

Juniper (Ar'ar) Tree in Classical Turkish Literature

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Introduction

Trees play a major role in the daily life and beliefs of human beings. Humans have used trees to survive, to keep warm, to attack or to produce. Since the Chipped Stone Age, people have continuously benefited from the tree species around them. Prioritizing trees with more vital value at first, human beings have also attributed a spiritual value to trees over time. Thus, trees and their fruits, which were initially used as a source of food and for the treatment of diseases, have gained a different identity. Over time, trees have become symbols with different meanings. Some trees were considered sacred in mythologies and religions and were seen as a gift from the gods (Gezgin, 2021, pp. 11-12).

In many cultures, trees have been seen as symbols of life, vitality and growth and development (Yıldırım, 2006, p. 245). The tree, which has a place as important as air, water and soil in the beginning and continuation of humanity, has influenced many cultures throughout the ages. In many cultures, the tree was considered sacred and turned into a cult. Cult means respect and worship towards beings known as supreme and sacred (Kayabaşı & Cini, 2024, p. 640). The basis of the acceptance of plants as cults is the concept of cosmic tree. In world cultures, there are three cosmic levels: underground, earth and sky. The communication between these three cosmic levels is sometimes a mountain, sometimes a universal pillar, and sometimes the tree of life, which is the source of human life (Ergun, 2017, p. 26). The tree of life rises from the center of the earth and connects all cosmic regions (Isık, 2004, p. 92). This tree, which is at the center of everything, is thought to be higher than all the trees of the earth and to be the representative of God on earth.

The tree is also given great importance in Turkish culture. In Turkish thought, the tree has assumed many roles such as derivation, nutrition, contact with God, reaching heaven, healing, wishes, and managing natural events (Ergun, 2017, p. 25). From ancient times to the present day, it has been believed among Turkish communities that planting trees around temples and near graves is a sacred duty. However, it is reported that the tree was considered sacred not as a result of its material existence, but as a result of some of its properties and the power it represents (Işık, 2004, p. 90). In ancient Turkic culture, it is believed that rocks, trees, bushes, mountains, floods, grasses, flowers, and especially objects made by human hands carry within them a very special essence, a being, a spirit (Roux, 2000, p. 32). We see the sacred tree form in many Turkish epics. According to the Altai, there was water before the creation of the earth. God, called Kудay or Ulgen, commanded the “person” who befriended him to bring up soil from the bottom of the sea. The first humans grew like fruit on a tree branch (Inan, 1986: 14). In the Er- Sogotoh saga of the Yakut Turks, Er- Sogotoh, the first human being, was brought down to the earth with a sacred tree (Ogel, 2010, p. 97). A similar motif is also seen in the Uighurs’ Derivation myths. The princes, who are considered to be the ancestors of the Uighurs, were born from the beech tree between two rivers (Ogel, 2010, p. 141). Again in Dede Korkut, it is seen that Basat derives from a great tree (Işık, 2004, p. 92). In the Oghuz Kagan epic, Oghuz Kagan is found in the middle of a river.

The place of the tree is also important in Abrahamic religions. In the Torah, the holy book of Judaism, the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil are mentioned in the creation of the world. Another tree considered sacred in Judaism is the gopher tree. God told Noah to build his ark from the gofer tree. Other trees that are considered sacred are the oak, acacia tree, sunnuk

tree, erz tree and date palm. It is reported that the Erz tree is the tree of Allah, that it was planted by Him and that birds build nests on it (Ergun, 2017:, p.138-140). In Christianity, the cross made from the wood of the tree of good and evil has replaced the cosmic tree. The cross is seen as a tree rising from the ground to the heavens. The most important symbol of the tree is that it is accepted as the tree where Jesus was crucified. Another important tree in Christianity is the pine tree. Pine is the symbol of Christmas, the religious holiday of Christianity (Ergun, 2017, p. 130). In Islam, the protection of plants, which are very necessary for the health and nutrition of people and other living creatures and for providing various means of livelihood, and the issue of not cutting them unnecessarily has also been given importance. Plants are given a wide coverage in the Holy Quran and hadiths. In Mecca, the plucking of plants was forbidden from the time of Prophet Abraham. Prophet Muhammad also attached great importance to the planting, cultivation and protection of trees and planted trees himself. He also had many miracles related to trees (Topaloğlu, 1988, p.458; And, 2007, p. 141). In the Islamic world, the pomegranate, fig and olive trees mentioned in the Qur'an were considered sacred and valued. The olive tree was also referred to as the tree of blessings. Another tree mentioned in the Qur'an is the oleander tree, which grows in hell and is said to be the food of the people who will go there. It is referred to as the Shajar-i mel'ûna, the cursed tree. It is also called Shajar al-ahdar, the green tree, and it is stated that Allah created fire from it and put it at the service of people. As for the tree of eternity, it is mentioned in the Qur'an as the tree that Adam and Eve were forbidden to eat from. It was under the shade of the tree of contentment, or shajarat al-ridwân, that Muslims pledged allegiance to Prophet Muhammad. The tree of Tûbâ is promised in the Qur'ân al-kerîm to those who do good deeds. It is believed that the roots of the Sidret al-muntehâ are located in Paradise. The Yaktîn tree is a tree said to have been created for Prophet Yunus in the Qur'an (Ergun, 2017, pp.107-108; Tanyu, 1988, pp. 458-459). Among plants, trees are perhaps the most important. In many communities, trees are considered sacred and valued. In the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, the word shajar or shajarah occurs in twenty-six places, both in the sense of tree and plant in general. The Qur'an states that the tree was created as a work of divine grace and power and draws attention to the fact that many living things cannot live without trees (Topaloglu, 1988, p. 457). The Qur'an mentions the names of some trees such as dates, pomegranates, grapes, bananas, figs and olives. Apart from these, trees such as zakkûm, tûbâ, sidretü-l- muntehâ, yaktîn, şecer-i memnu, şecer-i ahdar, şeceretü'l- huld are also mentioned (Topaloğlu, 1988, p. 457; Ergun, 2017, pp. 107-108). In Surah Tîn, fig and olive trees are sworn by (Tîn 95/1). In Surah Hajj, it is said that everything in the heavens and the earth, the sun, moon, stars, mountains, trees, animals and many people prostrate to Allah (Hajj 22/18). This is one of the indicators of the importance given to the tree.

The tree motif occupies a large place in classical Turkish poetry. The tree is seen as a symbol of life, vitality, growth and development. In Classical Turkish Literature, trees are also discussed outside of garden depictions. According to the poets, trees are Allah's gift to His servants. Allah has hidden many wisdoms in mountains, stones and of course trees:

"Bu tag u taş u toprakda ağaçlarda vü yaprakda

Ne hikmetler nihân eyler te'âla'llah zihî sâni' " Hakîkî (Esir, 2017, K. 266/9)

(In this mountain, stone, soil, trees and leaves, Allah hides wisdom, and He is the best of builders.)

Studying the colors of the leaves of trees reminds the servants of Allah's art:

"Ne san'at itdi ağaçlara Kudretiün kalemi

Ki reng reng görünür nite ki bûkalemûn" Ahmedî (Akdogan, 1979, K. 65/2)

(How Allah's pen made art on the trees so that they appear colorful like chameleons).

Each leaf of the trees turns into a mouth and tells about Allah:

“Bahâr eyyâmı remz-i vahdeti berg-i çemen söyler

Şecerde her varak esrâr-ı Hakkı bî-dehen söyler” Mehmed Sıdkî (Eren, 2017, G. 55/1)

(In the days of spring, the leaves of the garden speak the sign of unity. Every leaf on the tree speaks the secret of Allah without a mouth).

The movement of the trees in the wind reminds poets of someone praying. Şeyh Gâlib refers to the prostration of trees in his masnavi Hüsn ü Aşk:

“Hep secdeye vardı berg ü eşcâr

Hayretle eridi akdî enhâr” Şeyh Gâlib (Dogan, 2017, Hüsn ü Aşk, Mes./ 293)

(All leaves and trees prostrated themselves. All rivers melted and flowed in amazement.)

Mehmed Sıdkî, on the other hand, stated in the following couplet that the trees prostrate themselves. He also said that at the time of dawn, birds and savages express the oneness of Allah with love:

“Sâcid olmuş cümle esmâr râkî ‘olmuş hep şecer

Mürğ ü vahşî ‘aşk ile tevhîd okur vakt-i seher” Mehmed Sıdkî (Eren, 2017, G. 70/2)

(All the trees have bowed down, all the fruits have prostrated. At the time of dawn, birds and wild animals recite Tawheed with love).

Trees have also been the subject of prophetic miracles. In the following couplet, Vahyî alludes to the Prophet Muhammad’s revival of a dead tree. The poet says, “*You are that prophet of miracles who, with the effect of your gaze, made the dead tree fruitful in one breath.*”:

“Sen ol Peygam-ber-i iccâz-perversin ki bir demde

Dıraht-ı mürdeyi feyz-i nigâhun mîvedâr eyler” Vahyî (Tas, 2017, K. 6/26)

The revival of the dead tree is also among the miracles of Jesus Christ. In the following couplet, Naylî says, “*Just as Jesus’ breath revived the dead tree, the morning wind made the cypress of the rose garden walk.*”:

“Nesîm-i subh reftâre getürdi serv-i gülzârı

Dem-i ‘Îsî gibi ihyâ idüp emvât-ı eşcârı” Neylî (Erdem, 2005, Byt. 83)

Süleyman Çelebi, on the other hand, in the following couplet, refers both to the tree’s bearing witness to the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad and its prostration to the Prophet Muhammad:

“Hem ağaçlar kıldılar ana sücûd

Oldılar haklığına cümle şühûd” Süleyman Çelebi (Pekolcay, 2007, Vesiletü’n- Necat, 330)

There is also a miracle of the Prophet Muhammad walking a tree (Yucel, 2020 316). Hamdî of Lârendeli alludes to this event in the following couplet:

“Bir barmagunla iki bölünür felekde ay

Köklü ağaçları yürüdürsin bilâ-kadem” Lârendeli Hamdî (Kutuk, 2002, Leylâ u Mecnûn, Mes. / 273)

Since trees are seen as living beings in some cultures, they feel the treatment they receive. For this reason, bad words and behaviors in the presence of trees are frowned upon. In the couplet below, Âşık Çelebi states that the tree should not be stoned and that it will not bear fruit when stoned:

“Urduka seng ‘Âşık eyler du’â senâ

Taşlanmaz ol dirahî ki ol virmeye semer” Âşık Çelebi (Kılıc, 2017, G. 84/5)

In Classical Turkish Poetry, some trees are especially included in garden metaphors. This study examines how the Juniper tree, which has an important place in Turkish culture, is handled in Classical Turkish Poetry. While selecting examples from the hundreds of couplets analyzed, only one of the couplets with the same meaning or repeating the same metaphor was selected in order to avoid repetition.

Juniper Tree in Classical Turkish Poetry

Juniper is defined as “a tree of the cypress family, fragrant, evergreen in winter, whose round black nuts are used as medicine” (Parlatır, 1998, pp. 83-128). It is also known as mountain cypress and ar’ar. The juniper tree has pointed and long leaves and shiny black, cone-shaped fruits. It has a very effective odor that strikes people. It is known that its smell is more pronounced especially in rainy weather. This tree can grow up to 8-9 meters in average. Since the juniper tree is resistant to difficult climatic conditions, it can live for hundreds of years. Juniper is even known as the last tree to leave the forest. It is thought that the word juniper, which means remaining and not disappearing, was given as a name to this tree for this reason (Alçay, Akgül et al. 2018: 45; Torlak, 2009). Juniper is a tree that does not shed its leaves in winter.

Juniper is a well-known and respected tree in the Turkic world. The juniper tree is seen in ancient Uyghur inscriptions. In ancient Turkic beliefs, juniper represents strength and resilience. The sanctity of this tree, which is the subject of Kashgarli Mahmut’s work, came from Asia to Anatolia through Turkmens. According to Kashgarli, the word juniper is the name of two places in Kashgar. In another narration, the ay agili (moon house) is mentioned as the most beautiful thing among the Turks. Kashgarli Mahmut: Whoever said (shameful), the ear has heard that the moon house is a juniper branch (Ogel, 1995, pp. 472-473). Juniper graves have a very important place in Central Asia and Anatolia. Juniper has been one of the symbolic trees of Turkish culture. It is used as “arça” in Turkestan and “arçın” further north. The ancestors of the Yakuts believed that juniper had a divine, magical power, and they fumigated many places with juniper incense (Ergun, 2017, p. 281). The Turks living in Altai used the word “arçın” for juniper. Juniper is the most important symbol of cleanliness and holiness. Juniper is used against the devil and all kinds of evil spirits (Ergun, 2017, p. 283). Juniper is one of God’s blessed trees. With its tall stature, it rises up to the sky and scatters the light of God. At the same time, the moon receives its light from the juniper and therefore from God. Because juniper is described as the home of the moon. In other words, the moonlight received its beauty from the juniper tree that carries God’s blessing (Ergun, 2017, p. 282). Incense was burned from juniper tree to purify from evil.

Since the juniper tree is very valuable and has many benefits, it is forbidden to be cut in some regions and certain rules are imposed when its branches are plucked. The person who takes the juniper branch must be clean, and none of his/her close relatives must have died within a year. Before taking the branch of the tree, an anchor should be tied and a prayer to God should be

made. Then, after telling the reason for taking the branch and asking permission from the tree, the branch should be taken in a hurry by sprinkling milk around. However, two branches should not be taken at once and the branch should be broken by leaning towards the north. It is believed that bad words and behaviors should not be made in places where juniper trees grow. It is believed that those who act badly will be punished with illness or death (Ergun, 2017, p. 284). In Fethiye and Seydikemer Yoruks, old juniper trees are considered great because they are likened to human beings. Therefore, juniper trees are never cut down as long as they do not dry up. Even damaging the leaves is considered a sin (Eroglu, 2015: 99).

In classical Turkish poetry, juniper is often used with the name “ar’ar”. This beautiful tree is an indispensable element of garden descriptions. In his song heralding the arrival of spring, Gâlib depicts green cypresses, nesrin, ar’ar and jasmines watching the way to spring:

“Muntazır teşrîfine saf saf durur serv-i çemen

Vaktidir ey nev bahâr-ı işve bu gülzâra gel

Yolların bekler gül-i nesrîn ü ar’ar yâsemen

Vaktidir ey nev-bahâr-ı işve bu gülzâra gel” Şeyh Gâlib (Okcu, 2017, Şarkı-4/1)

When the rose garden is likened to a battlefield, the juniper becomes the banner:

“Leşker-i sultân-ı gül başdı çemen iklimini

Dikdi şahn-ı gülşene ‘ar’ar livâ nev-rûzda” Feridûn (Simşek, 2002, G. 14/10)

In winter depictions, the juniper covered with snow is likened to a wandering person wearing a white turban:

“Başında kar saçığı sarık arkada sâde

Nice gezer bu soğuklarda bilmezem ar’ar” Nedim (Macit, 1997, K. 13/2)

Juniper trees are used in city descriptions:

“Hevâsı mu’edildür suyu kevser

Dırahtı nâr-venle serv ü ‘ar’ar

Otu reyhân u sünbül hâki ‘anber

Ne hoş yaylak imiş bu şehir-i Lâdik” Mihrî Hatun (Arslan, 2007, Kt. 4)

Juniper is likened to many elements in Classical Turkish poetry. It is likened to a pen with its smooth length:

“Yazdıgun her nâme ki bir gülşen-i inşâ olur

Hat şükûfe nokta jâle satr cû ‘ar’ar kalem” Âşık Çelebi (Kılıc, 2017, K. 7/20)

(Every letter I write becomes a prose rose garden. Every flower bud and dewdrop is a dot, a line is a stream and a juniper is a pen.)

The straight stature of this tree reminded the poet of the righteous chaste person:

“Serv ü ‘ar’ar pāk-dāmen iki doğru hūbdur

Bāğ içinde el uzatmasın çenār anlara hā” Seyrî (Gokkaya, 2017, K. 5/10)

(The cypress and the juniper are two chaste, righteous beauties. Let not the sycamore lay a hand on them in the vineyard).

Juniper is also called mountain cypress tree. In this respect, poets have described it as a peasant:

“Nigāruñ sûreti āyinesi şōfi Hūdāyîdür

Şafā-yı hāşır ile bakmayan aña mürāyîdür

Kemāl-i i’tidāl-i kıddi yokdur serv ü ‘ar’arda

Biri gāyetde şehridür birisi rüstāyîdür” İshak Çelebi (Keklik, 2014, M. 86/1)

(O ascetic! The beauty of the beloved is from Allah; he who does not look at her sincerely is a hypocrite. The superior beauty of her measured height is not found in the cypress and juniper; one is very urban and the other is a peasant.)

The juniper tree is described as a person who opens his hands and prays:

“Bâg-ı ‘âlemde müdâm açup elün çün ‘ar’ar

‘İzzet ü devletine eyle du’â her meh ü sâl” Âşık Çelebi (Kılıc, 2017, K. 6/30)

(Every year and month, the Juniper constantly opens its hand in the garden of the universe to pray for the glory and state).

The juniper tree is remembered in Classical Turkish poetry for its tall stature. In the following couplet, Nev’i-zâde Atâyî refers to the height of the juniper tree while praising the morning wind. The morning wind is so strong that it bends the head of the juniper tree, whose head is high:

“Sabâ gibi kanı ‘âlemde rind-i şâhid-bâz

Baş egdürür niçe ‘ar’ar gibi serefrâze” Nev’i-zâde Atâyî (Karakose, 2017, G. 95/2)

The center of the world of Classical Turkish Poetry is love. For this reason, all beauty reminds the beloved. The juniper tree that beautifies the garden reminds the poet of the beloved in many ways. The height of the juniper tree reminds the lover of the beloved’s height. The poet compares the beloved to a cypress and a juniper tree and expresses that he/she does not know whether it is a cypress tree that adorns the heart or a tall juniper tree swaying in the garden of his heart:

“Bâg-ı dilde salınan serv-i dilârâ mı gelür

Bilemem yohsa ki bir ‘ar’ar-ı bâlâ mı gelür” Enderunlu Hasan Yâver (Ustuner, 2010, G. 68/1)

When the beloved sways with her tall stature, some liken her to a hind and call her the one who draws the heart:

“Kaçan ol serv ü sehî-kaddi hirâmanda gôrüp

Kimiler 'ar'ara nisbet ile dil-cû dediler" Ali Handi (Senyurt, 2004, G. 49/3)

The juniper tree is famous for its tall stature. However, the poet finds the juniper tree short compared to the lover's height:

"Bâgbân her ne kadar göge çıkarsa ögerek

Kadüne nisbet ile 'ar'ara kûtâh derin" Şeyhülislam Yahyâ (Kavruk, 2001, G. 275/2)

(No matter how much the gardener praises and ascends to the sky, I call the juniper tree short compared to (the lover's) height.)

Bâkî also compares the height of the beloved and the juniper tree. The poet acknowledges that the juniper tree is tall, but states that it does not have the beauty of the beloved's height:

"Egerçi 'ar'ar-ı bâgun büleñd kâmeti var

Nihâl-i kaddüñe nisbet letâfeti yokdur" Bâkî (Kucuk, 1994, G. 169/2)

Juniper is an evergreen tree that adorns gardens. But the most important element that adorns the world of the lover poet is his beloved. For this reason, instead of the cypress or juniper tree in the garden of the universe, the poet wants his beloved who is as tall as them:

"Ne serv ister ne 'ar'ar ister anca bâğ-ı âlemde

Hemân bir serv-kadd-i dildâr-ile geşt ü güzâr ister" Nazir İbrahim (Sengun, 2006, G 246/4)

Poets make comparisons between the height of the juniper tree and the height of the beloved. The winner in these comparisons is always the beloved. İshak Çelebi says that the lover is taller than the juniper:

"Kâmet-i bâlâñ ile işin bitürdün 'ar'aruñ

Döstüm gâyet ser-âmedsin bulunmaz hem-serün" İshak Çelebi (Cavusoglu&Tanyeri, 1989, M. 4/1)

(You defeated the juniper with your long neck. My friend, you are very tall, there is no one of the same height as you).

No cypress and juniper grow in any garden like your beloved's height:

"Serv ü 'ar'ar bitmedi kaddün gibi bustânda

Olmadı tãvûs zülfün bigi Hindistânda" Sevdâyî (Yasar, 2008, G. 50/1)

(A cypress and juniper like [your] height did not grow in the orchard. There was not a peacock like your hair in India.)

With its long and straight shape, the juniper tree is likened to the letter Elif, the first letter of the Arabic alphabet. The expression "Elif çekmek" is used in the sense of making a linear wound with a flat object, writing the letter elif. The poet interprets these wounds on his chest as the letter Elif being written by his beloved who is tall like a juniper tree:

"Gül-şen-i bâğ-ı mahabbetde diker tâze nihâl

Her elif kim sineme ol kâmeti 'ar'ar çeker" Baki (Kucuk, 1994, G183/3)

(Every elif that that Juniper tree tall one pulls on my chest plants fresh saplings in the rose garden of the vineyard of love).

Sometimes it is the lover himself who inflicts these wounds that remind us of the beloved's height:

"Çekdüm elif bu sîneye 'ar'ar kadüñ añup

Bâg-ı cihânda tâ ki kala bir budagımız" Emrî (Sarac, 2002, G.205/2)

(In order that we might have a branch in the garden of the world, I made elif-shaped scratches on my chest because of your height, which resembles a juniper tree).

In Pertev's ghazal, the beloved accepts the juniper tree analogy made about his height:

"Dâmen-i mîvesine dest-i emel nâ-reste

Kâmeti 'ar'ar u şimşâd ki dirler o bizüz" Muvakkitzâde Pertev (Bektas, 2017: 250/4)

(The fruit of the juniper does not reach the skirt of the tree, and we are the one they call juniper and shimshad).

Juniper is one of the trees that grow in wetlands. For this reason, the poet wants to embrace his beloved, whom he depicts as a juniper, and rub his face on her feet like water:

"Belki ol 'ar'arı âgûş iderem ey Âsaf

Gideyim yüz süreyim makdemine âb gibi" Asaf (Kaya, 2009, G. 1064/5)

If the beloved walks on the lawn with his tall stature, the juniper admires him/her:

"Çemende servi seyr itse hırâmân

Sanavber deng ü 'ar'ar kala hayrân" Şeyhi (San, 2017, Hüsrev ü Şirin, 5296)

(Juniper and pine admire the lover's coy walk on the lawn like a cypress).

God's blessed trees are also extraordinary with their swaying (Ergun, 2017: 281). In a Uyghur poem, it is expressed that the juniper and willow tree's branches sway in a hundred different ways. Yâver refers to the swaying of the juniper tree in the following couplet. The poet says, "The meaning of the beloved is accent, beauty and manners. What is meant by the tall juniper tree is always coy swaying.":

"Şîve vü hüsn ü edâdur kadd-i dilberden garaz

Hep hırâm-ı nâzdur bâlâ-yı 'ar'ardan garaz" Enderunlu Hasan Yâver (Üstüner, 2010, G. 91/1)

Azmizâde Hâletî also mentions the beauty of the juniper tree swaying in the wind in the following couplet:

"Tîz-kâm idi çün nesîm-i seher

Hoş-hırâm idi nitekim 'ar'ar" Azmizâde Hâletî (Kaya, 2017, K. 4/24)

The juniper tree swaying freely in the wind is interpreted as arrogance:

“Görmedi şive-i reftāruñı beñzer ki senüñ

Böyle ser-keşlik eder bāğda ‘ar‘ar güstāh”

Hayretî (Musluoglu, 2021, G. 101/5)

(The insolent juniper has not seen the dignity of your gait, so it is being obstinate in the vineyard.)

If the juniper walks with his tall stature, swaying with grace and dignity, the cypress on the lawn is subject to his sublimity:

“Reftāre gelse kâmet-i ‘ar‘ar-hırâm ile

Bâlâ-yı yâre serv-i çemen zîr-dest olur” Baki (Kucuk, 1994, G97/3)

No matter how beautiful the juniper swings, the beloved surpasses this tree in swinging:

“Hakkâ budur salınmada ol serv-i hoş-hırâm

Dikdi tepesi üstine tûbâ vü ‘ar‘arı”

Hecrî (Zulfe, 2010, G. 140/3)

(This is the truth, the beloved, like that pleasant swaying cypress, planted the Tuba and juniper trees on her hill in her swaying)

Those who see the swaying of the beloved as she walks remember the juniper:

“Seni bâğ içre şalındıkça görenler dirler

Bu hırâm u bu reviş var mı ‘aceb ‘ar‘arda”

Bolulu Hanif (Baser, 2018, G. 97/4)

(Those who see you swaying in the vineyard wonder if juniper has this gait)

The idea of the lover’s height falling into the lover’s heart is similar to the reflection of the juniper tree’s height in the water:

“Her kaçan kim gönlüme fkr-i kad-i dil-ber düşer

Şanasın âb içre ‘aks-i kâmet-i ‘ar‘ar düşer”

Çorlulu Zarifi (Taskın, 2019, G. 60/1)

This tree even trembles with jealousy and shame when it sees the beloved:

“Gülşende görüp kadd ü ruhuñ reşk u hayâdan

Güller kızarup lerze ten-i ‘ar‘ara düşdi”

Adnî (Kufacı, 2005, G. 90/6)

(Seeing your height and cheek in the rose garden, the roses blushed and trembling from jealousy and envy fell on the skin of the juniper.)

In the following couplet, Mostar Ziya expresses that while he was watching the gardens of the angelic world, he saw the juniper tree in the garden of the first and most sublime world, which is unique to Allah. With this couplet, the poet expresses that the juniper tree is a very valuable and sublime tree and that it is in Allah’s garden:

“Kıldı çün seyr-i riyâz-ı melekût

Gördi kim ‘ar‘ar-ı bâğ-ı lâhût”

Mostarlı Hasan Ziyâ’î (Gurgendereli, 2007, Şeyh

Sanan, Mes. 1334)

Juniper is mentioned together with different tree species in Classical Turkish Poetry. One of these is the poplar tree. To have the winds of poplar blowing over one's head means to be far from a sense of responsibility and to pursue pleasure and enjoyment. Poets use the words poplar and juniper in accordance with these meanings:

"Esmesün hîç kavak yili başunda 'ar'ar"

Göklere degse başun irmez ayagina elün" Âşık Çelebi (Kılıc, 2017, G. 19/3)

(May the poplar wind never blow on the juniper's head, even if your head reaches the heavens, your feet will never reach your hand.)

Another tree associated with the juniper is the willow:

"Sefid câmede yârı görüp didüm bu bahâr"

Şükûfe ile bezenmiş nihâl-i 'ar'ar u bîd" Helakî (Cavusoglu, 1982, G. 23/2)

(I saw the beloved dressed in white and said that this spring the willow and juniper trees were adorned with flowers.)

The wounds in the lover's bosom resemble the juniper, the cypress and the weeping willow:

"Kâmeti yâdına çekdüm sînem üzre şerhalar"

Kimi serv oldı kimi 'ar'ar kimisi bân sürh" Hasreti (Donuk, 2018, G.1/11)

(I opened wounds on my chest in remembrance of your height. Some became cypresses, some junipers, some red wisteria willows).

Among the trees, the cypress is the one he is most often mentioned with:

"Bulundı kaydı teşrîfât-ı gülde serv-i âzâdîñ"

Anıñ çün tutdılar 'ar'arla anı şimdi hem-pāya" Karabacakzade (Hakverdioglu, 2012, 191/ 7).

(Since the list of those who welcomed the rose included the cypress, they now equated it with the juniper tree.)

The juniper tree is a tree associated with birds. Ravzî mentions this relationship between the juniper and birds in the following couplet:

"Ravzî o servkâmete dil murgın uçurur"

Kuşlar mı kondurur 'acebâ ar'ar üstine" Ravzî (Aydemir, 2007, G. 478/5)

(Ravzi makes the bird of her heart fly to that cypress, does she make birds land on the juniper tree?)

Azmizâde Hâletî interprets the birds living in this tree as follows:

"Cihânda kalmadı bir murg-ı destâmûz kim şimdi"

Kaçup bâga çenâr u ‘ar‘ar üzre tutmaya me‘vâ” Azmizâde Hâletî (Kaya, 2017, K. 8/15)

(They fled to the garden to take up residence on sycamore and juniper trees, so that a bird that we used to handle as a fledgling is now gone).

Among birds, the thrush is especially associated with the dove:

“Murg-ı dili Emrînüñ ol kadd-i bülendüñde

Bir kumrı-ı nâlândur san ‘ar‘aruñ üstinde” Emrî (Sarac, 2002, G. 495/5)

(The bird of Emrî’s heart is as if a dove moaning on a juniper tree in that tall stature).

The juniper tree is a fruitless tree and is therefore often mentioned with the word âzâd. The poets have treated the fact that the juniper tree is flowerless and fruitless not as a deficiency but as freedom:

“Gelmiş çemende ‘ar‘ara âzâd kâgezi

Ol serv-i bâg-ı sâyefikenden midür ‘aceb” Muvakkitzâde Muhammed Pertev (Bektas, 2017, G. 25/2)

(The juniper tree in the garden received a freedom paper. I wonder if it is from the cypress tree that casts shade in the garden).

Some poets interpreted the fruitlessness and flowerlessness of this beautiful tree as useless:

“Ne mîvesiyle temettu’ ne sâyesinde huzûr

Ne fâyide tutalum kadd-i yâr ola ‘ar‘ar” Âşık Çelebi (Kılıc, 2017, K. 14/207)

(Neither benefit with its fruit, nor peace in its shade! Let us suppose that the juniper has become the height of the beloved, what is the use!)

Juniper trees have been planted on graves since ancient times because of their evergreen characteristic. Biological properties also lie behind the planting of juniper trees on graves. Juniper trees can stand for more than 300 years without collapsing and can stand for more than 100 years without decomposing after falling. In this respect, the juniper tree planted at the graves symbolizes that the deceased are not destroyed but are still standing (Torlak, 2009, p. 97). Juniper, which symbolizes not being forgotten by remaining green throughout the year, is planted in cemeteries. The relationship between juniper trees and cemeteries is mentioned in poems:

“Ger ölürsem hasret-i kaddiyle ol servün beni

Bir yire defn eylenüz kim sâye-i ‘ar‘ar düşer” Baki (Kucuk, 1994, G.119/2)

(If I die longing for the height of that cypress, bury me in a place where the shadow of juniper falls).

Conclusion

As in many cultures, trees have mythical and religious values in Turkish culture. Trees are frequently featured in classical Turkish poetry. In classical Turkish poetry, trees are more than an aesthetic element in environmental depictions. They are a part of Allah’s art. For this reason, each tree leaf describes the art of Allah. Poets have likened the shapes and movements of trees to

a Muslim praying. Trees are included in many prophet miracles. The poets of classical Turkish literature believe that trees are alive and therefore they should be treated well. Among the trees mentioned, the juniper tree stands out. The juniper tree, which was considered sacred according to the ancient Turks, maintained its importance after the acceptance of Islam. It was believed that incense made with juniper tree would purify from evil. These evergreen trees were planted in cemeteries.

In classical Turkish poetry, this tree is mostly called ar'ar, which is its Arabic equivalent. Juniper is also known as mountain cypress. In classical Turkish poetry, juniper frequently appears in garden descriptions. When the battlefield is depicted as a garden, the juniper becomes the banner of the army. This tree, which remains green in winter, is likened to a man wearing a white turban when covered with snow. With its smooth shape, it reminds poets of a pen. The poets, who thought that the tree's character was proper when its shape was proper, introduced it as a chaste person. With its smooth shape, it is likened to the letter Elif, the first letter of the Arabic alphabet. In the depictions, they are mentioned with other trees such as cypress, poplar, willow and bunch willow.

Classical Turkish literature is centered on the beloved. Every beauty reminds of the beloved. The tall height of the juniper tree reminds of the lover's height. The beloved is as tall as or even taller than the juniper tree. The swaying of the juniper tree in the wind is beautiful. But the sway of the beloved as she walks is more beautiful.

The juniper tree is mentioned together with birds. In classical Turkish poetry, especially doves and juniper trees are considered as nesting birds. Classical Turkish literature poets do not consider the fact that this tree is fruitless and flowerless as a flaw. According to poets, this situation provided freedom for the juniper tree. In classical Turkish poetry, this tree is one of the sacred trees declared by God. Juniper trees are planted in cemeteries. It symbolizes not being forgotten by being always green. Poets wished their graves to be under the shade of this tree. When we look at the place of the juniper tree in classical Turkish poetry, we see that this tree, which was considered sacred in Turkish society before Islam, maintained its importance after Islam.

Recommendations

Cultural studies are generally carried out on folklore. Works on Classical Turkish poetry are very important for Turkish culture in the Ottoman period. Cultural studies in Classical Turkish literature will open important doors to readers about past cultures and the continuity of culture.

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