

EXAMINING COFFE AND COFFE HOUSES IN THE DIVAN POETRY

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ABSTRACT

Coffee has gained a well-deserved fame through its historical journey for centuries. It is one of the indispensable products of the modern era. Having many rumors with its occurrence, coffee entered the Ottoman social life in the 16th century and was quickly adopted by the Turkish people. Its existence brought the appearance of the coffee houses. Despite having prohibition from time to time, they both got their place in the history. In this paper, the main objectives are to examine the usage of coffee in the divan poetry and to evaluate the verses that help to understand the place of the coffee houses in the society.

Key Words: *Coffee, coffee house, poetry, characteristic.*

ÖZET

Divan Şiirinde Kahve ve Kahvehanelere Bakış

Yüzyıllar boyunca yaptığı tarihsel yolculuğu sırasında haklı bir üne kavuşan kahve, günümüz insanının da vazgeçilmezleri arasında yer almaktadır. Ortaya çıkışı ile ilgili çeşitli rivayetleri bulunan kahve, XVI. yüzyılda Osmanlı sosyal hayatına girmiştir ve Türk toplumu tarafından çok çabuk kabul görmüştür. Kahve ile birlikte kahvehaneler de açılmıştır fakat ilerleyen yıllarda her ikisi de bazen yasaklanmış bazen de kullanımına izin verilmiş olarak tarih sahnesinde yerini almıştır. Bu yazıda, kahvenin divan şiirinde nasıl ele alındığı gösterilmeye ve kahvehanelerin toplum içindeki yerinin belirlenmesine yardımcı olan beyitlerin değerlendirilmesine çalışılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Kahve, kahvehaneler, şiir, özellik.*

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Introduction

Coffee (*kahve*), which is one of the indispensables of the daily life, has the following meanings: 1. A tree from root bedstraws that grows in the hot climates (*coffea Arabica*), 2. A fruit of the seed of this tree, 3. Powder that is attained by grinding of the roasted seeds, 4. The drink that is prepared with this powder (TDK dictionary). Despite its medical usage it has been the center of discussions in its journey through the centuries. Rumors about its first existence and the discovery still remain questions marks in the minds.

The base of the coffee word comes from the Arabic “k-h-v/y” root, which means to make something repulsive or decrease the attraction of something. According to one of the medieval Arabic dictionary authors coffee is a wine as it decreases the appetite for other foods. It is also true for sleep as well. Similar to the food case, coffee also diminishes the willingness to sleep. Some of the people interpret this similarity by considering coffee as a healthy substitute for the wine, whereas others prefers to see this metaphor as an intentional way to relate coffee to the illicit wine. However, none of the contemporary authors find it appropriate to point out this issue. Coffee is also similar to the “Kaffe” region of Ethiopia in pronunciation. It is possible that coffee was derived from “Kaffe”, and after its first entrance to Arabia, people could not reject the poetic temptation to adopt that name since it sounded like wine. A third etymological explanation is the derivation of the coffee word from “kuvve”, which means power or force, due to its ability to give aliveness and alertness. However, this possibility seems to be quite weak (Hattox, 1998).

Although it is not known for sure, Ebu'l-Tayyib el-Gazi, the brother of the Hattox Tezkire author Necmeddin (977–1061 / 1570 - 1651) rumored Hz. Solomon as the first person that drank coffee. According to this rumor, Hz. Solomon prepared a drink by roasting the coffee seeds coming from Yemen. There are also some stories based on the history of coffee. Generally the focus is on the three legends. In addition to these legends, the oldest knowledge about the existence of coffee is based on the medicine book of Ibn. Sina. Based on this book, it can be understood that Ibn. Sina was using and enjoying coffee in about 11th century. There are also some rumors that the drink that is made from the healing plant “Bunchum” is coffee. However, these rumors did not go beyond raising suspicions (Şahbaz, 2007).

It is assumed that Yemen had the coffee tradition probably from the sufi and they used coffee in their poets with a special meaning. The oldest record about the coffee was in the 10th century. According to this, coffee was especially very popular among the sufi in Yemen (Arendonk p. 97). All the sources agreed upon the relation between coffee and various cults.

Furthermore, it is suggested that coffee drinking began in Yemen and also spread to the whole peninsula and Egypt (Hattox, 1998).

Şehdi said that coffee was loved in Egypt:

Kahve şimdi 'aziz-i Mısır oldu

Ref'i'ullâh-ı kadre derecât (Şehdi K.95/9)

The following verse can also be an example for the above explanation by saying that coffee is the drink of the wisdom lovers.

Mu'âvindür ser-i sevdâ-yı hûbândur siyeh-hâle

Hele hem meşreb-i sevdâger-i 'irfândurur kahve (Kâni G.173/7)

The governor of Abyssinia (Habeşistan) Ozdemir Pacha did the first entrance of coffee to Istanbul through Yemen way during the time of Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566). Due to its power and intensity in its taste and scent, coffee got its place in the palace kitchen quite fast. Following its entrance to the average houses after the palace, it was forbidden during the times of, Ahmed I, and Murad IV until the 17th century. Its transition to Europe happened by Venetian merchants' carrying coffee to their countries.

When Kani says Habeş-reftâr as if he meant sending of coffee to Istanbul by the governor of Abyssinia:

Habeş- reftâr 'asel güftâr u mey kirdârdur 'ammâ

Necâşîdür süveydâlarda rengin hândur kahve (Kâni G.173/6)

It is quite normal for coffee to receive various reactions when it entered the social life of Istanbul in the 16th century. At first coffee was seen as unhealthy. Then, this perception was integrated with the religion, and religious laws were made to abandon the drinking of coffee. Many coffee houses were opened after the entrance of coffee to Istanbul. However, they were closed due to the problems with the public order (Açıköz, Ankara). The information about the coffee houses will be provided in the following sections.

Sayings like "A cup of coffee is remembered for forty years (*Bir fincan kahvenin kırk yıl hatırı vardır*)" or "A heart wants neither coffee nor a coffee house, a heart wants a friend, coffee is only the excuse (*Gönül ne kahve ister ne kahvehane gönül dost ister kahve bahane*)" shows the importance of coffee for the social life. In fact Turks were believed to having hard times without coffee. Coffee takes its place also in the literature with

the other pleasurable drinks. When coffee first entered the poetry it was used in the meaning of wine. Its color and ability to prevent sleep, pleasure in its taste, its ban and people's desire for it gave coffee a mystical dimension. Ruhi from Bagdat, Muhibbi, Fuzûlî, Baki, Ümidî Neylî, Râmî, Fehim-i Kadim, Nedim, Nef'î, Mezâkî, Nailî, Adli, Peşteli Hisalî, Ş.Yahya, Beligî, Nagzî, Sâbit, Kânî, Zihnî and many other Divan poets used coffee in their verses.

The interpretation of coffee by the Divan poets is the main objective of this article. Furthermore, coffee houses, which are important for our contemporary lives will also be examined in our verses. The following characteristics are specifically related to the coffee.

Coffee-black face:

When Kanuni burned the ships that carried wine to Istanbul in August 1562, the popularity of coffee had increased greatly. The poets those were addicted to the wine, used coffee as black water in their poems to insult it (Ceylan, 1995).

Coffee is mentioned as having a black face:

Pir-i meyhâne külâhın yine tekbîrledüp

Kahve-i rû-siyeh-e tevbe virür fincâna (Sâbit G.315/5)

Coffee comes to the meeting wearing black. It has a great reputation on the beloved one:

Siyeh-pûş oldu geldi bezme ol şûh-ı siyeh-çerde

Yed-i sîmin-i cânân üzre âhir mu'teber kahve (Zihnî G.290/2)

In the country of blacks, coffee is like a sultan:

Egerçi esvedânda rû-sepidân neş'e bulmazlar

Ve-lâkin karalar mülkinde san sultândur kahve (Kânî G.173/9)

Coffee is warm-blooded, so it cannot give up the lips of the beloved one. Coffee is affected by the fuzz in the face of beloved one and deeply in loved. Its color is black probably due this:

Ne issi kanludur la'l-i leb-i dil-dârdan geçmez

Hât-ı cânânenin meftûnudur sevdâ çeker kahve (Zihnî G.290/5)

Sabit mentioned that man of pleasure had always discussed the color of coffee and called coffee brown (kahve rengi-coffee color).

Nizâ'-ı reng-i kahve ehl-i keyfün eski cengidür
Kimi dir levni miskîdür kimi dir kahve rengidür (Sabit G.72/2)

Coffee-wine:

Baki seems to prefer wine after comparing it to coffee:

Egerçi kahvenün bir gûne vardur 'âlemi amma
İki kâse mey içre seyr iderler çin ü Fâgfun (Baki G.547/3)

Coffee was seen as a rival for wine:

kahve-i kışr-ı Yemen oldı rakib-i rû-siyâh
Duhter-i pîr-i mugân bir çehresi gül-gûn nigâr
(Peşteli Hisali G. 127/4)

Drinking coffee instead of wine sometimes seems like a mistake:

Yañılup içdim-ise ger kahve (Nebzî G.556/1)
Bakma ey pîr-i mugan bu sehve

The person who sometimes drinks wine and sometimes coffee does not receive the questions of why and how:

Geh içer kahve vü gâhî sahbâ
İdemez kimse aña çûn ü çirâ Neyli (lügaz 6/3)

In the meetings there is coffee as well as wine:

Visâle mey gibi bâ'is degil mi sâde-rûyânı
Bu bezm-i cân-fezâda dogrusu dil-ber eger kahve Zihni (G.290/3)

Wine suffers from insincerity. It is time for the ones who drink coffee:

Gubâr-ı zerk idüpdür tire baht-ı âb-ı engûrı
safâlar sürse demdür kahve-nûşânı Karaman'un Nev'î (G257/4)

Coffee-pleasure:

The pleasure and the joy that coffee gives to people is not limited like wine does, it can continue all the time:

Muvakkat mey gibi Kâni degüldür neş'e vü zevki
Safâ-bahşâyılıkda her dem ü her ândur Kahve Kâni (G.173/10)

Man of pleasure always has coffee:

Sen sen ol ehl-i keyf olan yerde
Kahveyi eksük itme bir ferde Kâni (Yazıcı 1998:318)

Coffee makes the sadness go away by giving pleasure:

Dil-i mahzûn bulurdı kahve vü berş ile Bâki zevk
Dirigâ aradan zevk-i dil-i mahzûn ise gitti Baki (G.544/5)

Sabit mentioned in his Ramazaniyye Kaside that a cup of coffee gives pleasure like a large glass of wine:

Kadeh rıtl-ı girân mertebesi neş'e virür
Kahve-âşâma ağır kahve ile bir fincân Sabit(XLV/18)

Coffee with its being the ornament of every meeting and council, is the white face of elderly and helper of the younger in their passion:

Kibârûñ yüzi agıdur sıgârûñ def'-i sevdası
Hele ârâyîş-i her bezm ü her divândur kahve Kâni (G.173/5)

It warms the ones in the meeting because it is warm-blooded:

Kendüye bezm-i şafâda ısıdur yârânı
Sâkiyâ kahve-i nâbuñ ısıcakdur kanı Ümidi (G.215/1)

In the meetings people drink coffee:

Mâh-ı mahsûfveş alsun ele câm kahve
Devr-i meclisde o hûrşid-i dırahşân yürisün Kâni (G.140/2)

Coffee is goodness:

Te'emmül eyledük de ma'ni-i rahmânı zahirde
Muharrâyâna gûyâ rahmet-i rahmândur kahve Kâni (G.173/3)

Coffee-prohibition:

After its entrance to Istanbul in the 16th century, coffee was banned sometime in the 17th century but was again allowed in the beginning of the 18th century (Öztekin, Ankara). Its consequences also reflected in the Divan poetry.

Kani said that coffee is hidden in the night like a real light or a drink that the coffee haters were jealous of. He also mentioned the prohibition of coffee.***

Şeb-i zulmâda nûr-ı Hakk gibi pinhândur kahve
Ya zulmât içre reşk-i çeşme-i hayvândur âahve Kânî (G.173/1)

Şeyhi, who was one of 17th century poets, mentioned the problems of the society and reflected the consequences of the coffee prohibition during the period of Murad IV to his poetry. In the period of coffee some phrases were used for the withdrawal of wine from the glasses:

Kahve devrinde çekildi gitdi sagardan şarab
Kondu hayfa aşiyân-ı fufî-i ale gurab Eğridirli Şeyhi (G.9/1)

It is understood that during the period of Nev'î coffee was banned. He could not understand why there was a prohibition for the coffee sellers. He asks whether a muslim would become faithless if he drinks coffee:

Muhtesib kahve-fürûşa ne ta'addi eyler
Yoksa kâfir mi olur içse müselmân kahve Nev'î (Muk.1)

Intellectuals should not silence the beauty that delivers coffee:

Seni 'ârifler ilzâm itmesün ey sâki-i kahve
Ko bahs-i câm u fincânı bilürsin hod idâren yok Ş.Yahya (G.183/2)

Kahveye tebdil idüp câm-ı şarâbun lezzetin
Bağladılar savt ü nakşun yirine efsâneyi (Nev'î G.469/2)

Sheikh tries to alienate friends from coffee by criticizing it:

Sogutmakdur muradı kahveden âlüfte yârânı
Kelâm-ı şeyh bâriddür gerek âb-ı zülâl olsun (Sabit G.257/4)

Coffee-treat:

In order to remove the bitterness of coffee it is emphasized to drink it with a sugar:

Biraz da acı acı bezm-i rezmi basdırsun
Efendi kahveyi rindâna leb-şekerle getirt (Hatem, Öztekin, 2006)

If the coffee that is offered for preventing the sleepiness of drinking wine does not come with a rose sugar, the lover does not drink it.

Zevk-bahş-ı hâb-ı nûşın fikr-i la'lündür senün
Gül-şekersiz kahveyi erbâb-ı dil nûş eylemez
(Nedim, Öztekin, 2006)

Coffee is seen as bitter water:

Eyleyüp kahve-i telh-âbeyi kanda ibdâl
Mısrđan ber-der idem lutfuñı şekker yimesün (Edip, Öztekin, 2006)

Coffee-fitness:

As coffee increases fitness, it is necessary for the teacher to have it before the class and to examine the book:

İRte derse çıkamaz gice kitaba bakamaz
Eger içmezse müderris iki fincan kahve Nev'î (Muk.2)

In his history writing for the second appointment of Nakib Efendi as the military judge during the 17th century, Sabit mentioned that the dead environment became alive with this appointment similar to fresh life that coffee provides:

Nisâb-ı kahve gibi nasbı virdi tâze hayât
Tabiat olmuş iken semm-i kahr ile mesmûm Sabit (TarihXXXII/5)

Coffee-roasting:

Coffee is being roasted with the fire of cruelty in Nabi:

Kahveyi âteş-i zulm ile kavurđı kemerün
Tütüni yakdı külin göğe savurđı kemerün
Nâbi (el metali /müfredat 24)

Coffee-coyness:

Coffee acts coyly with a pure way. At dawn it talks with coquettish manners:

Mussaffâ meşreb ile ehl-i keyfe nâz eder kahve
Ne gûne cilvelerle dil döker vakt-i seher kahve (Zihni G.290/1)

Coffee-wellness:

Coffee had become increasingly popular as it eases the digestion, stimulates blood circulation, improves mental wellness, increases mind power and prevents smoke poisoning (Onay, 2000). Hence, it is perceived as a health-giving plant for having these properties.

When the spreading areas as well as the mental benefits were concerned, coffee is perceived as a health-giving plant. Coffee is the physician in Anatolia and had a military expedition from Bagdat:

‘Azîz-i Mısrđır metbû’-ı şehri Şâm u İstanbul
Tabîb-i Rûmdur Bâgdaddan eyler sefer kahve (Zihni G. 290/4)

Coffee-scent:

Fresh coffee has a delicious smell:

Meşâm-ı câna virür tâze kahve bûy-ı nefis
‘Aceb mi ehl-i tîbâ’ şî’rüm itseler tahmis (Sâlim, Öztekin, 2006)

Nedim mentioned that coffee has a smell of anber, murabba and grout:

Süfûf u hâb yeter vakt oldı gayrı n’eylesün içsün
Murabbâlar mu’anber kahveler pâkize şerbetler
(Nedim, Öztekin, 2006)

Coffee-cup:

Ilhami used coffee in his poetry, as it is a pleasurable drink. He talked about going to Bosphorus and Kucuksu, and thought that coffee cup is similar to a rose. Zarf means a cover, case, and container. It is a cover that is used to prevent the hotness of the coffee. In addition, it has golden, silver or valuable stones to give an aesthetic appeal (Öztekin, 2006).

Yine ‘azm-i zevk idüp bir kahve nûş itdüm hele
Bir güzel fincânı sandum ben de beñzerdi güle

Kıldum elmâs zarfına dikkatle sunarken nazar
Gözüm ilişdi kalem parmaklı ol sîmîn ele (İlhâmî Şarkı 89/1)

Nev-bahâr eyyâmıdur Bogazda bir ‘ayş idelüm
Hem Küçüksuda güzel bir kahve der-pîş idelüm
Bu gam-ı ferdâyı hep cümle ferâmuş idelüm
Hoş degül mi kıl nazar fincânı sunarken ele (İlhâmî Şarkı 89/3)

No mercy comes from a beloved one that does not offer a cup of coffee to her lover:

Etme me’ mûl gönül öyle vefâ dil-berden
Sanma kim lutf ile bir kahve-i fincân verir (İlhâmî G. CIV/2)

Coffee houses had received various reactions since its entrance to Ottoman lands specifically to the political and cultural capital, Istanbul in the middle of the 16th century. Having a ruling power over the society created a threat for the political governors. Rather than being a center to drink coffee, it is being a center for criticizing the authority and state, obligated government intervention. These popular places were also among the focus of interest for the Ottoman intellectuals. Thus, they were prohibited due to religious as well as political reasons (Şahbaz, 2007).

Coffee houses first appeared in the Eastern societies. In addition to hamams and pubs, it encouraged individuals to participate in the social life by increasing the limits of daily life specifically by being an alternative to the Muslim societies. Despite the ability of drinking coffee at home, after entering Istanbul it was generally consumed outside of the houses (Şahbaz, 2007).

Coffee spread quite fast not only in Istanbul but also in the other cities. The examination on the coffee section based on the Bursa logbook prepared from Şer’i records talked about the coffee houses in Bursa and the prohibitions. Evliya Çelebi pointed out the interest by mentioning seventy five coffee houses in Bursa in the year 640 (Kepecioğlu, 2009)

Coffee houses created several discussions by being perceived as a house for conspiracy. Murad IV finalized the reopening of the coffee houses after prohibitions by totally destroying them. After reopening by Ibrahim I, coffee houses have not been closed any more (Ceylan, 1995 s.42).

Ruhi had a ghazel for the coffee houses that were closed and opened after wards in the 1590s. This ghazel mentions the joy of the society for this wonderful event. (Açıköz, 1999)

Yine çalındı her taraf çeng ü ney ü çegâneler
Düşdi cihâna velevele işledi kahvehâneler B.R. (G.418/1)

Coffee houses were lightened with candlelight:
Şevk-i ruhiyla giceler sâki-i mâh-rûlaruñ
Geldi o dem ki şem'ler kûşe-be-kûşe yanaler B.R. (G.418/2)

To remove the sleepiness from the drinks that were consumed in the entertainment meetings, it is necessary to go to the coffee houses at dawn and drink coffee:

Kalkıla bezmden seher varıla kahvehâneye
İçile kahveler ola def'i mey şebâneler B.R. (G.418/3)

Coffee houses are gathering places for poets that they read their verses and prose:

İrişe keyfler gele bir yere nükte-sencler
Okına nazm u nesr ola mebhas-ı şâ'irâneler B.R. (G. 418/4)

Ruhi announces opening of the coffee houses as good news:
Müjde cihâna Rûhiyâ kim yine feth-i bâb olur
Meygedeler açıldı hep işledi kahvehâneler B.R. (G. 418/5)

If the corner of the coffee house does not make any criticism, the poet would not leave his place at the bottom of the wine cube and his wine glass:

Hum dibin mesken idüp elden komazduk ayagı
Kahvehâne gûşesi olmasa dâmen-girümüz Peşteli Hisali (G.185/2)

Ilhami mentioned going to the coffee houses during winter, and going to paper company in spring:

Kış demidür varalım zevk ile kahvehâneye
Gidelim köhne bahâr erdikde Kâğıdhâneye

Gönlü İlhâmînin ‘ayni döndi bârûthâneye
Kahve fincânın seher eyyâmı durma al ele

İlhâmî (G.89/4)

Pleasure seeker that smokes was also present in the coffee houses.
Tobacco usage was also seen while drinking coffee:

Nûş eyleyüp duhân-ı mümessek zemânedede
Erbâb-ı keyf cümle kokâr kahvehânedede

Sâbit (316/1)

17th century poet Kânî, who also had verses about the coffee houses, shared his observations and criticisms. Kânî made criticisms in his observations of the military that was under the control of the government, expeditions, social injustice, hunger and poorness in the Istanbul streets due to the income gaps, traditional and religious applications in the weddings and ceremonies. Kânî made his criticisms among the public, in the discussion meetings in places like coffee houses. The coffee houses that were began to appear in the Ottoman social life since the middle 16th century were among the places that Kânî visited just because of this reason. As far as it is understood from his Divan, Kânî merged with the public, and carried his observations and public issues to his poetry: (İlyas Yazar: Kani Divanı Doktora Tezi, Ege Ün. Sos. Bil. Ens.2006)

Hasb-i hâl is an important poetry that includes social criticisms about coffee and coffee houses. The people that do not have a respectful place in the society despite having good properties such as knowledge, wisdom, and honesty were compared to the people that have good places even though being a liar and expedient. The following verses are exemplars from these: (Yazar: a.g.e.)

Girmeyince eline matlûbı

Kahve dükkânı olur mashûbı

Kânî (K.39/42)

Ya‘ni bir şey sanur anı gözedür

Dir hiç olmazsa dükkânı gözedür

Kânî(K.39/44)

Soñra ahvâline vâkîf olıcak

Tavrı tavrına muhâlif olıcak

Kânî (K.39/45)

Başlar ol dem dimege ol fi‘l-hâl

Çağırur kahveler için dellâl

Kânî (K.39/46)

Kâni mentions not sleeping in the coffee houses at night:

Ki gice kahvede yatılmayacak

Ecnebi araya katılmayacak

Kâni (K.39/47)

Nisarî, who prefers to be with his friends at the coffee house, does not want to be with drunks at the pub.

İçelüm kahvede yârân ile ingilizi

Olma bekrîler ile mey-gedede zâr u zebûn

Nisarî (G:199/4)

Refet Mehmet talks about coffee houses being full of pleasure seekers:

Vardı bir çahve-ñaneyeye doğru

Gördü erbâb-ı keyf ile dolu

(Refet Mehmet Mes5/23)

Tab'î mentions that when there is a call to the prayer Imam does not leave the coffee house. He says that everybody from different parts of the society including young, elders, masters, landowners, boys go to the coffee houses:

Nidâ eyler müezzin vakt olunca

İmâmı çahveden çıkmaz gelüp yan

(Tab'î K.22/28)

Ber-â-berce gezerler kahve kahve

Küçük büyük efendi aga oğlan

(Tab'î K. 22/45)

In sum, it can be clearly seen that coffee that is a necessity of a daily life, has had a great importance for the social life even for the periods it was banned. All the verses examined are also evidence of the interests of Divan poets towards coffee. The divans that we have reached showed that verses that are related to the coffee are quite little in quantity. However, the number increases for the poets such as Tab'î, Zihnî, Kâni.

In the Divan of Tab'î there were a kaside of 21 verses with a coffee redif. In the Divans of Kâni ve Zihnî there were ghazels with coffee redif. The information based on the verses enlightens us about the general issues as well as characteristics of the coffee. Moreover, there were even some verses that helped us to get information about the social and political situation of the era. In this article we talked about the several issues. Coffee has a black face. Wine was seen better when compared to coffee. Coffee can give

pleasure. Coffee had been the center of discussions and prohibitions. Thus, society's reaction was mentioned. Coffee can give health and fitness; it is consumed in a cup with a sugar. In addition, the verses that talked about the reopening of the coffee houses as well as the attention of the society were also examined.

These evidences showed that both the first and second-degree poets showed quite amount of interest to coffee. The verses that include coffee in them enlighten us about the social, cultural and political life of the society during that that times.

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