].

One of the Pink Angels explained the following: “In *Pesach*, *matzot* are distributed; *matzot* cakes are baked with the *matzot* flour; for the patients suffering from diabetes, the *matzot* are put into some water, and the dots on the *matzot* are carved with a spoon.” In addition, another Pink Angel told me that spinach was served for the feast, and another Pink Angel added that they were requesting the cook to cook vegetables with roots for the feast. Additionally, another Pink Angel suggested that *lokma*, a Turkish dessert can also be served during this event. Furthermore, a person whose nickname is Buly (2011, *Ladinokomunita*) mentions that Sephardim have to eat white foods, such as white candies and rice for the feasts; this whiteness represents happiness and joy, whereas the rice abundance within the framework of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

Moreover, during the feast of *Tu B’shevat*, the following nutrients are placed on a table: wine, biscuits, olives, dates, grapes, or raisins, figs, pomegranates, hazelnuts, almonds, walnuts, oranges, apples, bananas, carrots, watermelon and melon slices, and lemons (Koronyo and Ovadya 2004:110). A Pink Angel depicted me that the following products were distributed for this feast, after some prayers had been recited upon each of them; their symbolic meanings are explained by Yankel Ben-Barak (2012):

1. Wheat corresponds to *chesed* (kindness).
2. Barley corresponds to *gevura* (restraint).

3. Grapes grow in beautiful clusters and correspond to *tiferet* (beauty).
4. Figs correspond to *netzach* (endurance).
5. Pomegranate has a crown and corresponds to majesty and glory.
6. Olive oil corresponds to *yesod* (foundation).
7. Dates correspond to *malchut* (kingdom).¹⁶

For celebrating the feast of *Purim*, walnut pastries, desserts called “the ears of Haman,” and *Purim* sweets are eaten (Koronyo and Ovadya 2004:111). One of the Pink Angels said that the ears of Haman, thus, *borekitas* with nuts and sweet muffins (*ponçikler*) and marzipan were distributed for this feast. The celebration rules and spirituality of these feasts are abstract objects, whereas the foods are physical objects with meanings of abundance, happiness, and joy, in general. The Pink Angels take the social roles of waitresses and fairies who distribute foods that are consumed for wishing for good events to happen from a symbolic interactionist point of view.

Regarding the foods mentioned in the hospital menus prepared for two weeks, they may be based on symbolic meanings in relation with these festive celebrations. Regarding the foods consumed in the hospital during the fieldwork (see Appendix A, Tables 3 and 4), lentil soup is known as “*mahluta*” among the Turkish Sephardim (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:20). Lentils are symbols of abundance in the Turkish Jewish culture. Additionally, butter beans recognized as *kuru fasulyeler* (dry beans) in Turkish constitute a common and cheap Turkish dish; it is eaten together with rice known as ‘*pilav*’ (*pilaf*) in Turkish. In cooking rice (*pilaf*), *vermicelli* are fried, boiled, and added into the boiling rice: all these materials allude to fertility and abundance in the Turkish culture; as Jews have been living in Turkey since centuries, they adopted the Turkish culinary traditions and like the same culinary tastes as the Turks. *Pilaf* can also be cooked with peas or chickpeas, or it should be sautéed with tomatoes. This food symbolizes abundance, and as it is white, it may also symbolize health and happiness. Therefore, the Pink Angels are careful about food choices to be included in the

¹⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/JewishPeopleAroundTheWorld>. The seven species of Israel include wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and honey (*Deuteronomy* 8:8).

hospital menu; their unconscious behavior is evident in these food choices. However, they do whatever they have learnt from their societies in order to be appreciated by their communities, considering the suggestion of Cooley (1902) on social acceptance.

Concerning another Sephardic dish, *fritada de kalavasa* (squash without cheese), grated squashes are added to tomato slices, parsley, bread, eggs, and onion; these are mixed, some oil is added on a tray, and after putting “this mixture” on the tray, it is heated in the oven (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:25). Other Sephardic *fritadas* also exist; these include *fritadas de prasa* (leek pastries) and *fritadas de tomat* (tomato pastries) (see Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:26). Leeks allude to victory, as it has been mentioned previously. Classical Turkish foods lead to the acceptance of the Pink Angels by the Turkish patients in the hospital regardless of their cultural and religious backgrounds. In addition, eggplants are widely used in the Sephardic kitchen: the eggplants with ground beef are appreciated in the hospital. However, a Pink Angel suggested that eggplant kabobs were the most famous dishes of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital. Celeries and *zucchini* can also be cooked with olive oil; similarly, mixed vegetables (*türlü*) can be cooked with olive oil: olives allude to peace, and the Turkish dishes cooked in the hospital underscore the transnational identities of the Turkish Jews formulated after years in Turkey. Vegetables are rich in vitamins, and these show that the Pink Angels really take care of the patients.

Ottoman meat balls, called “lady’s tight” (*kadınbudu köfte*) entered the Sephardic cuisine, as well. Meat balls and rolls show the transnational identities of the Turkish Sephardim who adapted the Ottoman foods to their culinary traditions. Besides, they indicate that they take care of the patients who have to eat hot, cold, dry, and liquid foods cooked with seasonal ingredients so that they can feel better. In this case, the Pink Angels take the roles of perfect caregivers, nurses, and dieticians, if the Hippocratic laws are also taken into account from a symbolic interactionist perspective, as proposed by Blumer (1969).

Moreover, as it was winter, patients were encouraged to consume hot beverages, such as *yayla çorbasi*, thus the plateau soup, or the tomato soup. Both are

Ottoman dishes symbolizing the Turkishness of the Jews in Turkey. Moreover, *köftes abafadas* are the boiled meat balls. Spinach is usually cooked in canola oil. Hot beverages are good for the patients' health, and the Pink Angels take the roles of excellent caregivers by making the patients drink them. Rice is put in the stuffed peppers and *yaprakes* (filled grape leaves), which are two famous Ottoman dishes. Thus, this food may be symbolizing wishes for abundance hidden in an event, or an occasion.

At this point, fish is the most important dish in the Turkish Jewish culture, since it is not regarded as a meat product: boiled fish can be served with tomatoes, or other types of fish may be served. As explained by some Pink Angels, they bring fish, or artichokes to be cooked for the patients, as they celebrate an event or have to do something in memory of one of their dearest family members. These foods are symbolic physical objects, if they are analyzed within the framework of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). Besides, fish should be cooked in six different ways in the Sephardic cuisine:

- 1) "with lemon and eggs,"
- 2) "*Agristada* (sour with flour),"
- 3) "with sour plums,"
- 4) cooked "with tomatoes, lemon, and parsley,"
- 5) baked "with tomatoes, lemon, and parsley," and
- 6) "fried with sunflower oil" (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:8, emphasis added).

In addition, "*taramas a la cuda*" (Jewish *taramas*; fish eggs) are cooked by removing "the membranes of the fish eggs" (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:78, correction added). Desserts, yoghurt, and compote can be eaten after the meals. *Agristadas* are preferred and included in the hospital menu as fish in white sauce. As fish swim in the depths of the water, they protect themselves against the evil eye; fish are used against the evil eye in the Turkish Jewish culture. *Albondigas*

de prasa (leek balls) and *albondigas de espinaka* (spinach balls) are two different vegetarian Sephardic dishes (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:63). *Ispanaklı gül börekleri* in Turkish that mean *bulemas de espinaka* (rose pastries with spinach) in Judeo-Spanish are cooked as follows: spinach leaves are stirred with some eggs and some grated cheese; salt should be added, as well; the preparation is put into the paste shaped like a snail in order to look like a rose (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:37). Every food intends to bring joy to the people in association with its shape. Regarding *mantikos*, paste is filled with cheese, minced meat, or spinach, egg yolk is spread over the small square shaped paste pieces, and these are baked in the oven (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:29). All these foods imply unity in hard times, thus during illnesses, since they are shared in the whole hospital as physical objects from the symbolic interactionist perspective of Blumer (1969).

After the main dishes, desserts should be eaten in the Turkish Sephardic culture. Concerning the desserts, quince desserts are recognized healthy foods. Desserts symbolize happiness and joy for their sweetness. Yoghurt without fruits or compote that consists of fruits in sweet syrup can also be eaten after the main dishes. All these foods symbolize abundance, and the Pink Angels take the roles of consultants and assistants of the professional dietician of the hospital in order to preserve the Turkish Jewish culinary traditions and make the patients feel happier from a symbolic interactionist perspective, as Blumer (1969) indicates that people adjust their acts in order to be accepted by society. The dishes cooked and served in the hospital underline the transnational identities of the Jews living in Turkey: Turkish dishes are served together with originally Sephardic dishes as long as Turkish Jews cook some Ottoman dishes, since their ancestors have been exposed to the Ottoman culture for centuries.

5. 2. 2. Symbolic Food Distribution

The Pink Angels distribute specific foods everyday on a trolley. They usually distribute several dishes at about 3.00 p.m. in the afternoons. This allows the patients to have a break between the lunches and the dinners as an abstract object

for being a rule as a schedule, according to Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism. On Mondays, they distribute sandwiches (pastries) filled with chocolate walnut butter or cheese together with coffee or tea; the patients suffering from diabetes do not eat sweet foods, but choose the diabetic foods and beverages. As the sandwiches are light colored and white, they symbolize the good wishes of the Pink Angels for the speedy recovery of the patients. Cocoa and cheese may lead to happiness in the patients as long as they see that the Pink Angels consider them and offer them foods as gifts by taking into account if they are suffering from diabetes, or not. The Pink Angels appear as careful and cautious social objects for these reasons, concerning Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism.

Moreover, specific coffee is also prepared for diabetic patients. On Tuesdays and Sundays, bananas are distributed as sources of vitamins, and they are easy to peel off. As they are white and sweet, they allude to the speedy recovery wishes of the Pink Angels who are concerned about the patients who become glad in front of these sweet foods offered them as gifts. On Wednesdays, patients eat slices of cake or sandwiches with cheese; diabetic cake is also brought by some Pink Angels. On Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, Pink Angels also distribute cakes, *borekitas*, and salty pastries. However, only on Saturdays, they distribute milk pudding with rice called *sütlaç* together with the cakes and pastries they cooked, or bought. One of the Pink Angels told me the following: "We do whatever we can do in order to make a person happy." Thus, each Pink Angel tries to demonstrate the patients that they are not lonely and abandoned, and there are some benevolent ladies who help them voluntarily to cope with obstinate diseases by making them smile a little bit, instead.

Regarding the *borekas*, paste made with eggs, salt or sugar, sun flower oil, butter, and flour is filled with walnuts, Turkish delights, eggplants, spinach, almond, or cheese, et cetera, and it is divided into pieces shaped as semicircles whose tops are covered with some egg yolk, before having been baked in the oven (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:31, 32, 95, and 96). Although a Judeo-Spanish name is given to the paste, it is an Ottoman food called "*börek*" in Turkish. It may be eaten

together with guests, since it is cooked in a large pan in the oven. Thus, symbolically, it refers to togetherness and hospitality as a physical object from the symbolic interactionist point of view of Blumer (1969).

Additionally, some Pink Angels distribute *frojaldas*, which are salty cake slices, and *boyikos de kaşer*, which are biscuits with cheese; *tapadas* are also prepared by covering a tray with paste, pouring the mixtures of eggplants, cheese, or spinach on it, and covering this with paste again, before putting the tray in the oven (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:33-34). Moreover, for cooking a *frojalda*, a diabetic food to distribute, eggs are mixed with yoghurt and sunflower oil in addition to some flour poured afterwards; the mixture is poured onto the buttered tray; some butter should be melted and poured over this; grated sheep cheese should be also put on the top of the cake, which can be baked in the oven successively (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:35). *Boyikos de Kaşer*, known as chesters with cheese are made with paste which is divided into small round pieces with the help of a small coffee cup; they are put in order on a tray covered with butter; these are covered with egg yolk with a brush and some cheese is spread on their tops, before these will have been inserted in the oven to be baked (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:35). All these foods symbolize togetherness and unity, since they are cooked in the same trays and eaten by different people at the same time. Some of the Pink Angels narrated me that some of their group members were cooking the meals to be distributed, and others were buying them from recognized patisseries. These acts show the importance the Pink Angels give to the patients in accordance with symbolic interactionism.

Besides, all the Pink Angels I interviewed told me that none of the Pink Angels was coming to the hospital on *Yom Kippur*, since most of the Jews are fasting on this special day. As some patients cannot fast due to their health conditions, some staff members distribute the meals they send, visiting all the rooms in the hospital; one of the Pink Angels explained this as follows: “We assign some duties to some people here.”

Concerning the symbolic meanings of the dishes distributed, first of all, they show that some people take care of the patients, and second, all have symbolic

meanings. Sweets mean hope for the patients, whereas other pastries something to be happy about. As they are light colored, they symbolize mainly the happiness wishes of the Pink Angels who act as fairies, hope givers, and waitresses as social objects, while distributing nutritive foods and non-alcoholic beverages. All these distributed foods show that there are the Pink Angels as social entities who take care of the patients and provide them with spiritual support by making them think positive and believe that they will recover soon in order to eat every type of food that reminds them of their childhood and youth.

5. 2. 3. *Mevlit* (Memorial Service)

A rabbi working in the hospital's synagogue narrated me what a '*mevlit*' (memorial service) was in the following way:

“A memorial service should be organized every month, or in the eleventh, or the twelfth month succeeding the death of a person. The people who are attached to the traditions of Istanbul organize monthly memorial services; the others from the suburbs organize a memorial service just eleven or twelve months after the death of a person, and successively, they organize a memorial service every year; in the annual memorial services, the date of the burial of a person is taken into consideration for the first memorial service; however, the successive services are organized on the date of decease of the person.”

In addition, the mourning period consists of three different time divisions: the first is called *Shiva*, and lasts seven days, the second called *Sheloshim* lasts a month, and the third called *Shana* lasts a year (Alalu et al. 2001:148). These periods are abstract objects as rules to obey in accordance with the object categorization of Blumer (1969). Moreover, the rabbi in the memorial service room told me that the money made by selling jars of jam was left to the foundation of the hospital, and a receipt was given to the visitors who had purchased them. This joint act alludes to the importance of the social duty of donating to charities, if it is interpreted in accordance with Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism.

Regarding the table seating and organization during memorial services observed in the hospital, a main large table was organized for the family organizing the memorial service; the head of the family was sitting on the main chair placed at the head of the rectangular table in relation with his higher social status and dominant role within the family. As a physical object, the rectangular table alludes to the role divisions between different family members; it is inevitable that the head of the family sits in a position from which he can address all the family members in accordance with Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism. Besides, smaller tables were scattered around the hall; on each table, tea bags were placed in a basket; there were a bottle full of hot water, coffee cups, glasses, forks, knives, spoons, and napkins reserved for all the participants. Some participants could wash their hands before the meals; a copper jug and a copper cup where the water was falling, while one was washing her or his hand were put on a table. This act is known as '*netilat yadayim*' ('to wash the hands'); this act is also a symbol of spiritual purity and readiness for tasting the sacred foods created by God and praying being completely pure (Alalu et al. 2001:243-244). Moreover, *kippot*¹⁷ were distributed to the men. However, in one of the memorial services I attended, I saw two little girls carrying *kippot* on their heads. These physical objects indicate that the memorial services have religious values; besides, the abstract objects of prayers for the dead are believed to relieve the souls of the dead, in case they are interpreted in a symbolic interactionist manner, as defined by Blumer (1969).

The memorial service held after seven days of the death of a person consists of a breakfast called '*korte*' that means 'cutting,' as explained by a Pink Angel. The Judeo-Spanish verb *kortar* means 'to cut,' and the Judeo-Spanish noun '*korte*' means '*tranchant*' ('sharp' or 'cutting'), or '*cour royale*' ('royal courtyard') in French (see Nehama and Cantera 2003:305-306): Jews tear their clothes after the death of a person; this is known as '*Keriah*'; when an ancestor of the Jews, called Jacob received the death notice of his son Joseph, he tore his clothes (Alalu et al.

¹⁷ A *kippah* (*kippot* is the plural of this Hebrew word) is a hemispherical round head cover always worn by Orthodox men (Cohn-Sherbock 1999:82).

2001:145), and they must show their respect for the dead by praying together with their family and friends; a '*korte*' is an abstract symbol of respect of the dead. Succinctly, *korte* alludes to the end of the first seven day mourning period after the death of a dear relative (see Alalu et al. 2001:148 about the duration of the mourning period after the death of a relative).

A breakfast is prepared for the '*kortes*.' As the *kortes* symbolize the end of the seven day mourning period in which people should stay at home and in whose first three days people must not greet others (Alalu et al. 2001:148-149), family members and friends gather, have their breakfast, and pray together. All the people behave as mourners as social objects to be accepted in that environment. I saw that meat was not offered for breakfast; chesters (*boyikos de kasher*), *kasher* cheese, *borekitas*, and other pastries together with eggs, olives, tomatoes, and cucumbers were eaten for breakfast. A jug of water, wet paper packs, napkins, and a small jug of milk for coffee were put on all the tables. At this point, it should be mentioned that Sephardim eat "*borekas*, *boyos*, and *bulemas*" for "*dezayuno*" (breakfast) initially; finally, they eat *fritadas*, eggs, olives, and cheese (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:8, emphases added). *Boyos* is also a circle salty pastry in the shape of a snail; *bulemas* are the pastries baked in the oven; they are shaped as round as snails for looking like a rose; they are filled with cheese, eggs, eggplants, and spinach (see Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:36-37). Desserts are not eaten for a Turkish Sephardic breakfast. All these physical objects of foods underscore the Turkishness of the Jews living in Turkey from the symbolic interactionist perspective of Blumer (1969).

A typical memorial service lunch and dinner include the following dishes: cigarette pastries, *albondigas de prasa* (leek balls), eggs, fish, boiled rice with fresh almonds, filled pepper, mixed salads, olives, and bread. In one of the memorial services, *semola* was offered (by the way, one of the Pink Angels said that desserts were not usually served for the memorial services, since the participants were mourning; however, this was an exemption due to the influence of the Turkish Muslim behavior of eating '*helva*' that is a similar dessert for remembering a person who has passed away recently). Desserts adjust one's

blood pressure during harsh times caused by sadness, according to a Pink Angel; for this reason, the dessert of *semola* appears as a physical object to adjust the functions of the organs of the depressed, stressed, gloomy, desolate, or sorrowful people. Its distribution demonstrates that the hospital and the Pink Angels take care of the bodily functions and emotions of people who have lost a dear family member or a good friend. In the other afternoon and evening services, fruits were offered. Vegetables are cooked more often than meat due to the *Kashrut* laws (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:8). The formulae of Sephardic meals include the following: 1) a Sephardic meal consists of various vegetables and 2) “onions, tomatoes, parsley, and lemon” serve as flavors (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:8, correction added). Sephardim prefer to mix “tomatoes,” “lemons,” and “parsley,” and cook them together; they deep fry ball-shaped meals, such as “leek balls” (“*albondigas de prasa*”), they may bake some dishes, and fill in some vegetables “with meat and / or rice,” or while cooking, they apply both techniques mentioned above (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:8). These cooking rules are abstract objects implying the Jewishness of the Pink Angels, regarding the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

One of the Pink Angels told me that they were preparing two types of jam for two different feasts: they sell jars of apple jam for *Rosh Hashanah*, and jars of orange jam for the Passover. Apples are the most symbolic fruits of the Jewish New Year, since they are dipped into honey wishing for happiness during the entire year ahead. Besides, some Pink Angels were also selling other types of jam whose jars were prepared in this huge room. This room serves as a secret work place for the Pink Angels who act as decorators, cooks, waitresses, and jam jar decorators in terms of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

Additionally, a Pink Angel explained me that eggplant kabobs were the most famous dishes in the hospital, and they should have been cooked for memorial services. Chicken, or meat should also be served for lunch or dinner, as the cook of the memorial service hall and a Pink Angel explained me. Dairy products are offered for *kortes*, whereas meat products for lunch and dinner for the observance

of *kashrut* as an abstract object, concerning the Blumerian (1969) method of object classification.

According to one of the Pink Angels, “*gönülden yapılan herşey çok güzeldir*” (“everything realized voluntarily is very beautiful”). Moreover, some Pink Angels were also preparing small jars that would contain small Turkish delights; these were going to be sold after the memorial services just like the jars of jam. I saw that orange jam, strawberry jam, and fig jam had been put into jars. They were labeled as beauties, such as “*Portakal Güzeli*” (“Orange Beauty”), “*Çilek Güzeli*” (“Strawberry Beauty”), and “*İncir Güzeli*” (“Fig Beauty”). *Kiddush*¹⁸ was also written on small cards attached to the jars with a golden filament. As the jars of jam were sold for raising funds for the hospital and for certain feasts, they were sacred physical objects in terms of Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism.

As Pink Angels preferred to carry the materials they use in gift making in the memorial service hall, and work there, what they put in the gift baskets should be mentioned here: the baskets for adults include desserts and wine in addition to a greeting card. By the way, all the grape products, including wine must be *kosher*:

The restrictions on grape products derive from the laws against using products of idolatry. Wine was commonly used in the rituals of all ancient religions, and wine was routinely sanctified for pagan purposes while it was being processed. For this reason, use of wines and other grape products made by non-Jews was prohibited. (Whole grapes are not a problem, nor are whole grapes in fruit cocktail) [Rich 1995-2011c].

Fabrics with yellow, green, and red squares and fabric flowers were used for decorating the jam jars. The fabrics were cut by giving them a round shape with a white plate. These covers were tied to the glass jars with colorful ribbons; the fabric flowers included tiny white and pink roses and purple violets. All these

¹⁸ “*Kiddush* is the name of a ritual that involves reciting blessings over a cup of wine. *Kiddush* takes place at the beginning of *Shabbat* and before Jewish festival meals”; the Hebrew word *Kiddush* means “sanctification” in English; it distinguishes the other days of the year from the sacred days (Pelaia 2012b, emphases added).

materials were donated by firms. Therefore, the jars were attracting the attention via their ornaments symbolizing the country life. One of the Pink Angels told me that children's baskets included books in relation with the feasts celebrated: these are known as 'junior packs.' Children acquire knowledge about their cultural heritage via these packs, reading the books offered them as gifts which are physical objects showing the importance given to them and their cultural heritage, if they are analyzed in accordance with Blumer's (1969) method of object classification.

5. 2. 4. *Shabbat* as the Sacred End of the Week

As several Pink Angels narrated me, after having distributed the foods and the drinks to the patients staying in the hospital, one of the conscientious patients was chosen in order to light the *Shabbat* candles each Friday. A *Shabbat* candle lighting séance by a patient in the company of a Pink Angel was observed during the fieldwork: the woman's head was covered with a scarf made of lace which was alluding to the honor and spirituality of the woman as a physical object, according to Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionist way of object classification; the woman prayed together with one of the Pink Angels who took the role of her prayer assistant; afterwards, the two white candles lit by the patient were put on two similar candlesticks whose handles were decorated with a *Magen David*, the hexagram symbolizing the victory of David over Goliath; after having killed Goliath, he obtained his sword with a star; he assumes that this star symbolizes the protection of God; in Hebrew, the word means "the protector of David" (Alalu et al. 2001:218). The two white candles allude to the fact that the fourth of the ten orders about *Shabbat* begins with two words, which are *zahor* (remember, imperative) and *shamor* (obey, imperative) (Alalu et al. 2001:175). In *Exodus* (20:8-11), it is indicated that people must have a rest one day a week; as did God, after having created the sky, the land, and the sea and all the creatures in six days.

In the dining room, there is a corner dedicated to Coya Julya Sason (1914-2005); a *Magen David* under which a white lit candle picture was drawn under her name;

it is written so in capitals except for the conjunction ‘ve’ (‘and’) under the drawing:

“Bizleri emirleriyle kutsayan ve bizlere şabat mumlarının yakılması üzerine emir veren sen, Tanrı’mız mübareksin” (Şabat Mumu Yakma Duası) (“You, our God, who blessed us with your commandments and ordered us to light the sacred Shabbat candles, are sacred” (Prayer for Lighting the Shabbat Candles)).

The place where the candles are placed has also two door shaped parts like wings on the left and on the right; there is a Hebrew prayer on the left, and on the right, one sees its Turkish version. The following prayer was written under the drawing of a *Magen David*:

“Tanrım ve atalarımızın Tanrısı, bana eşime, oğullarıma, kızlarıma, anneme, babama ve tüm yakınlarıma lutfunu göster. Bizlere uzun ömür ve barış ihsan et. Bizi hatırla ve merhamet et. Bizleri yüce dualarınla kutsa. Evimizde huzur ve barış eksik olmasın, kanatlarının altında ve gölgende bizleri koru. Çocuklarımız ve torunlarımız bilgili, akıllı, Tanrı korkusu sahibi gerçek insanlar olsunlar. Dinimize bağlı, iyiliksever insanlar olsunlar. Tanrım: ricamızı kabul et. Şu anda sana sığınyorum, lütfen bu yakarışımı analarımız Sara-Rifka-Rahel ve Lea hatırlarından dolayı kabul et. Nur saçan bu Şabat kandillerim hiç sönmessin. İçimizdeki manevi ışık daima parlansın. Bana nur saç ve beni koru. Bize nur saç ve bizi koru. Amen” (“My God and the God of our ancestors, show your grace to me, my companion, my sons, my daughters, my mother, my father, and all of my friends. Give us a long life and peace. Remember us and have mercy upon us. Bless us through your lofty prayers. May joy and peace not leave us; protect us under your wings and shadow. Let our children and grandsons become real human beings who are wise, clever, and fearful of God. Let them be kind human beings attached to our religion: accept our request. I am nestling in you, please, accept this call of mine for the sake of our mothers Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah. May these Shabbat candles of mine spreading a light not be extinguished / shine forever. May the spiritual light in ourselves always shine. Spread light upon us and protect us. Amen”).

All these prayers lead to spiritual comfort in the patients. Besides, a Hebrew prayer is recited for welcoming the *Shabbat*, and it was written on this

candleholder which had been donated to the hospital by the daughter of Coya Julya Sason, Reyna, her daughter's husband Rav Izak Haleva, and their children.¹⁹ The prayers' messages are abstract objects to affect people positively; as well, their physical presence as scriptures gives comfort to the people in the hospital from the perspective of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

5. 3. Therapies Provided by the Pink Angels

Therapies provided by the Pink Angels can be divided into two: the chat therapies and the art therapies. On the one hand, the chat therapies intend to show that life is going on in spite of hardships and health problems that may be cured miraculously. On the other hand, the art therapies aim at making the patients realize that they can manage to construct useful and symbolic items via their skills.

5. 3. 1. Chat Therapies

5. 3. 1. 1. Physical Exercises at the Beginning of Each Chat Therapy

In the mornings, before the therapies, each Pink Angel greets each patient, asking how they are. Each chat therapy begins with basic physical exercises based on metaphorical commands that make the patients imagine that they are living in a different time and place from the reality. As nature renders everybody happy via the physical objects it has, such as trees, flowers, et cetera, the patients imagine that they are in a garden or a jungle, or in a bus or a train; dreams are abstract objects that make people happy, considering the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). One of the chat therapies began with exercises where the patients indicated the city in which they were born, such as Ankara,

¹⁹ *BARUH ATA ADONAY ELOENU MELEH AOLAM ASHER KIDESHANU BEMITSVOTAV VETSIVANU LEADLIK NER SHEL SHABAT* (Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the light of the Holy Shabbat).

Istanbul, and Bursa. They continued to cite the names of different Turkish cities among which some cities in the Eastern part of Turkey, such as Erzincan, Antakya, and Mardin were mentioned. As each therapy is based on the activation of the memories of each patient, this exercise made them travel in time, remember their memories, and imagine that they were passing through different cities on a train or a bus. The exercise rules are abstract objects, and the Pink Angels act as physical education teachers together with the therapist as social objects. The dreams of the patients are also abstract objects that make them happy. These can be explained within the framework of the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

In another exercise, the patients imagined that they were gathering fruits from the branches of different trees, as they were moving their arms: they gathered imaginary apples, cherries, quinces, and pears. The first physical exercise involved the act of moving one's head from left to right, and from right to left. Second, the patients moved each of their arms upwards, and third, the patients moved their legs forward and backwards. Each activity was repeated five times. Symbolically, these exercises imposed love for nature and life upon the patients. They started to love life by remembering the precious moments of their lives in the cities in which they lived by imagining a green garden, since nature helped them relax themselves. On a Saturday, the chat therapist Pink Angel guided the physical activities by saying, "Let us move our bodies, we should be healthy; first, we will take a deep breath; we wish that today will be a beautiful day for us and all the human beings, the world will be a peaceful place, and everybody will be happy." The patients were required to move their heads first forward and backwards, and then to the left and to the right four times; moving their heads from left to right, they saw who was sitting next to them. This act implied that everybody was taking care of the other group members as the members of the same team. Successively, they moved their shoulders, and the Pink Angel mentioned that people were carrying the loads of their lives on their shoulders figuratively: as people get older, they may have hunchbacks, or begin to walk, looking down as if they were carrying heavy loads. The sentence refers to the difficulties that tire a person during her or his life. Physical activities remove the

stress out of the human body. Besides, the patients move their arms as if they were playing the accordion, and gather fruits from the trees. They repeat each act five times. After the physical activities are over, the patients clap their hands for congratulating themselves. Besides, they play volleyball with a balloon sitting on their wheelchairs or chairs, if they are not suffering much too not to walk. The patients were also awarded by a piece of chocolate for their participation in one of these physical activities by the professional occupational therapist. Besides, a Pink Angel encouraged the patients to do the physical exercises by referring to a Turkish proverb: “*İşleyen demir ışıldar*” (“The iron that functions shines”). These physical exercises lead to positive thinking, since the patients start to imagine nice and green places where they will be able to go, as soon as they will have recovered. The patients like the professional therapist, and the Pink Angels are accepted and liked by for their kindness, appreciation, and encouragement as social objects in terms of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

5. 3. 1. 2. Chats on Dreams

After the physical exercises, the Pink Angels make the patients dream about something good and joyful; these chats are based on global moral values that convince you to be perfect human beings. One of the Pink Angels explained that Einstein said that nobody could survive without dreaming. Although the patients were old, they felt as if they had still many goals to achieve in this world. This activity imposed patience towards illnesses and some joy of living upon them. A story narrated by a Pink Angel was marvelous (this Pink Angel was bringing a small notebook with her where she wrote down what she was going to narrate): here is the story:

“One day, a teacher demands the students to write something about their dreams. A boy writes that he wants to have a big farm where he will grow vegetables, raise his kids, and take care of his animals; the teacher reads this, and assigns a grade of 0 (zero) to his homework, and asks him to see her after the class. The student goes to see his teacher after the class, as she requested him to do. The teacher tells him that this is impossible, since the child is destitute. The child returns home, and asks his father, “Do I need

to do my homework again?” The father recommends him not to allow anybody to discourage him and destroy his goals. Then the student goes to see his teacher the very next day, and says, “Both the grade of 0 (zero) and the dream belong to me.”

Symbolically, everybody has dreams, and must attempt to solve each problem they encounter in order to make their dreams come true. Additionally, the therapist described that religious tolerance and respect for diversity were requisite for a peaceful world where people from different religious and cultural backgrounds were united against mass killings, massacres, genocides, and wars, since six million people were killed just for being Jewish during the World War II. In this case, the stories narrated are abstract objects that explain moral rules and teach people how to behave in certain situations; moreover, the Pink Angels act as moral leaders and teachers in accordance with the symbolic interactionist approach of Blumer (1979).

One day later, it was snowing outside. There was another chat therapist; she asked the following question to all the patients: “Where would you like to be at the moment?” A patient replied that she wanted to be in *Côte d’Azur* due to the magnificent scenery of the sea. A male patient wanted to be in the Black Sea region, whereas another wanted to be at the seaside. A woman just wanted to watch the sea in Tarabya: there used to be a hotel in Tarabya called “*Tarabya Oteli*” (Hotel of Tarabya) where another female patient spent her honeymoon with her husband. In addition, there was a “*çay bahçesi*” (tea garden; a park where people gather, sit on the tables, and drink some tea) located in the neighborhood of Emirgan; a female patient wished to be there, watching the reflections of the sunlight into the sea; some other patients would like to be in Kanlıca where there are restaurants selling yoghurt; Turkish yoghurt is always white and salty; it may also have a delicious milk oil layer covering it. In Kanlıca, people sit in these restaurants and watch the sea. One of the Pink Angels reminded that yoghurt was sold in a big metal tray in the past, and in Teşvikiye, homemade yoghurt was still sold in a big tray. A patient joked by saying, “Yoghurt is eaten by blowing.” The whole proverb is this: “A person whose mouth was burnt by some milk eats yoghurt by blowing.” The Turkish proverb

advises people to be alert. Yoghurt is served cold, whereas milk hot. If a person has been hurt by a person who cheated her or him, she or he will begin to make detailed analyses on minor issues that may jeopardize the realization of her or his projects. However, when all the patients were asked about their dreams, most of them replied that they wanted to be healthy and see somebody who could come to the hospital in order to visit them; moreover, a male patient said that he wanted to play soccer, being totally healthy. All these discourses intend to revitalize the memories of the Pink Angels through their abstract messages in relation with the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

Besides, the patients were requested to talk about the foods specific to different cities in Turkey: they imagined the apples of Amasya, the pastrami (*pastırma* of Kayseri), the apricots of Malatya, and the watermelons of Çorlu as mentioned by a patient, and the watermelons of Mersin as mentioned by the professional therapist. Besides, another proverb was mentioned meanwhile: “*İğneyi kendine, çuvaldızı başksına batır!*” (“Prickle yourself with a needle, but another person with a packing needle!”). This proverb means “to criticize oneself less than another person.” However, the professional therapist suggested that justice had to be done. A Pink Angel used also another sentence in order to make the patients appreciate life: “Life is a gift offered to us”²⁰: the patients interpreted the sentence, and the Pink Angel represented me as a gift for that day. Everybody felt a bit relieved, considering life as a gift. Besides, one of the Pink Angels said that a person had to forgive another who did something bad to her or him. A Pink Angel said that it was very harmful to criticize people, just like a mother-in-law who criticized her daughter-in-law by arguing that the chicken she had baked was hard, the pastry was extremely salty, et cetera. According to her, one must be mature enough to cope with such harsh words. This message was encouraging enough as an abstract object to convince people to be strong and take roles as forgivers, referring to the terminology used by Blumer (1969).

²⁰ This sentence is originally said by Regina Brett (2006): “Life isn’t tied with a bow, but it’s still a gift.”

Besides, a Pink Angel criticized the people who were always sad, finding excuses, mentioning that some people were angry, while the sun was shining, or it was raining. One of the patients suggested that it was nice to travel to enjoy life. Meanwhile, the Pink Angel suggested that everybody should have enjoyed each moment of their lives, and as the environment was leading to relief in a person, it was a pleasure to sit in the garden of the hospital. Therefore, according to the Pink Angel, a person should always try to take the role of a positive thinker from the symbolic interactionist perspective of Blumer (1969). In addition, during another therapy, a Pink Angel encouraged the patients to greet everybody regardless of whether they had said hello, or not. She said the following: “*Hayata gülümse! Hayal kurmak güzel birşeydir; insanlar hayal ettikleri sürece yaşar*” (“Smile at life! It is beautiful to dream. People live as long as they dream”). The patients were encouraged to take the roles of dreamers and positive thinkers, taking into account the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). Afterwards, a Pink Angel said that they had three options: a helicopter would lead a tour of Istanbul, a submarine would show the depths of the sea, or they would travel on a car that would tour Istanbul, and she asked the patients which one they would have preferred. Most of the patients preferred to get on a car and tour around the city by eating fish in Sarıyer and drinking tea in Emirgan. One of the Pink Angels narrated that she was going to Egypt for scuba diving. The patients were encouraged to imagine all the beautiful creatures in the seas and skies and on earth. Moreover, a Pink Angel mentioned that one of the biggest aquariums of the world was opened in Istanbul.²¹ A patient was willing to swim with dolphins, but not with sharks. All these places made the patients feel alive as physical objects; however, they were imaginary, and dreams about these were abstract objects; patients took the roles of dreamers and travelers as social objects from the symbolic interactionist perspective of Blumer (1969).

Additionally, the therapist Pink Angel narrated that they had asked a ninety-six-year old American man why he had been so healthy and dynamic. According to

²¹ This aquarium called Turkuazoo was opened on October 22, 2009 in Bayrampaşa, Istanbul (Turkuazoo Akvaryum Istanbul 2011).

the Pink Angel, he answered that he was avoiding to digest some foods: he was tasting them and throwing them away; furthermore, he was never eating red meat. Besides, the Pink Angel also mentioned that it was forbidden to smoke in the parks in New York. Consequently, the Pink Angels managed to impose the love for nature and life and the importance of dreaming in success. The idea imposed upon them was that they may be suffering today, however, they may also recover in the future. Regarding the dreams, for the patients, they were some symbols of hope of recovery and some recordings of the beauty of being alive through the memories. The Pink Angels were accepted by the patients as long as they gave hope to them in accordance with symbolic interactionism (see Cooley 1902, Mead 1967[1934], and Blumer 1969).

5. 3. 1. 3. Chats on Human Relations

Another topic discussed by the Pink Angels was the continuation of the relationships between human beings. The therapist Pink Angel explained that computers had a great impact on our lives. According to her, the Internet should be a useful tool, in case it is used for providing the readers with correct information; the Pink Angel cited the website of Mustafa Sarıgöl, the mayor of Şişli as an example. On this website of the municipality of Şişli, one finds information on all the events and activities that will take place in the neighborhood of Şişli.²²

Besides, the Pink Angels criticized the attitude of a Turkish journalist named Hıncal Uluç in his article published on his blog versus the death of a Turkish American actress called Defne Joy Foster, since he was tackling with her private life and accusing her of being frivolous.²³ Several social network groups were

²² The website of the Municipality of Şişli is the following: <http://www.sislibelediyesi.com/site/>

²³ Uluç, Hıncal
2011 "Bu nasıl bir mahalle baskısıdır?" ["What kind of neighborhood pressure is this?"].
Electronic document,
http://www.sabah.com.tr/Yazarlar/uluc/2011/02/04/bu_nasil_bir_mahalle_baskisidir,
accessed August/15, 2011.

united against the criticisms of Hıncal Uluç, as well. According to the Pink Angels, groups should be formed in order to defend the rights of people. The story alluded to the unnecessary of gossips that are dire abstract objects in terms of Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism.

Moreover, a Pink Angel talked about another correct use of the Internet; thus, she talked about the true job announcements. However, she was surprised to read that the University of Bosphorus was looking for a trunk driver with a university degree. As this announcement should be regarded as funny, she wanted it to get noticed. All these unusual events are symbolically used in order to make the patients smile and refer to the importance of moral values, as in the case of the death of Defne Joy Foster and the media where backbiting and gossips must have no place. The abstract objects of moral rules are emphasized, when the Pink Angels talk about the human relations through which the human beings must act appropriately to be accepted by their societies, as Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism posits.

5. 3. 1. 4. Chats on Climate and Society

The Pink Angels defend that the natural resources should not be devastated, and consequently, sometimes they narrate the impacts of climate change on the behaviors and attitudes of human beings. A love for the nature is crucial for being accepted as a good citizen from a symbolic interactionist point of view. One of the Pink Angels narrated that the Danube was frozen in 1954 and the whole Marmara Sea was full of ice pieces. Additionally, the Golden Horn is next to the hospital-complex and people used to fish there in the past, as narrated by the same Pink Angel. Furthermore, the same Pink Angel added that hens were waking up people in the past; however, today people wind up their clocks; however, on the islands, one could still encounter hens. Therefore, the link between the technology use and societal changes in different settings was revealed in the chat therapies offered by the Pink Angels. Several physical objects are created by the human beings, such as alarm clocks and computers. Human beings start to give up their roles as wakers for others sharing the same

flat with them; one can say this, referring to the terminology of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

Furthermore, one day the professional therapist read a brief literary prose by Neslihan Yaşar published in *Yeni Dünya* [New World], which is the monthly magazine of Başkent University in Ankara, Turkey. It was the edition published in February 2010: the text personalizes the nature, who criticizes the human beings for devastating it by damaging its resources via wars for oil and other benefits, and recommends all the human beings to love all the creatures, including the babies and the animals. All these readings aim to create love for nature among the patients through the symbolic messages they have for the whole humanity as abstract objects to render the people welcome social objects in accordance with Blumer's (1969) object classification.

5. 3. 1. 5. Chats on Hope

Some Pink Angels depict some extraordinary cases for rendering the patients hopeful. One of them described the story of Nicholas James Vujicic, an Australian boy who was born in 1982, and did not have any arms and legs; he decided to commit suicide, when he was eight years old; however, he could not. In fact, this boy was amazing; he could write and use a computer with his toes. Besides, he could surf and deliver lectures in several countries. This boy has a non-governmental organization called *Life without Limbs*; he has not got any limbs.²⁴ This boy is a role model for the desperate patients. The Pink Angel emphasized that people should have tried to survive regardless of the obstacles they encounter. The message was very important, since most of the patients were encouraged to love life despite all their illnesses. The Pink Angel says, “*Yeter ki isteyelim!*” (“It is sufficient to desire it!”). The Pink Angel takes the role of a therapist who imposes hope upon the patients from the perspective of Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism.

²⁴ <http://www.lifewithoutlimbs.org/about-nick/>

The Pink Angels who act as therapists also advise everybody to be optimistic rather than pessimistic. According to one of them, if people burn some food, they may not worry about it, and say that they will cook it again. One day, a Pink Angel found some hair in the pastry she had ordered; her husband threw it away, and told her not to worry about this, since she could order a new meal. All these stories remind the patients of other possibilities and the necessities for hope and patience through teachings that are abstract objects in terms of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

Furthermore, natural events also proves that people must never lose their hope: a rainbow appears after the rain, as one of the Pink Angels suggested. A rainbow is very charming with its different colors; as well, the day succeeds the night, as explained in the therapy. Nature provides us with metaphorical events that incite hope: several physical objects existing in the nature transmit messages of hope through their existences in relation with the classification of objects by Blumer (1969). The Pink Angel explained that the human beings were afraid of long voyages; however, they had to make the first step in order to realize their dreams. Fear was an abstract object to be avoided. Besides, the same Pink Angel referred to Churchill who suggested that people must never give up their ideals. A Pink Angel said, “*Balina olmasak ta küçük balık olalım; yeter ki olalım*” (“Although we are not whales, let us try to be small fish; it is sufficient to be something”). According to this Pink Angel, no profession should be denigrated, and people should try to be the best in their professions regardless of what type of job they have been practicing. Thus, the Pink Angel emphasized that a woman could also be a housewife or a cleaner. Consequently, she asked some patients what their jobs were in the past; thus, she wanted them to talk about their previous social roles. One of the female patients worked in her family factory; they were producing leather. She used to shape different leather products. The Pink Angels appreciated the past job experiences of the patients who could make their own living, when they were younger: the patients felt the pleasure of talking about their past experiences as ex-workers in front of the appreciative Pink Angels.

In another therapy session, a Pink Angel referred to a Turkish idiom that involves a slang word: “*tabakhaneye bok yetiştirmek*”: “to make shit reach the tannery.” The idiom is uttered, when somebody is in a hurry and rushes. The patient who worked for her family factory explained that pieces of excrement were used for fixing the leather that smells awful. In the past, the patient’s family factory was located in Kazlıçeşme, and they moved to Tuzla, a neighborhood of Istanbul far from the city center. This idiom involved humor and challenged the participation of the participants into the chat therapy. A male patient used to be a greengrocer, and he used to sell vegetables and fruits in his shop. He said that he was successful in guessing the quality and freshness of fruits. The Pink Angel asked him, “Were you one of the most famous greengrocers?” Although the man was suffering much too not to answer this question, this question was very encouraging for reminding the patient of his achievements. The Pink Angels are successful at encouraging the patients as amateurial psychotherapists through their memories, which are abstract objects associated with happiness, according to the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

Afterwards, the therapist Pink Angel narrated a story on the importance of optimism as an abstract object:

“Once upon a time there was a man who was carrying water in two buckets; one of the buckets was damaged, and the water inside was leaking out through a fissure on it. The bucket told the man that it was very ashamed, since the water was wasted. However, the man asked it what he was seeing on the right, while walking. The bucket saw the colorful flowers fed by the water. Both of them became very happy at the end.”

The Pink Angel concluded that each of us was a bucket on which there was a fissure. Each of us can perceive something negative at first; however, when we think about it profoundly, we understand that it has a positive side. The role of the Pink Angels is the encourager in this case. One of the Pink Angels narrated the difficulty of the university entrance exams in Turkey, and she had congratulated her daughter for taking it without any hesitations; therefore, courage is very important in making a decision; otherwise, people can make

mistakes, and continue to stay at home without advancing their careers. Positive thinking is strongly encouraged through the symbols in the stories during the therapies. The Pink Angel referred to her role as a mother without creating any role conflicts between this role of hers and her role of the volunteer therapist from a symbolic interactionist perspective.

5. 3. 1. 6. Chats on Love

As February 14 is globally celebrated as Saint Valentine's Day, the day of love and lovers, and it was approaching, the Pink Angels preferred to talk about love in their chat therapies. In a chat therapy, they mentioned that a few love stories existed in the world literature. The patients were encouraged to remember these stories about enamoured couples that involve *Romeo and Juliette* by Shakespeare, *Ferhat and Şirin*, *Kerem and Aslı*, and *Aşk-ı Memnu* that was adapted into a Turkish series.

Regarding the first immortal love case, *Romeo and Juliet*,²⁵ a play written by Shakespeare, it was set in Verona; in the beginning, Montague and Capulet quarrel, detesting each other. The Prince of Verona declares that a future conflict will be punished by death; Count Paris wants Capulet to marry his daughter, Juliet, who is thirteen years old. Capulets organize a ball for convincing Juliet to flirt with Paris. However, Benvolio, Romeo's cousin conceives that Romeo was extremely solemn due to his unreciprocated love for Rosaline, a niece of Capulet; Romeo is Montague's son; in spite of this, Benvolio and Mercutio convince Romeo to participate in the ball organized by the Capulet family. Romeo is infatuated by Juliet, and enters secretly into the courtyard of the Capulets, and Juliet declares her love towards him on her balcony; they get married surreptitiously. Tybalt is Juliet's cousin, who notices that Romeo was present in the ball, and requests Romeo to duel with him; Romeo refuses to do so; instead,

²⁵ Shakespeare, William.

2005 *Romeo and Juliet*. Paul Moliken, ed. Clayton: Prestwick House Literary Touchstone Classics.

Mercutio accepts to fight with him; Romeo kills Tybalt, as he kills Mercutio, his best friend. As a result, the prince exiles Romeo from Verona; as Juliet is requested to marry someone else, she commits suicide; Romeo hears about the death of Juliet, and kills himself by drinking some poison; however, after seeing their children's dead bodies, both families make peace and terminate the feud between them. This story reminds the patients of the greatness of love as an abstract object from the symbolic interactionist point of view of Blumer (1969).

On the second difficult love case related to Ferhat and Şirin, the story takes place in Azerbaijan, the female emperor of the city of Erzen builds a palace for her sister called Şirin; Ferhat assumes the duty of decorating the palace as an expert.²⁶ Ferhat falls in love with Şirin, whereas her greater sister was in love with him; Ferhat meets Hürmüz Şah who persuades him to talk to the sister of Şirin who insists to deny to allow the marriage of the two; a war occurs between the two emperors. However, in the meantime, the son of Hürmüz Şah falls in love with Şirin, and consequently, they assign a very difficult task to Ferhat who has to dig a huge mountain in order to make water reach the city; all notice that he is successful and will complete the task, and Hürmüz Şah brings the news about the death of Şirin to Ferhat who commits suicide afterwards. In the end, Şirin also commits suicide. They are buried in the same cemetery. As an abstract object, this story is also explaining the greatness of love, regarding the classification of objects by Blumer (1969).

*Kerem and Aslı*²⁷ is also an Azerbaijani epic depicting the love between a Muslim man and an Armenian Christian girl whose father does not allow her to marry Kerem; in the end, some metaphorical fire burns and destroys the bodies of both lovers. As an abstract object, this story shows that most of the Pink Angels are not against mixed marriages and defend the equality of all the human beings in terms of Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism.

²⁶ Ferhat ile Şirin.
2003 Ferit Öngören, ed. İstanbul: Neşeli Kitaplar.

²⁷ Kerem ile Aslı.
2006 İsa Öztürk, ed. İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları.

Regarding the novel entitled *Aşk-ı Memnu*, written by Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, the daughter of a middle-aged woman called Bihter falls in love with the nephew of her husband, called Behlül; the family decides to marry him with his niece; in the end, Bihter commits suicide, and everybody understands that they had a relationship.²⁸ This story makes the patients understand that love is superior to money as an abstract moral object within the framework of the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). The old uncle symbolizes richness, whereas the nephew the youth and passion.

Additionally, regarding friendships, a Pink Angel mentions the following sentence: “A person who loves you is the one who becomes sad and happy with you.” Everybody conceives the importance of real love and friendship in these chats via the sweet and tender gestures and words of the therapist Pink Angels. The Pink Angels interact with the patients via these love stories so that they can remember the movies they watched and the novels they read, when they were younger, and they can understand that love is universal and exists between all the human beings regardless of their religious, cultural and ethnic differences via the main themes of the stories that are abstract objects presented by the Pink Angels who try to be as compassionate and lovable as they can be before the eyes of the patients as social objects, regarding the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

5. 3. 1. 7. Chats on Health

The Pink Angels may bring news about human health; according to the news that one of them brought one day, pineapples protect the stomach, oranges and apples decrease the cholesterol, and turmeric is good for combatting against the flu. This information underscores the importance the Pink Angels give to the patients' health as social objects within the boundaries of Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism.

²⁸ Uşaklıgil, Halit Ziya.
2011 *Aşk-ı Memnu*. Muharrem Kaya, ed. İstanbul: Özgür Yayınları.

Additionally, obesity exhausts the heart. Furthermore, one of the Pink Angels said that hamburgers were not healthy, and salt did not have to be added into several dishes. Another Pink Angel mentioned that a Pink Angel brought architokes to the hospital; as physical objects, architokes and fish might be brought to be cooked in memory of the people whom the Pink Angels have lost for the realization of a Pink Angel's wish and for celebrating a certain event that evoked happiness in a Pink Angel. On that day, fish were cooked and distributed. Furthermore, a Pink Angel emphasized that eggs were indicating the continuation of life, and some people avoided eating them. This culinary rule of the Hindus implies that every culture is respected in the hospital. This joint act of the Pink Angels as social peacebuilders indicates that they can refer to the abstract culinary values of the Hindus within the framework of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

Besides, the therapist Pink Angel added that a hamburger did not fester after a long time due to its ingredients. According to her, one must avoid foods with additives, since these are not natural, and thus, these are unhealthy. Moreover, the same Pink Angel touched upon the effects of the weather on the human health conditions and problems by saying, "If the wind blows from the southwest, some people may not feel good, and they may suffer from an irresistible headache." These exercises remind the patients of their own health conditions and the fact that a remedy exists for every type of illness or disease. These talks of the Pink Angels consist of good suggestions as abstract objects (see Blumer 1969 for the terminology). The Pink Angels prove that they take care of the patients via their teachings and they get accepted by the whole hospital.

Another Pink Angel, taking the role of a teacher, talked about the origins of the word of vegetarian, thus, "*vejeteryan*" in Turkish: "The word was created in 1842; this word was meaning vivace and content." She asked if people were created to eat vegetables and fruits, or meat. She answered her own question by proposing that human beings used to have a tendency to follow a vegetarian diet; according to her, after the development of the hunting tools, the human beings

began to eat also meat, and she added that people had to eat each type of food for being healthy.

In addition, she asked, “Do you eat a half mould of soap?” She found some news about a girl who would eat five soap moulds in a week for feeling cleaner. Furthermore, she talked about a girl who had tried eighteen bridal gowns and bought nine of them to wear at her wedding; the groom was very happy about her decision, and criticized those who told him that his wife had some psychological problems. As abstract objects, the funny stories were rejoicing the patients who were feeling comfortable in front of the tolerant and joyful behavior of the Pink Angels in terms of Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism.

5. 3. 1. 8. Chats on Altruism

One of the Pink Angels narrated a story on altruism: the boss of a carpenter asks him to build a house; the carpenter constructs the house, and says that he can get retired. The boss tells him that he is offering the house to him as a gift. At that moment, the carpenter gets shocked and does not know what to say, since he did not construct the house attentively. The Pink Angel says, “*Yaptığın işi itinali yapmak lazım*” (“It is necessary to do the job you are doing carefully”). However, you must not be extremely kind towards sordid people. One of the Pink Angels uttered this sentence: “*Menfaatin girdiği yerde, ahlak sukut eder*” (“If one tries to take advantage of another in a certain place, morality will be silent there”): all these metaphorical abstract objects lead to this conclusion: people must not be immoral enough to take into account the advantages that will be provided by somebody illegally as in the cases of nepotism and bribery. The Pink Angels act as teachers, whereas the patients as students during these chats from a symbolic interactionist point of view; people take roles, as posited by Blumer (1969).

5. 3. 1. 9. Chats on Fashion

Some Pink Angels also talk about fashion during the chat therapies. One of them asked each patient whether they were following the latest trends, or not. Some

agreed that women were much more interested in fashion than men. One day the professional therapist explained that women who had thin waists, blond hair, small-sized feet, and attractive lips were liked in the 1950s due to the diffusion of the belief that Marilyn Monroe was a perfect woman. The 1950s' women were introduced as physical objects reminding the patients of their youth within the framework of the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). One of the patients used to be a tailor, and one of the Pink Angels mentioned that lace was fashionable during those years. As well, the Pink Angel cited that a famous fashion expert, Cengiz Abazoğlu was going to present a television program where women were going to create their own styles; in the program, five women are present; each woman goes shopping in a certain district in Istanbul on a certain day of the week, and they buy clothes of their own choices in accordance with the theme of the day which can be a ball, a wedding day, a party, et cetera; the program is broadcasted on Kanal D [Channel D] in Turkey. A form should be filled out in order to take part in this program, entitled “*Bana Her Şey Yakışır*” [“Everything fits me”]: <http://www.kanald.com.tr/banaherseyyakisir/basvuru-form/>.

Thus, fashion is an instrument, an abstract object for reminding the patients of the lovely days in their past and for making them notice that they are still alive, the fashion has been changing continuously, and today it is still important as long as elegance means respect in front of others with whom an individual must interact from a symbolic interactionist point of view. The Pink Angels act as friends and fashion consultants for the patients who were fashionistas or just tidy cloth-wearers, when they were young. These were the social roles they took to be accepted by the others from a symbolic interactionist point of view.

5. 3. 1. 10. Chats on Justice

Some Pink Angels and the professional therapist began a therapy session on a Saturday by wishing that it would be a nice day for all the human beings who could live in peace. As well, one of the patients said the following Turkish

sentence: “*Yüreğinizden sevgi eksilmesin, sevenleriniz artsın*” (“May love not abandon your heart and may the number of the people who love you increase”). She also informed the patients about an old English woman who caught a thief by attacking him with her handbag. The story was very challenging for the old patients who felt themselves healthier and happier as a consequence. The message of the story is an abstract object that encourages the patients through an old woman represented as a role model as a social object in accordance with the theory of Blumer (1969).

On another day, a Pink Angel implied that it was obligatory for people not to refer to illegal and unjust ways for obtaining a benefit through a story:

“A man registers his hen to a race; as the hen hurts most of the other hens with the knife the man tied to its leg, while running, he wins the race. However, after the race, the knife cuts the vein in his owner’s leg, and the man dies.”

Therefore, as the life on earth is not eternal, one must avoid fraud, study hard, and try to be rewarded in a just manner: these are abstract objects as rules for honesty in terms of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). Another Pink Angel depicted how to be an ideal human being as follows with universal moral rules as abstract objects:

“A perfect human being should avoid the following during her / his life time:

- 1) when she or he is young, she or he must avoid ambition,
- 2) when she or he is strong, she or he must avoid fighting, and
- 3) when she or he is old, she or he must avoid avidity.”

The Pink Angels take the roles of teachers and counselors in front of the patients who act as their students in these occasions.

5. 3. 1. 11. Chats on Miracles

The patients were also encouraged to believe in miracles. One day the professional therapist explained that an American soldier had a relationship with

a Korean woman during the war, one day a lady came to his home as a caretaker, and he discovered that he was his daughter. In plus, in another chat therapy session, she narrated a story:

“A girl wrote a message and put it into a bottle: she wanted to befriend the person who would find the bottle. However, she did not want to be friends with the person who wrote her, as soon as he had found the bottle, since he was younger than her; after some time had passed, these two people met again and married.”

Thus, life is laden with surprises and miraculous events as abstract objects to experience in terms of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). As the patients listen to beautiful stories with happy endings, they forget about the diseases from which they are suffering, and they imagine that they will recover from them miraculously, acting as hopeful people, referring to Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism again.

5. 3. 1. 12. Chats on Religion: *Parshas* on Saturdays

On Saturdays, *Parshas* are read; *Parshahs* are “weekly *Torah* portions” (Weekly *Torah* Portion 2011, emphases added)²⁹. The Pink Angels’ *Parshas* were chosen from *Sevivon* (2011).³⁰ Apart from that, an article written by Rav Yehuda Adoni was used as a main resource on February 5, 2011: the messages in the *Torah* must be diffused: the ten commandments were inscribed on the stone tablets kept in a chest known as ‘the Ark of the Covenant’ (*Aron HaBrit*) as written in *Exodus* (37:1-7).

²⁹ <http://www.aish.com/tp/>

³⁰ <http://sevivon.com/>

On February 5, 2011, the following *Aliyot* were explained on building a “Tabernacle” (these are taken from the *Terumah: Terumah Aliyah Summary* (2011)³¹:

First Aliyah: G-d instructed Moses to accept contributions from the Israelites for the construction of a Tabernacle: “Let them make for Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell amongst them.” The needed materials: precious metals, dyed wools and hides, flax, wood, olive oil, spices and gems. G-d then gave detailed instructions regarding the construction and dimensions of the Tabernacle and its vessels—starting with the Ark that housed the Tablets. The Ark was to be made of gold-plated acacia wood. Rings were to be attached to the corners of the Ark, wherein were inserted the poles that were used to transport the Ark.

Second Aliyah: The Ark was to be covered with a slab of pure gold. Two golden, winged cherubs were to protrude from this cover. Next G-d gave instructions for constructing the Table for the Showbread.

This table was also to be made of gold-plated acacia wood, and also to contain rings for transportation poles.

Third Aliyah: The seven branched *Menorah* (candelabra) was next on G-d’s list. It was to be beaten out of a single block of pure gold, with decorative cups, knobs and flowers on its body. The *Torah* now turns its attention to the construction of the Tabernacle’s sanctuary. The covering of the Sanctuary was to consist of several layers of tapestries. The first layer was to be a woven mixture of dyed wools and linen. The second layer was to be made of goat’s hair. These two oversized coverings also covered the outsides of the Tabernacle’s walls. The very top of the Tabernacle was then to be further covered by dyed ram skins and *tachash* hides.

Fourth Aliyah: The walls of the Tabernacle were to be upright beams made of gold-plated acacia wood. The bottom of each beam had two projections that were to be inserted into two silver sockets. The Tabernacle’s front side (to the east) was to have no wall. Its northern and southern sides were to have twenty beams

³¹*Terumah: Terumah Aliya Summary.*
2011 Electronic document,
http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/630275/jewish/Aliya-Summary.htm,
accessed August/18, 2011.

each. Its western wall was to have eight. Altogether the inside of the sanctuary was 30 cubits (approximately 45 feet) by 10 cubits, and 10 cubits high. The beams were held together by several crossbars.

Fifth Aliyah: The Tabernacle's sanctuary was to consist of two sections: the innermost chamber was the Holy of Holies, wherein the Ark was to be placed; and the outer chamber was the Holy Chamber, which housed the *Menorah* and the Table (as well as the Golden Altar...). Two curtains were to be woven of dyed wools and linen. One was to be placed between the Holy of Holies and the Holy Chamber, the other covered the eastern side of the Tabernacle—its entrance.

Sixth Aliyah: G-d then gave instructions for the construction of the Outdoor Altar. This altar was to be made of copper-plated acacia wood, and it was to have four “horns,” vertical projections, protruding from its uppermost corners. The altar, too, was equipped with rings and transportation poles.

Seventh Aliyah: The Tabernacle courtyard was to be 100 cubits (approximately 150 feet) by 50 cubits, and enclosed by mesh linen curtains. The entrance to the courtyard was to be on its eastern side, and the entrance was to be covered by a curtain woven of dyed wools and linen [emphases and corrections added].

On February 12, 2011, *Parshas Tetsaveh* were read³²; below is its summary from Rabbi Aron Tendler (1995-2007) who explains that *Aliyah* means “to go up”; thus, a person who reads the *Parshas* gets promoted in front of God by getting closer to God, and these provide the patients with spiritual comfort, since the Pink Angels take the roles of divine angels and therapists, assisting the spiritual growth of the patients during the chat therapies conducted on Saturdays via their convincing and sweet voice tones, reading the *Parshas* as abstract objects with moral teachings in terms of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969):

First Aliyah: The *Parsha* opens with the commandment to use pure olive oil in lighting the *Menorah*. Aharon and his four sons were

³² *Haftanın Peraşası Tetsave* [Parsha of the Week Tetsaveh].
2011 Brochure, Istanbul: Kadıköy Caddebostan Cemaati [Jewish Community of Kadıköy Caddebostan] (February):1-4.

selected to be the *Kohanim*. The basic garments of a *Kohain* consisted of a turban, shirt, pants, and belt. The *Kohain Gadol* wore four additional garments: the *Me'ill* - a long outer robe; the *Ayphod* - a quilted vest or bibbed apron; the *Choshen* - jeweled breastplate; and the *Tzitz* - engraved, golden, forehead plate. The quilted vest is described in this *Aliyah* along with the two *Shoham* stones. These were engraved with the names of the 12 Tribes and set on the shoulders of the *Kohain Gadol*.

Second *Aliyah*: The cloth settings for the *Shoham* stones are described along with the jeweled breastplate. The method of fastening the breastplate to the quilted vest is explained. The breastplate was a quilted garment set with 12 stones, each engraved with the name of a Tribe.

Third *Aliyah*: The long outer robe is described. The hem of this garment was edged with small bells intended to announce the presence of the *Kohain Gadol* as he walked through the *Bais Hamikdash*. (From this the *Gemara* derives that a husband, prior to entering the door of his own home, out of respect for his wife, should announce his arrival by knocking on the door). The engraved, golden forehead plate and the *Kohain Gadol's* turban are described, along with the four basic garments worn by all *Kohanim*. All the garments were handmade of the finest white linen. The special vestments of the *Kohain Gadol* were woven from a special thread spun from five different colored threads, including a thread made of pure gold.

Fourth, Fifth, & Sixth *Aliyot*: The seven day ceremony consecrating the *Kohanim* into their priestly service is detailed along with the consecration of the *Mizbeach* - Altar.

Seventh *Aliyah*: The last vessel to be described is the inner, golden Altar, used to burn the daily incense offering. This offering, as well as the daily preparation for the lighting of the *Menorah*, could only be performed by the *Kohain Gadol*. The special mixture of incense called the *Kitores*, could only be formulated for this purpose. (The renowned biblical archeologist, Vendell Jones, claims to have unearthed a hidden cache containing 600 kilos of the *Kitores*, buried before the *First Bais Hamikdash* was destroyed) [emphases and corrections added].³³

³³ <http://www.torah.org/learning/parsha/summary/tetzaveh.html>

The *Parsha* was published and distributed by the help of the Jewish Community of Kadıkoy, Caddebostan (2011). Religious and moral stories are read on Saturdays, since it is the sacred festive day of *Shabbat*.

5. 3. 1. 13. Chats on Peace

Sometimes the Pink Angels and the professional therapist may talk about the attainment of world peace by referring to the commonalities between different cultural and religious groups. Sigal Ben-Porath (2006) argues that peace should be built by referring to a new education method based on her expansive education theory in her book entitled *Citizenship under Fire: Democratic Education in Times of Conflict*. She says the following:

When a democracy enters a period of war or overt security threats, its citizens' lives are affected in many ways. Their feelings about their country can be transformed; public and political distinctions between "us" and "them" shift; citizens' expectations from the government can be revised in light of what they perceive as their most urgent interests [2006:9].

Ben-Porath posits that the curricula used at schools should address two concepts: 1) "acknowledgment" and 2) "forgiveness" (2006:93). Ben-Porath's "expansive education" appreciates diversity and confirms the necessity of unity in diversity (2006:94). Expansive education posits that one must attempt to learn about the others and respect their ways of living and traditions (Ben-Porath 2006:94); as do the Pink Angels during the therapies they conduct. The professional therapist compares Hızır to Santa Claus, Saint Nicholas in a therapy session, since people ask them to bring them gifts. People make wishes by praying Hızır on May 6 each year, as it is *Hidrellez*, thus, the arrival of spring. They bury their wishes in the soil under a rose on a piece of paper; on the other hand, St. Nicholas brings gifts on Christmas. Besides, Hızır (Khidr) is a prophet who has Semitic origins;

in the surah of *Al-Kahf* in the Qu-ran,³⁴ his encounter and friendship with Moses are depicted in order to teach that although some events seem negative at first sight, they may lead to some positive results that God has planned.

Furthermore, the following can be said about Saint (St.) Nicholas, recognized as Santa Claus:

The basis for the Christian-era Santa Claus is Bishop Nicholas of Smyrna (Izmir), in what is now Turkey. Nicholas lived in the 4th century A.D. He was very rich, generous, and loving towards children. Often he gave joy to poor children by throwing gifts in through their windows.

The Orthodox Church later raised St. Nicholas, miracle worker, to a position of great esteem. It was in his honor that Russia's oldest church, for example, was built. For its part, the Roman Catholic Church honored Nicholas as one who helped children and the poor. St. Nicholas became the patron saint of children and seafarers. His name day is December 6th.

In the Protestant areas of central and northern Germany, St. Nicholas later became known as '*der Weihnachtsmann*.' In England he came to be called Father Christmas. St. Nicholas made his way to the United States with Dutch immigrants, and began to be referred to as Santa Claus [The-North-Pole.com 1996-2009, emphases and corrections added].

Therefore, a number of saints are mentioned during the therapies regardless of their religious backgrounds as sources of hope across different cultures. As the belief in saints should be regarded as universal, the Pink Angels and the professional therapist refer to such figures and their universal benevolence as the symbols of commonalities between various cultures, defending global peace through these similar beliefs, which should be regarded as abstract objects that

³⁴ Ali, Abdullah Yusuf
1978 The Holy Qur-an: Text, Translation and Commentary. Washington, D.C.: Islamic Center.

guide people, according to the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

5. 3. 1. 14. Language Use in the Therapies

One of the old visitors, participating in the therapies voluntarily, instead of spending his time at cafés, was saying, “*Buenas dias*” (“Good morning”) in Judeo-Spanish, as soon as he had arrived. Moreover, the patients have a tendency to utter the names of days in Judeo-Spanish, such as “*Martes*” (Tuesday), when they are asked about the date, as they answered in one of the chat therapies, when the professional therapist asked them about the date. Furthermore, Hebrew religious terms are always used, such as the names of the Jewish feasts and traditions, for instance, *brit-milas*.³⁵ One of the Pink Angels and the professional therapist explained that *brit-milas* were held in the hall reserved for memorial services; however, in general, mixed families were organizing these for their sons in this hospital, and they were distributing small toys as gifts. Only the morning memorial services have a specific Judeo-Spanish name, thus, *korte*. Equally, French was also used in the hospital, while the Pink Angels were addressing the highly educated senior Jewish women and men.

Consequently, the Pink Angels were successful in taking different roles in front of the patients from different backgrounds in terms of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). While one of them was visiting the room of a patient who gave life to a baby, she told her that she was going to bring a *nazar*³⁶ *boncuğu* (bead against the evil eye) that is also recognized as *mavi boncuk* (blue bead). A tiny blue bead with a pupil shape in the middle is carried as an ornament in Turkey, if one is frightened about another’s strange gazes and envious

³⁵ *Brit-Mila* is the circumcision of a boy, when he is eight days old; Avraam circumcized himself, and the tradition spread among all the Jews; successive to the circumcision, “a name” is assigned to the boy (Representation of a Circumcision Ceremony 2007-2011).

³⁶ The word *nazar* is the Turkish counterpart of ‘evil eye’ in English. *Mal ojo* is the Judeo-Spanish counterpart of word, and *ayin ha-rah* is its Hebrew counterpart; it refers to the damages caused on the performance of a person due to the negative energy transmitted to this affected person via the envious and greedy “thoughts” or speech of another envious person (Zumwalt-Levy 1996:264).

behavior for warding off the evil eye. Therefore, if the same belief has been transmitted from one culture to another as in the case of the belief in the dire effects of the evil eye, the Pink Angels prefer to use the Turkish terminology in relation with that belief to be understood by everybody. However, sometimes they can use Judeo-Spanish idioms and proverbs, while talking to the patients who do not know even a Judeo-Spanish word: one of the Pink Angels used the idiomatic expression of *'de gato a pato'* ('from the cat to the duck') in front of a patient and his host in order to spread joy and make them laugh. The Pink Angel was criticizing the people who were thinking that they knew everything, although they did not know anything. Thus, the Pink Angels use their linguistic abilities and knowledge of various languages and diverse cultures in order to make the patients and their hosts feel relieved. They take the roles of good orators in difficult situations in coping with stressful events the patients and their family and friends are encountering within the framework of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). Besides, the Judeo-Spanish terms used in greetings indicate that most of the Turkish Jews consist of Sephardim today, whereas the Hebrew terms refer directly to the Jewishness of the Pink Angels and the importance they give to the reproduction of the Turkish Jewish culture in the hospital from a symbolic interactionist perspective. As the words consist of sounds and should be written down, I regard them as physical objects; however, the messages transmitted via these are abstract objects: on the one hand, Judeo-Spanish words make the patients understand that they form a respectful family based on the kindness transmitted through salutations; on the other hand, Hebrew words remind the patients of the importance of moral and spiritual values of Judaism. These can be mentioned in relation with the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

5. 3. 1. 15. Finalizing the Chat Therapies

Each therapy provided by the Pink Angels intends to bring joy to the patients. At the end of each chat therapy, all the patients and the Pink Angels sing a song, alluding to the unity of all the patients and the Pink Angels in the hospital;

consequently, each person holds the hand of the person next to her or him. Everybody takes the roles of family members and singers, singing this song, a physical object for consisting of written notes and words; its suggestions are abstract objects: one of the patients changed the words of a Turkish song and created the hymn of the Pink Angels emblematically. These are symbolic interactionist observations based on Blumer's (1969) approach. The original song which is provided below was composed by K. Ali Rıza Bey (Mr. K. Ali Rıza) and written by Ö. Bedrettin Uşaklı:

Yıldızların Altında (Under the Stars)

Benim gönlüm sarhoştur (My soul is drunk)
Yıldızların altında (under the stars)
Sevişmek ah ne hoştur (oh, how beautiful it is to make love)
Yıldızların altında (under the stars)

Yanmam gönül yansa da (I do not burn, although my soul burns)
Ecel beni alsın da (although death takes me)
Gözlerim kapansa da (although my eyes get closed)
Yıldızların altında (under the stars)

Mavi nurdan bir ırmak (a river made up of blue light)
Gölgede bir salıncak (a swing under the shadow)
Bir de ikimiz kalsak (and if both of us stay together)
Yıldızların altında (under the stars)

Yanmam gönül yansa da (I do not burn, although my soul burns)
Gözlerim kapansa da (although my eyes get closed)
Yıldızların altında (under the stars)

Ne keder ne yas olur (Neither grief nor sorrow exists)
Yıldızların altında (under the stars)
Çakıllar elmas olur (the pebbles turn into diamonds)
Yıldızların altında (under the stars)

Yanmam gönül yansa da (I do not burn, although my soul burns)
Ecel beni alsın da (although death takes me)
Gözlerim kapansa da (although my eyes get closed)
Yıldızların altında (under the stars).

Here is how one of the ex-patients called Sabetay Uziel sang the song and formulated a hymn for the chat therapies so that negative ideas could have been

eliminated from the song that would encourage positive thinking from that time on:

Or-Ahayim Terapi Şarkısı (Therapy Song of Or-Ahayim)

Benim gönlüm sarhoştur (My heart is drunk)
Or-Ahayim terapisinde (during the Or-Ahayim therapy [during the therapy in Or-Ahayim Hospital])

Sevilmek ah ne hoştur (Oh, how beautiful it is to be loved)
Or-Ahayim terapisinde (during the Or-Ahayim therapy [during the therapy in Or-Ahayim Hospital!])

Yanmam gönlüm yansa da (I do not get burnt, although my heart burns)
Hayat bayram olsa da (although life is a feast)
Gözlerim açılrsa da (although my eyes get opened)
Or-Ahayim terapisinde (during the Or-Ahayim therapy [during the therapy in Or-Ahayim Hospital])

Sabetay Uziel

Additionally, as soon as the therapy sessions will have ended, everybody makes the following statement, holding and raising their hands, referring to the love and unity in the hospital: “*Hepimiz birimiz, birimiz hepimiz için; paylaşalım sevgiyi hep elele*” (“All of us stand by one of us, one of us stands by all of us; let us share love, staying always hand in hand”). This should be regarded as a joint act performed for unity in accordance with the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). As the song encourages positive thinking and hope for a better and healthier future, this last sentence inspires people to love all the human beings, their peers, and the therapists. The unity of all the residents and staff in *Or-Ahayim Hospital* is strongly encouraged in the whole hospital. The hymn, the therapy finalizing sentence, and the joint acts performed in the end of the therapies are symbols of the unity and togetherness of the people present in the therapies as if they were members of a family from the symbolic interactionist perspective of Blumer (1969).

5. 4. Art Therapies

As soon as the professional therapist and the Pink Angels had arrived, they were going to greet the patients. They were asking how the patients were, and the patients were answering, “*İyi olacağım*” (“I will be fine”). Art therapies are very useful for the patients, since they develop their concentration skills and make the patients forget about the illnesses from which they have been suffering by painting, drawing, and creating other types of works of art. Concerning these different types of works of art, cooking is also among them. In one of the art therapies, a Pink Angel wanted to make the patients remember how to cook omelet, and she mentioned that she needed a pan. She told them that she needed to pour the liquid mixture of the yolk and the white of the egg into a pan, and as it was thickening, she had to put some cheese, parsley, tomato slices, onions, and fresh onions into it, before crimping its edges. Additionally, one can also put meat into the omelet: *aji* (the Judeo-Spanish word means garlic in English; meat omelet) is a famous Sephardic dish: eggs are beaten together with minced meat, onion pieces, minced garlic, flour, salt, pepper, and spices like cinnamon, and they are fried (Koronyo and Ovadya 2005:15). As culinary arts require patience and craft, this symbolic act of cooking was beneficial for the patients and underscored the universality of some foods, since they can be cooked easily such as the omelet. However, different types of omelet are culture-specific as physical objects in terms of the theory of Blumer (1969) just like the *aji*.

Besides, in one of the previous therapies, the patients painted eggshells pink and turquoise: these colors reveal happiness, love, and freshness, since pink is the color used as a metaphor for happiness and love, and the color of turquoise alludes to novelties and freshness for being a vivacious tone of blue, the color of the seas and skies; these colors are physical objects, when they are analyzed within the framework of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969). Moreover, the professional therapist thought that it would be easy for the patients to practice ‘*ebru*’ (water marbling) and contacted an instructor. It is done as follows:

As one of Turkish national arts, *ebru* is carried out by transferring onto special paper a design which is formed by scattering dye on dense water. It is argued that the root of the word “*ebru*” is from “*ebr*” (cloud-like), “*ab-rû*” (water surface) in Persian, or “*ebre*” (moiréd) in Chagatai. Owing to its moiréd appearance, it is called “*marmor papier*,” “*papier marbre*,” or “marbled paper” in European languages, and “*waraqul-mujazza*” in Arabic.

The art of *Ebru*, which is believed to have origins in Bukhara (a city in Uzbekistan, Central Asia) in the eighth or ninth century, reached Anatolia and Istanbul via Iran along the Great Silk Road. *Ebru*, like other book arts, continued to develop in Istanbul, reached maturity in the sixteenth century, and experienced its brightest period of time in the seventeenth century. The *Ebru* that was produced in that period in Istanbul was enough to meet the demand from Europeans [Saraçoğlu 2011, emphases added].

Therefore, the professional therapist called an instructor who showed her what to do in an afternoon; moreover, they were planning to call this instructor to instruct the patients about this art. Everybody involved in art therapies had diverse social roles in terms of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

All the time, a Pink Angel may say, “*Bugün çok güzel bir gün olsun!*” (“Let today be a very beautiful day!”). The uses of negative words are strictly forbidden not only in the therapies, but also in the other places all around the hospital-complex. One of the patients appreciated the professional who wanted to have a rest by putting her head in her arms. The dialogues between the patients, the Pink Angels, and the hospital staff were very kind and soothing, in case a conflict occurred.

In an art therapy session, the patients painted small hay hats; they had vivacious colors, including pink, night blue, turquoise, lilac, and yellow. These hats that women can wear are symbolic; married orthodox women carry hats or wigs for implying that they are not single anymore (Henkin 2008). William Litgov discovered that the Venetian Jews were wearing red and yellow hats for distinguishing themselves from Christians in 1609 (Ravid 1992:180). Hats are important for Jewish women; in Istanbul, some wear them during certain occasions, especially if they are family members of the organizers. I witnessed a *Bar-Mitzvah* at the *Neve Shalom* Synagogue, and the grandmothers and mothers

of the thirteen-year-old boys were wearing hats which they had hired from a shop in the European side of Istanbul. Hats are associated with maturity and womanhood in Judaism as physical objects in accordance with the theory of Blumer (1969).

Besides, a group of Pink Angels brought a packet of light pink napkins on which there was a picture of a stork, carrying a baby in a basket; the animal had a crown, alluding to the nobility of the child it was bringing. In Turkey, if a child asks how she or he was born, her or his relatives explain that a stork brought her or him as a gift without referring to the sexual intercourse of the parents of the child, since it is not suitable for them to depict an act of which they are ashamed, and they think that the child who is not mature enough can be affected psychologically. On the other hand, the napkin had also white dots; some Pink Angels photocopied the napkins in order to decorate several objects with it. In addition, other Pink Angels had cartoon boxes; they fixed fuchsia paper on it and covered all around it; moreover, they fixed the photocopy of the stork picture on the box, which used to be a food delivery box of a *sushi* restaurant. Meanwhile, instead of participating in this activity, one of the female patients was passing the threads of a fuchsia wool flock on a wooden tool. Consequently, the participants were enjoying themselves in front of funny pictures and vivacious colors together with their teachers who are the Pink Angels. Such exercises were also useful for coping with Alzheimer's disease and dementia via the uses of colorful symbolic physical objects in terms of Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism.

In plus, an activity might seem childish; however, this activity that involves sticking Disney characters on buckets contributes to the functioning of the brain of the patients. The professional therapist painted a black bucket light pink, and fixed a Donald Duck on it; other characters fixed on another pink bucket included Winnie the Pooh characters, among which there were Tigger, Piglet, Winnie the Pooh, and the donkey, Eeyore (see Cuthrell 2008-2011). A man cut the characters' pictures on a paper and fixed them on the bucket. These characters with which children were playing showed the patients that they had still time in this world to enjoy the cute lively characters as physical objects just like children

who are social objects, if we refer to the classification of objects by Blumer (1969).

In another therapy, the patients prepared a golden moon with a cartoon that they had shaped as a new moon and golden fabrics: as a physical object, the shape of the new moon reminded them of the fact that they had still time to live in this world, and each life event was a new occasion just like the new moon.

During another therapy, the patients painted a black vase-like plastic object pink, and they fixed pink feathers around it so that it could be used as a night lamp. As a lamp gives light, this activity, which can be regarded as a joint action in accordance with Blumer's (1969) theory, means that there is still hope of recovery even from the worst diseases. I had also brought five plastic adhesive tapes designed with flowers, ducks, and hearts. Regarding the details of the adhesive tapes I brought, all were symbolizing love and peace as physical objects: the first was red and had white hearts, the second was white with colorful hearts which were exactly purple, green, pink, and yellow, the third was white and had yellow daisies on it, the fourth was green, and ducks were designed on it, and the fifth white tape had pink and white daisies. As physical objects, all were alluding to peace and harmony in terms of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

The professional therapist also fixed pieces of one of the tapes with hearts on the new lamp. Furthermore, the art therapy group was using the fabrics left from the jam work in covering baskets. The patients painted a basket yellow and covered the basket with a green and white squared fabric. Vibrant colors encourage the patients to try to live and enjoy life despite their illnesses. Besides, they painted hearts with various mixed colors for Saint Valentine's Day, and formed hanging ornaments last year. Two of them were hung with ribbons in the kitchen: the first was green and brown, and the second was pink, yellow, and green. Some relatives of a patient came to visit her during an art therapy session and brought a few clothes for the dolls she was usually carrying all around with her. The female dolls were dressed in light pink, whereas the male dolls in light blue. Similarly, when a boy was born, the doors of the rooms of the new mothers were ornated

with blue ribbons, flowers, and dolls wearing blue clothes. However, when a girl was born, pink items were used, including a doll dressed in pink. Blue is associated with manhood, whereas pink with womanhood. These physical objects attract the attention in terms of Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism.

Concerning the language use during these therapies, the Pink Angels were always encouraging the patients by congratulating them, saying, "*Aferin!*" ("Well done!"), "*Bravo!*" ("Bravo!"), and "*Maaşallah!*" ("May God protect you from the evil eye!"). Such positive reinforcement by encouraging social objects leads to positive thinking despite diverse hardships against which the patients combat as distressed social objects from the symbolic interactionist perspective of Blumer (1969).

The professional therapist said, "We give neither sharp tools to the patients, with which they may harm themselves, nor tiny items that they may swallow." All the Pink Angels explained that singers, students of the Jewish High School, or rabbis were coming to the hospital on festive days in order to rejoice the patients and make them feel that they are loved. One of the Pink Angels said, "The candles are generally brought from Israel" concerning the celebration of the feast of *Hanukkah* on whose each day a different candle is lit on a candleholder with nine branches. Some vintage photographs of the patients who were celebrating different feasts were also observed: on a *menorah*, candles of different colors were placed. A Pink Angel and the professional therapist mentioned that white, blue, red, purple, and yellow candles, or just white and blue candles were used for the feast of *Hanukkah*. Different colors symbolize the different wishes of the patients as physical objects. Blue and white are the colors of the Israeli flag. Below is a brief history of the Israeli flag:

The flag of The State of Israel includes two blue stripes on white background with a Shield (Star) of David (in Hebrew: *Magen David*) in the center. This design was first displayed in Rishon-LeZion in 1885 and was also used at the First Zionist Congress in 1897 (Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1971). It was inspired by the *tallit* (the prayer shawl with blue stripes worn by Jews during prayer) as a symbol. The Star of David is a common symbol of the People of Israel from Biblical times. The flag was adopted officially on

October 28, 1948 (25 Tishre, 5709) by the Speaker of the Provisional Council of State [Flag of Israel 1999-2011].

At this point, it will be useful to refer to the Jewish color symbolism, since the colors of blue, red and purple are generally used in the art therapies. In *Exodus* 25:4, “blue, purple, and crimson” yarns were mentioned, and the following is suggested:

Rabbi Meir (second century) connects blue to the sea, sky, and “heavenly throne” (Babylonian *Talmud*, *M'nachot* 43b). Also commenting on *Exodus* 25:4, Rabbi Shmuel ben Meir (twelfth century) sees crimson as a reminder of how sin can be forgiven (alluded to by *Isaiah* 1:18). And in ancient days, purple as well as crimson, was a sign of nobility [Zeplovitz 2009, emphases added].

Different physical objects were transferred into new ornaments or decorations during the art therapies underlining that everything can serve different purposes in life. The Pink Angels act as art teachers, whereas the patients as students as social objects in accordance with the theory of symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

Besides, most of the Pink Angels indicated that musicians and singers might come to the hospital on festive days. On these festive days, some gifts can be distributed to the patients who were divided into two groups as women and men in this case. One of the Pink Angels said, “We distribute bed gowns to women, and pajamas to men,” whereas another Pink Angel depicted a previous gift distribution in the following way, referring to different gender roles: “We gave mirrors and combs to women, and pantoffles to men.” Most of the Pink Angels explained that the number of the patients staying in the hospital was higher a few years before, and they had a higher performance in the activities. A Pink Angel depicted this: “In the past, we were making the patients draw ice-cream balls in a cone.” As well, another Pink Angel said, “We were writing questions on pieces of paper, and the patients were answering these questions.” Some Pink Angels also mentioned that the patients could play ‘*pišti*’ (a card game) and backgammon in the past. However, today Pink Angels can offer the patients basic art therapies

demanding them to perform simple tasks. In an art therapy session, the patients and the Pink Angels painted small hearts pink, red, and purple, attached them with a ribbon, and hung them on a cupboard in the kitchen. The works of art created by the patients are shown to the public during an annual exhibition in the hospital. Moreover, I saw cassettes painted lilac in the display in the therapy room; patients had created a modern napkin holder. They had also painted an angel figure in addition to the boxes they created: there were a lilac and pink box and a pen holder made up of green felt on which red felt flowers with green leaves were affixed with some glue. These symbolic physical objects were alluding to the colorful plants that appear in the spring that metaphorically refer to the positive results of being hopeful and patient within the framework of the symbolic interactionism of Blumer (1969).

As the patients were listening to the music, while working, some information about the types of songs to which they listen should be inserted here. Most of the Pink Angels narrated me that the patients were enjoying listening to the Turkish classical music, such as the songs of Zeki Müren (a male Turkish singer who was born on December 6, 1931 in Bursa and deceased on September 24, 1996 in Izmir (Zeki Müren.net 2007-2010)). As physical objects, the songs provide the patients with relief and happiness, leading to a flashback to their sweet memories as transnational social objects in accordance with Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism.

Regarding the Jewish songs played or sung during the therapies, "*Hevenu Shalom Aleichem*" ("We brought peace upon you") was one of them sung by several Pink Angels:

Hevenu Shalom Aleichem (We Brought Peace upon You)

Hevenu shalom Aleichem (we brought peace unto you),
hevenu shalom Aleichem (we brought peace unto you),
hevenu shalom Aleichem (we brought peace unto you),
hevenu shalom, shalom (we brought peace unto you,
peace)
shalom Aleichem (peace upon you).

Additionally, some songs of the Turkish Sephardic singers are played during the therapies.³⁷

Besides, İzzet Bana, a male member of the Turkish Sephardic music group *Los Pasharos Sefaradis* (Sephardic Birds)³⁸ explains in his Facebook message sent to me on February 20, 2011 that they sing well-known Jewish songs, such as *Avraam Avinu*, *En Keloenu*, and *Mizmor Le David* in Judeo-Spanish and *Hava Nagila*, *Hevenu Şalom Aleichem*, and *Ose Shalom* in Hebrew alongside Turkish classical songs such as *Üsküdar'a Giderken* (Going to Üsküdar), *Eski Dostlar* (Old Friends), *Hatırla Ey Peri* (Remember Hey Fairy), and *Senede Bir Gün* (Once in a Year), French oldies, such as *J'attandre* (I wait for you), and Spanish songs, such as *La violetera*, *La cucaracha*, and *Amapola*. All these song choices reflect the transnational identities of the Turkish Jews, the use of French as an élite language by the upper class Turkish Jews in the past, and the Spanishness of these Jews as long as they can understand contemporary Spanish. The patients would sing these songs, while they were young, and they remember their past beautiful days, listening to these songs, whose themes range from peace to old friendships, and love.³⁹

Art therapies were significant in underlining the transnational identities of the Turkish Jews and their acceptance of the diversity in Turkey, since they made ornaments for Saint Valentine's Day which has Catholic origins and they listen to Turkish classical music alongside French, modern Spanish, Judeo-Spanish, and Hebrew songs. Meanwhile, they were inspiring the patients from different

³⁷ a) Sefarad. *Sefarad*. (Volume I) June 2003. Doğan Müzik Yapım: İstanbul, Turkey.
b) Sefarad. *Sefarad*. (Volume II) June 2005. Doğan Müzik Yapım: İstanbul, Turkey.
c) Levi, Sami (Sefarad Sami). December 2007. *Hade Hade – Duke Duke (Kimler Geçti Alemde [Who Passed through the World])*. Üçüncü Göz İletişim, İstanbul, Turkey.

³⁸ Four musicians living in İstanbul have formed the group of “*Los Pasharos Sefaradis*” and have been “performing together since 1978”: *Karen Gerşon Şarhon* (singer), *İzzet Bana* (singer), *Selim Hubeş* (singer), and *Yavuz Hubeş* (singer and kanun and oud player) (Bali 2012).

³⁹ These songs can be found on the following websites:

1) Filiis. 2012. (by Guillén, Javier). <http://www.fliis.com/?radio=Mor+Karbasi&fine=La+Galana+i+la+Mar#>,
2) Ölmeyen Şarkılar. 2007. (by Internet Center). <http://www.olmeyensarkilar.com>, and
3) YouTube, LLC [Limited Liability Company], <http://youtube.com>.

religious groups to create a huge number of art works. Patients were becoming very happy during the therapies. As long as various vivacious colors were used, they were forgetting about their pain and illnesses, and just enjoying the moment, benefiting from positive thinking by avoiding talking about negative issues.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This study depicted the activities conducted by the Pink Angels who form a group that consists of volunteer Turkish Jewish women between forty and seventy years old within the framework of the theory of symbolic interactionism of the Chicagoans, since it is based on *participant-observation* during fieldwork during event organizations, and it involves some analyses of the social roles and self-imageries of the Pink Angels and the symbols they employ in order to underscore the universal values of love, hope, and respect alongside their Jewishness depicted just through certain foods they want to be cooked or distribute, certain songs they listen to, and certain pieces of art work they request the patients to create. Otherwise, the Pink Angels appreciate and respect different religions and cultures, and their transnational identities underlie this respect, since they adopted some traditions and customs of the lands in which their ancestors had lived. Accordingly, while I was conducting my fieldwork, they were getting prepared for a Saint Valentine's Day celebration. The moral stories they narrated or read during the chat and reading therapies were belonging to various cultural groups around the world and emphasizing the importance of love, self-esteem, and respect for others and the environment as universal values. In addition, some Pink Angels go to Israel in order to experience what the volunteer therapists are doing for serving the patients and their communities. They have also been appreciated globally, since some of them have been awarded by different Jewish or secular organizations. This group should be recognized as an organization for their professionalism in teamwork and organizational skills. According to the theory of symbolic interactionism and the role classification of Blumer (1969), the Pink Angels appear as social objects alongside the professional therapist, the

patients, the physicians, the doctors, and the hospital staff whose duties include public relations, cleaning the hospital, changing the bottles of sanitizing hand liquid, and so forth. Concerning Cooley's (1902 and 1998) concept of 'looking-glass, or reflected self,' the Pink Angels do their best to be accepted by society, the patients, the hospital staff, the Turkish Jewish Community, and the Jews around the globe: they wear their professional light pink robes, keep their hands clean by using hand sanitizers or plastic gloves, they carry their little scarves, and they usually have their hair done, as they are working voluntarily. Their professional look implies how much they appreciate their voluntary jobs. Their projected images can be identified as patient, tolerant, understanding, warm, kind, friendly, and affectionate; their self-image is consistent with their professional looks (see Messinger, Sampston, and Towne 1962, regarding the terminology).

As the title of 'Pink Angels' also suggests, it has been discovered that this women's group intends to make the patients forget about the diseases from which they suffer and think positive about everything. In Turkish, Spanish, and French, some idioms express that the color of pink alludes to positive thinking. One can cite the following among these idioms: the Turkish idiom "*dünyayı toz pembe görmek*" ('to see the world as if it were dust [light] pink') shares the same meaning with the Spanish idiom "*verlo todo de color de rosa*" ('to see everything in the color of pink') and the French idiom "*voir tout en rose*" ('to see everything in pink') both of which mean "to perceive everything as positive, although something negative may be involved" (see Topçu 2001:139). Additionally, the idiomatic expression of "*pembe yakalı*" ('pink collar') refers to the women doing jobs attributed to women. Therefore, all the Pink Angels wear symbolic pink robes, which allude to the fact that they are women who are trying to make the patients think positive and build dreams on a bright future during the chat therapies that some of them conduct, and to prove that the patients can create various fantastic artistic objects during the art therapies, although they may have been suffering from different diseases for a long time. The foods that they distribute to the patients may also have symbolic meanings related to the Jewish feasts and beliefs. Moreover, some dishes to be included in the daily menus may

also be chosen in accordance with the importance of the day. Thus, some symbolic dishes are included in the menus of the memorial services, known as *mevlitler*, which are meals organized for the friends and family members of the closest relatives of deceased people, who are grieving and mourning for their deaths. Some Pink Angels sometimes hold *brit-milas* in the huge hall designated for memorial services. These memorial services and *brit-milas* refer to the Jewish identities of the Pink Angels and their dedication to their communities; however, the dishes served indicate that most Pink Angels are Sephardic and live in Turkey, since they involve Ottoman and originally Sephardic foods. The settings, sitting orders and chair places during these Jewish events identify the ranks and importance of people within a family; for instance, the chief of the family sits on the main unique chair of a rectangular dining table and the tables of friends are scattered around, whereas the closest family members sit on the same biggest table.

Most of the Pink Angels take roles as encouragers, therapists, cooks, servants, and teachers, as they do their best for reminding the patients of the positive sides of life via the stories they narrate and the artistic works they create together with the patients. The Pink Angels have their logo next to their room's door: it is a little sweet cherub. They have to obey certain rules that are regarded as "abstract objects" (see Blumer 1969): they promise not to discriminate the patients due to their religious or cultural backgrounds before beginning to serve as Pink Angels; besides, they have to wear their robes, carry foulards and name tags in the hospital, pay their monthly contributions for the projects they intend to realize, check whether the foods conform to the religious laws and traditions, and must not hurt anybody as long as they have to respect them ethically. They realize "joint actions" (see Blumer 1969:70-77) by keeping in touch all the time forming a chain, and respecting the classificatory social rankings and roles within their organizational group. They respect what the organization's chief head, the organization's secretary, and their daily group's head decide and require them to do. All the Pink Angels always help each other; they always collaborate in every type of project they wish to realize. If a specific problem arises, regarding their work, they call each other and talk about it in order to solve it; for instance, if one

of them cannot join her group on a certain day, she communicates this to the head and the secretary of the organization as well as her group's members. The Pink Angels are always making 'joint' decisions in relation with their "joint actions" in assisting the patients, since the term "refers to the larger collective form of action that is constituted by the fitting together of the lines of behavior of the participants" (Blumer 1969:70-77). Moreover, in every organization in which they take part, they work harmoniously as a perfect team. As Mead (1967[1934]) suggests, group events, such as debates, ceremonies, meetings, et cetera are social for being joint actions where the members of a group act together; one interprets the acts and behaviors of others through their gestures and language uses, and negotiates with them accordingly. The Pink Angels' group meetings and decisions are joint actions; furthermore, their collaboration during event organizations, such as memorial services and *brit-milas*, and gift preparations are joint actions, as well.

On the other hand, the physical objects related to the activities performed by the Pink Angels include the items used in the therapies, warning signs, decorations, and icons used in the hospital; for instance, this study analyzes what kind of foods the members of the group of 'Pink Angels' distribute as physical objects together with their symbolic meanings. The physical objects in the hospital consist of the relieving decorations in the hospital regardless of whether they are religious, or just decorative. The artistic works created by the patients can also be counted as physical objects with different metaphorical meanings that allude to joy and happiness. Both the chats and the works of art are antidotes to the unhappiness and loneliness of the patients staying in the hospital. Besides, the Pink Angels are allowed to use Judeo-Spanish, French, and Hebrew, while communicating with the patients, and they may sing songs not only in these languages, but also in Turkish. The cultural meanings of objects, linguistic terminology uses, and thought processes necessary for interpreting the vital and vibrant symbols bursting out against the gloomy aspects of life during the events and activities organized by the Pink Angels are depicted in this study.

The atmosphere in the hospital and the fact that the patients come from different ethnic and religious backgrounds render the hospital a leader in the possibility of the attainment of world peace. The staff members of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital are very respectful towards people from different religious, social, and cultural backgrounds. We can regard the Pink Angels as members of an organization, defending goodness versus badness. Their professional robes and foulards, smart outlook, and friendliness are the major characteristics in identifying them. However, the Pink Angels can be divided into three main groups in accordance with their duties: the first group includes some Pink Angels who are very well trained in occupational therapies, and lead chat or art therapies; the second group consists of others who prepare or purchase the foods to be distributed that are symbols of religious freedom; in addition, the third group involves a few of them who get involved in every type of activity. Moreover, these Pink Angels belonging to these three groups have constituted an organization of seven daily groups that assume their duties on the seven different days of the week. In some occasions, some professionals, such as occupational therapists and psychiatrists may come to the hospital in order to train the Pink Angels some of whom also visit some nursing homes and geriatric units in Israel. Most of the Pink Angels are housewives. However, the businesswomen who serve also as volunteer Pink Angels prefer to work on Saturdays. Each day of the week is dedicated to a certain type of therapy: the chat therapies are conducted on Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. These chat therapies can be classified in accordance with the themes of the daily narrations by the Pink Angels and their contents as follows: (1) physical exercises; these exercises involve metaphorical movements based on dreams about different relieving places; (2) dreams, (3) human relations, (4) climate and society, (5) hope, (6) love, (7) health, (8) altruism, (9) fashion (10) justice, (11) miracles, (12) religion, and (13) peace. In the first case, the Pink Angels assume the role of physical education teachers, and in all the other cases, hope givers, therapists, and teachers. Besides, the language use is very crucial both in the therapies and in the room visits in addition to an emphasis on the unity of all the staff and the patients in the hospital just like a family whose members

have different roles ranging from caregivers, interns, physicians, nurses, cleaners, cooks, and secretaries to patients and their friends and relatives.

Additionally, the art therapies are held on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Symbolic works of art are created during them. Furthermore, as each Pink Angel has to be on duty, two or three of them work on duty every Sunday, visit the rooms of the patients, and distribute foods that allude to happiness and joy symbolically. The terminology and symbolism related to death constitute a taboo in the activities conducted by the Pink Angels.

Sometimes some Pink Angels can also ‘take roles’ as donators and curators: they may request the dietician to cook fish or artichokes after the realization of their wishes or in memory of one of their relatives, or they can bring objects in relation with the jam or the festive gift baskets they are preparing. As well, the fruits with which the jam is made have symbolic meanings in accordance with Jewish holidays. The Pink Angels also organize an exhibition for the works of art created by the patients each year as curators. They have shaped themselves as available all the time; they are accepted as friends by the patients who adore them for their gentleness, friendly language uses, and kind gestures in front of the patients. Thus, the Pink Angels answer the spiritual needs of the patients.

Regarding the research methodology employed, “*direct* examination of the actual empirical social world” as mentioned by Blumer (1969:48) was very useful in this research, since several stories that require metaphorical interpretation are narrated in chat therapies and a huge number of symbolic items are used in the art therapies. Some Pink Angels answered most of the questions in the interviews in relation with their duties; however, the symbolism employed by the Pink Angels had to be observed and witnessed. Thus, this study rarely refers to the interviews, but mostly to field observations, concerning the symbolic interactions of the Pink Angels and the symbolism, underlying the stories, texts, songs, and items used in the therapies and the foods distributed, or cooked in the hospital.

Succinctly, the Pink Angels have formulated a certain group identity by reflecting upon their attitudes and behaviors and receiving training, considering that the

visitors and patients at the hospital, the Jewish community, and their peers must accept and appreciate them. All the Pink Angels aim at serving the patients staying in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital and being appreciated by them, taking into consideration each one of their positive and negative attitudes and respecting their cultural backgrounds, while reproducing the Turkish Jewish culture. They see themselves in a similar way in which the patients see them, if the concept of ‘looking-glass self’ developed by Cooley (1902) is taken into account, and they adjust their behaviors in accordance with the patients’ demands. Thus, the Pink Angels constitute a perfect harmonious organization successful in helping the elderly from different cultural, social, and religious backgrounds and preserving the Turkish Jewish culture in Istanbul.

Consequently, the five hypotheses of this thesis should be accepted. The patients were feeling as if they had been at home, since the Jewish culture was reproduced through songs and foods. However, as Turkish Jews have transnational identities linked to the countries in which they or their ancestors have lived and their education at schools where French was the main language of instruction, some foods and the order of serving these could be associated with the Turkish culture, whereas the songs in various languages to which they listened and their esteem and respect for the universal moral teachings of other religions and cultures could describe their universalism and pacifism. When the patients were asked about their memories, they were becoming more optimistic about their health conditions, and believing that they would recover soon and perform the same activities again. Thus, all the activities conducted by the Pink Angels were evoking positive ideas and leading to positive thinking. The patients were thinking that the Pink Angels were their friends. They were also praying for them. Moreover, all of the foods cooked, distributed, or sold in the hospital, the postcards, and the gift baskets prepared by the Pink Angels were harnessing positive thinking in relation with the joyful symbols the items were carrying. Furthermore, a similar positive symbolism was found in the dress codes, ethical rules, and hygienic principles applied in the hospital that were making the patients take their dreams seriously linked to this seriousness alongside the stories the Pink Angels were narrating. In addition, the works of art created by the

patients were eliminating their stress or sadness as long as joyful symbols were used in order to make them feel happy. Besides, in the therapies in *Or-Ahayim* Hospital, no symbol alluding to death or sadness was employed; every symbol was related to happiness and even to birth, just like the colorful eggshells. All the Pink Angels were successful in promoting positive thinking among the patients by trying to access their dreams.

In sum, the Pink Angels were reproducing the Turkish Jewish culture in such a useful way that every patient could begin to think that life was beautiful, the world was full of different spectacular places to see, and miracles could occur at any time. No negative emotion was imposed upon the patients. Consequently, Jewish women who were assuming different roles as Pink Angels were tickling the patients pink by making them be in the pink of condition through the activities and therapies where the Turkish Jewish culture was being produced and universal moral values were highly estimated and diffused.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Tables

Table 1. Summary of the scripts to be referred in this study

PINK ANGEL PROTOTYPE = A LIGHT PINK ROBE AND A PURPLE OR A PINK FOULARD †

[CULTURE AND PEACE SCRIPT] 🌍🕊️

[CHAT THERAPY SCRIPT] 🗣️

The Pink Angel, who is the group leader welcomes everybody; she gets a microphone; she makes the patients do some physical activities; she narrates a joyful story; she poses some questions; the patients answer the questions, et cetera.

[ART THERAPY SCRIPT] 🎨

The professional therapist welcomes everybody; she introduces the artistic activity to the patients; everybody gets some paper and some pens; everybody paints, et cetera.

[READING THERAPY SCRIPT] 📖

The Pink Angels and the professional therapist choose the reading passage; a Pink Angel, or the professional therapist reads the passage; she asks some questions; the patients answer these questions, et cetera.

[SUNDAY VISIT SCRIPT] 🏠

Some Pink Angels come to the hospital; they visit each room; they chat with the patients, et cetera.

[CULINARY TRADITION SCRIPT]: this script consists of some other sub-scripts: [FOOD PREPARATION SCRIPT], [FOOD DISTRIBUTION SCRIPT], [‘*MEVLIT*’ (CHANTING IN MEMORY OF A DEAD PERSON) SCRIPT], which involves some sub-scripts: ([‘*KORTE*’ (MORNING ‘*MEVLIT*’) SCRIPT], [AFTERNOON ‘*MEVLIT*’ SCRIPT], and [DINNER ‘*MEVLIT*’ SCRIPT]), [ROOM VISIT SCRIPT], and [GIFT PREPARATION SCRIPT]



Pink Angels choose what to bring; they prepare the foods to be served; they put the foods on a trolley; they serve cakes, milk, coffee, pastries, et cetera to patients; in the case of a ‘*MEVLIT*,’ they prepare the tables, they welcome the hosts; they serve the foods; they greet the hosts, who are leaving; they have their lunch; in case, they have to prepare gift baskets or jars of jam, they take the baskets, or the jars; they fill them, et cetera.

Figures: Pink Angels, the professional therapist, and patients

Patients: patients; objects used and organized by Pink Angels

Motions: actions done by Pink Angels, the professional therapist, and patients

Path: direction of the motions of Pink Angels, the professional therapist, and patients

Ground: *Or-Ahayim* Hospital

Icon samples: yellow circle: ● (infection) red circle: ● (extremely serious infection)

Table 2. Summary of the medical theory of four humors of Hippocrates (a previous version of this table was used in Agiş 2007 and Agis [Agış] 2009; however, the main source of this table is Gill 1999)

The four seasons lived in the world and the organs associated with these seasons, and the four elements necessary for the existence of the world and their atmospheric qualities:
1. Autumn - Black Bile – Earth – Cold and Dry
2. Spring – Blood – Air – Hot and Moist
3. Winter – Phlegm – Water – Cold and Moist
4. Summer - Yellow Bile – Fire – Hot and Dry
Four different moods caused by the excessive amount of the four elements (as the earth has its balance, the human beings must also be balanced for living and surviving):
1. Excessive earth - Melancholic
2. Excessive air - Sanguine
3. Excessive fire - Choleric
4. Excessive water - Phlegmatic
Requirements for a balanced body:
1. Healthy diets,
2. Activities, and
3. Exercises

Table 3. Weekly menu of Or-Ahayim Hospital – January 31 – February 6, 2011

MENU	Staff	Patients (lunch)	Patients (dinner)
January 31, 2011, Monday	Dry beans, rice, and pickles	Soup, <i>kadınbudu</i> meat balls [lady's tights], meat and rice croquettes, potato purée, celeries in olive oil, compote	Soup, celeries in olive oil, pasta with <i>kasher/kosher/kashar</i> cheese, compote
February 1, 2011, Tuesday	Lentil soup, leeks with minced meat, <i>spaghetti bolognese</i>	Lentil soup, boiled chicken, rice with peas, compote	Lentil soup, leeks with minced meat, pasta with sauce, compote
February 2, 2011, Wednesday	Soup with barley, chicken with sauce, fried potatoes, salads	Tomato soup, fish in white sauce, <i>börek</i> [pastries], quince dessert	Tomato soup, mixed vegetables without meat (<i>türlü</i>), rice, yoghurt/compote
February 3, 2011, Thursday	<i>Ezogelin</i> soup, fresh beans with meat, <i>bulgur pilaf</i> (rice)	<i>Ezogelin</i> soup, fresh beans without meat, wheat rice, compote	<i>Ezogelin</i> soup, pepper fillings with rice and meat, pasta, compote
February 4, 2011, Friday	Chicken soup, oven baked chicken, rice with tomato sauce	Chicken soup, farm meat balls, rice with (roasted) barley, compote	Chicken soup with <i>vermicelli</i> ; oven baked chicken with vegetables, rice with chickpeas, compote
February 5, 2011, Saturday	Milky vegetable soup, kidney bean stew, oven baked pasta	Milky vegetable soup, fish with tomatoes, pasta with cheese, <i>semola</i>	Milky vegetable soup, celeries, <i>börekler</i> [pastries] with cheese; compote
February 6, 2011, Sunday	Lentil soup, aubergine <i>moussaka</i> , rice	Lentil soup, aubergine <i>moussaka</i> (cooked without frying), rice	Lentil soup, spinach – yoghurt, rice with (roasted) barley, compote

Table 4. Weekly menu of *Or-Ahayim* Hospital – February 7, 2011 – February 13, 2011

MENU	Staff	Patients (lunch)	Patients (dinner)
February 7, 2011, Monday	White <i>vermicelli</i> soup, chicken with sauce, fried potatoes, pumpkin dessert	White <i>vermicelli</i> soup, potato meal with meat balls, wheat rice, compote	White <i>vermicelli</i> soup, mixed vegetables without meat, pasta with <i>kasher/kashar/kosher</i> cheese, compote
February 8, 2011, Tuesday	Lentil soup, leeks with pepper filling without meat - yoghurt, fruits	Lentil soup, boiled chicken (the same as the one served during “ <i>mevlit</i> ”s [memorial service meals]), pasta with sauce, compote	Lentil soup, aubergine meal without meat, rice with barley, compote/yoghurt
February 9, 2011, Wednesday	Chickpeas, rice, yoghurt/salads	<i>Ezogelin</i> soup, meatloaf balls (with carrots and peas), rice with chickpeas, compote	<i>Ezogelin</i> soup with <i>vermicelli</i> , leeks in olive oil, pasta, compote
February 10, 2011, Thursday	<i>Ezogelin</i> soup, fresh <i>mantu</i> (Turkish Jewish <i>tortellini</i>), pasta with minced meat, leeks in olive oil	Valley soup with mint, fish with tomato and parsley, rose pastries with spinach rich in milk, pumpkin dessert/compote	Tomato soup with <i>vermicelli</i> , celeries in olive oil, <i>zucchini</i> -aubergine pastries, compote
February 11, 2011, Friday	Mushroom soup, Izmir meat balls, wheat rice	Mushroom soup, fresh beans in olive oil, tray pastry with cheese, compote	Mushroom soup, <i>albondigas de prasa</i> (leek balls), potato purée, celeries in olive oil, baked apples
February 12, 2011, Saturday	Tomato soup, hunter kabobs, rice with carrots, salads	Tomato soup, oven baked fish, mixed vegetables without meat (cooked in the same way as that served during the “ <i>mevlit</i> ”s [memorial service meals]), compote	Tomato soup, <i>okra</i> in olive oil, oven baked pasta, compote
February 13, 2011, Sunday	Lentil soup, cubic potatoes with meat, fresh beans in olive oil	Lentil soup, <i>kadinbudu</i> meat balls [lady’s tights], fried potatoes, dry beans in olive oil, compote	Lentil soup, cubic potato meal with minced meat; compote

Appendix B: Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı : AGİŞ
Adı : FAZILA DERYA
Bölümü : SOSYAL ANTROPOLOJİ

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : PINK ANGELS: CULTURAL
REPRODUCTION THROUGH THE THERAPIES PROVIDED BY A JEWISH
WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION IN *OR-AHAYIM* HOSPITAL IN ISTANBUL

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınmaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: 13. KASIM. 2012