

THE USE OF PROVERBS IN NECATÎ'S POEMS

SUMMARY

Proverbs with idiomatic expressions form an important part of Turkish. In the literary language, from the oldest works onwards, the existence of proverbs can be traced. The usage of proverbs in Divan poetry is a part of the tradition. Divan poets had used proverbs in their divans in different proportions more or less in accordance with their personal taste and understanding.

Necati is one of the greatest poets of the fifteenth century Divan poetry. One of the most prominent features in Necati's literary language is his usage of proverbs, popular expressions, and idioms. In his divan, simple sayings, common expressions, and proverbs are often encountered. In fact, it may be admitted that Necati owes his reputation chiefly to his frequent use of popular expressions and proverbs in his poems. All the critics agree in admitting Necati as the poet who used proverbs frequently and successfully in the service of poetry.

Proverbs with idioms are usually terse, forcible, and vivid. The same meaning could be set forth in some other way, but not with equal force and brevity. In other words, proverbs are shorter but more expressive. This outstanding feature of proverbs fits in especially with poetry, since a poet is supposed to say much with little words in verse. Concerning Divan poetry, each couplet of a poem consists of its own independent meaning. The use of proverb in a couplet helps to open the hidden meaning inside it at once and more clearly. So this is one of the main reasons why Necati and some other poets use proverbs in the language of poetry.

On the other hand, Necati's concern to proverbs must be connected with his awareness of employing Turkish in poetry. Shortly after its inception, Divan poetry began its own development, with the poets employing rhymes which were already being used in Persian and Arabic poetry. Meanwhile, Turkish words, here and there were also used for rhyming purposes. In the fifteenth century it occurred to many of the poets to use Turkish in the service of the language of

poetry. Necatî would seem to be the first to have become aware of the facility offered to poetry by Turkish elements, and in his verses there is seen a great effort indeed to make Turkish words rhyme and to use proverbs and popular sayings.

Alongside the aforementioned features, proverbs reflect various beliefs, attitudes, and customs of society. Hence they are forcible and persuasive on people. By means of employing proverbs in poetry, a poet can persuade any belief or idea to his reader. Lastly, proverbs including idiomatic expressions are used in poetry because besides several literary devices, proverbs are necessary for embellishment in verse.

As a general rule, proverbs and idiomatic phrases cannot be altered; no other synonymous word can be substituted for any word in the proverb and the arrangement of the words can rarely be modified. But, in poetry, this common traditional word order can be changed. This is partly because of metre and partly because of unavoidable change in the historical development of language.

Lastly, Necatî, the great lyric poet of the fifteenth century, brought into poetry something new, something of his own, by means of his usage of proverbs, popular expressions, idioms, simple sayings; in short, by means of the vernacular.