

WHISPER MUSIC TO MY WEARY SPIRIT: THE FUNCTION OF MUSIC IN AHMET HAMDİ TANPINAR'S *HUZUR*

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Özet

As a novelist, poet and as a literary critic Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar (1901-1962) has been an influential figure in Turkish literature. His novels display a number of characteristics such as an interest in Ottoman history and culture, as well as criticism of rapid Westernization. In that respect, Tanpınar's prominent novel *Huzur* (*A Mind at Peace*), which was first published in 1949 is no exception. Even though *Huzur* contains a multi-layered structure, this study argues that music emerges as its most central theme. Tanpınar's emphasis on it is so explicit that music, especially classical Ottoman music, contributes very actively to the plot. Tanpınar chooses to privilege the art of music, particularly in its classical Ottoman guise, over other art forms. *Huzur* is essentially a eulogy to music, Ottoman/Turkish music in particular. What is striking in *Huzur* is that it presents all its other themes, such as Turkish national identity and 'the East-West problematic', through the lenses of music. In other words, music functions like a glue that holds every component of the novel together.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *Huzur*, Müzik

BİTKİN RUHUMA BİRAZ MÜZİK FISILDA: AHMET HAMDİ TANPINAR'IN *HUZUR* ADLI ROMANINDA MÜZİĞİN İŞLEVİ

Abstract

Roman yazarı, şair ve de edebiyat eleştirmeni olan Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar (1901-1962) Türk edebiyatının en itibarlı isimlerinden biridir. Yazarın romanları Osmanlı tarihi ve kültürünün önemi, hızlı Batılılaşma eleştirisi gibi birçok konuya değinir. Bu noktada, Tanpınar'ın ilk 1949'da yayımlanan ünlü romanı *Huzur* da Tanpınar'ın bu temel konularını ele almaktadır. *Huzur*'ün her ne kadar çok katmalı bir yapısı olsa da bu çalışma, romanın ana konusunun müzik olduğunu ileri sürmektedir. Tanpınar'ın müzik, özellikle de klasik Osmanlı müziği vurgusu romanın olay örgüsüne oldukça etkin bir biçimde katkıda bulunmaktadır. Tanpınar müzik sanatını, bilhassa da klasik Osmanlı müziğini diğer sanat formlarına yeğ tutar. *Huzur* temelde Osmanlı/Türk müziğine övgü amaçlı yazılmış bir eserdir. Romanda dikkat çekici olan şey Türk milli kimliği, Doğu-Batı sorunsalı gibi tüm diğer konuların müziğin merceğinden geçerek ele alınmasıdır. Bir diğer deyişle müzik, romandaki her bir unsuru bir arada tutan bir tutkal görevi görmektedir.

Keywords: Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *Huzur*, Music

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I. Introduction

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar is regarded as one of the most significant literary figures of twentieth-century Turkey. Outstandingly versatile, he was a poet, novelist, essayist, short-story writer, academic and political figure. Azade Seyhan (2008) describes him as a 'Renaissance man of Turkish culture [who] clearly set a high standard of authorship for himself and other novelists'. Tanpınar liked to write about the inner lives of individuals while cleverly using the aesthetics of Ottoman culture as a medium to do this. His aesthetic concerns are reflected in his use of language, which is notably orotund and ornamental and enriched by metaphors and similes, at a time when the national novel and short story were more interested in social realism. Novels about village life, such as Kemal Tahir's, were typical of the period.

Tanpınar did not attract a great deal of attention in his time, but was rediscovered in the 1970s. He was notably different from other literary figures of the Republican period, mourning the lost values of Ottoman civilization at a time when Ottoman ideologies were not very popular in the politics of modern Turkey. Nonetheless, Tanpınar was also notably fond of Western culture; he enjoyed listening to Wagner and reading Baudelaire and Valéry, so he was by no means a typical conservative. The reason why Tanpınar did not achieve as much success during his lifetime may be that he did not conform to any of the ideologies of his era. However, in recent times Tanpınar has become one of the best-loved figures of Turkish literature and his works are now appreciated by many literary critics. This is partly due to a revival of interest in Ottoman language and history since the 1980 military coup.

Nurdan Gürbilek (2011) associates Tanpınar's originality with his political neutrality: 'Tanpınar'ın önemli yanlarından biri estetiğini dönemin siyasi seferberlik havasının kısmen dışında kurabilmesiys[i]' ('One of the most significant characteristics of Tanpınar was his ability to formulate his aesthetics partially outside the realm of the *levée en masse* [mass conscription] spirit of the early years of the republic').² She also observes a latent 'theme of loss' in Tanpınar, which is sometimes embodied in 'the East' as a dead mother, and evokes emotions which swing between a deep longing and a profound mourning' (Gürbilek, 2011). Thus, accordingly, Tanpınar's literary success stems not from an engagement with the ideals of the new Republic, which aimed to modernise the country and educate previously neglected sections of the population. Instead, he concentrated on the sense of loss of empire and what it symbolized.

The author's best-known novel, *Huzur*, is an excellent example of this theme of loss, narrating the tragic story of an upper-class young Turkish man, Mümtaz, who is working on a novel about Şeyh Galib, which he may never finish. The setting is 1930s Istanbul on the eve of the Second World War. Through flashbacks the reader learns about Mümtaz's childhood, and the loss of his parents at a very young age. Most of the novel focuses on his romantic relationship with Nuran, a gentlewoman with an elite Ottoman family heritage. The couple enjoy a dreamlike summer in which they wander around the streets of Istanbul, visiting old Ottoman monuments and mansions, and going boating in the breezy Bosphorus nights. Their conversations almost always revolve around Ottoman culture and music, which were already starting to lose their popularity at a time of modernization. Their relationship ends when the season changes; everything deteriorates in the protagonist's life and the immanence of the Second World War makes the atmosphere of the last chapter darker and forbidding.

According to Jale Parla (2012), the subject matter of *Huzur* is the arts. I would go further and argue that the subject matter is essentially music. In almost every page a reference to music is present. The novel is interested in various forms of art such as painting and architecture, including some references to these forms as well, but the stress is primarily on music. As stated earlier, *Huzur* is a multi-layered novel that embraces the themes of love and history and contemplates the idea of Westernization and the shift in civilization and Turkish identity, as well as being a novel of ideas that expands within the frames of art, aesthetics, death, and time.

Moreover, it is a quest novel about an unproductive writer. Nonetheless, all these themes develop under the umbrella of music which forms the backbone of the narrative, foreshadowing future events, creating the atmosphere of the scenes, and featuring in the daily conversation of the characters. It even plays an instrumental role in the discussion of political issues. All in all, it serves both as a subject and an object for the novel, penetrating every cell of its structure.

² All translations are mine except for Erdağ Güknar's *A Mind at Peace*, the English translation of *Huzur*.

II. Methodology

This article adopts close reading method which requires a small number of texts in order to induce a conclusion. In close reading, the literary critic focuses on particular text(s), read them carefully sometimes zoom in sentences or even words in order to prove his or her argument. In this article both small units such as single word choices and larger units such as long quotations are going to be interpreted in order to support the main argument.

III. Analysis

a. *The Relationship between Characters and Music*

It would not be inaccurate to argue that almost all the characters are related to music in some way. Knowledge of and taste for music indicate a refined, elevated, eminent character whereas a lack of taste for music signifies superficiality and immaturity. In fact, a direct correlation exists between music and spiritual profundity in the novel. A character who is deprived of musical taste is portrayed as an insensitive and shallow person. Thus, music becomes the main criterion for assessing the likeability of a character. Mümtaz is very keen on Turkish folk songs and classical Western music and is almost obsessed with classical Turkish music. It is no coincidence that he falls in love with Nuran, who represents the sophistication and nobility of the Turkish musical tradition. Her family is distinguished by a long musical heritage. Her father is a Mawlawiyah, while her mother is a 'Bektashi', an order of mystics that came into prominence in sixteenth-century Anatolia. In her childhood, musical ceremonies called 'fasıl', were performed almost every night:

Bütün çocukluğu bir kuş kafesi gibi bu ney sesleri içinde geçmişti. Başkalarında bin türlü duyumdan kurulan dünya, onun içinde sanki yalnız sestem ve müzikten kurulmuştu. (Tanpınar, 2011, p. 108)

Her entire girlhood had passed in a birdcage of melodies made by that flute. The world, which was manifested for others through a thousand sensations, existed for her purely through sound and music. (Tanpınar, 2008, p. 137)³

Nuran's good knowledge of folk songs and dances is one of the main reasons why Mümtaz is drawn to her. Indeed, her grandfather is an eminent composer and famous for his composition about a tragic love story entitled 'Mâhur Beste', which ironically is mostly a cheerful maqam. The song's lyrics and the life of the composer are interrelated because Nuran's grandfather is jealous of his wife's affair with a doctor and indirectly causes the death of the lovers.

Since one of the major themes of the novel is tragic love and its psychological effects on Mümtaz, the emphasis on this song makes the theme more prominent. Nuran and Mümtaz's flirtation begins when Nuran sings the song to Mümtaz, who is very fond of it (p. 117), and indeed its tragic love story foreshadows their own.

By contrast with Mümtaz and Nuran, Adile hanım is portrayed as a superficial character, sneaky and constantly attempting to control people's lives. Opposing Mümtaz and Nuran's relationship from the beginning, Adile tries to discourage Nuran. Her selfishness is the main cause of this: since she has not initiated the relationship she is disturbed by the fact that the couple can love each other without needing her. Adile often undertakes the role of matchmaker for her friends in order to exercise some power over their lives. Being materialistic and unsophisticated, she tries in vain to distract Nuran with luxurious possessions, and discussions about the duties of motherhood, in order to induce a feeling of melodrama in Nuran. Naturally, Adile does not have any enthusiasm for music. The narrator notes that she considers music to be a leisure activity, which does not reflect a real appreciation of art: 'Ona göre musiki ve her şey şu zaman dediğimiz boşluğu doldurmak içindi. Bir geçit alayı, bir boks maçı hikâyesi, şöyle rahatça yapılan dört başı mamur bir dedikodu, ona en güzel sanat eserinin verebileceği sıcaklığı verebilirdi' (p.86: 'In her opinion, music was meant to fill the void we called time. A parade, an account of a boxing match, or some exquisitely appointed piece of gossip, if presented with consummate ease, might evince in her the same warmth as an extraordinary work of art', p. 93). Even though the novel depicts the protagonist as a complex character it still has a tendency to depict its characters in a rather two-

³ Further references to these editions are given after quotations in the main text.

dimensional way. The presence or absence of any interest in or talent for music is enough to present a character in either a positive or a negative light.

b. The Need for Wholeness and Music

Parla (2010) argues that 'zamanı tersine akıtmak, o mutlak zaman ve yekpare zamana kavuşmak hem büyük bir arzu hem de bir meraktır Tanpınar'da' (to make the river of time flow backward and re-join that infinite and wholesome time is a great desire for Tanpınar'). In this regard, *Huzur* is mainly about the personal quest of Mümtaz, who is searching for a perpetual euphoria and a feeling of wholeness and continuity. The first chapter of the novel describes his difficult childhood, in which he experiences the Turkish War of Independence (*Kurtuluş Savaşı*) which followed the collapse of the Ottoman Empire (Turkish nationalists defended Turkey against the Allies between 1919 and 1923). In a short span of time Mümtaz's father is killed by the enemy and he loses his mother because of an illness. His reactions during and after these events suggest that Mümtaz loves loneliness and considers himself different from other people. Apart from him everybody seems to be enjoying life without encountering any serious problems. He searches for somewhere dark and cosy, like the black rocks that he visits every evening in the bright summer season on the delightful Mediterranean coast of Antalya:

Mümtaz burada, yoldan denize kadar inen büyük kayalar üstünde oturup akşam saatlerini geçirmeyi severdi. [...] Fakat bu sert kaya parçaları hayattan ebediyen uzaktılar; rüzgar eser, yağmur yağar, zerre zerre ufalanırlar, dev cüsselerinde derin izler, oluklar peydahlanır; fakat hiçbirini onlardan ilk felaketin eliyle yoğunlaşmış kaldıkları hali gideremezdi. Onlar hayat yolunun üzerinde soracak hiç bir sualleri olmadığı için, her sualı birden soran sonsuz zamanın içinden gelmiş zalim, haoin sembollerdi. (pp. 34-36)

Mümtaz liked to spend the twilight hours perched on boulders between the road and the sea. [...] Yet these solid fragments of stone were forever removed from life; the wind might blow, the rain might fall; atom by atom they'd erode, deep lines and furrows would appear on their colossal bodies, but none of it could rid them of the state in which they were formed by the hands of some primordial apocalypse. Inasmuch as they had no apparent inquiry to make on life's trajectory, they were crude and coarse symbols issuing from infinite time, posing all questions at once. (pp. 33-36)

The contrast of sunny summer days with cold black rocks in the evening appears to symbolize a desire to die or perhaps even find a peaceful shelter rather like a womb. His search for peace continues into adulthood, and the feeling of loss never leaves him.

In Tanpınar's novels, 'kahramanlar yalnızca birbirleri tarafından büyülenmezler, gezdikleri Boğaziçi, Osmanlı musikisi, evlerde gördükleri eski eşyalarla da büyülenirler' (the characters are not only fascinated by each other but they are also mesmerised by the Bosphorus, the antique furniture that they see in houses and the Ottoman music') (Pamuk, 2010). Consequently, love and aesthetics are mingled and it is impossible to separate one from the other. As a young man Mümtaz also seeks his peace in the delights of music, the Istanbul summers, romantic Bosphorus evenings and the beauty of classical Ottoman architecture and history. The novel repeatedly emphasises the beauty of Istanbul and of Ottoman music. His beloved Nuran is also representative of that beauty and his love for her is similar to his love for music and other aesthetic subjects. These graces complete each other and seem to constitute a feeling of wholeness in his life. Thus it could be suggested that together music, the Ottoman cultural heritage, and love function as substitutes for the black rocks of his childhood. In his analysis, Moran (2011) suggests that: 'Nuran ile olan aşk, sanatkarca yoğun yaşamayı arttırdığı içindir ki ayrıbir anlam taşır ve [...] tüm güzellikleri bir bütün olarak kavramada bir araç rolü oynar' (Mümtaz's love for Nuran intensifies ardent feelings for the artistic life and acts as an instrument to conceive all the beauties of life in a holistic way). The reader witnesses how Mümtaz's love for his beloved and music merge and constitute an inseparable whole:

Mümtaz, Nuran'ın aşkıyla bir kültür miracını yaşadığını, Nevakar'ın nakış ve çizgisi daima değişen arabeskinde, Hafız Post'un rast semai ve bestelerinde, Dede'nin uğultusu ömründen hiç eksilmeyecek büyük rüzgarında onun ayrı ayrı çehrelerini, aynı Tanrı düşüncesinin büründüğü değişiklikler gibi gördüğünü söylediği zaman, hakikaten bu toprağın ve kültürün asıl yapıcılarına bir bakımdan yaklaşıyor ve Nuran'ın fani varlığı gerçekten, bir yeniden doğuşun mucizesi oluyordu. (p. 223).

When Mümtaz said that he'd experienced a *mi'raj* through Nuran's love, or declared that he'd seen visions of her distinct personas, like variations of the divine incarnate, in the ever-changing ornament and progression of the arabesque of Itri's Nevakar song, in the Rast *semais* and melodies of Hafız Post, and in the great gale of Dede Efendi, whose *cantus firmus* would forever accompany Mümtaz, he genuinely, as it were, approached the true architects of this territory and culture, Nuran's mortal presence actually became

the miracle of a reincarnation. (p. 239)

Through romantic love Mümtaz's joy for life reaches a crescendo. The 'Miraj' simile indicates ascension to the sky and a feeling of emotional ecstasy, which is reinforced by the love of music. In the quotation, Nuran's name is mentioned in connection with the composers whom Mümtaz adores. The narrator, who is almost identical with Mümtaz, touches upon regional folk songs as well. The anonymous love, longing, and lust unite with Mümtaz's love. All these emotions lead Mümtaz to the love of God and the beloved's face is compared to the idea of God. 'Miraj' and resurrection are specifically religious references. Love of God or 'the whole entity' manifests itself in the romantic love of the individual. Love for Nuran, the aesthetics of music and the idea of God exist together in the novel as a remarkably intensified moment of ecstasy. For Mümtaz, love is a kind of worshipping:

Hakikatte Nuran'ın aşkı Mümtaz için bir nevi dindi. Mümtaz, bu dinin tek abidi, mabedin en mukaddes yerini bekleyen ve ocağı daima uyanık tutan başrahibi, büyük mabudenin sırrın yerini bulması için insanlar içinden seçtiği fani idi. Güneş her gün onlar için yeni baştan doğuyordu. Bütün mazi üstüste zamanlarını onlar için tekrarlıyordu. (p. 150).

Nuran's amorousness represented a faith of sorts for Mümtaz. He was its sole devotee, a high priest waiting before the most sacred spot in the temple and keeping the hearth forever lit, the one chosen from among mortals by the goddess so that her mysteries might find substantiation. This comparison contained a measure of truth. The sun rose each day and the entirety of the past replayed its epochs as if for their sake alone. (p. 191)

Romantic love thus functions as a temple in which Mümtaz protects himself from the devastating feelings of loss and absence, and in this temple Nuran is the deity and Mümtaz is her devotee. It could be added that the most significant ritual of this faith is listening to or talking about music with the beloved. Music is thus an integral part of the loving experience.

Music also functions within the structure of the novel. The reader can deduce future developments in the novel from the lyrics of the songs. For instance, before Mümtaz's mother dies, the reader is introduced to a folk song which is sung by a little child who passes in front of Mümtaz's house in Antalya every day at the same hour. The sorrowful song the child sings acts as a forewarning of a tragedy:

Akşam oldu yakamadım gazımı, Kadir Mevlam böyle yazmış yazımı,
Doya doya sevemedim kuzumu, Ben ölürsen yavrum seni döverler. (p. 30)

'Tis nightfall and I haven't lit this lantern o' mine

The Almighty has written this fate o' mine I haven't caressed my lamb to my heart's content

Should I die, darling, your fate will be torment. (p. 37)

Music is also a crucial factor in evoking the atmosphere of a scene. The woeful lyrics about fate, death and the distressing future of the beloved one can be associated with the death of Mümtaz's mother, his orphan status, the uncertainty of his future and his approaching loneliness.

Seyhan (2008) rightly notes that 'Tanpınar incorporated musical motifs into his poetry and prose and lent spirit to the word with tempo and imagery.' Arguably, *Huzur* is the quintessential example of this fusion of elements. Music manifests itself in his language, expands it with imagery and glamourizes it through his use of tempo. Thus, even within contexts that are not directly related to the music, a figurative language which evokes music is constructed:

Her düşünce serin bir uyanış duyumunda değişiyor, uzviyetin derinliklerinden gelen küçük ve esrarlı dalgalılar, unutulmuş hayat şarkılarını tekrarlıyordu. Bu sessiz musiki ikisinde de vardı, ikisinin de içinden yüzlerine doğru yükseliyor, Nuran bunu göstermemek telasiyle, olduğundan çok mahsun görünüyor ve Mümtaz ise aksine, tabiatındaki mahçupluğu gizlemek telasiyle, zorla cesur ve kayıtsız olmağa çalışıyordu. (p. 100)

Each notion transformed in the awareness of a brisk awakening, and the small and mysterious contractions emanating from the depths of his being sang forgotten songs of life. This music of silence existed in both, rising to their faces from deep within, and Nuran, frantic to suppress it, appeared more crest fallen than she actually was, while in contrast, Mümtaz, yearning to mask the shyness of his character, forced himself to be bolder and more carefree. (p. 127)

The quotation above refers to the theme of courting. In this scene, Nuran and Mümtaz experience the first awakenings of romantic love. Nuran pretends to look more timid than she is while Mümtaz feigns indifference. In other words, they both try to act according to traditional gender roles. The context does not include music; however, through metaphorical language such as 'forgotten songs of life' and 'this music of silence', it is included in the scene. 'Songs of life' and 'silent music' may suggest 'joy of life' and 'silent bliss' or 'silent excitement' respectively. That kind of metaphorical language recurs throughout the novel and intensifies the expression of emotion.

c. *The Clashes of Cultures and Music*

History and continuity were two concepts to which Tanpınar paid much attention. For him, the civilization of the Ottoman Empire should not be underestimated by the new Turkish state and the idiosyncratic features of the older society should be maintained wherever possible. In particular, he associated classical Turkish music with authentic Turkish civilization and Ottoman culture. Tanpınar the critic argued that 'Dünkü hayatımızın en kuvvetli, hayata en çok tesir eden tarafı musiki idi' ('the strongest aspect of our life yesterday was music') (Tanpınar, 1970). Thus for the author, Turkish history and Turkish music are closely related to each other 'For us,' he claimed, 'Bizim için milli deha musikide aranabilir' ('the national genius can be sought in music') (Ibid). Tanpınar complains that Turks have fragmented lives, which is particularly evident in the music they listen to:

Biz Türkler, burada da bütün hayatımız gibi parçalanmış yaşıyoruz. Kaç türlü musikimiz var? Hayatımıza kaç türlü zevk hakim? Cemiyetimizin bence en büyük mes'elesi, medeniyet ve kültür değişimidir. Bunu bir gün İhlamur köşkünü tek başıma gezerken, adeta tenimde duydum. Bu değişikliğin yahut ikiliğin en zalim şekilde kendini hissettirdiği nokta da musiki zevkimizdir. Çünkü musiki bir milletin zamana tasarruf şeklidir.

We Turks live fragmented here like all our life. How many kinds of music do we have? How many types of pleasure are there in our lives? For me, the greatest issue of our society is the shifting of civilization and culture. I felt this almost physically in my skin when visiting İhlamur Mansion alone one day. This alteration or duality where it makes itself heartlessly most visible is in the music. Because the music is a way of saving of a nation.⁴

He underlines his argument that the Westernization process and the shift of civilization has brought duality to Turkish social life, showing this through the example of music. According to him, continuity and unity can dynamize a civilization, whereas in the new regime he complains about the fact that Western influence has begun to shape the aesthetic pleasures of the people. His criticism implies that he does not consider this duality as enriching, but rather as a kind of deterioration. His views about the function of music in the national psyche can be clearly seen in *Huzur*, which includes several references to debates on Turkish national identity which mention old Ottoman music, traditional Turkish folk songs or sometimes Western classical music. At the very beginning of the novel, the reader encounters the following lyrics:

Aç kapıyı bezirgan başı, bezirganbaşı Kapı hakkı ne verirsin? Ne verirsin? (p. 17)

Raise the gate, toll keeper, toll keeper. What will you pay me to pass on through? (p. 22)

This couplet is a children's rhyme which has been popular among Turkish children for several generations. The narrator could have mentioned the song briefly but instead he decides to share its lyrics with the reader and makes them visible, highlighting the song's importance to Turkish identity. It was probably sung by Nuran and even her grandmother as well, and symbolizes a tradition which stretches from the Ottoman Empire to the twentieth century Turkish Republic. Similarly, another Turkish folk song plays a similar role in the novel:

Bulut gelir seher ile Çiçek açmış bahar ile Herkes kavuşmuş yar ile -İşte bunu sevmeliyiz. İhsan hakikaten mesuttu. Bütün hakikatler burada, bu engin ummanda. Halkımıza ve hayatımıza ne kadar yaklaşırsak o kadar mesut olacağız. Biz bu türkülerin milletiyiz. (p. 275)

With the dawn come clouds With the springs bloom flowers We'll all be reunited with our loved ones 'You see, that is what we should cherish.' İhsan was content. 'All truths are contained here, in this vast ocean of meaning. Our satisfaction is relative to our closeness to the folk and our lives. We're the children of these *türkü*'s'. (p. 345)

Mümtaz's older brother İhsan claims that Turkish identity can be found in traditional Turkish folk songs which express the emotions of people. He points out that the contemporary generation is descended from the people who sang these folk songs. It is vital for the modern Turkish intellectual to remember his past and celebrate the customs of the society of the past because these are the constituents of a harmonious nation. The concept of ownership is implied: Turkish folk songs belong to the Turkish people, and are therefore invaluable to them. In the Ottoman Empire, language and social differences between the ruling classes and the public resulted in a disconnection between classes. After the foundation of the Turkish Republic this difference had decreased to a certain extent, but the problem still

⁴ There is a negative shift of translation in the last sentence of this quotation. The ordinary meaning of 'tasarruf' is 'saving(s)', yet in this context there is no relationship to this meaning, as the discussion is about music not finance. Therefore, it might have been better to translate it sense-for-sense: 'Because for a nation, music is a way of making history'.

existed even in the 1930s when the events in the novel take place. In this context, İhsan, who represents the elite Ottoman intellectual, takes pleasure from folk songs which he sees as the cultural products of Turkishness and which he believes are necessary for his country to prosper. İhsan complains about Turkish intellectuals being unaware of their cultural heritage:

İhsan ki bu işe o kadar meraklıdır, o halde mevcudun yüzde birini bilmiyoruz, diyor. Biri çıksa da şunları tanıtırsa, notaları neşredilse, diskleri yapılırsa, hülasa, şu piyasa musikisinden bir parça kurtulsak! Düşün bir kere, Dede gibi bir adamı yetiştirmişsin, Seyid Nuh, Ebubekir Ağa, Hafız Post gibi adamlar gelmiş, muazzam eserler vermişler. Benliğimizin bir tarafı yapılmış. Sen farkında değilsin; ruh açlığı içindedin... Felaket şurada; bugünkü nesil ortadan çekildi mi, çoğu ezber olan bu eserler kaybolacak. Mesela tek başına Münir Nurettin'in bildiklerini düşünün. (pp. 85-6)

But they contain songs and pieces we've never heard before! İhsan, who's a savant in these matters, says that in that case we don't know one percent of what's really out there. If only somebody would come around and promote these songs, have sheet music published, make recordings; that is, if we could just save ourselves a little from today's popular music! Just think for a minute, you're a country that's given rise to a musician like İsmail Dede Efendi; and composers like Seyid Nuh, Ebubekir Ağa, and Hafız Post have come along and composed extraordinary works. Part of our identity has been formulated by their artistry. We're not even aware that we're living in a state of spiritual hunger... This is the catastrophe: Assume that today's generation vanished. These works, many of which are only known by heart, will simply vanish. Just think about what Münir Nurettin Selçuk alone knows. (p. 92)

Having been founded after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the secular Turkish Republic intended to break many connections with its traditional Middle-Eastern past and to follow the Western world politically, socially and culturally. Yet, arguably, this problem is also related to the modern world where people's tastes inescapably change. An overwhelming shift in values is particularly reflected in music and in the 1930s classical Ottoman music tended to seem outdated. According to Mümtaz, when intellectuals such as İhsan die the loss of this art will result in some significant problems for future generations. Therefore, İhsan's illness and ultimate death at the end of the novel is not coincidental; he personifies the era that ends with him.

In the third chapter, entitled 'Suad', a *fasıl*, an Ottoman-style musical ceremony, is performed by Mawlawiyah Emin, an old friend of uncle Tevfik. Mawlawiyah is an order of Sufi mystics that became especially well known for its whirling dervishes and for a special musical prayer called a *dhikr*. The author spends some forty pages describing this musical performance and its effects on the characters. Classical Ottoman music in the form of *maqams*, the names of their composers, the philosophy of that musical genre and the transcendental emotions it creates in listeners are all depicted in great detail. These detailed descriptions of Emin and his music enable the novel to focus on the old, traditional Turk and his philosophy. However, that old type of Turk belongs to the past and his values are vanishing in modern Turkey:

O kadar asırlık Mevlevî terbiyesi onda ferde ait her şeyi silmiş, sanki bu halim, ilhamlı ve sabırlı adamı, [...] bir nevi hüviyetsizliğin içinde eritmişti. O kadar ki bu küçük ve kim bilir nasıl bir iç güneşinin sığağında yarı erimiş maddesinden başka bir ferdi tarafı yok gibiydi. Bu madde de bir yığın adâbın, teşrifatın, kendini herkesle bir görmek, bize garip gelecek bir hicapta şahsî her şeyi inkâr etmek terbiyesinin altında her an gizleniyor, kayboluyordu. (pp. 277-78)

Centuries of Mawlawiyah cultivation had eliminated everything relating to the ego and seemingly dissolved the genteel, inspired, and patient man within selflessness of sorts, [...] Emin had no individual aspect beside his tiny material self half-melted in the intense heat of who knows what inner sun. And this material self hid and vanished each moment behind myriad formalities, decorum, and the acculturation of considering himself one with others and denying everything individual at the state of humility that we'd consider bizarre today. (pp. 297-98)

The musician Emin is created out of Mawlawiyah discipline, which puts society to the forefront instead of the individual. Mawlawiyah philosophy requires the individual to be humble, modest, and without ego. Consequently, Emin is not only a character who performs music but is also an idealized character in terms of morality.

Because they advocate a collectivist perspective and push individualism to the background, Mawlawiyah philosophy and Sufism run contrary to the individualist philosophy that has arisen in Europe and the United States. Old Mawlawiyah Emin represents the lost values of Sufism. His musical performance, involving characters who have completely different worldviews – such as Suad, a rebellious nihilist, and İhsan, the traditionalist – constitutes a micro society. Forgetting their individual differences, characters harmoniously abandon themselves to the music.

In this way traditional, religious music functions as a glue that holds their society together. As a result, Emin's character and the atmosphere he creates through his music might be regarded as awkward

in modern times. This is almost the only time when the title of the novel 'Mind at Peace' can be said to define Mümtaz's state of mind: he loses himself during the performance and finds a nostalgic peace in Emin's music, whereas at all other times he is restless and alone. Unlike his friends, instead of committing himself to solving the political and social problems of his country, he chooses to seek out the aesthetics of the past. Incapable of conforming to the society of his own time, he fantasizes about being a part of that social community of the past.

In the second part of the novel Mümtaz highlights the vitality of the philosophy of Ottoman music. For him, no matter how outstanding Ottoman musicians are in their art they cannot consider themselves as separate from the public:

Kaldı ki, eski musikimiz insanı yok eden, yahut bir hayranlık duygusunda tüketen sanatlardan değildir. Bütün o evliya ruhlu ve tavazulu ustalar, sanatlarının zirvesi ne kadar yüksek olursa olsun, insan hayatının içinde kalyorlar ve onu bizimle beraber yaşamaktan hoşlanıyorlardı. (p.188)

But Ottoman music wasn't an art form that dispensed with humanity or depleted it by imparting a sense of devotional awe. All of those saintly souled and humble virtuosi, no matter how lofty the pinnacle of their art might be, were pleased to remain within society and to live communally with others. (p. 238)

In the quotation above, '[a]n art form that dispensed with humanity or depleted it by imparting a sense of devotional awe' could be interpreted as a criticism of Western arts and music. It might be suggested that *Huzur* puts classical Ottoman music on a pedestal– indeed that this is almost the main purpose of his novel. Interestingly, the second and third chapters that narrate the romance and the short-lived peace of the protagonist, are full of references to classical Ottoman music. However, before the suicide of Suad, an old friend of Mümtaz, Beethoven's 'Kreutzer Sonata' for violin is performed, and İhsan's doctor plays the same sonata when İhsan is on his deathbed. Offering that interpretation, Nesrin Tağızade Karaca (2005) claims that 'in the destructive scenes Western classical music is preferred whereas Ottoman classical music is referred in the scenes where tranquility dominates'.

CONCLUSION

Huzur addresses many crucial themes such as love, Istanbul as a centre of refined beauty, 'the East-West problematic', Turkish national identity, Ottoman history and changing values in the society. The novel mourns a culture which is vanishing. It regards forgetting the past as decadence; losing the purity and beauty in aesthetics. Therefore, the protagonist Mümtaz, who longs for a continuity and harmony, is symbolically doomed to lose his beloved. However, the article has argued that all these themes revolve around the idea of music, in other words, all characters and ideas are scrutinized through the lens of music. The music helps to construct the atmosphere of the scenes in the novel. Moreover, a character's taste in music may reveal his or her personality. For example, Nuran's fondness for music is an important aspect of her character and is one of the main reasons for Mümtaz's love for her. Different types of music represent different notions or situations. For instance, folk songs represent the Turkish identity. Ottoman style *Fasıl* can be associated with spirituality, harmony and fulfilment whereas Beethoven's 'Kreutzer Sonata' represents destructiveness and foreshadows death. In this regard, music has multiple functions in the novel and is the most substantial element in *Huzur*. Thanks to the existence of the music, the novel succeeds in presenting various themes and motifs harmoniously.

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