

Trabzonlu Sırrî as an Example of Poets in Divan Literature

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Abstract: Divan literature is a literary style that lasted six hundred years. This literary style, which had a vital importance in our history, has been strongly criticized on the grounds that it was isolated from the people of the time and had no connection to real life. However, Divan literature was popular in all levels of the society, and popular with many poets from different parts of the empire. This article aims to analyze the poet Sırrî, who lived in Trabzon in the 16th Century, and whose life has not yet been studied.

Key words: Divan literature, divan poets, Sırrî

Introduction

While the Ottoman Empire was expanding its land, it also carried its language to the level of an empire empirical language. Since the reign of Yıldırım Beyazıt, the palace prepared the necessary substructure to develop classical literature. Following Fatih's invasion of Istanbul, the city became the center of culture (Kurnaz, 2009:205; 2007: 201-212). This created a social structure in which the society and the intellectuals gathered around the common values. Those people with distinctive talents and skills represented a philosophy intricate with the common values. And those intellectuals, sharing the same values with the society they were born into, became teachers of both the society and the palace (Kurnaz, 2009: 206; qtd. in Güngör, 1980:28).

In that structure, which united everybody with the philosophy of Umma, the harmony of taste and style is also clearly visible. The same feelings were shared all through the country from the West to the East. The poetry of a Balkanian poet was read and listened in Şam with the same enthusiasm (Kurnaz, 2009: 207). Almost every city was a part of this cultural movement influencing the whole country (İsen, 1997: 77-84; Şentürk, 2007: 208-210).

This harmony of taste, which was reflected in our classical literature in a positive way, encouraged the emergence of talented poets within each level of society, and ethnic background all over the empire (İsen, 1997: 64-76). To be more precise, Divan poetry became the sole possession of the society and was developed by the society itself. Sultans and Şehzades opened their meetings to the poets. Literary communities were created around the important members of society, especially the governors (İpekten, 1996; Şentürk, 2007: 208-210; Çeltik, 2007). Trabzon, which is one of the important centers of Black Sea Region, made an important contribution to the development of poetry with fifteen Divan poets (İsen, 1997: 70).

Sırrî, who will be introduced in this research, was one of the 16th century Divan poets. His mastery in the poetry as well as his skill in calligraphy, his assistance to Sultan Murad the 3rd, and his position as a Divan writer in government caused him to be well-known. *Tezkires* (anthology of poets) mention his mastery in calligraphy and his talent in poetry. He should be considered from this respect. There is no academic research on him available so far. In this research, we aim to carry his name from historical records to our time.

Sırrî's Life, and Examples from His Poetry

Sırrî is the nickname of the poet whose real name is Mehmet according to all resources. He was referred as Muhammed only in Çelebi's *Tezkire* (Hasan Çelebi, 1989: 470). This maybe because those two names are written the same in Arabic, and either of them is used according to the preference of people. However, Mehmet is preferred to Muhammed as a sign of respect to the Prophet. With the agreement of the other sources, his real name is Mehmed (Beyani, 1997: 120; Ahdi, 2005: 357, Riyazi, 1982:78). In addition, his name is referred as Muzaffer in Aşık Çelebi's *Tezkire*. However, the poet is known as "Muzaffer Sırrısı" (Hasan Çelebi, 1989: 470; Ali, 1994: 309). The poet, who was grown in Black Sea Region, became famous with this name. There is such kind of naming in Black Sea Region. For instance, Hasan Alisi indicates that Ali is the son of Hasan. And this application is special to this region. Therefore, the expression that "his name is Muzaffer" in Aşık Çelebi is wrong. It should be "He is famous as Muzaffer Sırrısı".

With the agreement of the sources, he was from Trabzon. There is no available information about his family background in the sources. Based on his nickname, we can only say that his father's name was Muzaffer.

There is no detailed information about his educational background, either. However, it is clear that he had a good education. He was an assistant and student of Yahya Çelebi, one of the famous respected teachers in his time. The education under the supervision of Yahya Çelebi, shaped his personality: “*Medâric-i ilimde pâyesi kutbu'l-ibrâr Yahyâ Çelebi hizmet-i şerîflerini erişmişdir. Ve zamân-ı sabâdan gül-i unvân-ı ömrü monla-i mezbûrun sabâ-yı himmeti ile şükûfte ve handân bâğ-ı letâfette terbiyette nihâl-i ahvâl-i a'mâline ol mihr-i zülâl-i kemâl reşahât-ı sehâb-ı feyz ü fazliyle âb u nâb vermiştir*” (Aşık Çelebi, ty:408).

Sırrî was not only a successful poet, but also a very good calligrapher. He was also well-known as a talented *Katib* (a kind of correspondence clerk in the Ottoman Empire). Every line that he wrote was appreciated like a new product in the market. “*Fenn-i kitâbetde yed-i beyzâsı olup memâlik-i kitâbetle mülk-i yümn ile mâlik olup küt'a nüvislikte her satırı mukatta'ât-ı ibn-i yemîn gibi meyl-i dide-i ayân-ı ehl-i haseddir*” (Aşık Çelebi, ty:408). The poet completed his education with a good degree. His academic competence was confirmed by the high authorities of his time: “*Mukaddemâ tahsil-i ulûm ve tekfîn-i fûnûn edüp isti'dâd-ı zâtisi mecâlis-i ulemâ-yı âlâm ve mehâfil-i fuzelâ-yı izâmde imzâ olunduktan sonra*” (Ahdi, 2005: 357).

As well as his academic membership, the poet was also a well qualified calligrapher. Generally, the calligraphers were good at one or two writing styles. Our poet had a distinctive talent in writing all kinds of calligraphy. Especially, he was good at *nesih* and *ta'lik* writing styles. At that time, a calligrapher of his calibre was rare: “*Kitâbetde râsîh ü mâhir ve kalem misal her gûne hattı yazmaya kâdir idi*” “... hususa nesh ü ta'likte mâhir ve diyâr-ı rumda emsâl nadirdir” (Hasan Çelebi, 1989: 470; Ahdi, 2005: 357).

He attended Celal Bey's gatherings, who was one of the assistants of Şehzade Sultan Selim the 2nd. He sometimes complained about Celal Bey's meanness, and his lack of support. (Âli, 1994: 309)

Sırrî also assisted Şehzade Murad the 3rd. Hasan Paşa, one of the Rumeli *Beylerbeyis*, realized his capacity and talent, and made him a *katib*. The poet had some difficulties following Hasan Paşa's death. He went to Kütahya, one of the important centers of the time. He was assigned to be a Divan *Katib* when Sultan Murad the 3rd became the emperor. Before long, he died in 1574. It is also the year when Sultan Murad the 3rd was crowned.

Bursalı Cinânî wrote a line referring to the date of his date:

“Gitti Sırrî mülk-i ukbâya” (Âli, 1994: 309; Riyazi, 1982:78).

The sources indicate that his writings were very much appreciated. He wrote in Turkish. Everyone was interested in his nice and comforting expressions, and attracted by his use of Turkish so well. This is mentined in *Gülşen-i Şu'arâ* as: “*Kıt'ası makbûl-i zurefâ-yı deverândır*” (Ahdi, 2005: 357). His distinctive talent and competence contributed to the appreciation of his poetry. His successful communication skills caused him to be appreciated by the high authorities of the government as well. He was admired by everyone because of his high rank and prestige: “*Musahabet-i dil- küşâsı ferah-fezâ olmagın eshâb-ı devlet gayet ihtibâr eylemişlerdir. Ve şiiri fevka'l-had naziktir. Zümre-i şu'arâ içinde hayli iştihârı vardır*” (Aşık Çelebi, ty:408; Ahdi, 2005: 357; Hasan Çelebi, 1989: 470).

All *tezkires* acknowledged that his death at a young age prevented him from producing better works. If the poet, whose poetry was very influential, had lived longer, he would have produced many good works: “*El-hak hûb eş'ârî ve sırr-ı halden mebnî güftârı vardır*”, “*ömrden bir mikdâr behre-dâr olaydı şu'arânın namdârından olmak muhakkak idi*”, “... pür-iştihâr ve namdâr şâ'ir-i pür-âsâr olurdu” (Beyani, 1997: 120; Hasan Çelebi, 1989: 470).

There is no available record to prove that he wrote a Divan. His early death might have hindered his production of a Divan. Âli mentioned about the abundance of his words worth listening (Âli, 1994: 309). His poetry available consists of only a couple pieces. Those poems have reached our times only because they were written in *teskires*. The *teskire* writers acknowledge that the poet, who had a distinctive talent, used all the elements of Divan tradition with a great mastery. As well as his clear and understandable style, his poetry had the taste of powerful work of arts of Divan tradition. Some of his *beyits* (two line poems) and *gazels* (a poem consisting of 5 to 15 *beyits*) can be a proof of that:

*Kanı hâk-i rehûn ahumla berbâd etdügüm demler
Anılmaz mı ser-i küyunda feryâd etdügüm demler*

*Gözümde uçar oldı ol tezerv-i şive- kârımla
Dem-â-dem murg-ı cânı gamdan azâd etdügüm demler*

*Akar cûy-ı sirişkim kamet-i dîlcûyun andıkça
Tolar kan ile çeşmim la'lini yad etdügüm demler*

*Hayâl-i hevâya döndü küşe-i firkatde ey meh-ru
Visâlünle dil-i nâ-şâdımı şâd etdügüm demler*

*

Reng-i rû olsa eğer mâhda ey gonçe-dehen
Benzedürdüm ruh-ı rengînine mehmâ-emken

*

Şehâ çeşm-i çerâğ-ı alem-i nûr-ı basarsın sen
Nazîrin görmedüm bir merdum-i sâhib-nazarsın sen

Görüp ben nâtüvânın kaçma lutf et ey perî-peyker
Seni görsem vücûdum mahv olur kimden kaçarsın sen

*

Âstân-ı gayre yüz sürmem kapundan sürseler
Dönmezem yolunda olmaktan eğer öldürseler

*

Ne nümâyiş var ola serv-i hırâmânunda
Sevr- kadler katı alçak görünür yanunda

*

Nedür çok böyle incinmek dil-i şeydâya sultânım
Nedür bâ'is bu denli nâz ü istiğnâya sultânım

Revâ mı ru-siyehler sâye-veş yanunca salınmak
Yazıklar hasılı ol kamet-i bâlâya sultânım

*

Kûşe-i meylde olsa yerimiz gam yimeziz
Zevkimiz kûşesidir ol bezm ey zâhid-hâr

*

Evsâf-ı dil mi bulunur câm-ı musaffâdan yeğ
Pâk-meşreb mi olur sâgar-ı sahbâdan yeğ

Kanı bir sünbül-i hoş-bû bu cihân bağında
Ârız-ı yâre düşer zülf-i semensâdan yeğ

*

Meded o kaddi çenarım vefâdan el çekti
El ucuyla olan merhabâdan el çekti

*

İrgüren vasla rakibâ demiş ol mahşeri
Şâl-lâh ol günlere irgürmeye Allâh seni

*

Sünbülün gül üzre kim pür-piç ü tâb olmaktadır
Ru-yı maksâda kara bahtım nikâb olmaktadır

*

Gam-ı cânânî âşıklar dem-i ukbâya vermezler
Bugün nakdi koyup dil nisye-i ferdâya vermezler

Bu deyr içre Mesihâ dirilenler tanrı hakkı çün
Ölürler bir puta can vermeye dünyâya vermezler

Mey ü mahbûb zevkin anlayan şevk ehli âşıklar
Şerâb-ı kevserleri dilberleri hûrâya vermezler

Metâ-ı vasl-ı yâre nakd-i cân ver ölmeden seni
Ki dâim ömr gibi sana bir sermâye vermezler

*

Eşk-i çeşmün akıdup tenhâda inkâr eyleme
Ol senin ey Sırrî yüzünden gözünden akıyor

*

Görünmezsin kaçarsın âşıkınla neylesün âdem
Sana çok söyle kaçma ey perî layık mıdır andan

*

Seyr et habâbı dide-i ibretle bir nazar

Güyâ ki kaldı sâğar-ı meyde Cem'in gözi
*
Saklarım aşkın derûn-ı sinede cânım gibi
Kafirim aşkın senin sevmesem imânım gibi

Kul ola mı kimseye şâhim ne eylersin beni
Bir efendim var iken âlemde sultanım gibi
*
Cân derdi sanma hicr ile vardı huzûra Kays
Benden sorun firâk-ı elemin ol dahi uyur

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