

Artists-Works-Protagonists as Paratextuality in Context of Transtextuality in Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı's Poems

Nuran Özlük, Assistant Professor

Abant İzzet Baysal University, Faculty of Arts and Science, Department of Turkish Language and Literature, Bolu-Turkey

Abstract: French theorist Gérard Genette's intertextuality, which is basically the relation of a text with another text, is called transtextuality. In this study, Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı's poems, artists, works and characters are analyzed in 4 titles in terms of paratextuality elements, one of the five types of transtextuality Genette mentions. Therefore, the traces of transtextuality are followed in terms of paratextuality, and the names of some artists, their works/characters that had role/effect on the sense of art/life of the poet.

Key Words: Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı, Gérard Genette, transtextuality, paratextuality.

Introduction

Many theorists/critics such as Roland Barthes (1973), Michael Riffaterre (1980), Laurent Jenny (1976: 266-67) tried to formalize and clarify intertextuality, suggested by Julia Kristeva (1969) in France based on Mikhail Bakhtin's (2001: 33-80) dialogism theory, by defining its boundaries with their studies/opinions.

French theorist Gérard Genette redefines intertextuality, which is basically the relation of a text with another text, in his works called *Introduction à l'architexte* in 1979, *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* in 1982 and *Seuils* in 1982, and makes the term clear with new words. Genette refers to all relations/exchange between two works as transtextuality rather than intertextuality in his aforementioned work, and mentions five types of transtextuality: intertextuality, hypertextuality, paratextuality, architextuality and metatextuality.

The subject matter of our study, paratextuality are certain secondary signals/paratext elements such as works and/or writer names, characters generally mentioned to support the emotions/opinions of the artist such as presentation, preface, epilogue, epigraph, dedication, title etc. that includes the reader in the text/establish the relation of reader-text and in a sense provides interpretation/reception of the text based on the reader's knowledge/potency.¹

Most of the concepts mostly addressed within postmodernism/postmodern works including transtextuality are included in some of our literature works written in periods before

¹ For the references we used in our study, and to get extensive information, please see: Kubilay Aktulum, *Intertextual Relations*, Öteki Press, Ankara, 1999. 2004. Kubilay Aktulum, *Intertextuality/Intersemioticity*, Kanguru Press, Ankara, 2011.

1960s, the time when the postmodernism concept/perception was first used. One of them is the poems by Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı, one of the loved poets of Republic Period, and he still continues to be read and loved. There are many studies on the poems of Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı both in terms of style and content. As we have mentioned above, we will study artists, works and characters in 4 separate titles as paratextual element in the context of transtextuality in Tarancı's poems.

1. Artists to whom poems are dedicated

The first name under this title is Halit Fahti Ozansoy. Halit Fahri publishes the poem "Unfortunate" (Talihsiz) (Tarancı, 2005: 26), which he chose between in the poems Tarancı sent him, in *Servet-i Fünûn* magazine, of which he was the editor in chief. This was the first published poem of Tarancı. Tarancı dedicated his aforementioned poem to Halit Fahri.

Tarancı published his poem titled "Snow and I" (Kar ve Ben) (Tarancı, 2005: 31) with dedication stating "Cordially to the great poet Necip Fazıl". Kısakürek is one of the poets that influenced Tarancı, and one of the ones he loved most. Tarancı classified the poem *Kaldırımlar* as "the peak of Turkish poetry" in his article "A Peak of Our Poetry: Necip Fazıl" he wrote for the poem, and he praised the poet (Tarancı, 1995: 16-20).

Another poet is Munis Faik Ozansoy. Munis Faik and Cahit Sıtkı attended Galatasaray High School together. Tarancı dedicated "A Confession" (Bir İtiraf) (Tarancı, 2005: 40) to his peer Munis Faik even though they had different senses of poem.

The fourth artist mentioned in the work is Peyami Safa. As he was studying in Faculty of Political Science, Ankara University (historically: Mekteb-i Mülkiye), Tarancı sent his poems to Peyami Safa, who was a writer in the newspaper *Cumhuriyet*. And Peyami Safa started a friendship between them that will last for 15 year with two of his articles called "A New Poet" (Yeni Bir Şair) (Peyami Safa, 1932: 2). Tarancı dedicated his first poetry book called *Slience in My Life* (Ömrümde Sükût) that was first published in 1993 with the dedication "To my great friend, Peyami Safa". Later, he published *Peyami Safa: Life and Works* (Peyami Safa: Hayatı ve Eserleri) (Tarancı, 1940).

Tarancı dedicated his poem "The Well" (Kuyu) (Tarancı, 2005: 65) to Ziya Osman Saba, who was his desk mate in Galatasaray High School, and stayed friend until death, whose poetica he mentioned in his letters. "Still, I remembered you while I was writing that poem... Just like that, you not showing up, working just by yourself, it made me suspect that you had really fallen into a well..." (Tarancı, 1957: 45)

The Poet dedicated his poem "I am not a Man to Die" (Ben Ölecek Adam Değilim) (Tarancı, 2005: 96-97) to Şevket Rado. Rado published his poems in *Muhit* and *Millî Mecmua* under the name Şevket Hıfzı in 1931-1932 (roughly the same years as Tarancı). Their friendship, started with the letter Tarancı wrote to Rado after his poem "Waters in the Fall" (Sonbaharda Sular) was published in *Muhit*, continued until Tarancı's death (Orhon, 1970: 17) Şevket Hıfzı

was not only his friend; he was also one of his friends among the young generation that he believed in (Tarancı, 1995: 96).²

There are foreign artists under this title. The poem called "Maid" (Hizmetçi Kız) was dedicated to the spirit of La Fontaine. The maid in this poem by Cahit Sıtkı, whose poems and stories have parallelism Enginün, 1999: 240-49), is one of the characters in the story "Hotel Maid" (Otel Hizmetçisi) (Tarancı, 2006: 165-71). French author La Fontaine's flirtatiousness is mentioned in this story through the maid called Fernand. Tarancı and his friends declare their love to Fernand working in the hotel they stay in Paris. The author replies the ones condemning this situation: "Do not say me how could one declare his love to the maids in such a place as Paris. Late La Fontaine is said to please, taste the maids first when he was invited to the castles of marquises, duchesses, countesses admiring him. Who knows how many he tasted just as Fernand!" (Tarancı, 2006: 167)

The Poem "The Lion" (Arslan) (Tarancı, 2005: 116) was dedicated to Vedat Günyol. Günyol was Tarancı's "friend", "sympathizer" since elementary school (Günyol, 1997: 23). In the poem, although the verses "A lion goes around and around in his cage/How hard it is to wait for the day not coming/In the garden of a prison" give the impression that Günyol was in prison, actually it was Nazım Hikmet, mentioned in those verses (Günyol, 1997: 23).

"Consolation Part" (Teselli Tarafı) (Tarancı, 2005: 176) was dedicated to the spirit of Kemal Uluser, nearly 1 year after his death.

2. Artists-Works/Characters Mentioned in Verses

In the poem "As the People Talked" (Etraf Konuşurlarken), the verses "Listen, listen to what the mountains say;/From Ferhat's lovestruck digging/To Musa's sobbing!" (Tarancı, 2005: 91) makes a reference to the character Ferhat from the folktale *Ferhat and Şirin*, who made a hole in the mountain with his pickaxe so as to fulfill the condition of bringing water to the city to get together with the love of his life, Şirin.

Other than the characters of folktales, the characters of *Layla and Majnun*, an example of divan literature, was used jointly and separately for 7 times. First of this is included in "Love Song" (Aşk Şarkısı) (Tarancı, 2005: 75). In this poem, Tarancı says his love is a predestined path such as death, reminding Layla and Majnun. The second poem is "Impossible Reunion" (İmkânsız Vuslat) (Tarancı, 2005: 90) The poet expresses that their reunion is impossible due to their parallel stars even if he burned in the desert just like Majnun, or his lover waited for "a million springs" like Layla. The other poem is "Blind Love" (Karasevda) (Tarancı, 2005: 184). In this poem, defining the one in love as blind just like Majnun, there is no Layla this time. The poet, emphasizing that loneliness is for everyone, mentions the names of Layla and Majnun in his poem called "My Loneliness" (Yalnızlığım) (Tarancı, 2005: 187). In "The Poem" (Şiir)

² For Tarancı's opinions on this time's poem senses, see: Mehmet Törenek, "Cahit Sıtkı's Opinions in His Time's Poetry", *Atatürk University Faculty of Letters Social Sciences Magazine*, 53, December 2014, p. 63-80

(Tarancı, 2005: 187), he uttered that he will not give up his love for being a poet, resembling himself to Majnun: "I am Majnun; I never complain about my Layla;/Even though all the problems she caused me." As he stated that his lover was worth Layla and Şirin to him in "Winter Night Dream" (Kış Gecesi Rüyası) (Tarancı, 2005: 196), he demonstrates the heroines of both mesnevi and folktales as measurements. "Loneliness Adventure" (Yalnızlık Macerası) (Tarancı, 2005: 200) has the same feature. He mentioned neither Layla, nor Aslı or Şirin ended up with him although he stated that there was only himself and Majnun that crossed the desert worshippingly in love, he got his teeth pulled out just like Kerem, and he threw his mace in the mountains just like Ferhat.

Daniel Defoe's character Robinson Cruseo, who gave the novel his name, is in "I am not a Man to Die" (Ben Ölecek Adam Değilim) (Tarancı, 2005: 97) poem. Stating that he lives according to the opinion is death is being separated, and he should be grateful that he is among people, he included the loneliness Robinson went through in a deserted island for years.

Cervantes's famous character Don Quixote is mentioned in the poem "The Mill" (Değirmen) (Tarancı, 2005: 104). Through the reference to Don Quixote's attacks on windmills, he said the live is consumed, and ground by a mill.

In "Something" (Bir Şey) (Tarancı, 2005: 117), Nazım Hikmet's both name and works are mentioned. Tarancı wrote the poem in 1947, while Nazım Hikmet was in Bursa prison, however, due to the oppression of single-party state, he published the first part, and during the rule of Democratic Party, in 1950, he could complete the poem (Bezirci, 1975: 246). He abbreviated the names of Nazım Hikmet's poems in the poem as "Benerci, Jokond, Varan Üç, Bedrettin", and referred to Nazım Hikmet as "The strongest son of this county/Brother Nazım is rotting in prison".

The beautiful in "It's Your Verdict" (Ferman Senindir) (Tarancı, 2005: 184) is expressed as away from Nedim. Since Nedim is mentioned in the poem, the words are chosen to reflect this. Such as dilber, hüsnüan, umman, yaran, gülistan, ferman etc.

In "Age Thirty Five" (Otuz Beş Yaş) (Tarancı, 2005: 188-89), the Italian author Dante is mentioned: "We're in the middle of life like Dante." The first part of Dante's famous work *Divine Comedy*, "Inferno" starts with the verse "Midway upon the journey of our life/I found myself within a forest dark..." (Dante, 2011: 33). "According to Dante, human life draws an arc where the peak is age 35; Dante, who was born in 1265, started writing this work in 1307, however he went to Rome to participate the "jubilee" year Pope Bonifazio VIII organized in 1300; in this work, Dante counts this trip he made when he turned into 35 as the start of imaginary trip; (jubilee year=the years ending with 00, 25, 75, in which the pope excuses the sins; this practice is started by Pope Bonifazio VIII in 1300)" (Dante, 2011: 33)

In his poem "Listening to Independence March" (İstiklal Marşı'nı Dinlerken) (Tarancı, 2005: 202) uttering the events that lead to the writing of this anthem and what he felt listening to the anthem, Tarancı does not mention Mehmet Akif Ersoy.

In "Trust" (Güven) (Tarancı, 2005: 220), two poets are mentioned. Tarancı makes reference to Tevfik Fikret's poem "Should Morning Comes" (Sabah Olursa), saying that they visited Fikret with Orhan Veli on the day of bairam, that the poet never mentioned Haluk, however kept on saying the verse "Should morning comes to this country one day, Haluk".

3. Artists-Works/Characters Included in the Names of Poems

The poem named "Thinking About Sadri Ertem" (Sadri Ertem'i Düşünürken) (Tarancı, 2005: 91) was written after Ertem's death. Sadri Ertem was a storyteller Tarancı liked from the previous generation (Sağlık, 2003: 50).

Having the same name with Cem (Tarancı, 2005: 182), mentioned as the inventor of wine in mythology/legend, the poem Cem makes reference to the famous 7-edged wine glass.

Feeling right the opposite of what he felt in "I am not a Man to Die", in "Robenson" (Tarancı, 2005: 146), about the character *Robinson Crusoe*, Tarancı admires the life Robinson lives, and asks him to take him to the island.

The person (Abbas) the poem is called after, is the character of a tale the poet listened to when he was a child, which is mentioned in *Letters to Ziya*, an included in the story called "Abbas" with a different version.

4. Artists Included in the Epigraph

In the poem "Mehmetçik" (Tarancı, 2005: 197), Mallarmé's verse "*Tel qu'en Lui-même enfin l'éternité le change*"³ is presented as epigraph. In *Letters to Ziya*, stating the importance Mallarmé entrusts on words in poem, Tarancı feels that this opinion/approach is the essential element of poet understanding.

Conclusion

There are many direct or indirect relations in terms of transtextuality theory through the artists, works, characters we come across as paratextual elements in Tarancı's poems. With the dedications, the artists, works, characters in poet names or verses and the authors in epigraph, the reader makes connections to many works thanks to the explorer/equipped point of view. The exchange between the names Halit Fahri Ozansoy, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, Munis Faik Ozansoy, Peyami Safa, Ziya Osman Saba, Şevket Rado, Vedat Günyol, Kemal Uluser, Sadri Ertem, Nâzım Hikmet, Mehmet Akif Ersoy, Tevfik Fikret, Orhan Veli, Nedim; La Fontaine, Daniel Defoe, Cervantes, Dante, Mallarmé and the poem, novel, story, letter, article, speech, memory, essay, criticism, folktale, mesnevi, mythology/legend, tale texts we provided above regarding these names and the poet's other works is an indicator of transtextuality as an element of

³ "So, eternity changes him as in himself."

paratextuality; along with this, these are also important in terms of the effects/importance of most of these names on Tarancı's life/sense of art.

References

- Aktulum K. (1999). *Intertextual Relations*. Ankara: Öteki Press.
- Aktulum K. (2011). *Intertextuality/Intersemioticity*. Ankara: Kanguru Press.
- Bakhtin, M. (2001). "Discourse in the Novel", *From Carnival to Novel: A Compilation of Essays About Philosophy of Language*. translation: Cem Soydemir. compiled by Sibel Irzik. Istanbul: Ayrıntı Press, 33-80.
- Barthes, R. (1973). *Le plaisir du texte*. Paris: Seuil.
- Bezirci, A. (1975). *Towards Socialism Sided with Science: Essay-Criticism-Research*. Istanbul: Cem Press.
- Dante (2011). *Divine Comedy*. translation: Rekin Teksoy. 12th edition. Istanbul: Oğlak Press.
- Enginün, İ. (1999). "Similarities Between the Poems and Stories of Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı". *New Turkish Literature Studies*. 2nd edition. Istanbul: Dergâh Press.
- Génette, G. (1979). *Introduction à l'architexte*, Paris: Seuil.
- Génette, G. (1982). *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré*, Paris: Seuil.
- Génette, G. (1982). *Seuils*, Paris: Seuil.
- Jenny, L. (1976). "La stratégie de la forme". *Poétique*, 27, 266-67.
- Kristeva J. (1967). "Bakhtine, le mot, le dialogue et le roman". *Critique*. 33.
- Kristeva J. (1969). *Semeiotiké: Recherches pour une sémanlyse*. Paris: Seuil.
- Orhon, O. S. (1970). *Poems*. Ankara: MEB Press.
- Peyami Safa (1932). "A New Poet I". *Cumhuriyet*, 3053, 2.
- Peyami Safa (1932). "A New Poet II". *Cumhuriyet*, 3058, 2.
- Riffaterre, M. (1980). "La trace de l'intertexte" *La Pensée*. 215.
- Sağlık, Ş. (2003). *A Study on the Stories of Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı's Stories*. Istanbul: Hece Press.
- Tarancı, C. S. (1940). *Peyami Safa: Life and Works*. Istanbul: Semih Lütfi Press.
- Tarancı, C. S. (1957). *Letters to Ziya*. Istanbul: Varlık Press.
- Tarancı, C. S. (1995). *Writings: Articles/Speeches/Answers*. prepared by: Hakan Sazyek. Istanbul: Can Press.
- Tarancı, C. S. (2005). *Age Thirty Five: All Poems*. compiled by: Asım Bezirci. 28th edition. Istanbul: Can Press.
- Tarancı, C. S. (2006). *"May the Sun Not Disappear from My Window"*. Istanbul: Can Press.

“Those Who Live Within Me” (1997). *Vedat Günyol: Life, Works, Artistic Life*. prepared by: Feridun Andaç. Istanbul: İde Pres.

Törenek, M. (2014). “Cahit Sıtkı's Opinions in His Time's Poetry”. *Atatürk University Faculty of Literature Social Sciences Magazine*. 53.