

Social Life in the Poems of Classical Turkish Poets from the Balkans

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Abstract In many poems, it is possible to see how most of the classical Turkish poets and especially Ottoman Divan poets played active roles in the social life with their poems and vigorously work to direct the society and to open up new prospects by preferring a literary style which transcribe the deficiencies and failures of society instead of a passive attitude against the social issues. To reveal the bond of literature, which we analyzed sociologically, with social life, we chose Classical Turkish poets from the Balkans as the reference of our study.

Keywords: Balkans, poets, social, life, poem.

Introduction

Communication, which started with the existence of human beings, and words, which is the most important element of communication, became the strongest and essential carrier of culture through language. The efforts to express the words beautifully and effectively gave birth to literature and literature always included aesthetics within itself. No doubt that the literature to seek the beauty didn't cause it to be just an aesthetic tool.

Without interfering to the nature of literature, in other words without touching the words that are gathered together for obtaining beauty, saying that literature will not be foreign to the social life, seeing the natural organic bond between social life and literature will not be an interference to the aesthetic characteristic of literature, on the contrary it would be a realistic and true approach to its wide content integrity.

Of course, literature doesn't have a function as to reflect the social life as it is, however stating that literature is a space that only opens its window to aesthetics within its ivory castle completely out of the boundaries of social life will be a total misinterpretation of literature. Sociology of literature which is based on the literature and society relationship has the tendency to perceive literature from a totally different perspective. Sociology of literature makes effort to analyze social conditions with the things it obtained from literature and observations, and to find sociological connections by taking the literature as the basis.

Literature is the name of one of the self- or society-oriented abstract creation forms of the individual. However the thing we referred as personal abstract creation isn't performed only with a single element. This is something constructed on social basis. Like other intellectual activities, literature is the transfer of knowledge to consciousness and consciousness to language.

Besides explanatory and objective scientific fields, art and literature penetrate into the surface of social life, too. In this respect, there is a need to analyze literary texts and examine what kind of relationship there is between these texts and social reality in order for the social analyses to reach healthier results.

The poems especially the ones focused on real life in literature, directed our attention to sociology of literature. This kind of poems lived their brightest periods during the social, political, economical and moral corruption and degeneration. Generally their target is society, cruel and repressive administrators, laws and rules that caused these moral corruptions, customs and traditions, and bad economies. Briefly their target is everything that's bad in the social life and everyone, every mentality and idea that caused this badness.

Since intervening in deficiencies and failures of social life in parallel with the divine thinking beyond personal anger and jealousies is more dominant in poems whose subject is society, the poems which doesn't dissociate themselves from life tend to be more objective and to remove and repair observed faults in the social life. For this reason, when we look from the social perspective, we can see that social poems abstain from the personal things and they bear a constructive characteristic instead of a destructive one. Yet the subjects of social

poems are not eyes, noses, eyebrows etc. of someone, they are the faults that will harm the social progress and future. When we look from this perspective and observe that criticisms of the past are in line with the complaints of the present, it would be clear to us that social poems are essential for the future and welfare of societies.

Social Corruption

In other words, the thing we named as “degeneration” is not a cause of social corruption, it is the result. In societies whose political authority weakened and economy hit the bottom, moral corruption will be faster, and characteristics and behavior that were not seen in the society before will be observed.

The society reaches to a point that the concepts such as "shame" or “sin” will be of secondary importance and stepping out of some social norms will not be found odd, instead it will be seen as natural. The fact that humans are alienated from innocence and stuck into the dirt of life and get corrupted, caused a wind of hopelessness to blow and fed these people to perceive life negatively.

We can see the hopelessness portrait in the following poem that mentions degenerations in the general structure of the society, the forgotten characteristics such as divine aim, justness, and honesty. The hopelessness to increase among people as the dimensions of corruption enlarge can be perceived as a natural result. And for this reason, after a specific point people stop thinking big and start chasing their individual desires and thinking small.

Mest olduğumuz yâd-ı lebinden güneh ise
Bu devrde bes kim buluna bî-güneh ey dost

Ahmed Paşa, Ode 21, 4. couplet

It attracts attention to the facts that people are dehumanized by only desiring to own assets and smart people live in difficulties, that even beautiful people are degenerated as a prisoner of their own desires and people to show no sensitivity about subjects such as gossip.

When corruption starts in a society, the existence of this is felt in all stages of the social life. Tendency towards loose woman; increase in dishonest, mean, dishonorable, corrupted men were other subjects that attention was directed to in that period.

In these periods where material things were desired and the spirit was neglected, it is an inevitable ending for people to move away from the beauties such as goodness, loyalty by leaving aside all those behaviors which make humans who they are.

The corrupted and distrustful characteristics which couldn't go beyond being the cause of doubts in fellow creatures were emphasized. These mentioned corruptions were not just external; these also came from the individual's internal being.

We see that in people who don't hesitate to trust others for their most valuable assets, now all these good qualities and the trust they have for each other are damaged. Now there is no one to trust in the world who will keep thousands of secrets.

Corruption is not just in specific individuals or groups; its existence is felt in everyone somehow. When the society is corrupted, people cannot stay out of this social picture. Since people are the ones that make the society what it is.

Âdemlik insân olmadır mi'râc-ı rûhu bulmadır
Îsâ vücûda gelmedir nefh ile Meryemden garaz

Hayâlî, Ode 231, 4. couplet

And these behavior patterns of power owners who abandoned some of their good qualities accustomed in the society were not welcomed by poets, they are criticized.

Ehl-i fazlın bilindir kadri senin kapında
Hazretin alsa eline yine mizân-ı kerem

Ahmed Paşa, Eulogy 27, 39. couplet

And the changes and corruptions in the desires and essences of those on the top are degeneration.

Dedi kadd-i bülenimde anuñin eğridir zülfüm
Ki meyl ettikçe bâlâya olur dûd-ı siyâh eğri

Ahmed Paşa, Ode 332, 5. couplet

The fact that majority of the people in the society to be degenerated, not being able to find, see a single person as a true friend, someone to relieve you causes people to be alone in the crowds, and single among the unities.

And people to be toughen by arrogance and incapacity that rise in line with this toughness, lose of good qualities such as being sensitive to the problems of others are other examples of corruption and this negative change.

The drastic decrease in the number of people, who can be human with their essence, integrity and every behavior instead of their appearance, is the sign of times where hopes are gone, the lights are off, and a dark future is ahead.

People feel really sorry for loosing unifying traits such as friendship and kinship in the society; however they are not doing anything.

And time to take away all those wise, insightful, trustworthy people and to clean them from all these beautiful traits can only be observed from a distance with desperate and tired eyes, and no power can be found to fight against the time that takes away all those beauties one by one.

The fact that those who are corrupted with all the ugliness of the world to be happy with this situation instead of thinking to get rid of all these ugliness is a sign which shows how a weak role the humankind started to play.

Hôş gelir ehline âlâyîş-i çirk-i dünyâ
Câme âlûdeliği zînetidir bakkalm

Sabit, Ode 221, 4. couplet

Trust, which is the main brick of a society and which should offer comfort to the society, to disappear among people of this time is another dimension of corruption.

Aldanma uyup her girîve-i rûbâha
Sâbit sığın ol kerîm olan Allâh'a
Gör vâkı'a-ı Yusuf ü gürk-i çarhı
İhvân-ı zemân ipile inme çâha

Sabit, (Musajjac) Quatrain 1

Changes in the Approach to Honor and Shame Concepts

Giving up acquiring some of the values after a while is a sign that sanction power of social norms are decreased and individuals adapted to the new condition. Of course this new approach is a material of criticism when it is assessed within the general rules of the society.

The tendency of those, who have weak values of honor and shame in the society, to disgracefulness was criticized.

Sabit who mentioned the unkindness of parents and the weakness of honor concept in the society also attacked amorality and corruption of the generation.

Dünyâyı tokuz dolaşsa âdem bulamaz
Baba-yı şefik bir selîmü'l-bâli
Ferzend-i nüh âbâ-yı felek olmakla
Ebnâ-yı zemâne heb tokuz babalı

Sabit, (Musajjac) Quatrain 8

Inequality

Inequality concept is a fact that emerged in the relationship of the much stronger one and the weak one. This concept generally acquires currency in rebellious situation.

Hayreti, who couldn't solve why the inequality dimension is high among people and the difficulty of understanding this situation, questioned the reason of this situation.

Kamu bir âdem oğlu iken insân
Kimi bende kimi mevlâ nedendir

Hy.K.17-15

'Anâsırda berâberken bu mahlûk
Kimi ednâ kimi a'lâ nedendir

Hy.K.17-16

Kimisi eylemiş dūzahda mesken
Kimine Cennetü'l-Me'vâ nedendir

Hayretî Eulogy 17, 15 and 16. couplets

Ahmet Pasha who reacted against the inequality concept that emerges at the point where people with

branches or used as a reference. At this point, the history of literature which is an important sub-branch within the general history helps sociology and facilitates its task. That's why a solid history of literature plays a special role in the analysis of national literature both in terms of sociology and sociology of literature. When we look from a wide perspective, we see that the degree of literature's impact area and its connection to other scientific field has a pluralistic center and perspective.

The criteria and methods used for analyzing the sources literature and sociology fed on and the degree they affect each other are also important. Sociology and literature to get closer to each other has a role in knowing the unreflected sides of power and achievement both in terms of writing and creating texts. Besides this, the literary work takes the data and qualities that are required to fictionalize the world expressed with words from the rational world. By this way, we also see a direct reflection of the real world in the literary works. And this real world and social creation chain brings literature and sociology closer.

Literature and all the other art branches cannot be alienated from the society that they are living in. Even though the poets from Balkans lived at a place far away from Anatolia, they weren't indifferent to the realities of both Anatolia and the land they were living on, and they drew the picture of the society in their poems.

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