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SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE FEMALE IMAGE IN GULTEN AKIN'S POETRY

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Abstract: This article provides a detailed analysis of the artistic, social, and psychological interpretations of the female image in 20th-century Turkish poetry. The topic is explored through the works of two major and distinct poets: Gulten Akin and Salâh Birsel. The paper highlights Gulten Akin's mastery in creating a resilient and strong female character against the backdrop of exile and displacement, alongside Salâh Birsel's sharp ironical depiction of the domestic monotony and inner emptiness of urban women. Moving away from traditional clichés, the article explains the transition of the female image into an independent and active persona in a clear and engaging manner.

Keywords: Turkish poetry, Gulten Akin, Salâh Birsel, female image, social realism, lyrical character, symbol of resilience, satire and irony, personal freedom.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada XX asr turk she'riyatida ayol obrazining badiiy, ijtimoiy va psixologik talqinlari batafsil tahlil qilinadi. Mavzu ikki yirik va bir-biriga o'xshamas ijodkor - Gulten Akin va Salâh Birsel asarlari misolida o'rganilgan. Matnda Gulten Akinning surgun va musofirlik dardi foni orqali metin irodali, matonatli ayol obrazini yaratish mahorati, shuningdek, Salâh Birselning shahar ayoli hayotidagi maishiy monotonlik va ichki bo'shliqni o'tkir kinoya orqali tasvirlashi izchil yoritilgan. Maqola an'anaviy qoliplardan chiqib, ayol qiyofasini mustaqil va faol shaxs darajasiga ko'tarilish jarayonini sodda va ta'sirchan tilda tushuntirib beradi.

Kalit so'zlar: Turk she'riyati, Gulten Akin, Salâh Birsel, ayol obrazi, ijtimoiy realizm, lirik qahramon, matonat timsoli, satira va kinoya, shaxs erkinligi.

The 20th century was a period of immense transformation for Turkish literature, alongside Uzbek and world literature. By this era, the voice of female creators in the literary environment of Turkey began to resonate louder and more captivatingly than ever before. While women in poetry had previously been understood primarily as objects of beauty, love, and lyrical feelings, the female poets of the new century completely shattered these molds. They turned female freedom, social life, migration, the tangled pathways of the human psyche, and gender issues into the core themes of their poetry. While early pioneers like Halide Nusret Zorlutuna stood at the beginning of this process, a generation of female poets with unique and distinct styles—such as Lale Müldür, Didem Madak, Birhan Keskin, and Sennur Sezer—subsequently emerged in Turkish poetry. They incomparably expanded the poetic boundaries of Turkish literature.

Among these powerful voices, Gülten Akın distinctly stands out as the most prominent representative of 20th-century Turkish poetry. The main feature of Gülten Akın's poetry is that she

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elevated woman from merely an imaginary, romantic archetype to a real person living, struggling, suffering, and at the same time being as strong as iron in real life. In her poems, the poet mostly depicted the harsh fate of the Anatolian woman, social inequality in society, and the inner loneliness of human beings on the basis of a folk spirit and sharp social realism.

Her poem “Kadın Olanın Türküsü” (“The Song of the Woman”), considered the crowning achievement of the poet's work, serves as the brightest example of this. In this poem, the image of a woman is not viewed merely as the personal tragedy of a single individual. In it, the female figure becomes a generalized symbol of an entire nation that has been exiled, suffered the pain of separation and poverty, and was separated from its homeland. The author expresses human endurance and historical suffering through the female heart in a deeply moving way. Right from its opening lines, the poem draws the reader into that grim atmosphere:

“Git oldu can, sürgün geldi dayandı

Sürgün yine geldi dayandı”

The word "exile" (*surgun*) in these lines does not merely denote relocating from one place to another. Here, the poet refers to a person being severed from their spiritual roots, losing their moral anchors, and becoming adrift. It is against this backdrop of exile and instability that the true nature of the female lyrical hero unfolds. She is not a helpless victim who surrenders and cries out in the face of life's ruthless trials. No matter how arduous it may be, she is a force who continues to genuine to keep the wheels of life turning:

“Kitapları topladım, çocukları giydirdim
Hadi de doğrulalım Dranazın karına
Biz nereye düşeriz, halk fakir fıkara
Her bahar, her yaz gurbette…
Sılaya dönmesi olur velakin
Ne sılamız belli, ne gurbetimiz”

These lines demonstrate that the woman is not only a shield protecting her family and children, but also reveal the extraordinary height of her inner fortitude. As the poem unfolds, the woman's grief transcends individual boundaries and merges with the collective destiny of an entire nation. In mentioning various corners of Turkey, the author emphasizes that this tragedy is a fate that has befallen the whole nation:

“Çiğdemi Ardahan yaylalarında
Nergisi Sinopta Vanda koparmışsak sarı gülü
Portakal kokusu Kumlucadan gelir
Karıştırdık sıla nere, gurbet hangisi
Bizim gibi gurbetçi görülmemiştir
Git oldu can, sürgün geldi dayandı”

The pronoun "we" (*biz*) used in the text carries an immense aesthetic function. Through her grief, the woman joins the river of the entire nation flowing like a vast current. She is no longer merely a housewife or a lyrical character; she becomes a socio-philosophical archetype. Even amidst the pain

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of migration and homelandlessness, the poet advances the idea of preserving hope for the future. In her view, life inevitably asserts its reign, and nature renews itself regardless:

"Diktiğin fidanlar sen olmayanda
Yel vura ırgalana, gün vura duldalana büyüyecek
Yasa şu ki ekinler yürüyecek
Bebek dillenecek, güçsüz hallanacak"

These lines represent the deepest philosophical layer of the work. Here, the woman is depicted in parallel with the eternity of life and the continuity of nature. She is the mother and the bearer of life who nurtures new shoots, brings joy to infants, and builds the foundation for the future. Gülten Akın does not view woman as merely a weeping creature. True, there are tears in her eyes, but these tears do not signify weakness; rather, they are a sign of humanity and a living soul:

"Yüreğim yürektir, bakma gözüm yaşına
Git oldu can, sürgün geldi dayandı
Sorulmasın vatanımız ilimiz."

While Gülten Akın succeeded in creating the image of a woman as a resilient individual tempered like steel amid real-world tragedies, her contemporary, the renowned Turkish poet Salâh Birsel, approaches the issue from a completely different perspective. In his poem "House–Woman–Fashion" (*"Ev–Kadın–Moda"*), he portrays urban women who have lost the true meaning of life and are attempting to fill that void with artificial roles, external charm, fashion, and petty household worries. However, the poet commits this to paper not with hatred or anger, but with light irony and subtle sarcasm:

"Sizin ölmenize daha çok var
Odalarınızı toplayın rica ederim
Bilin ki yaşama da bir çaba ister
Kirpiklerinizi avkalayın sodalı suyla"

On the surface, these words appear to be simple domestic advice. Through recommendations such as tidying up rooms or wiping eyelashes with soda water, the author actually highlights the monotony in women's lives—that is, the crisis of routine. He instructs women to smile even while frying eggplants. Behind this call lies the depressed psyche of a woman who is bored with domestic routine, weary of marital monotony, and searching for a way to fill her inner emptiness through other means. Although in the following lines the poet seems to remind women to enjoy life, a sharp satire lies beneath this reminder:

"Sizin ölmenize daha çok var
Ot böcekleri toplayın gelen misafirlere
Saçlarınızı temmuz aydınlığında tarayın
Ha babam çene çalın lâf yetiştirin
Dedikodu yapın çamların altında…"

The poet's desires for the woman to fulfill the daily obligations placed upon her by society and the family, yet at the same time, he fully realizes how spiritually exhausting these chores are and how they lead her into an inner void. It is precisely for this reason that he employs such subtle mockery to provide a "stimulus to live" for women's wear of life's relentless rhythm. What troubles the poet and

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seems incomprehensible to him is the way women constantly hide their true potential, beauty, and authentic capabilities from society, confining themselves within rigid, predefined molds:

"Niçin kızkardeşlerim
Kim geçerse geçsin yanınızdan
Işığı kendinize haram ediyorsunuz
Bir vücud noksanını saklar gibisiniz
Utanıyorum utancınızdan"

Salâh Birsel does not view women's extreme hesitancy and self-imposed limitation of their own willpower merely as a consequence of social pressure. In his eyes, a woman is afraid to display her true strength and the beauty bestowed upon her by nature. She burdens herself with improper, restricted social roles, and for this reason, the poetic expresses that he feels embarrassed by their dismal condition.

In conclusion, it can be stated that 20th-century Turkish poetry liberated the image of woman from traditional romantic and pseudo-idealistic molds. Gülten Akın portrayed this figure amid major social tragedies such as exile, separation, and homelessness as a person of resilient willpower and a powerful figure preserving the future. Salâh Birsel, on the other hand, focused on the domestic-psychological side of the issue, exposing a woman's crisis of self-limitation through sharp satire and irony. Both creators, through their respective approaches and styles, proved that the image of woman in Turkish poetry is not merely a passive subject, but a complex and active individual standing at the very center of life.

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