

Traces of Cyprus culture in contemporary Cyprus Turkish poetry

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Abstract. The parallelism between language and culture emerges as a reality accepted by everyone. The individual living in a certain society carries the cultural elements of the society in his own life. The poet, who is in the society in question, reflects the cultural characteristics of the society to his poetry through language. When we look at the formation of Cypriot identity in Turkish Cypriot poetry, it appears as a result of the movement initiated against Turkish nationalism by the 1974 Generation or the Red Belt. In the poems of Fikret Demirağ, Feriha Altıok, Fatma Akilhoca, Saygın Akanyeti, Gür Genç (Gürgeç Korkmazel), Tamer Öncül, M. Kansu, Osman Türkay, Altay Burağan, Orbay Deliceirmak and Faize Özdemirciler, which are considered to have begun in 1943, Contemporary Turkish Cypriot poetry is included. There are many elements to Cypriot culture. In this study, many determinations about the Cypriot dialect, Cypriot life, Cypriot plants and Cypriot food and beverage culture are presented in the poetry books of the above-mentioned poets.

1 Introduction

Cultural background is the most important factor in introducing the existence of a society. The cultural values of certain geography form their original identity. The word “culture” is defined as “*the unity of all material and emotional values owned in the historical and communal development process, reflecting the amount of human interest in natural and environmental domination and transferring them to future generations, culture,*” “*A unity of mind and arts peculiar to a certain group of people or community*”, “*Judgement, pleasure, and criticism skills improved by learning and experience*”

These definitions indicate that culture is the reflection of the moral and material values of a community. On the other hand, language is the tool that effectuates cultural reflections, institutionalization, transferring it to future generations, and survival. Culture and language should not be considered to be two same elements. While language is the means that carries culture along, culture includes the necessary elements needed to form the language [1]

When literary products are considered, it is noted that poetry plays a great role in language phenomenon. While language is a tool targetting specific meaning in everyday life, novels, tales, plays, etc., poetry focuses on an aim, which creates a new language rather than explaining something.

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When we examine a geographical area with its cultural identity, cultural language, and its poetry, where language occupies the biggest part, we can say that poetry has a great role in the existence of Cyprus culture and its transfer to future generations.

A poet living in a certain community acts mainly through poetry according to the values of the people.

In this respect, it is quite natural that a poet, living in Cyprus, reflects traces of Cyprus culture. A connection between culture and poetry always exists in every society. The first type of poetry, *sagu*, entertainment, and *sığır* were told in religious ceremonies by holy men, among Turks. People sang babies to sleep, moaned at funerals, and sang sweet songs at weddings.

Throughout the development of poetry in Cyprus in the verbal period chansons, cradle songs, and tongue twisters were frequently heard, which is an indication of a connection between poetry and culture.

In different eras, particularly the 1974 generation, called Red Generation, the question “Is there Turkish Literature?” was frequently asked. The same question may be put as “Is there a culture different from Turkish culture in Cyprus?” Every society forms the political, historical, and social culture of the geography they belong to. When this is considered, it can be seen that culture has gone through different stages in Cyprus from the Venetian era, the British administration, and the Ottoman era to form the culture of the community. Therefore, every cultural background in every geographical area is different. In this respect, it is important to notice the traces of Cyprus culture in Turkish poetry.

The flow of immigration from Turkey to North Cyprus started particularly in 1974 and onwards. Today, the cultural variety in North Cyprus put the Cyprus culture in the minority position. At this stage, it is important that Cyprus culture is dealt with in Cyprus Turkish Literature. At this point, it must be emphasized that the poet should not focus on reflecting Cyprus culture”. As it has been mentioned above, the elements in poems are natural reflections of the community. This, in my opinion, will cause the Cyprus Turkish Literature to get nowhere fast. As stated above, language has a great role in culture. Therefore, Cyprus dialect in meals, daily life etc. can be considered. This study will deal with the reflection of Cyprus culture on contemporary Cyprus Turkish poetry with the dialect, meals, plants, and daily life.

1.1 Limitations

This study was limited by findings from poems by seven poets involved in Cyprus Turkish Literature, Fikret Demirağ, Tamer Öncül, Saygın Akanyeti, Feriha Altıok, Faize Özdemirciler, Gür Genç (Gürgeç Korkmazer), and Fatma Akılhoca.

1.2 Aim and Methodology

This study aims to protect both Cyprus culture and Cyprus Turkish Literature through Cyprus Turkish poetry. A collection method was used in which books by poets, digital articles, and books were scanned.

2 Dialect

Dialect preserves its importance while dealing with traces of Cyprus Turkish literature in Turkish poetry, Language and culture are strongly interrelated. In this respect, the Cyprus dialect, in other words, Cyprus Turkish should be considered within Cyprus culture. Cyprus Turkish or Cyprus dialect belongs to Turkish spoken in Turkey and is assumed as one of

the Oghuz languages. Towards the second half of the XVI century, the Turkish period started in Cyprus the people who came to Cyprus from Anatolia [2].

Turkish Cypriots adopted standard Turkish used in Turkey while using Cyprus dialects. Although Turkish used in Turkey was seen in literature, traces from Cyprus culture/dialects are also observed.

“probable he never came”

“perhaps he never came”

an illusion falls on

like a ply” [3]

“belki de hiç gelmedi

bir yanılsama düşer

geçkin zamandan içe

gatmeri” [3]

As can be noted in the lines above from the poem “Saltlake” by Fatma Akilhocca, the word “gatmeri” (multi-fold ply) reflects Cyprus dialect/dialects.

“unable to keep his mother alive a bit longer

Washes her with snow

to see her off to make love with warms”

“az daha yaşatamadığı anacığını

yıkayıp sarar karlarla

yolcu ederken sevişmeye kurtçuklarla”

“when it was still dark... [3]

ve etraf hâlâ daha

hâlâ daha

karanlıkken...”[3]

In the poem, “White and Black” in the same book by Akilhocca, “anacığını” (darling mother) is often observed in the Cyprus dialect. The diminutive “cık, cik, çık, cik, cuk” suffixes are affection and pity. The word “kurtcuk”(little warms) in the line “when seeing his mother off” reflects the Cyprus dialect. In another part of the poem, the expression “hala hala” (still) is used to emphasize the duration.

“stew the delicious

flesh around nails

and lets spoon it up” [3]

“tırnak kenarının

lezzetli etçiklerini

yahni yap

kaşıklayalım” [3]

The word “etçiklerini” (the flesh) in the poem “About to go mad”, consists of contracted forms of the Cyprus Turkish dialect.

“I noticed the marble

in the darkness of your eyes-black” [3]

“gözlerimdeki pirilliyi

kaçıramadım

gördüğü ışığında –kara” [3]

In the poem “Pirilli” (marbles) above, the word pirilli is used in Turkish used in Turkey meaning playing marble.

“while moving your hidden

hand around me,

my hair rises on my arm

please let noone see” [3]

“dolanırken saklı elciğin içimde

dikleşir kolumdaki tüyler
aman görmesinler” [3]

In the poem (Bebek) (baby) by Akilhoça the word “elciğin” (your small hand) consists of a contracted suffix used in Cyprus Turkish dialect.

“I thought the shades
gliding through the doorway
were your hair” [3]

The word “tüycüklerin” (your tiny hair) in the poem “Güvercin Suçu” (Fault of the Pigeon) reflects the Cyprus dialect.

“kapı aralığında süzülen
gölgeleri
tüycüklerin sanıp” [3]
“what was more to do
we looked around” [3]
“ne kaldıydı yapacak
bakındık
sola
sola” [3]

Another aspect of the Turkish used in Cyprus is that instead of the learned past simple, the narrative is used. In the first line above by Akilhoça the word “kaldıydı” (what was left) is used as “kalmıştı” (what had been left). The same word “kaldıydı” (was left) is used in the Cyprus dialect referring to the past.

“kiss me
said a sweet old sparrow
and laughed the hungry soil” [3]
“öp beni dedi
yaşlılık bir serçeydi
güldü aç toprak” [3]

In the same book by Akilhoça, the phrase “Kuş Haikular” is an expression in Cyprus dialect.

“well, you were very old
what could you do
leave me alone
there is more to do”
“eh sen gittin çok yaşlıydın napacan
bırak beni
vardır daha yapacak!”

The phrase “Ne yapacaksın?” (What will you do?) in common language is expressed as “napacan? (what will you do?) as seen in the above poem.

“is quiet and moans inside
the ones that can’t be said
fondles itself
the loveless little cat
at doorway” [3]
“susar ve zarıncar içte
söylenemeyenler
sevgisiz kedicik
okşar kendini
kapı eşiğinde” [3]

In the poem “Sinir Okşaması” by Akilhoca, the word “zarincar” (moans with agony) is peculiar to the Cyprus dialect, meaning leaving in pain and moaning. The word “kedicik” (little poor cat) is a word used in the Turkish dialect.

“my neighbors are quiet
in the hot”

“çıt çıt olur
alafta komşularım” [3]

The word “alaf” (flames) refers to very hot weather in the Cyprus dialect.

“tell me, love

what my fortune says” [3]

“söyle can falımda ne görün” [3]

In the poem “Gölgeyla dans” (Dance with the shade” above by Akilhoca, the word “görün” (what do you see?) consists the sound “nazal n”, which is in Cyprus dialect.

“your finger-prints are
in the bubbles in my heart” [3]

“parmak izin var
yüreğimin gandilli bölgesinde” [3]

In the poem, “You or” above by Akilhoca, the word “gandilli” refers to bubbles filled with water in Cyprus dialect.

“we should store lemon
at least for next summer, Hasan” [3]

“ekşi saklamalı gelen yaza
en azından hasan” [3]

The word “ekşi” above is used for lemon in the Cyprus dialect.

“fear was a blue beret in the mirror of water
throwing chocolate and pointing him the barrel” [3]

“korku bir mavi bere’ydi aynasında suyun;

Hem çukolata atıyor hem namlu gösteriyordu ona” [3]

Fikret Demirağ, in his book, “Tanrı Müziği Bir Sessizlikte” (Music in God Silence), presented important samples from the New Trend 11. In his poem “It Was A Small Olive Branch” the word “çikolata” (chocolate) is used as “çukulata” (chocolate) in the Cyprus dialect.

“You left and mines were planted;
along the road, you followed;
there are wires and bush along the roads;
you will come back;

so many hot summers we had since you left” [3]

“Gittin ve arkandan mayınlar döşendi gittiğin yollara,

döneceğin yolları teller, çalılar бүрүdü;

kaç çingır sıcak yaz yaşandı sen gideli” [4]

In the last line of the poem “Ölen Sardunya Çiçeği, Taşlanan Barış Tarlaları” (Faded geranium, stoned peace fields”, the expression the last line “kaç çingır sıcak yaz” refers to many hot summers in the Cyprus dialect.

“I asked you to orange blossom
it lost its smell

on its broken branch” [5]

“portokal çiçeğine

sordum seni,

kokusunu yitirdi

kırılan dalcığında” [5]

In his book, poet-writer Tamer Öncül describes the historical periods of Lefkoşa (Nicosia) in a poetic language. In the expression “kırılan dalcığında” (on its broken branch) in the above poem, the word “dalcığı” took a diminutive suffix to express it in the Cyprus dialect.

“frowned eyebrows;
two broken cypress branches;
dowry chest with no key”
“Çatık kaşları
kırık, iki selvi dalcığı
ağzı abanoz,
anahtarsız
çeyiz sandığı...
“dropped his looks;
to the Lafgara handcraft
round his neck” [5]
Boynundaki
Lefgara’ya düşürmüş
kırık bakışlarını;” [5]

Another sound event seen in Cyprus Turkish language is the change in k>g., which is usually at the beginning, in, and the end [2]. In the poem titled XXXXIV in the same book by Öncül, the k>g change in the word “Lefkara” became “Lefgara” to fit into Cyprus culture.

“Hey, city these are ;
what left behind for me” [5]
“İşte bunlar
ey ŞEHER
senden kalanlar bana” [5]

The word “şehir” in the lines above is used to replace “Lefkoşa” in the Cyprus Turkish language

“A hall, with an army photograph;
my mother keeping her eyes on;
and with tales by an old;
grey-haired granddaddy” [5]
“Annemin gözlerini yapıştırdığı
bir asker resmi
ve ak saçlı bir dedeciğin
masallarıyla dolu bir salon...”[5]

The word “dedecik” (grey-haired granddaddy) in the above lines has a diminutive suffix used in the Cyprus Turkish dialect.

“can’t fill my cup with milk;
by playing saz (a musical instrument) or jazz;
by repairing my torn shoes” [5]
“saz çalmak, caz çalmakla
maşrapam süt dolmaz gerçi
potinlerimin yırtığı ortadan kalkmaz,” [6]

In the poem “Çal” (play) in the 7th edition of Demirağ’s book, the word “potin” in the above lines is used in Cyprus Turkish dialect meaning “shoe”.

“Turk or Greek or British;
We are all bastards;
(God damn!)
“Ne türk ne urum ne İngiliz

piçik hepimiz
(kopsun içinde galsın kökümüz)
So many headaches;
for such a tiny place;
Bir çingı yer için
onca fasariya
Peace is not on the İsland;
but underneath;
Adanın üstünde değil
altındadır barış
Come come, all of you;
There is plenty of lands here;
More than enough foeveryone; [7]
Gelin gelin, siz da gelin
toprag çok burada
hepimize yer var altında” [7]

Several bits of the language used in the above lines in the poem “The latest expressions of the System” by Gür Genç (Gürgeç Korkmazer) in his book titled “Sakanur” is peculiar to Cyprus dialects.

As in the above lines, a consonant mutation was used to refer to the “Greek” to express it as” urum”. The word “çingı” meant a little piece, and the word “fasariya” is used to express “problem, difficulty, hard work” [8]

Another characteristic observed in the Cyprus dialect is that the “de”, “da” (too OR also) connectors in the standard language is used only as “da”. In the Turkish language in Turkey, the sentence “Ben de oraya geleceğim” (I’ll be there, too”) is expressed as “Ben da oraya gelecem) in Cyprus dialect. The “da” connector in the lines above by Gür Genç “Gelin gelin, siz da gelin” (come come, you too) is an example.

A phonetic change (k>g) occurs in the Cyprus dialect. In the line “toprag çok burada” (there is plenty of land here), diminutive suffixes can be observed in the words “toprag” and “çok”.

“Not the first.....the last?” [7]
“İlk değil son?” [7]

In Cyprus Turkish dialect the interrogative article “ mı, mi, mu, mü”, as can be observed in the poem “Sır” (secret) by Gür Genç, is not usually used after the word “son” (the last?).

“the moon was just about to lick;
poked and awakened his wife saying;
you are snoring” [7]

“Tam yalamak üzereydi ki ayı
dürtüp uyandırdı, “horlan” dedi karısı” [7]

In the word “horlan” in the above lines by Gür Genç “Licking the Moon”, a nasal “n” was used, which is in the Cyprus dialect. In the common language, the word “horluyorsun” (you are snoring) is used as “horlan” (you are snoring) in the Cyprus dialect.

“mutual jokes;
He would give marbles from one pocket;
gannavuri from the other...” [7]
“Gannavuri” (a kind of small seed used as a drug-cannabis)
“Jeste karşılık jest:
Bir cebinden pirilli, diğerinden gannavuri
verirdi...” [7]

The words “pirilli” (marbles) and “ ganavuri” (cannabis) are both peculiar to the Cyprus dialect

“ the only surprise of the night;
was the Turkish teacher who asked;
what do you want me to show you” [7]
“ ‘Neyi isten göstereyim’ diyen Türkçe
öğretmeniydi gecenin tek sürprizi” [7]

Interference of the Greek language in the Cyprus dialect is in the word order. In standard language, the verb is at the end of the sentence in the Cyprus dialect [8] In the poem by Gür Genç, “Neyi isten göstereyim) (what do you want me to show you?) is peculiar to the word order in the Cyprus dialect.

“an embryo screams;
but no one hears” [9]
“bir cenin
mavi bir çığlık atar
duymaz kimsecikler” [9]

The word “kimsecikler” in Akanyeti’s “Embryo Army” poem” in his “ 2 Sudden in Between” and “3. Purple” book can be an example of the Cyprus dialect.

“if they had asked my last wish;
cover me with my unfinished poems;
I want the ribbons of my burial robe;
to be from my unfinished lines;
black earth sorry;
before gonno (kind of soil)” [9]
“sorsalardı son dileğim
beni henüz bitmemiş şiirlerimle örtün
kefenimin bağları
yarım kalmış dizelerimden olsun
karatoprak pardon
gonnodan önce” [9]

The word “gonno” (clay soil) in the above lines is used in the Cyprus dialect.

“reaching like a red tiny house with four small rooms;
with my heart longingly:
awaiting for arrival” [9]

“4 odacıklı al bir evcik gibi dumanı tüten
4 gözlü yüreğimin
4 gözle yolunu beklediği” [9]

In Akanyeti’s poem “Purple Crime” above, the words “odacıklı” (with tiny rooms” and “evcik” (a very small house) are peculiar to the Cyprus dialect.

“before shaking off the natural dust;
from its wings;
that’s why I’m shouting at you;
like tsunami;
edi-edi-edinbara come on- come on- BARRA!!!!!!!!!!!!” [9]
silkelmeden kanatçıklarındaki doğal toz
onun’çin tusunami gibi bağıriyorum sana:
edi-edi-edinbara hade-hade-BARRRAA !!!!!!!!!” [9]

In the poem “Edi-Edi-Edinbara” above by Akanyeti, the word “Barra” is in the Cyprus dialect meaning “to dismiss someone”.

“I project my village in my memories;
a room in my village;

a tiny house in the room; [10]
“köyümü seyrederim anıların izdüşümünde
köyümde bir oda
odada bir evcik” [10]

In the poem “My Stars” by Altıok in her book titled “Eylül” (September), the word “evcik” has a diminutive suffix which is peculiar to the Cyprus dialect. is used

“according to nature’s deep call;
a nameless plant said goodbye;
to the attachment”; [10]
“uyarak doğanın en derin çağrısına
veda etti adsız bir fidancık
sevgi bağına” [10]

In the poem above “Fidancığın Çilesi” (Ordeal of the sapling), the word “fidancık” (the sapling) has a diminutive suffix, which is peculiar to the Cyprus dialect. The same application can be observed in the line “veda etti adsız bir fidancık” (said good-to bye the nameless sapling).

“well, it stretches and stretches;
right over here;
pulls out the hottest summer longings;” [10]
“hani uzar uzar da
şuracığın uzaklığı
çekip çıkarır özlere en sıcakını” [10]

In Aqlıok’s poem “That Hot Summer Afternoons”, the word “şuracık” has a diminutive suffix peculiar to the Cyprus dialect.

“a small İsland, divided into two;
its history is written by strangers;” [11]
“İkiye bölünmüş bir adacık
tarihi yabancılar tarafından yazılan” [11]

The word “adacık” (a tiny island) in the above lines by Faize Özdemirciler, a poet and writer, uses a diminutive suffix at the end of the word “ada” (island) as used in the Cyprus dialect.

“hey you all, keep away from my father’s hopes;
he went to trenches for years;
as if going the city”; [11]
“Hey siz! hepiniz! uzak durun babamın umutlarından
şehir’e gider gibi mevziye gitti yıllarca” [11]

As used in Demirciler’s book, the word “city” is expressed as “şehir” referring to Lefkoşa (Nicosia) in Cyprus dialect.

“months and days and red roses;
come back again, as my mother puts it;
and spoil my poem;
a boy woke me up at the most exciting stage of my coffee fortune”
“aylar ve günler ve kırmızı güller
Tekrar gelir, annemin dediği gibi “puşt” ederdi şiirim
bir çocuk uyandırdı falın en güvercinli zamanında” [11]

“as the sun came;
to the top of the people’s heads;
burning the carob, olive, orange trees” [12]
“Güneş vurdukça insanımızın
Tepesine tepesine,
Ateşliyor harnı, zeytini, portakalı” [12]

In his poem “Deli mi bu insanlar” (Are these people crazy?), Altay Burağan, follows an ecological policy in the Cyprus Turkish poetry and expresses the word “harup” as “harnıp” in the Cyprus dialect.

“a little lamb dyed with henna;
bouncing up and down
in short steps,
following me”
“Bir kınalı kuzucuk
Hoplayan ve zıplayan
Küçücük adımlarla
ardım sıra”.
“a cheerful breeze;
hitting its cool;
on my face and body”
Bir neşeli esinticik
Vuran serinliğini
Yüzüme, benliğime.
“a tiny black insect;
from nature;
finding its way into my hand;
flapping over my head”
Bir kara böcecik
Doğanın bir parçası
Avcumda yol bulan
Başımda kanat çırpın
“a heart full of affection;
trying to fly to new places”
Bir sevgi yüklü yürecik
Uçmaya çalışan yeni dünyalara” [12]

In Burağan’s “The wind of the sweet wind” work the words “kuzucuk” (little lamb), “esinticik” (a slight breeze), “böcecik” (a tiny insect), and “yürecik (a little heart), the diminutive suffixes “-cık, cik” are used to refer to something small in the Cyprus dialect.

“a north wind says to another north wind;
Hey north wind;
Let’s go to Karpaz;
For the sake of this country” [12]
Bir Poyraz bir Poyraz’a
“Be Poyraz,
Gel beraber Karpaz’dan girelim
Bu ülke için.” [12]

Another example of the Cyprus dialect can be observed in the lines above by Burağan. The exclamation “be” in the Cyprus dialect (trying to attract one’s attention) is often used

“as they burn the coalpits;
they pollute the environment;
and kill the trees” [12]
“Yaktıkça gaminilerini gaminiciler
Çevreyi kirletiyor,
Ağacı kurutuyorlar.” [12]

As an environmentalist, Burağan tries to explain in his work “Coalpits” how they pollute the environment. “Gamini”, in the Cyprus dialect refers to “Coalpits”.

“the small of toasted bread;

with the taste of margarine
cookies with smashed green olives;
liver, kebab, or perhaps;
just a sandwich” [12]
“Gabira kokuları, margarin tadı,
Başka bir yerlerde var mıdır acaba?
Çakistezli çörekler, ciğer, kebab
Belki de basit bir sandüviç.” [12]

In Burağan’s work to do with food and drink culture, in his “Lefkoşa from sunset to sunrise” poem, words in the Cyprus dialect can be seen; such as “gabira” (toasted bread), “yeşil çakistez” (green smashed olive) as well as the word “sandviç” (sandüviç) in the common Cyprus dialect.

“they sit in a circle;
Around us “keep sleeping mom;
“with the little boy”
“çember olurlar, otururlar
çevremizde: “sen uyu ana,
oğlancık da uyusun yanında” [13]

In the poem “I came from the earth and came I!m around now” the word “oğlancık” (the little boy) has a diminutive suffix peculiar to the Cyprus dialect.

“we say nothing;
“you can’t hear a sparrow singing;
or a vulture screaming” [13]
“Bizden hiçbir ses çıkmaz;
ne bir serçe cıvıltısı
ne bir gıgisi çığlığı” [13]

In Kansu’s work “Toz” (Dust), the word “gıgisi” refers to a sparrow hawk living on dead animals and is peculiar to the Cyprus dialect. [2]

“I wanted to listen to;
that warrior’s sad stories;
where screams were not heard;
and disappearing into the depth of the sea;
“o savaşçının
marazlı öykülerini dinlemek
isterdim, çığlıkların
iştirilemediği denizin derinliğinde
ve karışan denize”

The word “marazlı” (worried, sad, ill) in Kansu’s “Wounded Warrior” is typical of the Cyprus dialect expressing “grief, fear, and aggrievement. [2]

3 Food and drink in the Cyprus culture

Every community has its own food and drink culture which is expressed in different words. This feature is also observed in contemporary Cyprus Turkish Poetry, in which several food and drink names are seen.

1.
“When coffee is heated;
varicella squirts
from the belly of blue; let’s pick”
“ateş görünce kahve
su çiçekleri fişkirır

karnından mavinin toplayalım

II.

“baby gazelles ice cream;
while teens bang into the concrete;
make the coffee and let’s clink” [3]
yavru ceylanlar dondurma
ergenler tostlaşırken betonda
sal kahveyi üstüne
tokuşturalım” [3]

The lines above by Akilhoça, reveal the addiction to coffee among the people of Cyprus and the coffee culture.

“I made the coffee;
to my best;
I added everything;
but I forgot to add the present” [9]
“ettim kahveyi
iyi mi iyi
ekledim gerekli
her şeyi
ah ah bir de koymayı
unutmasam şimdiyi! [9]

Like other poets, Saygin Akanyeti also takes up drink culture and expresses the coffee culture in Cyprus.

“the peace of verigo; (a kind of grape)
can’t cure my heart under the smoke” [3]
“duman altındaki ruhumu
iyileştiremiyor
verigomun erinci” [3]

The word “verigo” refers to a kind of grape hard and with big seeds.

“A fistful of pine smell;
Stuck to her hair;
Baf chewing gum chewed in the streets” [5]
(Baf (Paphos) a city in South Cyprus)
“Bir tutam çam kokusu
yapışmış saçlarına,
Baf Sakızı dişleri
çiğnenmiş sokaklarda” [5]

In Öncül’s poem titled XXXIV in his book “İ-Hora- Şehir (city), the expression “Baf Sakızı” (chewing gum peculiar to that area) is an example of food culture in the Cyprus Culture.

“make white cheese, zivaniya, wine;
rose-syrup and;
splash it to my heart” [4]
nor; a kind of Cyprus cheese,
köfter; a kind of sweet made from grape juice;
zivaniya; a kind of very strong drink (alcohol)
“nor, köfter, zivaniya, şarap yap
gülsuyu serp yüreğine
“when tangerines turn yellow...” [6]
“ya yusuflar sararırken” ...”[6]

In Fikret Demirağ's work "Singing refugee songs", food and drink peculiar to the Cyprus culture are mentioned. "yusuflar" in the above lines refers to "tangerine".

"we had watermelon, buns, and Cyprus cheese happily;
and we felt death growing like a sapling; in our stomachs" [7]
"Karpuz hellim, çörek yedik gülererek,
ve bir fidan gibi büyüdüğünü duyduk
ölümün, midemizin içinde" [7]

In Gür Genç's poem "The Death of the Cruel" traces of the types of food in North Cyprus are mentioned. Meanwhile, the popularity of having watermelon and "hellim" (Cyprus cheese) is also stressed.

"you aren't around for three consecutive days,
and I'm having broad beans with vinegar" [7]
"Yoksun, üç gün üst üste
sirkeli kuru bakla yiyorum" [7]

"sirkeli kuru bakla" (broad beans with vinegar) is a kind of dish peculiar to the Cyprus culture

"you insisted on your decision;
with a hernia in your right groin;
as big as a sugar melon;
grown in Peristerona" [9]
(Peristerona is a village famous for its sugar melon in Cyprus)

"ısrarla aldığım kararla
Peristerona kavununca büyük
sağ kasığındaki fitik" [9]
"how many citrus blossoms;
how many petals you need;
to make blossom jam" [9]
"kaç turunç çiçeğinin
kaç ak taç yaprağından
kaç sodacık
çiçek macunu yapılır" [9]

In Akanyeti's work "How many Nothingths", the typical expression "Blossom jam" is a widely used expression in the Cyprus culture.

"pidgeons left, cranes came;
a fisherman, a few apples from Troodos;
the location is half, the sky is half, the sea; [11]
"Giden güvercindi gelen(ler) bir turna
bir balıkçı, birkaç trodos elması
mekan yarı gök yarı deniz" [11]

The expression "a few apples from Troodos" (Troodos: mountains in Cyprus) is a typical food in Cyprus.

"kebab, buns;
nuts , sujuk, various tastes;
this city, awaken til morning"
"Kebaptan, çöreğe
Fıstıktan, sucuğa onlarca tat.
Sabaha dek
Ayakta bu şehir.

...

"smell from toast bread, taste of margarine;
can it be seen anywhere else;

buns with green olives, liver, kebab;
perhaps a simple sandwich” [12]
Gabira kokuları, margarin tadı,
Başka bir yerlerde var mıdır acaba?
Çakıstezli çörekler, ciğer, kebab
Belki de basit bir sandüviç” [12]

In Burağan’s work “ Nicosia From Evening to the Morning” there are samples of food culture in Cyprus, such as “kebab, buns, nuts, etc.” The food culture was presented as an aesthetic material. The second part talks about green olives, liver, margarine, and sandwich.

4 Life in Cyprus

Culture reminds one people’s way of living. The cultural atmosphere where food and drink are consumed and the way of living has always been a matter of interest. Many poems talk about people gathering for coffee, reading coffee fortune, stringing jasmine together in a necklace, and selling them, incensing to prevent bad luck.

“While coffee is made;
Varicella springs;
From the center of the blue; let’s pick them”
“ateş görünce kahve
Su çiçekleri fişkırrır
Karnından mavinin toplayalım
II.

“baby gazelles ice cream;
while teens bang onto the concrete;
make the coffee;
and let’s drink” [3]
yavru ceylanlar dondurma
ergenler tostlaşırken betonda
sal kahveyi üstüne
tokuşturalım” [3]

Coffee culture has a great place in Cyprus Turkish Culture. That is why this issue is often in poetry. In North Cyprus, people start the day with a cup of coffee wherever they are; at home, in the village, when with neighbors in the summer or winter. The above lines by Akilhoca reflect the coffee culture among the people.

“children would sell jasmine;
strung together;
in the streets” [3]
“ipliğe dizili yasemin satardı çocuklar
yollarda eskiden” [3]

In Cyprus Turkish Culture, jasmine flowers strung together in necklaces to be sold was a way of living. In her work “Mourning”, Akilhoca reminds children to sell jasmine necklaces in the streets.

“incensing with olive leaves;
In the morning” [3]
“tütsüler zeytin yaprağıyla
sabahı edince” [3]

Incensing is a traditional belief among the Turkish Cypriots who wish to have a baby or keep away from every kind of evil eye or malignancy. [14] . Akilhoca brings up the issue in her work “Mualla” and talks about incensing with olive leaves.

“he couldn’t finish the dodgeball game;

with his bleeding knees” [3]

“yakantop oyunlarından

yarım kalmış kanayan dizleri” [3]

The lines above talk about dodgeball games, a part of the Cyprus Turkish culture.

“I was about to win the backgammon game by far;

I was ahead, but both dice were the same;

I lost the game at the last second” [9]

“tavlada kazanmama ramak kala, özellikle de açık farkla

öndeyken her 2 zarın da denk gelerek kılpayı kazanamadığım o

son saniyede, hele hele” [9]

In his work “Trial” Akanyeti reflects on the backgammon game peculiar to the Cyprus Turkish culture. ,

“months and days and red roses”

Come back again;

and spoil our poet, as my mother says;

a boy woke me up during the best part of my coffee fortune” [11]

“aylar ve günler ve kırmızı güller

Tekrar gelir, annemin dediği gibi “puşt” ederci şiirimi

Bir çocuk uyandırdı falın en güvercinli zamanında” [11]

In her work “Balkon-11” (Balcony-11) Özdemirciler talks about coffee and fortune-telling culture among Turkish Cypriots. The expression” puşt ettin falı” (You spoiled my fortune telling) is used when someone interrupts while fortune telling. “Puşt” (homosexual) is used in a poetical dialect.

“who had created

the swamp inside us;

who had put the viper;

into the bottle filled with alcohol” [13]

içimizdeki o bataklığı

kim yaratmıştı. alkol

dolu şişeye, kim doldurmuştu

kıbrıslı engerek yılanını” [13]

In the poem “We would become a Big Bird” in the book titled “ Walking Barefoot Across the Desert” above “by M. Kansu, one of the famous poets in Cyprus Turkish poetry, samples from Cypriots’ lifestyle. The writer reminds putting a snake into an alcohol bottle by asking, “Who filled the bottle with a viper?”, which is a reflection of the Cyprus culture.

“I will never let anyone put into pieces the narcissus flowers sold by children in Nergisli” (a village in North Cyprus) (Deliceirmak, 1994).

A member of the Turkish Cypriot poetry, Orbay Deliceirmak gives examples of the lifestyle in Cyprus in his book titled “Leyla and Köroğlu”. In the above line, he talks about the children selling narcissus flowers in Nergisli village in Magusa district.

5 Cyprus plants

As called by many, the island of Cyprus “Pearl of the Mediterranean” is overwhelmingly famous for its plants in a cultural sense.

There are not plants only peculiar to the island, but different plants from different geographical areas, and these plants are named differently in the Cyprus dialect. For example, the word “kuşkonmaz” (asparagus) in Turkey is called “ayrelli” in Cyprus and is frequently used in contemporary Cyprus Turkish poetry.

“smiles the plant louse;

on dying branches of;

roseberry” [3]

“gülümser

kuruyan dallarında

zakkumun yaprak biti” [3]

Known as “ayçiçeği” (sunflower) in the Cyprus dialect is peculiar to the Mediterranean region and is known as the pearl of the Mediterranean. The expression is used in Cyprus Turkish poetry, as can be observed in the poem “Sabah Çişi” (Morning Pee) by Akilhoca.

“it was half smiling;

forgotten on her lips;

hidden in the roots of;

güldamlası (a kind of plant with a sweet odor) [3]

"dudağında unuttuğu

yarım gülüşüydü

köküne gizlediğim

güldamlasının” [3]

In the above lines of the poem, “Güldamlası” is a kind of plant grown in Cyprus, which in common language is known as “geranium”

“You don’t care what happens around you;

only two trouble gnaw you;

unpicked several olive trees;

your grandchildren with good people” [9]

“dünya yansa umurunda değil

sadece 2 dert kemirir seni

toplanmayan ıssız/ sayısız zeytin ağaçları

ve torunlarının kıymetli ellere düşmesi” [9]

In his poem “ 69 Mirror 96” Akanyeti mentions olive trees, which are important on the Island. The two trouble mentioned refer to unpicked olives and grandchildren in good hands.

“how many citrus blossoms;

how many petals do you need;

to make blossom jam” [9]

“kaç turunç çiçeğinin

kaç ak taç yaprağından

kaç sodacık

çiçek macunu yapılır” [9]

In the work “How many Nothing” Akanyeti talks about a plant “citrus blossom” peculiar to Cyprus.

“If love didn’t exist;

Orange blossoms wouldn’t smell so nice;

Spring wouldn’t strike that much” [10]

“Aşk olmasaydı

ne çarpardı böyle

bu bahar

ne böyle kokardı

çiçeğinde portakal...”[10]

The impact of love is clearly expressed in the lines “ Aşk Olmasaydı” (If love didn’t exist) above by Altıok, in which the role of orange and citrus is emphasized to be an example from Cyprus, an island famous for its citrus.

“if you stay, you like it;

If you go, you for others;

even they plant jasmine in your name” [10]

“kalırsan sen beğen
gidersen el içindir
yaseminler dikseler adına” [10]

In her work “If They Plant Jasmine In Your Name” Altıok emphasizes the place of the jasmine flower in Cyprus

In another piece of work “Oh September, You Were so Beautiful” Feriha Altıok goes;
“You went work in July;
became green again in your heart;
jasmine freed in heart” [10]

Jasmine do they plant roses for you;
the ones who didn't see tulips;
in Tulip Period” [10]

“temmuz işte gittin
bağrında yeniden yeşerdi
canda kurutulan yasemin” [10]

“Yaseminin canına gül mü dikerler
lâle devrinde lâleyi görmeyenler” [10]

In Altıok's work “9/11” the plant jasmine is the main topic

“I hoped everything with no shame;
I lost my hope with no shame;

my father's fertilizing formoza on an almond tree” [11]

“formoza” as expressed in the poem above is a kind of plum grown in Cyprus.

Herşeyi umdum utanmadan, utanmadan kestim umudumu
babamın badem dalına formoza aşılarken kullandığı...” [11]

“I wish I could go with my pain;
with the prolific sapling of love in me;
and plant it in strange climates” [10]

“alıp ağrımı gitsem
İçimde aşkın yediveren fidesi
Yabanıl iklimlere diksem” [10]

In Altıok's work “I wish I could go” the “prolific sapling” refers to a kind of lemon tree in Cyprus.

“I remembered funerals of my childhood;

In the streets;

Gecetütenler blossoming on graves” [11]

“gecetüten” is a kind of flower with a sweet smell, particularly in the evenings)

“trunks of olive and carob;

And citrus trees;

Are all guests of cal mine for tens of years;

One after the other” [12]

Zeytin ve harnup kütükleri,

Ve narenciye ağaçları

Bir bir, kömür ocaklarının

Konuğudur on yıllardır” [12]

As in many other poems, citrus, olive, and carob trees, plants peculiar to the Cyprus culture are expressed in Altay's work “Are These People Crazy”. The writer draws attention to the destruction of such trees.

“Every bush you step on;

Every plant;

Spreads different odors;

As if it comes from a herbalist shop”

Tülümbe, thymus, and rock-rose” [12]

“Bastığım her çalıdan

Her bitkiden

Çeşit çeşit kokular geliyor

Sanki bir aktar dükkanı

Tülümbe, laden ve kekik...” [12]

“tülümbe” (a kind of wild bush peculiar to Cyprus)

In the work, “Tülümbe Odor” by Altay Burağan, expresses the plant as a bush that grows on mountains and is used to make a bush brush to brush front yards in houses or barns.

“The Earth cracked;

dirt flowing everywhere;

as if a smell coming from jasmine” [12]

“Yarılmış yer küre,

Pislik akıyor ortasından,

Bir yasemin kokusu yayılır gibi” [12]

Like many other writers, Burağan too picked up the jasmine smell in his work “I’m Walking In The Dark”. He compares dirt with a jasmine smell to draw attention to pollution.

“when jasmine blossomed in our garden;

there was love and respect” [12]

“Yaseminler,

Açtığı zaman bahçemizde

Sevgi vardı saygı vardı.” [12]

As in other poems by Burağan, in his work “Jasmines” he compares the present when jasmine blossoms with the past and draws attention to the respect and love in the past. While doing so, he mentions a plant peculiar to the Cyprus culture.

“five thousand years from now;

taking away what we admire;

your compositions with daphne, and rockrose smell” [16]

“Beş bin müzik yılı sonra gelecekte

koparıp zevkimize armağan ettiklerin:

defne kokan,laden kokan bestelerin” [17]

Nominated for the Nobel Prize, Osman Türkay, one of the famous poets in Cyprus’ Turkish poetry, and named the space-age poet, makes use of Cyprus plants, daphne, and rockrose, in his “Melodies of Beşparmak mountains” in his book titled “7 Telli”.

“As you get ready for a peaceful sleep;

with olive trees, vineyards, and orange orchards;

decorating your chest” [16]

“Sen, güzel ve ince göğsünü süsleyen

Zeytin ağaçlarıyla, bağlarla ve portakal

bahçeleriyle

Sakin ve rahat bir akşamın uykusuna

Hazırlanırken” [16]

Osman Türkay in his work “The Blue Pearl of the Mediterranean” published in his book titled “Roaming About Universe” he mentions Cyprus plants; olive and citrus, as in the above lines.

“The soil was virgin;

the area was dry;

I made it green with olive and orange trees....” [15]

“Bakireydi toprak, dölledim...

Kuruydu çevre,
Portakalla, zeytinlerle dalladım...
“I’ll never let anyone put into pieces the narcissus children sell in Nergisli (a village)....
Artık Nergisli’de nergis satan çocukları, nergislerini parçalatmam kimseye...
“I will release pigeons over the Mediterranean;
with olive branches;
myrtle and daphne branches in their pegs....” [15]
Artık güvercinler salacağım Akdenize'
Gagasında zeytin dalı,
Gagasında mersin dalı ve defne...” [15]

The lines above from the poem “Song of Freedom” in Deliceirmak’s book titled “Leyla ile Köroğlu” Cyprus plants are mentioned. The samples can be observed in the second and third lines above.

6 Conclusion

Language and culture are closely related. Individuals reflect the cultural features of the society they live in. Thus, many poets reflect traces of Cyprus Turkish poetry in their work. Cypriot identity is a result of actions started by the 1974 generation or in other words the Red Generation against Turkish Nationalism. In Contemporary Cyprus Turkish poetry, Altay Burağan, Fikret Demirağ, Feriha Altıok, Fatma Akilhoca, Saygın Akanyeti, Gür Genç (Gürgeç Korkmazel), M.Kansu, Osman Türkay, Orbay Deliceirmak, Tamer Öncül, Turgay Akalın and Faize Özdemirciler included several issues in their work reflecting the Cyprus Turkish Culture.

This study has presented various samples of the Cyprus dialect, lifestyle in Cyprus, Cyprus plants, and food and drink culture.

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