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**REFLECTION OF URBAN-RURAL LIFE CONFLICTS ON CHILDREN'S LITERATURE WITH THE EFFECT OF ROUSSEAU: "A CHILD SATISFIED BY ART"**

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**ABSTRACT**

Preference, liking and defense of natural, pastoral, rural life, which came into Turkish literature with Rousseau's opinions/works, over urban life were covered in some literary works published after the Tanzimat reform era. Based on the thesis that the nature makes a person happy and strong, seeing the life in there more preferable than urban life became prominent in stories in children's literature in addition to adult's literature, and it was expressed via defense of village life by a youngster against an adult. This study covers the factors over which the conflict of urban-rural life is discussed in the story titled "A Child Satisfied by Art" published in 1912 and derivation of the text in question from Ottoman Turkish.

**Keywords:** Jean-Jacques Rousseau, conflict of urban-rural life, children's literature, A Child Satisfied by Art

The nature and elements of nature are some of the themes/motifs of Turkish literature. The nature in both classical and folk literatures of Turkey was used with the purpose of revealing the poet's/author's skills in the art sometimes and expressing their emotions and opinions or reflecting beauties in the nature, while it gained a different meaning in Turkish literature after the Tanzimat era, while the life in the nature/village/rural areas that was seen as a reason for happiness of the people after the conflict of urban-rural life was seen more preferable than urban life. This thought was based on the opinions of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the French romantic philosopher who was studied by the intellectuals of the era. "In Western literature, Jean-Jacques Rousseau preferred the nature against artificial systems of the society. Romanticism established a tight connection between people and the nature. This way of thinking also entered Turkish literature after the Tanzimat era and was used as a potent weapon against the artificial systems, habits and traditions of the society."<sup>1</sup>

Following the translation of Rousseau's work titled *Émile ou De l'éducation* (1762), where he projected that a child should be brought up in nature as urban life leaves the individual weak in many aspects, by Ziya Paşa, preference of the nature/village life over urban life, defense of the nature against civilization, were covered, for example in *Sahra* by Abdülhak Hamit Tarhan and *Bahtiyarlık* by Ahmet Mithat Efendi.

We meet the effects of Rousseau in works written for children, in addition to those written for adults. One of these is the story entitled "A Child Satisfied by Art", written by Ali Nazîma, who published many works on this issue. This story is in the work by the author named *Hazine-i Kıraat*, or *Two Hundred Stories for Children*, which he stated to be consisting of moral, literary, emotional and exemplary stories with the purpose of fixing children's morals, improving their behaviors in scope of the new project of the Ministry of National Education. In the story we included in full-text below, preference of rural/village life over urban life and the happiness of the people living in it were discussed comparatively over conversations between a shepherd and a huntsman in terms of a flamboyant house, a yard with a pool, life of entertainment, school/education, money, love of parents, and helping ones in need.

### **A CHILD SATISFIED BY ART**

A young shepherd named Turan was herding his flock in the mountains.

At the time he entered a narrow passage to look for one of his lambs in the crowded forest, he saw a man lying under a bush. The man was exhausted, but breathing.

He said to the shepherd:

"Young shepherd! I am dying of hunger and thirst. I came to this mountain yesterday to hunt, but I got lost. I spent the night in the forest."

Turan took bread and fresh cheese out of his bag to give him and said:

"Please eat and follow me; I will take you to an oak tree with a constant flow of water near it."

The huntsman ate what he could, then followed Turan. He drank the water and found it magnificent. After this, Turan showed the way to the huntsman.

Then, the huntsman said to the shepherd:

“Nice boy! You saved me from death. If I were left there for one hour, I would be dead. I am grateful to you in this matter and I would like to show my gratitude. Let us go to the city together. I am very rich, and I will treat you as if you are my own son.”

And the child said:

“No, sir. I cannot come with you to the city. I have a poor mother and a father I love very much. However rich you are, I cannot abandon my mother and father for you.”

For his response, the huntsman said:

“However, you are living in a simple hut covered by straw here, but I am living in a mansion covered with marble and surrounded by beautiful columns. I will have you drink water in crystal glassed and eat brilliant food in silver plates there.”

The child said:

“Our tiny residence is not as simple as you would think. As much as it is not surrounded by columns, it is engirdled by fruitful trees and large vines. We drink the clear and magnificent tasting water we collect from a nearby fountain with great appetite. We are satisfied with the food that is enough for us that we obtain as a result of our efforts and dedication, and although we do not have crystals, silver or marble at our home, we are not deprived of flowers.”

The huntsman responded:

“My child, I invite you to come with me. We also have trees and flowers in the city. We have roads surrounded by trees and I have a very beautiful garden with the most precious flowers. There is a beautiful fountain in the middle of this garden and you have not seen anything like it in your life. The water rises up suddenly and falls down on a pond made out of white marble.”

To this, the child said:

“We are satisfied with walking in the forest nearby. I suppose the shadows of the trees in our forest are nicer than those of the trees on the sides of your roads. Our green grasses are covered with thousands of trees. Roses, violets, lilies and such flowers surround our home beautifully. Do you think our wells and springs are not as beautiful as your fountains? Oh, how much love seeing them emerging from the cavities of rocks and their serpentine movement falling from hills onto the flowered grass!”

The huntsman said:

“Look, my child! You do not know the thing you are denying. There are huge school in the city, and you will learn all kinds of arts and sciences there. There are also singers and musicians who will satisfy you with their beautiful tunes, and you will be present in places that are magnificently designed as a guest.”

The young shepherd:

“No! No, sir! I will not be able to follow you to go to the city. They teach me actually useful and necessary things in the school of our village. All in all, they teach me the science of my religion, utilization of resources for the entire community, respect for my parents, and abiding by the morals of good people. I do not want anything more than this. Are your singers singing more beautifully than nightingales or whitethroats? We have friends, too. If only you could know how happy and joyful we get when we visit our friends as a family, sit near a raging river under the shadows of trees and start singing folk songs or accompanying the people who sing with our instruments! Our songs reach further places, their echo repeats them there, our parents look at us satisfied and proud, and applaud us with a heart-felt smile. No, I shall not come with you to the city.”

When he said it, the huntsman realized that he should quit trying to take the child to the city and says:

“If so, what should I give you to show as an indicator of my gratitude? You can at least accept this pouch filled with gold and silver, my child.”

“What would I do with this money? Even if we are poor, we do not lack anything; if I accept the money you are giving me, it means I sold my service that I gifted to you! This would be indecent. My mother will scold me for this behavior, because she always tells me that we have to help those in need and those spending effort, and not expect anything in return.”

“Then, what can I present you with, my noble-hearted child? You must accept something from me, or else, you will leave me indebted and in grief.”

“If you want to give something to me for sure... You may give me the bottle near you with the depiction of movements of the dogs following a deer on it.”

After this response of the young shepherd, the huntsman immediately took the bottle hanged around his neck and gave it to him, and the shepherd left in joy, jumping up and down as a lamb.<sup>2</sup>

**REFERENCES**

[1] Mehmet Kaplan, *Studies on the New Turkish Literature*, 2nd Ed., Dergâh Press, Istanbul, 1994, p. 91.

[2] Ali Nazîma, *Hazine-i Kiraat, or Two Hundred Stories for Children*, Part 2, Kasbar Printworks, Istanbul, (1328/1912), pp. 240-245.