Melih Cevdet Anday, amongst the three poets of the poetic civilization program of Garip Movement (1st New Movement - Strangers’ Movement) in Turkish poetry, carried the poetic journey he started with Garip to more marginal themes and embodied a unique world of language-meaning.

Mitat Durmuş’s recently published book from the Ministry of National Education Melih Cevdet Anday’s Universe of Poetry (Ç) takes one step ahead as a work filling the missing part of a monograph in Anday’s position within Turkish Literature. In particular the effect of poet’s life on the process of literary production, in the light of themes dealt separately with respect to theme, aesthetics, language-style and linguistics, acts as a road map for the poetry of Melih Cevdet. Particular literary work stands out not as a challenging style of reading to experience the poetic


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approach of the poet but rather a guiding study that puts into action encircling and aesthetical perception references based on the poetological theories related to Anday’s poetry. By virtue of this quality, present research seems to have blocked misleading anachronical definitions and perceptions in our poetic tradition that is frequently repeated for Anday’s poetry to place him within one single era, generation or movement.

M. Durmuş at first classifies under a monographic scheme the poetic approach of M. C. Anday into four sections respectively; 1- His interest towards poetry and pre-Garip era, 2- Garip, socialist realism and Yaprak period, 3- Early seeds “Tohum” of the departure from Garip Movement, 4- “Kollari Bağlı Odysseus” (Chained Odysseus) and its aftermath. This classification aims to categorize the transformation of Anday’s poetry and supplies the reader with the clues enlightening the themes in his poetic journey. Accordingly Garip draws attention as a movement Anday fit into easily and adapted the poetic language into its principles comfortably within the axle of the political and social conditions of his age. Durmuş who differently analyzes the influence of Garip on the youth of poet on the basis of the forerunners and practitioners of a literary movement narrates in his work: “Edebiyat-ı Cedide (New Literature), Fecr-ı Ate, Genç Kalemler (Young Pens), Yedi Meşaleciler (Seven Torches), Beş Hececiler (Five Versists)… and all the fresh movements witnessed in Turkish poetry the most frequent emphases like ‘youth’, ‘newness’ are most of the times worded by the creators of literary movement whereas in Garip poetry the reverse holds true. (…) What is meant by these definitions is actually different; ‘young’ refers to ‘kids’. By attributing to this word of young the ignorance of meter and rhyme, lack of fine attitudes, engagement with coarse words without feeling ashamed and even valuing the use of coarseness, lack of dignity, frivolity and cynicism to describe the followers of Garip movement.” Based on such expressions the transformation of the traditional form and meaning extensions into a poetic irony has laid the grounds for the union between the poetry of Melih Cevdet and Garip Movement.

Regardless of the criticisms directed to Garip Movement that Melih Cevdet also followed, it was inevitable for the poet to pass from this path during the course of his poetic journey. Durmuş underscores a significant detection which relates to the poetic transformation in Melih Cevdet in the wake of his poetry book Kollari Bağlı Odysseus. Then the poetic approach in Garip era started to melt, dissolve and passed from the man on the street to the man of rank. Meanwhile, Durmuş reports that, unsurpassable barriers have been established between the newly presented forms of Garip poetics and the reader who is conditioned to an already provided reading style. Needless to say that the departure of poetry from a simple style of expression brings with itself a meaning world open to philosophical problematizations such as human, existence and time. This is, doubtless to say, a reality that moved poetic approach of M. C. Anday from I. New to II. New. Indeed the change in the inspirational resources of Anday poetry during this stage; the replacement of poems of Ziya Paşa and Abdülhak Hamid with books of philosophy and the inclination towards Anatolian, Egyptian, Hittite, Sumerian and Greek myths, is a fracture reflecting these changes in his poetic approach.

Likewise thematic evaluations of Mitat Durmuş on the poetic approach of Melih Cevdet Anday reflect the meaning world of the poet and hereby some readings that aim to illuminate the specific poet-reader relationship under the dominant themes with respect to its deliberate effect on the perception/reception activity of reader. Thematic background emerging as time, death, longing,
lonesome, nature, existence, moral conflicts reveal that Anday oriented towards the deep points of poetry world which was on the top surface during Garip era and enabled an elaborate analysis of the conflicts as well as projections of existence tragedy on the texts of Eastern and Western literature.

Durmuş, in his thematic analysis dealing with the time concept of Anday poetry, relates that Anday avoids from sticking mnemonic existence of human within a historical chronology. He also adds that looking from a wider perspective to the concept of time, Anday provides an effect uniting the ancient with the modern. He continues that in the poetic perception that is relevant of mythology, while explaining the myths, Mircea Eliade presents epiphanic references that do not fit into mathematical time form. That means while experiencing the myths a new time corridor is opened and chronological time scale is turned upside down. This emphasis points to the attempt of the poet, who desires not be stuck in a certain restriction, to restructure concept of time over the language of poetry.

Another foregrounded theme in the poetry of Melih Cevdet is death. At this point the transformation in poetic language that can be seen in Kolları Bağlı Odysseus also reveals itself in death theme by gaining a philosophical meaning. Yet it is likely that death concept has been affected by the poet’s experiences with Garip movement and First and Second World Wars since there are not many metaphysical questionings stated. Durmuş comments on this issue such: “Even after-death period is presented not in relation to the next life but within the context of present life. In the poetry of Anday after-death does not matter; reality of death is narrated with respect to the relationship of individual with present life. Death is neither a directly tragic view nor a disappearance or an ever-frightful reality.” Hence concept of death which has no abstract appearance in Melih Cevdet means a reevaluation of existential problem of human in terms of completing a natural process and its transformation to an ironic style without being solved.

Anday’s poetry takes the perception level of reader into its center because in his poetry reader is no longer an ordinary reader but attempted to be treated as a reader with elevated level of comprehension/perception/interpretation. In Turkish poetry, just like the poems of Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Hilmi Yavuz and Sezai Karakoç, poetry of Anday also demands at the very start a certain level of comprehension from its readers. This expectation from the reader which turns into a theme at the points of Nesnenin Yadsınaması ve Anlamın İtilmesi (Denial of the Object and Rejection of the Meaning) seems to be the motive driving Durmuş to read the poetry of Anday in relation to Ferdinand de Saussure and Plato. In the distinction Saussure makes between word/language, the word does not refer to the word but to the concept and then this concept changes into a word according to mental picturing. In poetic language too the presented background has relation to mental pictures hence in a sense it refers to the mystery/unknown and also to the ambiguity specific to the artist/poetry. The reflection of such linguistic means recalling Wittgenstain’s pictorial language theory in the poetry of Anday is that image carried to poetic language pushes in a speculative ambiguity the meaning backwards and demands the interpretation of a reader who is all ready.

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1 ibid. p: 192.
2 ibid. p: 193.
3 ibid. p: 213.
4 ibid. p: 227.
5 ibid. p: 229.
To wind up, Mitat Durmuş’s work *Melih Cevdet Anday’s Universe of Poetry* (Ç) filled a significant gap in the attempts to properly analyze his position in Turkish poetry. In addition to linguistic analyses of the context and form features in his poems particularly, philosophical resolutions of Anday’s poetry that are conducted in thematic readings section also stand out as a guide for the reader who shall aim to take a trip on the poetic universe of Anday. Furthermore by virtue of this monograph, meanings in Anday poetry have been stratified; his poetic approach has been analyzed from an ideal perspective, under the light of multi-way reading it has been turned into a multipliable activity of ideas.