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Yahya Kemal and Nizar Qabbani: Two Poet-Diplomats in Spain and “Andalus” in their Poems

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Abstract

Yahya Kemal and Nizar Qabbani were two poets who served as diplomats in Spain in the past century on behalf of the governments of Turkey and Syria. Yahya Kemal wrote two poems about Spain, “Dance in Andalusia” and “Coffee Shop in Madrid”. “Dance in Andalusia,” a poem written about the Flamenco dance, has become very famous. In this poem, he described the traditional dance of the Spanish people and emphasized the place of this dance in their lives and the fun-loving lives of the people of Spain. In almost all of the poems which Nizar Qabbani wrote about Spain, on the other hand, a feeling of sadness rather than joy prevails. He gives a deep sigh in his poems as he regards Andalusia as the one-time land of his ancestors. His most important poem with respect to Spain is the poem entitled “Granada”. This poem is considered to be one of the most significant odes in the Arab literature describing Granada, the pearl of Andalusia, Arab influences there, the Alhambra palace and the sadness felt due to the loss of the city by Arabs. This study analyzes the two most important poems written by Yahya Kemal and Nizar Qabbani concerning Spain, namely “Dance in Andalusia” and “Granada”. Whenever it is deemed appropriate, other poems of the two poets regarding Spain will be dwelt upon and what kind of an influence Andalusia left in their emotional world will be revealed.

Keywords

Andalusia, Dance in Andalusia, Granada, Nizar Qabbani, Yahya Kemal

Introduction: Text as Context

Yahya Kemal and Nizar Qabbani were two talented poets who broke ground in the Turkish and Arab poetry. These two poets, who did not confine themselves to the traditional and old forms of poetry, possessed unique styles that were hard to imitate. According to the official documents, Yahya Kemal was appointed as Ambassador to Madrid on 6 February 1929 (Kahraman 361), and was sent to Madrid where he was to stay for three years (Ertop 109). Nizar Qabbani, on the other hand, served as a diplomat in Cairo, Turkey, London, Beirut, China and Spain and then resigned in 1966 to devote his time to poetry (al-Fâkhûrî 686). Nizar Qabbani wrote ample amounts of poems whereas Yahya Kemal was discreet with regard to writing poems. Although both poets are known for their famous women and love poems, they also wrote poems about national historical and social issues. Some poems of both poets were set to music. Tülücü states that more than twenty of Nizar Qabbani’s poems were set to music and they were sung by Umm Qulsum, Mâcide Rûmî and many others (28). Many poems of Yahya Kemal were also set to music by different composers in the course of time. Ömürlü included in his book a hundred and seven different compositions for Yahya Kemal’s fifty-six poems, along with their lyrics and notes (13).

These two poets, who were among the most-talked about poets of the Turkish and Arab literatures of the 20th century, deeply influenced several generations in their time. Not only did they affect their time but they also managed to become poets who were widely read by generations after them. Although their poems about Andalusia do not, in terms of quantity, occupy a significant place in their collected poems, they are the ones that need to be dwelt on seriously owing to their contents. Qabbani’s poem “Granada” is a precious piece of poetry that will immortalize the name of its poet. Yahya Kemal’s poem, too, is an important poem that describes the Andalusian culture, the Flamenco dance and the Spanish

joy.

A common point in Yahya Kemal and Nizar Qabbani is that they wrote poems for cities and places. In one of his odes, Nizar Qabbani addresses "Beirut" as "Oh You Miss World, oh Beirut" (577), he eulogizes Beirut in his ode entitled "To Female Beirut with Apologies" and speaks to those who destroyed it in the following words: "If Lebanon dies, you will, too, die along with it / Anyone that kills it is himself dead" (628).

For Yahya Kemal, on the other hand, miss world is İstanbul. His prose writings about İstanbul which were published in different places were compiled in a book called *Aziz İstanbul*. There are odes he wrote for Göztepe, Çamlıca and Çubuklu (Beyatlı, *Kendi Gök Kubbemiz* 63-68). The poet speaks of İstanbul in the following terms: ". . . I would say they have lived in the longest and best dream / Who have lived long in you, died in you and rests in you" (Beyatlı, *Aziz İstanbul* 7).

The beauty of Granada and Alhambra deeply affected Yahya Kemal. He describes in a letter an unforgettable night he spent at a hotel called Alhambra Palace located on the hill where Alhambra is situated in the following words:

It is very difficult to squeeze Alhambra and Granada into a letter. The hill where this palace is located is probably one of the most beautiful visiting sites of the globe. I stayed at a hotel on this hill that was named Alhambra Palace overlooking the plain. The one night I spent there will be one of the most prized stays of my life. The hotel had a long terrace that faced the plain, the city and the snowy peaks of Sierra Nevada. I felt, till late at night, the color, peace and music of a Granada night on this terrace. (Kahraman 369)

Yahya Kemal went on a weekly tour of Andalusia in May 1929 and visited Granada, Seville and Cordoba (Banarlı 132). It is understood, from his memoirs, that he did not spend much time in Andalusia. However, this does not mean that he did not find anything that struck one as attractive. On the contrary, the poet expresses in the following terms the fact that Granada is a city that cannot be forgotten after it has been seen once:

I went from Seville to Granada. It is a place that one will remember forever after seeing it once. Granada is a final commemorative site that the Arabs created with the force of all of their art and their last artists after they were driven out of everywhere and took refuge in a corner in the South of Spain. The city is located on a large plain that is surrounded by snow-clad mountains. The Alhambra is on a hill behind the city. It is on this hill that the Arab, or to put it more accurately, the Andalusian civilization of mixed Arab and Berber origin gave its final feast before fully withdrawing from the Spanish soil. (Kahraman 369)

Methodology

The poetry anthologies and poetry books of these two poets where their poems were collected were surveyed and those about Andalusia were brought together to be analyzed. It was found that nineteen poems of Nizar Qabbani and two poems of Yahya Kemal were about Andalusia and Spain. Moreover, their prose writings about Andalusia were also reviewed. Their poems "Dance in Andalusia" and "Granada" were used as a base and while lines belonging to these poems were being analyzed, other poems related to these lines were also referred to. Different sources were searched with regard to Spanish culture, the Flamenco dance and Andalusia and the accuracy of the information concerning these topics given in the two poems was checked.

Literary Review

Nowadays, the name Andalusia reminds us first of the Alhambra Palace, that pearl of the Andalusian civilization, and the Flamenco dance. Words fail to describe the unequalled beauty of the Alhambra Palace. Sâmi Paşazâde Sezâi, who served as an ambassador (like Yahya Kemal) in Spain used, in his travel notes about the Alhambra palace, the phrase ". . . its mihrab, or altar, at which even non-Muslims would prostrate themselves for worship," for altar of the palace which he praised (qtd. in Gündoğdu

319). Andalusia has been, undoubtedly, a land of hand bells, or castanets, shawls and dances, though there has never been a shortage of wars there. According to Erkoçoğlu and Arslan, the golden age of hand bells, music and dance was experienced in Andalusia eleven centuries before Yahya Kemal wrote his poem "Dance in Andalusia" (Erkoçoğlu and Arslan 261). Naturally, one has difficulty imagining a palace that lacks poets and musicians. Throughout history, music and poetry held a special place in the palatial circles during the Abbasid, Umayyad and Andalusian Umayyad eras.

In the first line of his poem "Granada", Nizar Qabbani makes mention of the Alhambra Palace and states that the event that he had experienced took place there. Yahya Kemal, on the other hand, cites Andalusia and Granada in the first and fifth lines of his poem "Dance in Andalusia". Kahraman maintains that the dance was watched by the poet in the Xerez district of Andalusia [Jerez in Cadiz] (376). Yahya Kemal mentions "three reds" in the first couplet of his poem. If these reds were the colors that caught the poet's eyes while he was watching the dance, then one can conclude, on the basis of Gürsel's comment below concerning the first couplet of the poet, that the dance was watched in Granada:

The first red must have been the amber-colored sight of Alhambra on the fountain of the Lion Garden, wet with the tears of Boabdil, the last ruler of the palace; the second red must have been "the most beautiful rose of hussy Granada" on the breast of the dark-skinned gypsy doing Flamenco dance; well, then what about the third red? It must of course have been the shawl of the Andalusian dancer that seduced our ambassador in Madrid "with their sudden spins like the turning of a fan, their whirling, opening and covering themselves"; The last Ottoman poet who said "Not all colors do our eyes desire, our eyes are on red; Spain, with all its existence is at this shawl this evening" cannot have thought of the blood of the Spanish poet executed by firing squad in the same city during the civil war! He saw three times red in an Andalusian evening but he did not want to see blood. Yet, I knew from Machado's lines that the murder had been committed in Granada, that Granada of Lorca's. In my eyes, Andalusia was red by the blood of the poet who wrote Gypsy romances. (qtd. in Özmen 57)

When we think of the dominant color in Granada, we immediately remember the red-colored Alhambra palace and the striking green of the trees surrounding the hill upon which it sits like a crown. It is fine that the first red brings to Gürsel's mind the Alhambra palace. However, if the dance was watched in Serez, as Kahraman maintains, instead of Granada, then the first red might have been the red dress of the dancing girl. Since the poet indicated the time of the dance as "evening time" in the first couplet of the poem, what is meant by the first red might also have been the crimson horizon that arises at sunset.

Özmen disagrees with the aforementioned criticism by Gürsel with regard to Lorca stating that the poem "Dance in Andalusia" was completed in 1933 but that the execution of Lorca by firing squad took place in 1936 (58). Gürsel imagines Andalusia as being painted with the blood of the poet due to his keen interest in Lorca. If Lorca had died before the time Yahya Kemal had written this poem, and if the poet had meant a blood with the color red, this blood could have been the blood of people who had been tortured to death during the Inquisition as well as Lorca's blood.

In this poem, Yahya Kemal deals with the traditional Andalusian dance. This type of dance which he calls the "Spanish dance" is known as Flamenco, a fast-running dance unique to Spain. Fakhruddin contends that the word Flamenco is generally associated with dance but this is wrong because it is composed of a combination of dances, songs and musical performances. He believes that it was born in Andalusia in the 18th century out of Andalusian music and dance; he argues that there are various theories regarding its origin but that the strongest thesis in this context is that Flamenco belongs to Maghreb (Fakhruddin).

In the letters he sent to his friends, Yahya Kemal came with interesting findings about the "Spanish dance":

What I most dreamed of seeing in Seville was the Spanish dance. Unfortunately, I was told that the best of this dance could be seen in Paris at Opera-Comique! This miracle of shawl, rose and

bell and the storm of ecstasy, which we deem to be Spanish, is in fact an Arab dance in origin, but it was kept alive by Gypsies, who remind one of Arabs, and spread across Europe as a Spanish dance. This dance, despite all its beauty and fame, was not adopted by the Spanishness and was even disdained. Here, people regard foreigners seeking Spanish dance in the way we regard Europeans who want to see harem in Turkey. (Ertop 109-112)

Ertop states that Yahya Kemal laid the foundation of this poem, which he would complete years later, on the words "bell, shawl and rose" (115). When we look at the manuscript of the "Dance in Andalusia" poem belonging to Yahya Kemal, which he shared in his book, we see that the words bell, shawl and rose were written more than ten times in Ottoman Turkish and Latin alphabets (Ertop 116). Almost the whole sketch is composed of these words. The pioneer couplet of this poem is the couplet where these words are used. The verse was completed with the addition of the other couplets afterwards. Just as there are advance guards in a warring army, so there is certainly a guiding couplet in a poem and that couplet drags the other couplets behind it. The couplet where the words bell, shawl and rose are used is the pioneering couplet of the poem "Dance in Andalusia" and drags the others behind it.

Nizar Qabbani, on the other hand, who is known as the poet of women and love, states in an interview held with him that the most successful deed he did in the name of women exploited by men was probably his removing the name of women from "the foods menu" and adding it to the "list of flowers" (Qabbani 533). He complains that the epithet "Poet of the Woman" was etched in his skin by the press and that he suffered due to being labelled in this way and he adds that he is a poet of men, women and human relations, that is, he is a poet of all of these (540-541).

The poem "Granada" is, in my opinion, Nizar Qabbani's best political-historical poem. It is flawless in terms of both form and content. The ode drags the reader into an atmosphere of grief from the very beginning to the end. In his "Little Ballad of Three Rivers", Federico García Lorca lets grief flow in the waters of Granada, saying "... Two rivers of Granada / One weeps, and one is bloody ... and ... But for Granada water / only the sighs growing ..." (Lorca). Nizar Qabbani, too, lets a similar grief seep into us in this poem of his. Most Arabs who are interested in Andalusia remember the couplets in the ode because they express the grief felt over the loss of Andalusia.

Nizar Qabbani and His Poem "Granada"

Nizar Qabbani wrote nineteen poems in total with respect to Andalusia, six in "Muzakkarat Andalusia", eleven in "Awraq Īsbāniyye", one in "Ahzānun fi al-Andalus" together with this poem called "Granada". Of these, he wrote the poem "Granada" in the Kamil meter of the Aruz prosody, while the others in prosodic *tefīles* without sticking to a specific prosody. Nizar Qabbani managed to squeeze into this twenty-couplet ode the history of Andalusia, the glorious past of the Arabs, the architecture of the palace and the wailing for the loss of those lands, in short everything. He is extremely successful in expressing his emotions. Nizar Qabbānī wrote this ode in Granada in 1965:

Our meeting was at the entrance of Alhambra
how nice it was to meet without making an arrangement!
Two pitch black eyes. In their sockets
Dimensions are being born out of dimensions!
I inquired, "Are you Spanish?"
[Yes] my birthplace is Granada, she said.
Granada? And seven centuries were born (again)
in those two eyes, after a sound sleep
The flags of the Umayyads were hoisted high
and their horses were lined in rows.
How strange history is, look how it has taken me back
to a dark-skinned female grandchild from my grandchildren
A Damascene face, I saw through it
the eyelids of Bathsheba and the double chin of Su'ad

And I saw our old house. and a room
Where my mother used to spread my cushions.
And the Jasmin flower decorated with its petals
and the pool with a golden sound
What about Damascus? Where is it? You will see it, I said
In your cascading hair, a black river
And in your face unique to the Arab, and in your mouth
still harboring the suns of my country
In the smell and water of Jannat al-Areef
In the Arabian jasmine, in the basil and in the citrus
She walked with me, and her hair running breathlessly behind her
like wheat spikes left without being reaped
The long earring in her ear glimmers
Like Christmas candles on a New Year night
I trailed behind my guide like a child
and behind me, the history: a heap of ashes ...
Decorations, I will almost hear its heartbeats
Embroideries, call out from the ceilings
Here is Alhambra, she said, the source of pride of my forefathers
Read my glories on its walls
Her glory? (Upon hearing this) I rubbed salt into a bleeding wound
Then in a second wound in my heart...
If only my beautiful heiress knew
the people she mentioned were my ancestors
When I bade farewell to her, I embraced in her
Someone by the name of Tariq bin Ziyad.
(Qabbani 569-574)

The poet begins his ode with the entrance of the Alhambra Palace, the most beautiful sight of Granada. He makes his entrance as if into a dream world through the gates of the palace, which is an unequalled structure with its ornamentations, architecture, garden, fountain and flowers. Here, the fact that the beginning of the poem and the beginning of his visit coincides to be the same place adds a special beauty to the poem. Another nice thing about this meeting is that the poet met the girl who was to serve him as a guide coincidentally without making an arrangement beforehand. The moment of meeting of two acquaintances, a grandfather and a grandchild, who, as if have not seen each for years and awaited eagerly to meet, takes place in front of the Alhambra palace.

“Two pitch black eyes.. In their sockets / Dimensions are being born out of dimensions!” What first attracts the attention of the poet in the meeting is the jet black eyes of the girl who is going to serve him as a guide. When the poet catches the girl’s eyes, the blackness of her eyelashes draws his attention. According to Spanish people, three black things that make women beautiful are eyes, eyelashes and eyebrows and three thin things are fingers, lips and hair (Mérimée 42). With the blackness of her eyes, the poet here made reference to the first black limb of the Andalusian beauties. When the poet looks at those black eyes, he moves from one dimension to another: through the beauty of the eyes, he begins a journey from the real world into a world of dreams, and from the moment he is in to the past.

“I inquired, ‘Are you Spanish?’ / [Yes] my birthplace is Granada, she said.” As is the custom, the poet wants to initiate a conversation by asking the girl where she is from. Here, the poet’s asking “Are you Spanish?” rather than “Where are you from?” brings to mind the possibility that he thought she was Spanish because he had seen a face that was typically Andalusian. The Spanish girl responds to the question saying that she is Spanish and that she was born in Granada, where they set foot, not in any other place.

“Granada? And seven centuries were born (again) / In those two eyes, after a sound sleep”. At the mention of the word Granada by the Spanish girl, the poet dives into deep thoughts, going back to

distant times, seven centuries before. Those two eyes shake off the veil of oblivion on the glorious soil of his ancestors and reanimate him; he witnesses the rebirth of a gold-gilded past in those two black eyes. The past of his forebears begin to flash before his eyes. This couplet marks the transition to that gorgeous history; with this couplet, the poet announces that he will take his readers on a journey through history and draws their attention here”.

“The flags of the Umayyads were hoisted high / And their horses were lined in rows.” Centuries after they were brought down, the poet imagines the Umayyad flags to be flying on the towers of the Alhambra palace. He dreams that thoroughbred Arab are everywhere in the now-empty palace. In those eyes, he embarks on a journey in the past and takes a walk in that palace, where there was constant activity in the glorious period of seven centuries ago.

“How strange history is, look how it has taken me back / To a dark-skinned female grandchild from my grandchildren”. The poet is astonished to have met once again a dark-skinned girl of his own lineage who remained from the Umayyads after they had left Andalusia to the Spanish centuries ago, and feelings of affection arise. The poet of love does not now look the girl he has met from the perspective of material beauty; instead, he puts her in place of his granddaughter. The fact that the girl is dark-skinned reinforces his belief that she is of his own blood or ancestry.

“A Damascene face, I saw through it / The eyelids of Bathsheba and the double chin of Su'ad”. When the poet looks at the Spanish girl, her face reminds him of the face of Bathsheba and double chin of Su'ad. Bathsheba is the queen of Sheba, whose parable is mentioned in conjunction with Solomon in the Holy Quran. Upon Prophet Solomon's invitation, she professed her belief in God, and stopped worshipping the sun (Quran, Surah al-Naml 23-44). Nizar Qabbani's second wife, Belkis al-Râvî of Iraqi origin who he had married in 1970, was killed in a bomb blast when Iraq's embassy came under attack in 1981 and this loss caused unspeakable grief to the poet (Zubaydah 30). However, Qabbani wrote his ode entitled Granada in 1965 before he had married Belkis. It is possible that the poet may have known Belkis before their marriage.

The name *Su'ad*, on the other hand, is one of the female names that have been used in Arab poetry since the period of Jahiliyya (pre-Muhammadan era). In his work “Alfiya”, Ibn Mâlik includes the name *Su'ad* as a proper name in a section called “alem” (proper name), stating that it was *murtejel* (used originally as a proper name, not for any other purpose) (Ibn Mâlik 80). Some poets use this name when they refer to their beloved but whether their beloved is named *Su'ad* or not is a debatable topic. In the annotation he wrote to an ode entitled *Banat Su'ad*, Ibn Hucce el-Hamevî indicates that the name *Su'ad* might be the true love of Ka'b bin Zuheyr or it could just be an allegation (al-Hamevî 27-28). Although we are not Arabs and our beloved's name is not Leila, we sometimes use that name to refer to our beloved. In a way, some names have replaced the word beloved. Ka'b bin Zuheyr's ode (109) ‘*Banat Su'ad'-Su'ad Left*’, which he wrote to apologize to Prophet Muhammad and to praise him, is known by the name of *Qasida al-Burda* and the name *Su'ad* is used in three couplets including the first couplet. Although al-'Aṣā (241) and Jahiliyya poet al-Dhubyani (101) had two odes whose first couplets begin with ‘*Banat Su'ad*’, *Su'ad* has been associated with the name Ka'b bin Zuheyr due to the ode he wrote to the Prophet just as Leila is associated with Qays.

“And I saw our old house... and a room / Where my mother used to spread my cushions.” Some events, persons and things that we encounter in our lives take us back to our childhood; sometimes, an silverberry tree that we come across on our way takes us back to the past, to a silverberry tree which we climbed to pick silverberries but fell off. Nizar Qabbani, too, remembers the house where he spent his childhood in Damascus and the room in which his mother made his bed, his cushions, while he was taking a tour of the Alhambra.

This situation naturally brings to mind the similarity between the Andalusian architecture and the architecture in Syria. Undoubtedly, traces of Arab architecture are observed in the buildings in Andalusia. For example, Sâlim argues while referring to the Cordoba Mosque that it is impossible to deny existence of traces of Syrian art in architectural decorations and in some parts of the building and adds that many buildings and palaces constructed by Abdurrahman ed-Dâhil in Cordoba, Rusâfe and Dimashk resemble similar buildings in Syria (209). The situation is the same not only in Cordoba but also in other cities. Le Bon states that the Alhambra palace, like many Arab palaces, does not at all

resemble European palaces and adds that Arab poets describe Granada as “the brightest city that sun beams have ever seen” and as “Dimashk of Andalusia” (306-308). The poet may have spent his childhood in building constructed in an ancient style. While he is going through the rooms of the Alhambra palace, the poet feels as if he has entered the room where he entered to sleep when he was a child. In this way, he seems to have returned to the family home he left yesterday.

“And the Jasmin flower decorated with its petals / And the pool with a golden sound”. Today, the Jasmin flower can be seen in the gardens of apartment blocks, overflowing into streets over garden walls in Granada. Its fine smell in the morning and milk white petals attract people. This plant is a common and much loved flower in Syria. While Nizar Qabbani is rambling through the corridors of the Alhambra in admiration, this flower attracts him to itself and the pool with a fountain, the garden and the palace enable him to travel in a dream World depicted in the tales of *One Thousand and One Nights*.

What about Damascus? Where is it? You will see it, I said
In your cascading hair, a black river
And in your face unique to the Arab, and in your mouth
Still harboring the suns of my country

It is understood that Nizar Qabbani gets into a conversation while he is touring with the tour guide. The tour guide asks him about his country. It is not known whether or not this conversation took place in the said manner. Sometimes, a poet constructs beautiful things that he cannot have the opportunity tell his beloved when they are together and expresses them in his poems. One who spends invaluable time with the beloved in a dream may not have this opportunity in real life. With such a method of construction or fiction, the poet puts in lines the sufferings of reality in a dream-like manner. During the conversation, the girl asks him about his hometown and where it is. The poet, in his turn, means to say, in a way that seems to tell her that she too is an Arab girl, “My city (Damascus) is in you, within you”, indicating her black hair and black face unique Arabs. Continuing the Arab tradition of likening their beloved’s face to the moon or the sun and their teeth to pearls and other bright objects when they describe their beauty, Nizar Qabbani emphasizes the Spanish girl’s face unique to Arabs which reminds one of the sun, and brilliance of her teeth. He points out the harmonious beauty created by black hair and white teeth despite the apparent contrast between them.

“In the smell and water of Jannat al-Areef [Generalife] / In the Arabian jasmine, in the basil and in the citrus”. He continues to cite the similarities between Granada and Damascus, as trying to say that his city is not far away and that he has carried here the city in the Orient with all of its beauty. He wants to say to the tour guide girl that the smell of his city is in the smell of here, and that its water is in the city of this city; he adds that jasmines, basil and citrus fruit, in other words everything has brought his own city Damascus to Granada. The fact that the poet mentions the jasmine flower which he has already referred to in previous couplets leads one to think that he has a special interest in this flower.

She walked with me, and her hair running breathlessly behind her
Like wheat spikes left without being reaped
The long earring in her ear glimmers
Like Christmas candles on a New Year night

While he is walking behind the guide, the poet’s eyes focus on her long hair. Her moves while she walks just like ears of wheat left unripe sway from one side to the other in the wind. The poet runs after her, her hair out of breath. Here, he uses the figure of speech of personification to add variety and vitality to description. Then, her shiny earrings draw attention. He likens the golden earrings to candles radiating yellow flames on a New Year’ night. In this couplet, too, he uses the art of metaphor (tashbih) to lend vivacity to the color of the earrings.

I trailed behind my guide like a child
And behind me, the history: a heap of ashes . . .

Decorations, I will almost hear its heartbeats
Embroideries, call out from the ceilings

They continue to walk around the Alhambra. The poet obeys his guide with full devotion and follows her like a child. While he introduces parts of the palace one by one, the poet reminisces how the magnificent history of his ancestors came to an end here, how they were driven away from this wonderful building and the civilization here and is overwhelmed with grief. The decorations seem as if they were living beings and he imagines he hears their heartbeats; the poet begins a journey through the past and re-experience those times as if the masters engraving those decorations on the walls during the construction of the palace were working right beside him, as if the construction of the palace had been completed just yesterday. The ornaments on the ceiling call him, as if to say “you are not a stranger here; this is your homeland and just yesterday your ancestors were walking here”.

Here is Alhambra, she said, the source of pride of my forefathers
Read my glories on its walls
Her glory? (Upon hearing this) I rubbed salt into a bleeding wound
Then in a second wound in my heart . . .

After their tour of the palace finished, the Spanish girl tells the poet, who is dazzled by this beauty, that those who built all this beauty were ancestors, feeling the pride of showing him the magnificent heritage of her forebears. This statement by the tour guide girl opens a deep wound in the poet’s heart. He feels sorry that the splendid civilization built by his ancestors is denied. The second wound comes when the girl, who he thinks is Arab, believes she is Spanish. The poet’s sorrow doubles due to the fact that the girl is unaware of both the civilization his ancestors built and her own origins.

If only my beautiful heiress knew
The people she mentioned were my ancestors
When I bade farewell to her, I embraced in her
Someone by the name of Tariq bin Ziyad.

Having completed the tour in sorrow, the poet feels time has come to say goodbye to the Spanish girl, who is his tour guide. It is not understood from the last two couplets whether or not the poet has told the Spanish girl anything about her origin. However, the poet wishes that the girl knew who her ancestors were. While he is bidding farewell to her, he hugs the girl as if he were hugging Tariq bin Ziyad, his ancestor who had conquered Andalusia, and leaves there.

Yahya Kemal and His Poem “Dance in Andalusia”

The poem “Dance in Andalusia” is one of Yahya Kemal’s poems that were made into music. Ömürlü included in his book the notes of the composition made by M. Nurettin Selçuk in the Kürdî’liHicâzkâr maqam (Ömürlü 94-98).

Bell, shawl and rose. All the speed of dance is in this garden
Andalusia is three times red at a night of zest
The magic song of love is on hundreds of tongues.
With all of its joy, Spain is at this bell.
Their sudden spins like the turning of a fan,
Their whirling, opening and covering themselves ...
Not all colors do our eyes desire, they are on red now;
Spain is at this shawl wave after wave this evening.
Her lustful fringes are in ringlets on her forehead,
And the most beautiful rose of hussy Granada is on her breast ...
There is a golden chalice in every hand and the sun is in every heart;

Spain, with all its existence, is at this rose this evening.
She stops in the middle of the dance and dances as if she walks;
She looks with a turning of the head, as if she kills ...
She has a rosy skin, ember lips, and smutty eyes ...
Devil tells me I should hug and kiss her a hundred times ...
To the shawl that dazzles the eyes, to the rose that enchants,
And to the bell that fills every heart, an "Ole!" from all chests".
(Beyatlı, *Kendi Gök Kubbemiz* 102)

The poem is written in the Mefûlu/fâilâtu/mefâîlu/fâilun meter of the Turkish Aruz prosody. It is one of the frequently used prosodies by Yahya Kemal.

"Bell, shawl and dance. All the speed of dance is in this garden / Andalusia is three times red at a night of zest". The poet begins his poem by citing bell. All of the first three words in Turkish (zil, şal and gül/bell, shawl and rose) are closed syllables involving one consonant, one vowel and one consonant have the same value in prosody; despite this, the poet begins the poem with word *zil* (bell), which implies that the sound made by the bell first rang his ear while he was watching the dance and that was why he began the poem with this striking bell. Today, this dance is associated with the guitar. Nevertheless, the poet does not refer to the guitar or any other musical instrument but instead emphasizes the sound of the bell. Today, a small wooden base is placed in squares in Granada and a dancer, getting onto this platform, performs his/her dance. In some cases, this dance is also performed without accompanying music. High-heeled shoes worn by dancers may produce the rhythmical sounds that can be generated by any musical instrument. Dancers seem to maintain a fast tempo with their feet during their performance, as though playing a musical instrument. However, since the dance is very fast and vigorous, the feet need to be moved very fast, which renders the performance of this dance quite challenging compared with the other types of dance.

Ertop reports that the poet watched three female dancers' dance (115). Yahya Kemal is engrossed in the dance and has set his eyes on the dancers. The dancing girl's shawl and red rose draws his attention. Dancing girls occasionally attach these roses to their hair, take a fan in their hands to add an aesthetic beauty and wave it. Sometimes, their hands are empty, so they hold their skirts and move them, which adds a special beauty to the dance. That the shawl is red is understood from the next couplet.

Nizar Qabbani, on the other hand, writes the following lines in his poem "Bayt al-'Asafir" about Spanish girls and their connection with roses:

In Seville
Every beautiful girl wears
A red rose in her hair.
In the evening, falls on that rose
All the sparrows of Spain
(548)

Irving makes mention of a girl named Jacinta in his tale "The Rose of the Alhambra" in his book *Tales from The Alhambra*, indicating that Andalusian women traditionally embellish themselves with roses: "...Her glossy hair was parted on her forehead and decorated with a fresh plucked rose, according to the custom of Spain..." (171).

Nizar Qabbani, too, watched this dance but what draws his attention is the "symphony of the fingers". He writes the following lines in the third poem of "Muzakkarat Andalusia":

A Spanish dancer,
Tells everything with her fingers.
The Spanish dance is the only dance,
Where the finger replaces the mouth.

A fervent invitation. Thirsty rendezvous
Consent. Wrath.. Lust. Wishes.
All are uttered with the sigh of a single finger,
With the tapping of a finger
I am at my place
And so is the symphony of the fingers
It reaps me
It carries me (to other realms)
It places me on the Andalusian dance garment,
That which has stolen all flowers of Andalusia,, without caring for anybody
That which has stolen the light in my eyes,
With reckless abandon.
... (Qabbani 531-533)

Yahya Kemal's ode and the lines in Nizar Qabbani's poems together seem to complement the elements of the Flamenco dance. For example, Yahya Kemal does not make mention of a dancer tapping out by clapping hand, Nizar Qabbani does this and names this as the "symphony of fingers". Perhaps, the dancers in the show that Yahya Kemal watched did not tap out with their fingers and that's why he may not have mentioned this subject in his poem. Yahya Kemal writes his poem as if writing a letter to a friend in distant lands like someone introducing this dance to him so describing everything in detail; anyone who has not watched this dance before can create a mental picture of the dance and the dancers when they read this poem. In Nizar Qabbani, too, one cannot see a troubled person's lack of interest towards their environment in his poems about Spain; in spite of his grief, he directs his attention to his environment and expresses what he has seen in detail.

"The magic song of love is on hundreds of tongues. / With all of its joy, Spain is at this bell." In this couplet, Yahya Kemal tells us about the Spanish people's custom of accompanying songs. Moreover, with the phrase "With all of its joy, Spain", he emphasizes the Spanish people's characteristic nature, i.e. their disposition to laugh and have fun together. On the other hand, in his short poem entitled "Sonata", which he included in "Awraq İsbaniyya", Nizar Qabbani states that the guitar fills one with grief but at the same time it also gives joy: "In the body of a wailing guitar / Spain dies... and is born" (Qabbani 546).

"Their sudden spins like the turning of a fan, / Their flirtatious whirling, opening and covering themselves . . ." In this couplet, Yahya Kemal indicates, while the dance is being performed, the dancer's rapid and lithe movements, their sudden turns to the right or left, their bending down and then up in a flirtatious manner, their swaying their skirts with their hands and their pulling them to themselves. He describes us in such details the movements of the dancers in these words as if we were watching it, not skipping anything.

"Not all colors do our eyes desire, they are on red now; / Spain is at this shawl wave after wave this evening." The color red, which is the symbol of love, is a striking color. The poet does not see the other colors, or he does not want to see them; he does not take his eyes off the red color, that is the shawl of the dancer. The Spaniards, too, have engrossed themselves, like the poet, in the dance and focused their eyes on the colorful shawl. In this couplet, the poet employs assonance in the Turkish poem for the purpose of adding harmony to the couplet. While he uses, of the other vowels, the letter "e" four times, "ı" five times, "i" three times, "u" and "ü" twice, he uses the letter "a" twelve times. Moreover, his use of *bronze rhyme* with *-al* and *şal* and the repeated phrases of "*-dadır*" have enriched the harmony in the poem.

"Her lustful fringes are in ringlets on her forehead, / And the most beautiful rose of hussy Granada is on her breast . . ." Here, the poet turns his gaze towards the dancer's face and the rose she wears on her chest. He likens her fringes to the fringes of hussies and attributes attractiveness to Granada that is typical of a hussy beauty. Here, he uses the figure of speech of simile (*tashbih baligh*) where the city is likened to a seductive beauty. The artistic merit of this simile is that an inanimate being is attributed to a quality that is specific to human beings, that is Granada is ascribed the beauty of a woman through

personification (tashkhis). Yahya Kemal does not look at the city the way Nizar Qabbani sees it. He voices the beauties the city brings to mind and wants to see its beauty, rather than the sorrows. When he watches the dance, he does not, like Nizar Qabbani, act with a sense of belonging there historically.

“There is a golden chalice in every hand and the sun is in every heart; / Spain, with all its existence, is at this rose this evening.” It is understood from this couplet that those watching the dance spend the evening drinking. He describes the wine glass, which has turned yellow due to the color of the wine, as a golden glass. Here, too, he emphasizes the sharpness of the color of the wine by using the art of simile (tashbih baligh). He finds the effect left by the attractive color of gold in the wine glass. By citing the sun, gold and wine glass in this line, the poet highlights the bright color common to them. These three beings are believed to provide happiness; by choosing these words, the poet seems to announce that he is one of them. With the phrase “the sun is in every heart”, the happiness of those present there is emphasized. Since he uses the word the sun in place of happiness, he has made use of simile (istiara tasrikhiyya). The artistic beauty of this simile is that an abstract concept has been concretized, i.e. the art of personification (tashkhis) has been used. He states that the present company has spent a fine night and forgotten about themselves among the elements that have rendered the environment beautiful. In addition, these couplets provide some clues as to the socio-cultural life of the Spanish people. It is emphasized that the Spanish people are gregarious society that loves eating and drinking together. The poet deals with this issue, which he sees and takes seriously, in passing.

Nizar Qabbani, too, has watched this same dance in a pub. However, he is busy reminiscing his ancestors rather than the joy of the Spanish people. He is sad rather than happy in his poem “Bakâya al-‘Arap” in “Awraq İsbaniyya”:

Flamenco..
Flamenco..
And the slumbering pub awakens
With the laughter of the bells of its wooden tambourine.
And with a sad sound going shrill,
Flowing like a golden fountain.
And I am sitting at a corner.
Wiping my tears,
And gathering the remains of the Arabs.
(Qabbani 556)

In these lines of his, Qabbani attaches the ability of laughing, which is unique to human kind, to the bell of the tambourine. This line contains the art of metaphor (istiara makniyya). The poet has strengthened the meaning by using the art of personification.

Whereas Nizar Qabbani is filled with sadness which he is watching the Flamenco dance, Yahya Kemal loses the joy that he feels in his poem “Dance in Andalusia” in still another poem entitled “Coffee Shop in Madrid”. In this poem, he seems to envy the joy of the Spanish people. He feels sorry about his being away from his country and voices his longing for it:

I saw a cafe in Madrid, which is a synagogue,
We are somewhere where remarks are palavers.
Hundreds of bigmouths lost in laughter and talk,
This clamor still lingering in my tired ears
I paused, sadly pitying my situation
Remembering for a moment Café Çınaraltı in serene Emirgan,
And the sound of the leaves in northerly winds.
Sometimes, one’s heart drifts into the music of the waters
Sometimes into the most beautiful of Yesâri’s calligraphies.
(Beyatlı, *Kendi Gök Kubbemiz* 109)

Indeed, as two grandchildren of two conquering nations, Yahya Kemal and Nizar Qabbani share similar feelings. But, the objects of love in the hearts of the two are different cities. While Nizar Qabbani, a grandchild of Arabs, yearns for Granada of unequalled beauty, which his ancestors had once conquered, Yahya Kemal, the grandson of that glorious nation who conquered Istanbul, the pearl of the world, longs for it. If there is one city left to be loved in the world, it has to be Istanbul. The poet never fails to mention Istanbul, in which he lives wherever he goes and cannot wait to meet again.

"She stops in the middle of the dance and dances as if she walks; / She looks with a turning of the head, as if she kills . . ." In this couplet, the poet returns to the dance after three couplets. He continues to describe in detail the dancers' movements specific to Flamenco, their stopping for a moment and then resuming the dance, their turning their heads to the viewers sharply and casting a glance, the effect of these looks on the viewers and the dancers' actions. Again, he uses metaphors (tashbih) in both lines, creating a vivid image of the dance in the readers' eyes.

"She has a rosy, ember lips, and smutty eyes . . . / Devil tells me I should hug and kiss her a hundred times". The poet states, from the bare parts of the dancer's body that it has a pinkish color. The fact that her lips are red with lipstick, her eyes are jet black and her eyelashes are smutty make the dancer even lovelier for the poet and he wants to embrace her, kissing profusely. It is seen that the poet has deliberately used the phrases "a rosy", "ember lips", and "smutty eyes" to reflect the riot of colors. The art of metaphor (tashbih baligh) has again been used three times in these phrases. Yahya Kemal describes, using these adjectives, how the great differences between colors exist harmoniously in the same single face. Frequent reference to these different colors in this and other couplets indicates us that a riot of colors is prevalent in the environment.

"To the shawl that dazzles the eyes, to the rose that enchants, / And to the bell that fills every heart, an 'Ole!' from all chests". While concluding his poem, the poet returns to the shawl, rose and bell. Just as he has begun the poem with the bell, shawl and rose, so he bids his farewell with bell, shawl and rose. The sound of the bell, the dancer's shawl and the rose have impressed everyone and they all encourage the dancer shouting 'Ole!'. 'Ole' is defined as "an exclamation of approval or encouragement customary at bullfights, flamenco dancing, and other Spanish or Latin American events" (Dictionary.com n.d.). It is rumored that the origin of the word 'Ole' is Arabic 'Allah' but in time its pronunciation has changed into 'Ole' in Spanish and is used to express approval and like (Fakhruddin).

As can be seen in all of his couplets, the poet went there that evening to have fun and watch their dance, so he does not want bitter memories to sour the entertainment. He desires to spend a good evening with the people there, get to know their culture and take part in their joy. He observes the people, and envies their happy state. When we hear the poem, the lines that voice excitement, joy and love do not take us to realms of sadness.

Conclusion

Nizar Qabbani and Yahya Kemal served as diplomats in Spain and breathed the same air there. Yahya Kemal wrote two poems about Spain entitled "Dance in Andalusia" and "Coffee Shop in Madrid". The poet's longing for his motherland is in the foreground in 'Coffee Shop in Madrid'. He is sad while the Spanish talk and laugh in joy. The themes dealt with in the two poets' poems "Dance in Andalusia" and "Granada" are different. While one is concerned with weeping and yearning, the other describes dance and joy. Whereas Yahya Kemal's poem deals with a crowd that has fun and is rapturous with the dance of the dancer, the environment where the dance is performed, and the Spanish joy, and makes happiness into music, Nizar Qabbani's poem is a sad symphony, a yearning and an elegy. Each couplet is like a sorrowful sound emanating from an instrument where sorrows are played with different notes. Just like music played with sadness touches sensitive parts of our hearts, so do the couplets of the ode trickle into us suffering and grief slowly and drop by drop. This is so much so that when the poet hugs the girl for farewell in the final couplet, we feel a need in us to embrace the poet to console him. The poem is rare compared with similar ones in terms of its form and content. Emotions, sadness, yearning and admiration have all mingled with one another with all their shades on the pallet the poet holds in his hand and the poet has managed to produce an unequalled painting by distributing that mixture across that canvas of poetry.

The quantity and the quality of the poems indicate that Nizar Qabbani is devoted to Andalusia with closer bonds, the bond of Arabness, than Yahya Kemal. It is observed that in comparison with him, Yahya Kemal did not establish a spiritual connection with Andalusia. Since there was not a relationship of belonging between Andalusia and his ancestors, Yahya Kemal acted as an observer and took part in their joy. In his poems about Spain, Yahya Kemal does not share Nizar Qabbani's suffering in Andalusia but the same is also true for Nizar Qabbani; he, too, is far from feeling Yahya Kemal's suffering in connection with the Balkans in his other poems. Yahya Kemal lives the moment in Spain and takes part in the joy of the Spanish people whereas Nizar Qabbani seems to want his ancestors to rise from their graves and hug him. He wishes to roam the narrow streets of Andalusia with his forefathers once again.

Both poets employed descriptions in their poems and made an effort describe to the smallest detail whatever they have seen. The poems "Dance in Andalusia" and "Granada" will remain on top of the Turkish literature and the Arab literature respectively as two exquisite poems until better and newer ones are written.

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