

A Study of the Sociology of Literature: Beggary in Fictional Texts, Essays and Memoirs in Turkish Literature

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ABSTRACT This study investigates beggary and begging as an activity, which have been despised and insulted by public most of the time, within the context of sociology of literature, fictional texts, essays and memoirs that constitute an important part of Turkish literature. Beggary is an engagement that falls short of gaining acceptance by public almost in every society. Having a social reality, this engagement has inevitably found its place in literature. Thus, begging as an activity displays a quality that is worth examining in terms of sociology of literature. First of all, how past societies considered beggars and begging as an activity has been introduced from a historical perspective in order to shed light upon the ground of this work and properties of the area of examination; and afterwards Ottoman Empire's struggle against begging classes as well as Ottoman regulations regarding them are presented. Literary texts of Turkish literature that make up the center line of the subject matter have been examined and evaluated in terms of sociology of literature.

INTRODUCTION

Many Turkish Dictionaries, in complete agreement, simply define the word "beggar" - including the activity of begging itself- as "the person who makes a living on begging" (Ayverdi-Topaloglu 2007: 268; Dogan 1994: 185). Although this definition seems to unveil the basic function of "begging/beggary", these terms may show up in literary texts, with an expansion of the meaning, much beyond this definition. So, how was the term "beggary" dealt in Turkish Literature, how did the writers make use of this term and how did they give place to this class which is assumedly discriminated? Beggars, just like the murderers, thieves, idlers and vagabonds, have been discriminated against from time to time and they have formed a social class that is generally ignored even though they are in the very center of society. The main reason why beggary is engaged with this approach is because it includes an action that doesn't gain acceptance by public. In this respect, governments have always strived against beggary for social, political, economic and safety reasons. Not only beggars but also idlers have been despised by pub-

lic and reasonably or unreasonably discriminated. Those who beg in need and the ones who are professional beggars have been treated differently by the members of society. This study aims to present how Turkish literature handle with beggars who are probably the most neglected class of society. To this end, different approaches in the past societies – especially the last period of the Ottoman Empire – have been put forth in this study. Then how beggars and beggary were treated in prose (poetry is considered as a separate study) is to be explained. Literary texts on beggary have been presented in chronological order. After explaining how and to what extent the beggary was dealt in literary texts, how beggary emerged in social life was questioned. As literature has close correlation with social issues, literary texts are unique works to make sociological evaluations on social problems and society itself.

CORRELATION BETWEEN LITERATURE AND SOCIOLOGY

Studying different correlations, interactions, alterations and transformations between literature and society has always been a common application. This correlation stands for a cur-

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rent actual situation. Literature, in first place, is a mirror which -voluntarily or involuntarily- reflects a social reality or an expected or predicted social situation. And this aspect is one of the major discussions of sociology of literature (Alver 2006). Yet, just like the other works of art, literary works are much too complicated to be explained only as the imitation and the reflection of social facts. Literature, at the same time, handles with the human beings as the members of society and their lives. Furthermore, the writer himself/herself is a member of the society. In this sense, it must be taken into consideration that the writer represents the society she/he lives in and influenced by it. This approach, again, is one of the basic arguments of classical sociology of literature method. Having influenced by the social environment she/he lives in, the writer relatively influences the society with his/her work (Kösemişal 1967: 1). Thus, the birth, rebirth and evolution of the myths that are the witnesses of major social milestones or the basic structure of human spirit, can be observed through literature (Alver 2006: 59).

The fact that the writer is born into a language used as a means of communication and that he/she expresses herself/himself through that language, allows societies exist on language, individual and society mutually influence each other. Literature and sociology, in some areas, start from the same material to improve new research techniques and try to put some scientific data by using several scientific techniques such as comment, criticism etc. And this is one of the main purposes of the sociology of literature. As Guy Michaud also determined "Literature represents society within its own spirit and spiritual structures" (Alver 2006: 61). The main idea in this statement is that society takes all types of qualities, inferiorities, superiorities from the past and passes them on to the future with some alterations and transformations. It is quite reasonable to say that literary works displays a relative balance as long as there is a balanced continuation in society. However, literature revolts against any kind of disorder during the periods of crisis and tries to figure out the reasons and solutions to that disorderliness in its own way.

Sociology uses the power of being a discipline which examines the alterations, developments and transformations in social relations via some scientific methods whereas literature produces works that have different purposes and -

consciously or unconsciously- reflects social structure and that can be used by sociology. Both discipline, inevitably, can make studies on their own ways starting from the same materials originated from society - the common denominator. These two separate disciplines can unite the targets and make researches through the Sociology of literature.

The Sociology of literature, as a natural outcome of the material it uses, has a large reserve which can be considered as the legacy of public memory such as lives, people, habits, traditions, social classes, social weaknesses and superiorities, reasons and results of social behaviours, interchanges, transformations, conflicts, reconciliations between the social layers that take place in a literary work. Thanks to these qualities and the influence of literature on society, the Sociology of literature can make some studies that provide today's people with much prescience. The Sociology of literature, in broad terms, examines the period of time and society the writer lives in, his/her financial situation, his/her status, how she/he is close to or apart from the popular trends of his/her time, his/her political point of view and his/her educational status (Cuma 2009: 84).

Many people and schools of thought including Marxists and postmodernist theorists have presented criticism-based studies in the Sociology of literature. In general, the pursuits of the Sociology of literature consist of four major elements (Kösemişal 1967: 12). The writer, the first of these elements, is a very significant resource as he/she lives in a society and she/he both influences and is influenced by the society. The second element, for sure, is his/her work in which he/she consciously or unconsciously reveals his/her point of view, thoughts, interests, hatred, resentment etc. Third element is all the bodies and organisations that publish the writer's work. The last element is, of course, the reader who is the buyer of all these efforts and work and who tries to understand the writer. The Sociology of literature tries to examine these elements through surveys, witnesses, history studies and statistics (Kösemişal 1967: 12).

Postmodern theories have left unidirectional, single-sided point of view and thus writer-centered perception in the sociology of literature has been replaced by a reader-centered one. The writer and the strong relationship between the writer and the society s/he lives in in classical sociology of literature studies have been shattered.

tered by postmodernism. The death of the writer put “the reader” in the center (Game-Metcalf 1999: 166).

No matter what kind, the relationship between society and literature is a sociological one. As a discipline that exists in society and reflects the content related to the social field, literature requires sociological analysis. Modern societies have very complicated qualities. Social realities, nowadays, occur through very complicated processes and factors compared to the ones in the past. In this point of view, not only sociology or literature but all social sciences essentially needs interdisciplinary approaches. Because, social or rather individual problems are originated through multidimensional factors/processes. Sociological dimension of any social fact may actually include psychological, financial, historical or educational extensions. In this respect, no matter which discipline is involved in a social fact, a sociological method, to some extent, is required.

ASPECTS OF BEGGARY IN HISTORIC SOCIETIES

Even though beggary has existed in almost every society, in relation with the purpose of this study, it has never been favoured. For instance, pro-Islamic scholars have always objected beggary as a way of making a living (Toksari 1994: 299). Therefore, in Muslim societies, various precautions have been taken against those who do it professionally in order to abolish beggary. Although these precautions were successful time to time, none of Muslim societies in history has managed to abolish beggary completely. For that reason, when its influence on social life is considered, it is possible to come across with many samples about beggary and beggars in some idioms and proverbs in Turkish language. Some of them are ; “*Dilenmez dilenci*” – The beggar who does not beg- (Aksoy b 1998:720), “*Dilenci çanađý – beggar’s pot-, dilenci vapuru* – the steamboat of beggars (Sözer 2001:102). These idioms clearly shows what the beggars’ function in social life is and how they are perceived by public.

Turkish proverbs which are the organized forms of thoughts, dreams and observations that took hundreds of years also deal with beggary. The proverb “*Dilenci bir olsa sekerle beslenir*” -If there was only one beggar, he would be fed with candies” emphasizes the enormous amount

of beggars. “*Dilencinin torbasý dolmaz*” - “Sack of a beggar is never filled” indicates the never-ending wishes of a beggar; “*Dilenciye hiyar vermisler, egri diye begenmemis*” -“They gave a cucumber to a beggar but he didn’t like it because it is crooked” - expresses that beggars are never satisfied with the kindness done to themselves (Çotuksöken 1992: 104; Ahmet Vefik Pasa 2005: 130-131); “*Dilenci küsmüs, kismetini kesmis*” – “A beggar was offended, therefore he was cut off from a fortune” implies that if a beggar doesn’t like the alms he was given, he will be starved forever (Aksoy 1998: 242). As it can easily be seen, beggary which is a fact in social life may appear in different fields of life due to its influence on social life.

BEGGARY IN THE LAST PERIODS OF OTTOMAN EMPIRE

With the increase in the number of beggars, Ottoman governments took some measures to secure the people under their protection. There are many different reasons why these measures failed. Defeats after long-term battles, weakening of central state authority in rural areas, increase of taxation, bandit gangs pestering the villagers, migration from villages to big cities, especially to Istanbul, because of health and safety problems are just some of the reasons that caused increase in beggary. The reason why a “Directorate of Beggary” was formed during *Tanzimat* period – name of a period between 1839-1876, literally means period of *reorganization*- was to keep this community under control (Ortaylı vd. 2008: 350).

Ottoman institutes applied some practices like “*mürur tezkiresi*” – “passage licence” in order to prevent the immigration to the capital city, made some regulations to deport the beggars in the city and they hereby tried to keep the capital safe (Özbek 1999: 36). Especially the apartments where single men lived were under strict control (Özbek 1999: 43). Insomuch that, these single men were not allowed in the city without a guarantor. Believing that it is possible to edify and amend the unemployed and unemployment and to reduce the numbers of people who beg because of unemployment through “work”, the government with limited resources began to found “business houses” (Özbek 1999: 37). This action may be considered as a struggle to render these people harmless. The most significant attempt to fight

against beggary was the foundation of “Darülaceze” - a home for poor, homeless, handicapped people and homeless children / “hospice” - during the reign of Abdulhamid II (Özbek 1999: 37). Although it had various functions, as it aimed to keep the unemployed with work in its workshops it was a job centre as well or “darüsay” in Ottoman phrase. Nevertheless, this institution, either, was not able to provide a solution against beggary.

The disappointment of the people who hoped a decrease in begging with the establishment of “darülaceze” can be traced in the newspapers of the period. In an article in “Sabah” -a newspaper that literally means morning- on March 20, 1900, it was mentioned that people expected begging to decrease as the hospice began to function. However, because the controls against beggars were not consistent, desired comfort was not gained and people were still troubled with beggars (Özbek 1999: 37).

Within the complex structure of population in Istanbul, beggars were treated in the same way with idlers. Likewise, with the regulations prepared by the Council of the State on April 17, 1890 to prevent begging (Özbek 1999: 37-38), it was announced that sick, handicapped and deserted beggars would be caught by municipal officers and kept in a jail for a week. Those from Istanbul would be sent to a hospice and those from other cities would be sent to their homelands. The ones who were healthy enough to work would be jailed for some time and then those who were from Istanbul would be bailed out, those who came from the rural area would be forced to work for the municipality of the city they were from. The regulations on September 18, 1890 - “*Serseri ve Mazanne-i Sû Eshâs Hakkında Nizamname*” (Regulations on Idlers and Suspects)- removed imprisonment. Begging was prohibited for disabled people and orphans who were from Istanbul by the regulations. They were taken under protection by “Darülaceze”. Those who didn’t disturb people and begged on an occasion would not be punished (Özbek 1999: 37). Despite all these efforts beggary had never been totally swept away by the government. Because of the lack of job opportunities in Istanbul and for some other reasons, beggars were sent to some other cities to be “kept busy”. Sultan Abdulhamid II opened “Darülaceze” in 1896, yet this considerable attempt fell short to stop beggary in Istanbul. Thereupon, the House of Dep-

uties legislated “Law for Tramps” and beggars alongside with the unemployed were sent to Izmit to work. Nevertheless, this law even failed to stop begging completely.

In Bayburt, a city in Black Sea Region in modern Turkey, “*Bayburt Müslümân Dilendirmezler Cemiyeti*” - “Association of Those who do not let Muslims Beg” was founded “as a precaution against beggary that rised in Ramadan” (Karakişla 2002: 36) and it was the first example of institutions against beggary in Anatolia. It is also an important association as it was founded by state officers who “considers giving a job to one in need is the best charity” in collaboration with local people and as it was ready for every aspect of fight against beggary. It can easily be understood that beggary turned into a national problem from a cosmopolitan one.

The tragic stories of child beggars took place in some periodicals (Aksel 1937: 4-5, 32). In 1940, Hakkı Süha Gezgin wrote about an association founded by the beggars and how beggars of the time worked systematically to form an association (Gezgin 1940: 3).

Begging has been a social phenomenon since the Republic of Turkey was founded and has continued to increase until the present day. Therefore, handling beggary only with social and economic aspects will make it more difficult to thoroughly understand it. Literary texts help us to complete some missing parts and gain a better comprehension of beggary.

BEGGARY IN LITERARY TEXTS

Literary texts in Republican Turkish literature, especially fiction texts are also interested in begging. Many novels and stories have been written so far and in this section some related examples will be presented. Hence, the works which adequately reflected every aspect of beggary have been chosen.

Ömer Seyfettin, famous for his Turkist and nationalist ideas, has a distinctive place in Turkish Literature and he is a writer who successfully reflects daily public life and criticized lamenesses in social life through an ironic style. The basic quality of his works is being constructed on an approach that aims to give a good lesson via simple stories.

Ömer Seyfettin’s short story “Terakki” – “The Progress” (Ömer Seyfettin 2004: 53-57) is an ironic work that contains all the qualities mentioned

above. In order to allow reader comprehend easily he starts the story giving the time and setting of the story. It is a time that beggary is tolerated, even supported. There aren't many characters: Niyazi, Neset and the beggar. Niyazi and Neset were away from Istanbul for a while, and when they are back they are fascinated how amazing a "progress" the city went through in a very short period of time. They talk about this progress and innovations in the city. Buildings, streets etc were all amazingly changed. Their conversation on the change on the streets and the spirit of the city is interrupted by a voice that makes sense with the place; a beggar. For the purpose of keeping the reader awake, the writer sets a paradox forth. The city had progressed in terms of architecture and cleanliness but some people who would never realize this progress still existed. The writer uses some adjectives like "strong, severe, intense, vivid, gentle, harmonious" for the voice he did not mention about its owner. The voice complains that the world changed, old days were gone, compassion, philanthropy and humanism in the past were out of date and people selfishly fell in fun. The progress these two men talk about was not shared justly among the people of the city. The progress in the city was not in harmony with progress in humanism, that is basic qualities of humanism did not progress therefore he concludes that the progress has had a bad influence on people. Niyazi and Neset first pay attention to the style of the voice rather than its owner. They think the owner of the voice must be a "powerful rhetorician". The voice keeps telling that "humans are mortal" and the ultimate end is death. According to them, the owner of this voice who freely expresses these ideas must be either a philosopher or a socialist. When they look out, they see the truth. The man they thought either a philosopher or a socialist was just a beggar who has to live in the lowest layer of society.

The beggar, walking slowly, has typical clothes of a beggar despite all the progress in the city. He had "shabby clothes, a sack on his shoulder and a stick in his hand. The beggar who sees the men at the window asks for "a slice of bread for God's sake". This totally surprises both men. They define the man who has a powerful rhetoric as "beggar philosopher" or "philosopher beggar". However, they give him nothing and draw the curtain. In the introduction writer presents the characters in a smokey room and this is not an irrelevant detail. The writer make

the reader feel these two men smoke in Ramadan and this characterization symbolizes the modern man of that period. These type of people talk about progress but they are reluctant to help a beggar and they are unfamiliar with the social progress.

A vivid life that constantly changes, different from past is going on outside: progress. Increase in progress changes and identifies the quality of the relationships between people. Any change in social life can influence the human being and anything about humanity. Therefore where there is progress there are inevitable changes in all institutions of society.

Two men say that there were not such "teachers" before progress and progress provided such opportunities. On the other hand, such a "progressed" beggary is just "arrogance" for them.

Yekta Ragıp Üren's story "*Çöpçülükten Dilencilige*" - "From Garbage man to a Beggar" - (Üren 1940: 5) about a man named Durmuş who moves to Istanbul to make money and who is promoted to a beggar after working as a garbage man because beggars make much more money, differs from other stories. Durmuş is a very strong man. Just as he was about to go back to his village, he starts working as a garbage man for a municipality. A holy night as he is going home, he gives his money to beggars. This charity gives him relief. Another day he intends to give money to beggars again but he hears their conversation and he forgoes. He learns from the conversation that beggars put the money in a bank and get interest income. After that, Durmuş begins to observe them. He, too, has got a good job but thanks to the interest beggars make more money. He starts begging with an ambition to earn more money. It is about making money easily, one of the major reasons for begging. That one business owner deigns to begging, an activity which is done by a segment of society that is more and more marginalized and ignored in terms of status, environment, quality of life and that one's personal observations demonstrate the influence of ambition of earning money is a serious example.

In Raif Necdet Kestelli's "Küçük Dilenci" - "Little Beggar" - beggars are defined with an expression that reflects the general acceptance of begging; dirty, in tatty clothes, weak, pale and so on. This beggar looks like a tortoise and has faint voice (Yılmaz 2006: 106-107). This ten-year-old boy does not care about the money more

than he needs. What he really wants is to run and play like the kids at his age. He is resentful because he is disabled whereas the kids around him play joyfully (Yılmaz 2006: 107-108).

"*Sadaka Almayan Dilenci*"- "The beggar who does not receive alm" by Osman Cemal Kaygılı tells a love and separation story. Fahire has just broken up with Selim. As she is walking on İstiklal Street, she hears a Greek beggar playing "Un peu d'amor" and gives him alm. Selim sees this and agrees with the beggar to serve Fahriye a trick. After he finishes playing, Fahriye offers him money again but the beggar refuses. The beggar tells her that he saw a dream and in his dream she suffered from pangs of love and that she should reunite with him because her lover is a "blessed boy" (Kaygılı 1340:2). Upon this Fahriye returns to Selim.

In Refik Halit Karay's *Memleket Hikâyeleri* – Stories from the Country- a story named "Cer Hocası" – "Assistant Imam" (Islamic reverend) tells the story of a young man called Asim who lost his job in Ministry of Education after the proclamation of Constitutional Monarchy and begins to work as an assistant imam in the villages. He has to take refuge in people once he helped. He has to lead for the prayer, read Qur'an to the villagers, give sermons they can understand, make himself loved by them and do good deeds for them (Karay 1990: 36). Constitutional Monarchy which causes Asim's income reduce, also isolates him. Asim once has to stop off in a village as he is sick. He gives sermons because the imam of the village is away and wins their affections. He stays in the village during Ramadan and keeps giving sermons on. The villagers want to replace him with the actual Imam. The real Imam invites Asim to his place and almost begs him to leave the village. Thinking for a while, Asim sets off back to Istanbul. Asim, in this story, stands for the man of that time influenced deeply by the chaos after Constitutional Monarchy. He is also a good example for the people who are influenced by social and political changes and transformations and lose their social status and environment as well as their job.

Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar is a writer whose works deal with Istanbul, and who presents almost all the dialects, customs and traditions and the contradictions in Istanbul with humor. Events related to our work are in the central location in his novel "*Hayattan Sayfalar*" Life Pages"

(Gürpınar nd: 79). A note from the author himself at the very beginning of the book tells us the events take place before the First World War.

In the novel, beggars and begging traditions are presented in context with the language features of the time and the fragments from the community at stake. The main characters are Hacer, who once was a prostitute now is a very talented beggar, her family and the people in their neighborhood.

The nickname for Hacer, the dominating character in the novel, reveals her moral quality; Slut. Hacer, worked as a hooker when she was young and now becomes a beggar as she grows older, is a person who has many defects in moral sense. Her husband, Abdullah, is a poor, impotent man. Hacer makes use of these qualities for begging. She helps and supports him to beg "in front of the public fountain in Eyüp, on the corner". How she did it is told in the novel this way:

"Every art has its season. Senectitude means cash in beggary. I put a fleece under him and placed the senile man in front of the public fountain in Eyüp, on the corner. I surrounded his cap with a green cloth. I put him on dark glasses so as that people think he is blind. I hanged his arm on his neck with a cloth as if he were a cripple. I put prayer beads over his other hand. He was such a cute beggar that even if he didn't utter any words ten-para coins were falling like rain and whoever saw this poor man gave some money. We made more than 15 kurup a day this way (Gürpınar, t.y.: 18)."

Hacer's greatest trouble is that her husband isn't "permanent" in beggary. Her husband never stays permanent where he is left because he does not want to beg. Problems that can be faced in beggary is also expressed in the novel. A racketeer asks for special assessment for the place they begged so they have to pay 5 kurup a day to him.

In the following sections of the novel the activities of the graveyard beggars is told. Hacer and other beggars in the neighborhood begins to wear their working clothes when they heard the dead body of a general's (pacha in Ottoman) wife was brought to the graveyard. They run to the graveyard and show how graveyard begging is done. Although they don't know the dead woman, they cry out how helpful, honest, generous, charitable she was. One of the basic techniques used in graveyard begging is to ornament these tribute along with exaggerated

prayers. To get more from the alms distributed by the funeral owners, they put on colorful clothes and accesorries in order not to be known. The author tells how these graveyard beggars work in a colorful language:

"Fifteen or twenty of them were rushing to where the money was distributed, catch the coins like a juggler, stretch the empty hands out again. No matter how much alms were given it was impossible to reduce the numbers of the beggars. Distribution took nearly half an hour. However the beggars were still claiming they hadn't got any."

The attendants were about to run out of not only money but also patience. One of the stewards yelled out:

- ♦ *Don't give that girl with patched cardigan. I noticed she took three times.*

The girl, crying:

- ♦ *If I'd taken any, may God stab me with His sharp sword, may He make me kiss my parents' dead body, may He make me fall apart with my aunt in Bursa.*

The steward:

- ♦ *You old woman! Leave! How many times have you taken?*
- ♦ *Oh, are you blind or what? May wounds appear on my body if I'd taken any.*

A doddery old man, pushing the old woman aside:

- ♦ *Zeliha, let us take some money, too! (Gürpınar t.y.: 55)*

This scenery of graveyard beggars who always want to get more is the most vivid narration of graveyard begging. The impudence the graveyard beggars display shows us that this type of beggary was still popular in Istanbul of that period of time.

How the characters make a living through beggary is not the unique concern of the writer. He makes no bones of explaining how they live, the interior of their homes, their moral defects, and their personal weaknesses. For instance, although they live in the same neighbourhood they have no affection or respect towards each other and they do not hesitate to fight with each other for nothing. The writer naturally portrays the characters as people who don't shy to swear as they belong to the lowest layer of the society and they have many moral and personal defects. For the author is influenced by the naturalism in literature, these people should be given in their own natural environments and speak in harmo-

ny with the status and moral structure they belong to.

Bad effects of the social environment they live in can be seen in the characters' family lives. Fitting with the determinism in naturalism, Slut Hacer's daughter sleeps with a man and gets pregnant. This girl called Hürmüz, at the same time, is a source of making money due to her beauty. Her getting pregnant is a great disaster because she could lose the chance to get married to a rich man. Hacer wants to marry her with Veli Aga, the rich greengrocer. Just like the others, the greengrocer is depicted morally imperfect. Veli Aga gives evil looks to the young girls who come to his shop for shopping. The biggest obstacle for this marriage is Hürmüz's unborn child. Towards the end of the novel, Hacer doesn't let Hürmüz out till she bears the baby and Hacer kills the newborn baby. Beggary is something to do with the people who can do the worst deeds in society. So to speak, according to the writer beggary is equal to immorality and the novel is based on this idea.

The only independent work about beggary in Republican Turkish Literature is probably *"Miskinler Tekkesi"* – "Lodge of Idlers". Resat Nuri Güntekin, the author, emphasizes on beggary as the main subject. The manifests of the relationship between a beggar and his family in social life, which is the main reason for the author to write this novel, is the main concern. And then he tells how a person starts begging, social and historic reasons for this beginning, where the beggars live, what the begging methods are, what the beggars' psychology is like. The character, who tells his life, has no name. The narrator uses a modern technique and a "fairy tale" form to tell what he lived through. In order to keep persuasive, he gives the event in chronological order. First person singular narrator increases the candor and allows reader to equate himself with the narrator.

The deduction methods he uses and poems from Classical Turkish Literature he recites show us he is not "illiterate" which can be considered as a common quality in beggars. He sometimes puts such ideas that reader can easily understand that he is quite knowledgeable. Moreover, the verses he recites indicates he has a mature taste of literature.

On the very first pages, we learn that the narrator invented an "easy, unrivalled, peaceable game which is just for milksops" when he was a

kid. Game of begging. This game has a feature that shapes the narrators personality, makes it easy for him to be used to beggary, psychologically relieves him and even provides him with a historic reference. The narrator's grandfather is one of the wealthy and powerful people of his time. The family falls apart because of progressively decreasing wealth and as a member of this family he starts begging when he was in the army for his military service. With the loss of this wealth, there occurs big gaps that will not probably be refilled in the lives of the family members. As the word clearly suggests, this loss would stop when there is nothing to lose.

The narrator uses ironies to enrich the narration. For example, as he was trying to reveal the bases of the feeling for begging in him he compares it with the alm given to his family by the sultan of the age and the acceptance of this alm by his family. This shows us how strong his observations are and how capable he is of telling these with a good sense of humour. Thus, to justify himself or for psychological relief he concludes as this:

"So alm is in my blood; The Kocabas family (the narrator's family) were born with it and it is not surprising that this feature I inherited from my glorious ancestors has reached perfection in me" (Güntekin t.y.: 10).

The narrator discourses on antipathy even as he describes himself in front of the mirror and depicts the physical appearance of a person who is to be a beggar:

"I spent many sad hours in front of this mirror that was placed in the corner of our room in our new mansion by my sister.

I had a unstable and scattered feature like people trembled in front of the camera and a wide and shallow nose which is usually seen in weak-willed people. On the tip of this nose divided into two with a slight line was a beaked mole. My honey-colored eyes, my mouth and especially the dimple in my chin were not ugly. However, my head that swells abruptly with the jut over my bold, joined eyebrow made it all worse.

Combing my hair to the left or right, forward or backward usually resulted in awful scenes. My head that was never straight used to make me feel like seasick and shake all parts of my body (Güntekin t.y.: 20). His discomfort with his body probably helped him to take up with begging.

The narrator tells the proclamation of Constitutional Monarchy, how he became a member of Ahrar Partisi – Liberal Party – and how İttihat ve Terakki – Unity and Progress Party- came to power and thus he lost his job in a chronological order. His work at "Nur-i İrfan Mektebi" – "Light of Education Schools" – on collecting aids from shops was, with his own words, his "first serious experience of begging".

He tells how the country he lives in got poor along with his own story. He joined in the army and served in various fronts. During his service in Aleppo he had an accident and this accident provided him with the defect that would suit with begging. This implies that the society has a positive approach towards disabled people in some ways. A supply garron causes several fractures on his right wrist and arm. Thus his arm remains damaged and after the army was defeated he begins to beg to survive and go back home. In time it turns into his only way of making a living. Our hero, who finally manages to arrive at a hospital in İzmir, is so poor that he has got nothing to wear when he is discharged from the hospital. The director of the hospital gives him a dead man's clothes. Leaving the hospital, he begs professionally for the first time. He never forgets this experience and he chooses the profession for the rest of his life. These incidents in the novel are enriched with significant details to show how he becomes a beggar.

The narrator who starts to live in a district called Tamapalik in İzmir Kadifekale joins in group of people, mainly formed by beggars. He goes on begging here but he thinks it's something temporary. He thinks he is right. Because approach of a person who is a natural born beggar towards beggary is different from the person who becomes a beggar afterwards. He manages to succeed in this job in which he was not trained or experienced. That is to say, he is talented at this job. After İzmir was liberated from occupation, because of the people who notice his wealth and because walking with a turban on the streets becomes dangerous he decides to go back to Istanbul. Thanks to this decision, a new and different career of begging starts for him.

Mesule and İsmail who he took under protection in Tamapalik become his family. He brings them Istanbul, too. He rents a house near Süleymaniye in Istanbul. This situation which can be considered a sign for his desire to settle down, encourages him to stop begging and set up a

tobacco shop. However, bureaucratic handicaps frustrates him to start a business. Now it's time to start begging in Istanbul.

We also witness the classification of beggars by a beggar. The narrator classifies the beggars as the crippled, insanes, fools and the representatives of other classes. Besides, he gives some examples of begging methods he witnessed before. Begging with a letter is practised "among polite people". The beggar hands the letter to the collocutor and awaits for the reaction in a "decent silence". There are some differences between the old beggars and the new ones. First of all, the number of beggars who practise an additional "art" along with begging has increased. Another major difference is that new beggars bid with the fortune they have made through beggary and put their money in the bank. This shows that beggars accept beggary as a "primal" job. The beggary gets its share from the economic and social changes that causes the formation of a lodge, a social class which practise it as a profession. Government and society are now obliged to take up with the beggary once they tried to prevent but failed. Therefore they try to stay away from it. A matter of fact, in the oncoming parts of the book we see that the narrator becomes the "patron" of a public officer. This situation can be seen as a sign of failure in struggle against beggary due to the economic, political changes. Or, from a different point of view, beggary gets its superiority over the body politic via some attack methods, aggression techniques and resistant activities.

There occurs some crisis between the narrator and Ismail whom he sees as his son. Ismail does not object his so-called father when he sends him to a boarding school. He intuitively that he practises beggary and feels sad for him. Ismail is ashamed of the narrator's profession. This makes the relationship between the father and son tense. However, at the end of the book Ismail starts to beg with the woman he just got married, goes back to the narrator's home and give his gratitude to the narrator as he took care of him and grew him up. Verses from "Mesnevi" the narrator read him are quite influential on this situation.

Ihsan Oktay Anar is a writer who writes post-modern novels which has fantastic elements and in which he reflected his personal perception of history with an idiosyncratic approach in his historic novel form. The central issue in his book

"Puslu Kitalar Atlasi" – "Atlas of Misty Continents" – is beggary.

Bünyamin, who starts begging in order to rescue his father Uzun Ihsan Efendi, kidnapped by beggars; Hinzýryedi, who started begging after being caught for robbery while he was the most famous thief in Baghdad and sent to Istanbul when Murad IV conquered Baghdad for his success at his job; Ebrehe, who is alleged knightmare of beggars but in fact the chief of "Tepkilat-i Istihbat-i Humayun" - The Imperial Investigation Organisation"- and his assistants are the connections to beggary in the novel.

In "Yılanın Renkleri"- "Colours of the Snake" section that starts with the abduction of Uzun Yhsan Efendi, customs and traditions, rituals and approaches in beggary are presented. Bünyamin's adventures form the main structure and the novel's secret is resolved with them. Bünyamin is wounded on his face as he is trying to rescue Zülfiyar, an agent of the organisation, from a castle. The wound helps hiding his real identity. He comes back to Istanbul and wants to join in beggars to save his father. The beggars register him and everyone who wants to be a beggar. This registry that belongs to the Beggars' Lodge is formed with the records kept in the languages of the nations which ruled Istanbul before. The notebook whose first pages were written in Latin, then in Greek and finally in Ottoman displays the history of beggary. Bünyamin gets registered in this notebook and starts to accommodate in "a ruined church which is located between Süleymaniye Mosque and Valide Inn and left by the priests as they were not allowed to repair after the fire it experienced"(Anar 2008: 107). Interestingly there is no sexual discrimination here and men and women can stay here without reserve.

Bünyamin learns the skills of beggary here. A big library that was founded to improve the skills of beggary and the books that tells the tips of begging are available here. There are even medical books which show how to make wounds to get more alms and this indicates how meticulously the beggary was carried out. The novel includes many interesting details about the physical appearance and lifestyles of the students. For example, after giving information about their clothes, how and what they eat is told. The beggars use the pots and pans for washing their bodies as well. And this washing is practised just once a year. On the other hand there is a hierarchy among the beggars. Alemsatti, Hin-

ziriyedi's headmaster, is responsible for kađitçibasi (chief of begging with letters), goygoycubasi (chief of poetic beggars), kasidecibabý (chief of the graveyard beggars) and amababý (chief of blind beggars). His assistant's name is Öterbül-bül. While naming the characters the writer make a reference to their personalities. Kâğıtçılar -those who beg with letters- hands out pieces of paper on which is written "May you lay your head at Kaaba! An alm for God's sake!" at the mosques.

The secret in the novel is a secret that can be resolved in between the beggars. Ebrehe, the chief of the organisation and director of the beggars, is looking for a glazed, black coin. In order to get this coin, he uses the resources of the organisation which was founded by the previous sultans but whose existence is known by sultans and several senior officials. For this, he checks all the coins collected, and delivered to Hinziriyedi, in Istanbul in a day. Ebrehe's main concern is the time travel. The power necessary for such a travel is contained in a coin-size matter. This matter will provide the eternal energy for the spintop he would set for time travel. In fact the coin is in the atlas that Bünyamin keeps on his chest.

Ebrehe cannot realize his dream because he is killed by Hinziriyedi, the head of beggars. His death is, at the same time, end of a centuries-old organisation. Ebrehe's dead body is put on a place which may have symbolic and ironic references. "The body is placed on the altar on which the Greek beggars presented sacrifices to an unknown deity before the conquest of Istanbul" (Anar 2008: 219). Hinziriyedi gives a feast on Ebrehe's tomb. The head of beggars is killed by a stroke of lightning.

Although beggary is not the main concern in Mithat Cemal Kuntay's "Üç İstanbul" - "Three İstanbul", we see how one of the characters loses his status and starts begging. Adnan, one of the major characters in the novel, attends Belkıs Haným's mansion as a "hodja" and be friend with Hüsrev, a navy captain, who is known for his "wealth" and "snobbery". In the following parts of the novel Adnan marries Belkis Hanim and meets Hüsrev as a beggar (Kuntay 2009: 499). Hüsrev is no more wealthy or respectable:

"The uncolored cap on Hüsrev's head was the red hunting cap he bought in Germany. The day when Adnan taught Suleyman the Magnificent to Belkis, Colonel Hüsrev came back from hunting with this cap and threw it on the table

in the hall of Mermer Yali – Marbled Mansion as though nobody was there. Adnan recognized this cap that ignored him that day before Hüsrev's face. The memory of the cap was so vivid that he still thought it was red" (Kuntay 2009: 499).

Towards the end of the novel Hüsrev appears once more at Adnan's funeral. Hüsrev "who steadily attends the funerals to get some money for raki" (Kuntay 2009: 699), is the best symbol that stands for the contradiction between the dead and alive.

BEGGARY IN ESSAYS AND MEMOIRS

Ahmet Hasim is a master at hunting the details in the routine of daily life and he exhibits this skill in essays. In his essay called "Beggar" he tells his impression about a beggar "with clever face" he met on the street in an ironic way. He tells how he cares his job like "an official who has to sign an attendance book", how long he stayed on the Street and how he felt the "mercy" of the passers-by and how he hunted them. Ahmet Hasim's success is his attention peculiar to the poets and giving his observations with a naive style. He presents his opinions on why the beggar does this job this way:

"I didn't consider it as a completely foolish action to cadge as a beggar while this man, who is equipped with the highest qualities of a virtuous disposition such as patience, tolerance and neatness, could have run after a more profitable business in harder fields" (Ahmet Hasim 1992: 23).

In his essay "Ramazan Dilencileri" - "Ramadan Beggars", A. Ragıp Akyavas narrates how and when the old beggars come to Istanbul. According to the author, the beggars from every part of the country floods in Istanbul in Ramadan by a ship. With their arrival the streets of the capital are filled with people. As Istanbul has its own beggars, the author likens these newcomer beggars to an augmentation force. In his essay "Goygoycular" - "Poetic Beggars" - he mentions a different group of beggars. The author claims this type of beggars are peculiar to Istanbul and the start walking on the streets in Muharram (a month in the Muslim calendar). He tells how they walk around citing poetry, aphorisms and sayings (Akyavas 2000: 358). According to the author who says these poetic beggars leave the

streets from the tenth day of Muharram were the source of fun for the kids of the time.

Balikhane Naziri Ali Riza Bey divides the beggars in Istanbul into two different groups (Balikhane Naziri Ali Riza Bey 2001: 53-56). A group begs temporarily and the other begs constantly. The writer who claims there were 2700 beggars in Istanbul in 19th century, talks about different begging styles. He says the beggars were classified in a variety of categories such as "kasidedci", "goygoycu" and "gezer" (wanderer) and there was a directorate for beggars. He reports there were much more beggars in Ramadan.

In his essay "Hoy Goycular" (Sema 2002: 289-290) Sadri Sema passes along his observations about the beggars called "goygoycu". His essay is a good sample that shows how these "goygoycu" beggars left traces on the minds of the people of that period.

CONCLUSION

Beggars in fictional texts, with the influence of modernism, took place in many works. Because the financial "progress" could not be shared by all the segments of the society, like in Ömer Seyfettin's "*Terakki*", beggars have managed to keep their existence in society. The existential reflexes of the beggars allowed them to make innovations. We see the promotion of Durmus from garbageman to a beggar in order to make more money in Yekta Ragıp Üren's story "*Çöpçülükten Dilencilige*". This story should be considered significant as it displays the idea that beggary is a profession which provides an enviable income. Because, it indicates a surprising change of direction of the main character who prefers beggary owing to its income, despite the fact that it refers to a lower social status. As seen in the novel *Miskinler Tekkesi*, beggars began to practise different activities apart from the classical perception of beggary because of various social changes and transformations. Some of them took the first steps towards bourgeoisie by bidding and some others put their money in the bank.

It is possible to see all kinds of beggary in fictional texts. The novel *Hayattan Sayfalar* includes the best examples how graveyard beggary is practised. In *Puslu Kitalar Atlası*, different classes of beggary and their techniques are given.

Beggars have been excluded and ignored time to time and even classified out of the average moral values of the society such as trustworthiness, morality and wealth. Therefore the beggars have been defined with adjectives like "thief, wicked, felonious, liar, fraudulent" in fictional texts. The beggar which is just the opposite of these definitions is the narrator who grows up and reintegrates Ismail in *Miskinler Tekkesi*.

Süleymaniye and its surroundings have always been the most popular place for begging. A lot of beggars were located in these places that consist of buildings such as a mosque, public fountains, an almshouse, mansions. Süleymaniye and its surroundings are the major settings in novels dealing with beggary.

The author's observations and opinions on beggary are also presented in memoirs and other literary forms. We learn that "goygoyculuk" is a kind of beggary peculiar to Istanbul from these works.

These fictional works we have examined imply that beggary has always been considered as an activity of making easy money and exploiting people's heartiness. Therefore, beggary has been a profession which is ignored and excluded by society and government, beggars have been seen as a lower class which contains all kind of evil characters and practises evil deeds. Throughout the history, big cities have been the ideal places for begging. Naturally, beggars have been nourished in the society and taken place in the literary works as the members of the society.

Beggary represents the negative sides of the society as a material of literature and thus relatively make us aware of the problems in the lower parts of the society, lives of these people and their philosophy of life. This gives outstanding examples to a sociologist of literature to see how literature is influenced by the issues of social life.

The beggars, the subject of the beggary, naturally appear in almost every form and period of Turkish Literature that tries to surround every aspect of life. This seemingly simple activity of begging may refer to many sociological phenomena. First of all this profession is practised by the poor or people who want to seem poor. So there is a gap which allows to exploit people's good intentions. Hence, the reasons why people do this activity and how the society perceive it can be seen as a unique source of sociologic data. The activity of begging shows and reminds

us the distortion of moral values, helping with each other and exploitation. With the alms given to the beggars who are the typical figure of pity, people sometimes save their conscience and sometimes it turns into a means of excluding this figure of pity. With this aspect reflected in some distinguished works in Turkish Literature, this fact has always been in social life and mostly perceived as a social problem and beggars have been excluded some way.

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