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Literary Genres vis-à-vis: Novel-Masnavi and the Position of the Narrator

Edebiyat Türleri Karşı Karşıya: Roman-Mesnevî ve Anlatıcının Konumu

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Abstract

This article aims to focus on the problem of whether masnavi, one of the most significant narrative forms in Ottoman poetry, and novel, as a narrative form that became popular in Ottoman literature through the Westernization period, are interrelated. In masnavi, the lack of rhyme relations between *beyits* and a limit for the number of *beyits* provide poets with the opportunity to extend the subject they write on, and in this way, masnavi became one of the favourite narrative forms in Ottoman poetry. In spite of the fact that there are many masnavi types such as religious, sufistic, humorous, moral, didactive, epic etc., romantic masnavis - since they include elements like characters, episode, time and space - are more comparable with the novel genre which includes the same elements. In this regard, this study will focus on romantic masnavis, on the basis of Şeyhî's *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn*, the main theme of which is a love affair. Despite being invented and progressed in different societies, contexts and having different structural features, this study will include the ideas on the comparable relations between these two genres. The genres, masnavi and novel, converge on in terms of plot, basic and additional texts, and, in this sense, differing narrators. In this context, a comparison in terms of the "narrator" provides the masnavi genre to be rendered within new viewpoints.

Keywords: Novel, Masnavi, *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn*, romantic masnavis, narrator.

Öz

Bu çalışma, Osmanlı şiirinde en çok kullanılan anlatı türlerinden biri olan "mesnevî"nin Batılılaşma çabaları ile birlikte edebiyatımıza giren "roman" türü ile ilişkilendirilip ilişkilendirilemeyeceği konusuna odaklanmayı amaçlamaktadır. Mesnevî türünde beyitler arasında kafiye bağlantısı bulunmaması ve beyit sayısının sınırlı olmaması, şairlerin işledikleri konuyu istedikleri kadar genişletmelerine imkân sağlamış ve böylece mesnevî, Osmanlı şiirinde en çok kullanılan nazım şekillerinden biri olmuştur. Her ne kadar mesnevî türü; dinî, tasavvufî, mizahî, ahlakî ve öğretici, savaş ve kahramanlık gibi geniş bir yelpazeye yayılsa da kişiler, olaylar, zaman, mekân gibi öğeleri de içermesi açısından aşk konulu mesnevîler, hemen hemen aynı öğelere sahip olan roman türüyle kıyaslama yapmaya daha müsait görünmektedir. Bu bağlamda, ana izleği aşk olarak kabul edilen Şeyhî'nin *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn* mesnevîsi örneğinde aşk konulu mesnevîlere odaklanılacaktır. Bu çerçevede yürütülecek olan çalışmada, her ne kadar farklı toplumlarda, farklı bağlamlarda ve farklı yapısal özelliklerle ortaya çıkıp gelişse de aynı zamanda ortak özelliklere de sahip olan bu iki

yazınsal türün karşılaştırılabilir olup olmadığına ilişkin görüşlere de yer verilecektir. Çok katmanlı olay örgüsü, temel metin ve eklenti metinlerin varlığı ve bu doğrultuda farklılaşan anlatıcılar sayesinde roman ve mesnevi türleri birbirine yaklaşmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, “anlatıcı” açısından yapılacak bir karşılaştırma, mesnevî türünün yorumlanmasında yeni olanakların ortaya çıkmasını sağlayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Roman, Mesnevî, *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn*, Aşk Mesnevîleri, Anlatıcı.

Introduction

This study aims to focus on whether or not one of the most used narrative genres in Ottoman poetry, “masnavi,” can be related to the novel genre which entered into our literature as a reflection of the Westernization efforts gaining momentum with the Tanzimat period. As dealing with all of the masnavi samples, or examining the two genres mentioned, within the framework of events, time, place etc., will exceed the boundaries, only the masnavi named *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn* by Şeyhî will be studied from the point of view of the “narrator”; the masnavi genre will be tried to be construed in the context of the novel theory. The reason why the aforesaid masnavi was chosen was that it was one of the texts that presented the most productive examples within the framework of the research criteria mentioned above. So as to be able to make a theory-based comparison between the masnavi and types of the novel, it will be appropriate to address the features of the masnavi in Ottoman literature.

What Kind of a Genre is Masnavi?

Masnavi, whose dictionary meaning is two by two, couple, and “a kind of verse in which each string of the couplets rhyme with one another, written in short measures with each meter of prosody” is a literary genre that has passed from Iranian Literature to Ottoman Literature (Dilçin 167). At the same time, the works written with this method are given the same name. Masnavi is considered to be one of the easiest forms of diwan poetry for reasons such as the completion of meaning and concepts in one couplet, and the fact that the poet has to find two rhymes for each couplet (Dilçin 167). Masnavi is accepted to be one of the most used verse forms of diwan poetry, and since there is no relation between the rhymes and the number of the couplets is not restricted, the poets are allowed to expand the subject as much as they wish.

After İsmail Ünver states that masnavis whose main theme is love and adventure are in the foreground with their art aspect and that they appeal to the reader’s literary taste. He emphasizes that these masnavis have important differences in terms of plan in comparison with the ones whose subjects are religious, mystical, moral and instructive, about war and heroism, humour, about a city and the

beauty of this city. According to him, one of these differences, perhaps the most important one, is that the poems which are sung by the heroes with different types of verse, in the parts where the subject takes place (445). Ünver points out that these poems, which may appear as a letter sent by the lover to his beloved or a poem sung by two lovers mutually, are often poetized out of the persona's mouth, but these poems are also sung by other personas accompanying the main one. and remain in the background of the incident to express the feelings of their masters. In addition, poems which are directly out of the poet's mouth can be seen, but the poet informs in the last couplet before he continues with these poems to make a connection between the masnavi and intervening poetry. Ünver, who indicates that very few of these poems include the pen-name of the poet, also mentions that most of the poems have the name of the poet or have no name at the end.

One of the most important features that distinguish the masnavis whose subject is love from the other masnavi types mentioned above, is that while the events are aligned one after another, the poet tells a different story by creating a relation with the subject. In such masnavis, the poet, after telling the death of one of the characters or a similar catastrophe, gives the reader a piece of advice on the subject by stopping the flow of events with a heading that emphasizes the disloyalties in the world (Ünver 446).

Cem Dilçin lists the first remarkable features in these masnavis, the main subject matter of which is often human and sometimes divine love, as follows:

No matter what the subject is in masnavis, the first striking feature is that the event is told in a fairy tale atmosphere. A lot of events that go beyond the rational and logical measures follow each other. The time and place of the event is uncertain. Unity in the plot is not provided. Parts of the story look like irrelevant pieces attached to each other. The descriptions of nature and events in which the events took place are not relevant to the reality. The heroes of the story perform extraordinary actions. The heart of the matter in these stories is love. Usually this love is a human love. Sometimes this love is described as divine. In the stories there are plenty of fairy-tale motifs such as demons, fairies, giants, witches, and fire breathing dragons. (177)

Although such claims of Dilçin above, which draws attention to those elements like time, space, plot, characters point out a similarity between masnavis and narratives, it is questionable to what extent masnavi, a traditional type, overlaps with an individual type, the novel. In this respect, İsmail Ünver states that in the periods of writing and reading of the poems of love and adventure, especially in Iranian and Turkish literature, while taking on the function of the "story" and the "novel" in terms of their duties, they stay apart from today's story and novel, and by saying that "the masnavi genre which gets its subject from love, usually 'couple-heroic love stories,' and that there is [a classical structure] in terms of

subject, events, heroes, time and place,” he implies that these two genres can be compared (450).

Can the Masnavi and the Novel be Compared?

In the foregoing part, the characteristics of the narrative style of the masnavis, as one of the most important types of Ottoman literature, were discussed. In what follows, the similarities and differences between the masnavi and types of the novel will be discussed in the context of the main elements of a narrative type. Particularly in the early examples of the Tanzimat novel, the fact that the novels written by the writers were based on the traces of traditional Ottoman poetry allows this study to have a qualification for “comparison”. In this context, whether or not the first Ottoman novel was a continuation of masnavi will be discussed by focusing on the “narrator”. Yet the masnavi *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn* by Şeyhî is a text where the narrator and focalization are changed as in the novel; and it seems appropriate for comparison. Therefore, in this part of the study, such features as the plot, time, place, characters, etc. will be briefly discussed; especially the subject of “narrator” will be focused on.

In the love masnavis mentioned above, the subject is not usually original; topics in Eastern literature have been either translated or rewritten. For example, “*Hüsrev ü Şîrîn*, which takes its subject from history, first takes place in Firdevsi’s *Şah-name* as a story in verse. Nizâmî is the first poet to work on this subject as an independent masnavi. After that, this subject has been written by many poets in Iranian and Turkish Literature” (Ünver 450). In the novel genre, the subject which the novelist has chosen is original, and he is not concerned about reproducing tradition. The motivation of the Ottoman masnavi poet is to take the masnavis, which had been written on the same subject and in the same title, up one step further with both his style and images he uses. Thus, although the subject matter presented by the tradition itself is not original in content, the poet needs to make his text original in view of other similar texts with the features mentioned above. This allows the masnavi to be evaluated as successful or unsuccessful. As the novelist does not have this traditional mind structure while writing a novel, he does not refer to the novels written previously on the same subject with the same mental motivation of a poet who refers to the previously written masnavis. In this sense, the novelist constructs his work from a more individual point than a masnavi poet; the novelist tries to reach from individual to the universal. This stands out as a big difference between the genres of the novel and the masnavi.

These two types differ in their way of dealing with the subject as well as their occurrence. As mentioned earlier, masnavi is a genre that has been passed from Iranian literature to Ottoman literature, and between the 11-19th centuries numerous outstanding works for nearly eight centuries had been written in this

genre which had no concern about reflecting the real world and in which the imaginary aspect dominates. In contrast to the masnavi, the novel which appeared in the West is a genre that is interested in reality and focuses on the real world. İsmail Ünver writes about the plot in this way:

The events in the subject resemble separate parts of a whole. Each poet can sort the flow of the events according to his own, or he can incorporate the events of the same subject which are not found in other examples. In fact, this is the most common method that poets apply to the poems in order to make their work more original. The events are told in an exaggerated way. These exaggerated events turn into the spirit of a fairy tale with the participation of unreal creatures. (451)

The disconnection in the plot and the description of the subject in the fairy tale atmosphere place the masnavi genre in a different position from the novel which focuses on the total plot and whose main purpose is to tell the reality.

When we consider the time in masnavis, the time of the events in these works is unclear. The concept of time is usually represented by words such as seasons, months, weeks, and days (Ünver 455). Ünver adds the following about the concept of time:

The poets, while telling the time of an event, use seasons, while telling how long a journey takes or a war lasts, they use years, months, weeks or days. In addition, the event-time relationship is extraordinary in these works. Six-month route can be traversed in six days. The period from the beginning of the events to the end of the work is unclear. After years of adventure, people are still alive and have not grown old. (455)

In the novel, there is a time based on the reality of the plot as well as a historical time that surrounds the reality in the plot, which highlights the concern of the novel about reality. The masnavis have a wide variety of place, but just as in the case of time and plot, contrary to the novel, it is a dream. According to Ünver's explanation,

Only a few of the places are known geographically. These places are roughly shown: China, Maçin, India, Turkestan, Medayin, Armenia, Roum [Anatolia], Egypt, and Yemen. Country names aside, city names are even more uncertain. The same situation exists in the names of the seas. It is unclear on which sea they travelled and where they landed. The places where events take place are depicted according to the nature of the events. The place is tried to be arranged according to the nature of the event. While the events that make people happy take place in fancy palaces where the nature is beautiful, unhappiness is often with difficult natural conditions in distressed places, which darken people. In masnavis, seeing and evaluating the person's environment according to his spiritual state is also mentioned in excess. (445)

The masnavi characters are presented as one-dimensional in many respects. Ünver explains this situation as follows:

These people are created for good or evil. [...] The personas in the masnavi, whom we regard as main characters, are ideal people who are not relatable in every way. In addition to their physical and moral beauty, they are strong, courageous and knowledgeable. [...] We cannot see an analysis that reflects the inner worlds of people in masnavis. On the other hand, they are the people who are affected by events, who tell their problems to their close ones, or call various beings and communicate with them. One-dimensional characters encountered in masnavis are not found in examples in the novel. In the novels; analyses of the inner world of the characters is frequently encountered. This once again reveals its close relationship with reality. (454-5)

Views on the Relation between Masnavi and the Novel

There was one type of story in our old literature. As this story continued after the Tanzimat, in the new type of stories which occur by emulating western works, some of the characters changed, too. To state these points, it is necessary to take a look at such stories. (Özön 39)

Mustafa Nihat Özön thinks that there is a connection between “old stories” and “new types of stories that start to emulate Western works” and asserts that such stories should be examined. In his work titled *İlk Dönem Hikâyelerinde Anlatıcılar Tipolojisi* [Typology in the Narratives of the First Ages], Yavuz Demir says, in parallel to Özön, that “before the narrative forms such as novels and stories, in classical Ottoman literature, there are masnavis mostly written in aruz and presents mythical love themes, like *Leyla and Mecnûn*, *Yusuf and Züleyha*, *Hüsrev and Şîrîn* and so on” (16), and he considers masnavis among those narrative types like the novel or the story; but at the same time, he thinks that these narratives are far from novel and narrative configuration (18). The author uses the following opinions of Şemseddin Sami to support this view:

A man who has been educated according to the necessity and requirement of our age cannot feel the taste of reading the poem, *Leyla and Mecnûn*, no matter how skilful the poet is; Mecnûn’s sitting in the middle of various animals, such as the wolf, the lamb, the lion and the gazelle which gather around him and chatting with them, or Leyla speaking to the candle, even a young child cannot read these fondly. (Demir 18)

Based on the words of Şemseddin Sami, it can be thought that there are differences between the novel, a new genre coming from the West and the masnavi, which has been composed of one tradition over the centuries (or more), in terms of the “narrator technique”. In fact, a person who has been educated by the characteristics of the period does not enjoy reading masnavi; one of the motifs in the masnavi is considered as “the motif of speaking to the wild animals” cannot even be enjoyed by a child.

Pertev Naili Boratav, in his *Folklore and Literature*, contends that in the emergence of the Turkish novel fictitious stories are not the only effective element. In this respect, according to Boratav, who claims different views from Mustafa Özön and Yavuz Demir, the Turkish epics, Turkish stories, born under the influence of Arab and Iranian literatures, folk tales and finally the stories of public storytellers also evolved into the modern Turkish novel (304-8). Boratav thinks proses like *Leylâ and Mecnûn*, *Yusuf and Zeliha* and *Ferhat and Şîrîn* have little relation to the novel, and he differentiates “prose” and novel as such:

These works are considered to be the works that reflect philosophical, moral, or lyrical notions in narrative - mostly sufi - forms. Indeed, this genre, as long as the style and technique are preserved like in the novel, does not take place in crowds. Not following the people, who have a high level of culture and whose taste is refined, remaining in the narrow neighbourhood, leaving himself to the flow of the events - from the beginning to the end - and watching the destiny of the human beings but to experience the pleasure of reading poems in parts and in fact reading beautiful words. (Boratav 306)

One of the most important ideas derived from Şemseddin Sami’s words, along with those of Pertev Naili Boratav, Mustafa Nihat Özön, and Yavuz Demir is their effort to determine positive and negative relationships between the novel and the other genres. Mikhail Bakhtin deals with the same problem in his seminal work “Epic and Novel”. Bakhtin, who tries to determine the place of the novel among the canonized genres, defines the novel as the only genre that continues its development and has not yet been completed (164). According to him, “Novel is the only genre which has been developing among the ones which have completed their development and have been partially dead” (Bakhtin 165). Perhaps the novel, Bakhtin believes, has its own particular difference due to this feature: “Some of the types put pressure and then run out, and it introduces some of them to its original structure by re-formulating and re-emphasizing (Bakhtin 167). The fact that the novel enters into this type of interaction with other literary genres suggests that it can be fed from the masnavi; thus, the novel and other literary genres can be compared in many respects, including the plot, the subject, and the portrayal of the characters, the narrative, and the setting.

The Importance of the Narrator in Masnavi

When it is considered that “narrative style” is one of the most important points in the comparison of masnavi and the novel, a “narrator” problem occurs as well, which constitutes the main subject here. It is clear that the most basic figure of a fictitious text is the narrator. According to Yavuz Demir, in order to determine the “inner” and “outer” narrator in a fiction, there are hints such as “description of place,” “identity of characters,” “summary of time,” and “the things that the

character does not tell or think" (20). Demir's sentence "by looking at the last two elements, it is possible to say that the narrator has complete control on what is happening in the story" (20), can be guide for the study of *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn*.

Hüsrev ü Şîrîn by Şeyhi, written in dedication of Murat II, is a masnavi based on the love affair between Hüsrev-i Perviz, the son of Hürmüz, who is one of the governors of Sasanis in the sixth century, and Şîrîn, an Armenian princess; and meanwhile, the tragedy of Ferhat. This story, which has attracted a great deal of interest in Islamic literature and has been dealt with by many poets, is based on a historical fact. In *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn*, which consists of 6944 couplets, in addition to historical events, the original story is composed of eleven chapters, and there are twenty-six odes which were told through the narrative of Hüsrev, Şîrîn and Ferhat. One of the most important features of the work is that it involves two love stories of different nature during the struggle to become a ruler. The first axis of the love story is the mutual love between Husrev and Şîrîn, and in this respect implies worldliness. The second axis is based on Ferhat's unrequited love towards Şîrîn, and in this respect, it is interpreted as Sufism. These subjects, which show different characteristics, have been successfully written by the poet as a whole. Thus, it can be said that *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn* is not a one-dimensional work; it can be said that the subject is attempted to be discussed in multiple axes. At the same time, this work also extends the historical events in the narrative; in these respects, it shows a multi-layered structure.

Şeyhî began his work with different flow of events as required by the masnavi tradition, he also includes those parts, "tevhid," "münacat," "na't," the part where the sultan of the period is addressed (Murat II) through praising and suggestions. In this respect, the work makes the reader think about different platforms. After mentioning the reason why the book was written, he starts to explain the events under main and sub-headings. In the narrative, when the main plot is unravelled, the use such headings as "Gündüzün vasfı / The quality of the night," "Baharın vasfı / The quality of the spring," "Gecenin sıfatı / The view of the night," and "Gündüzün sıfatı / The view of the day" is significant to extend the influence of the work on the reader. Yavuz Demir says, "It is possible to evaluate the narrative that is at the top of a narrative text as a narrative in which the narrator is a part. There is a narrative position intertwined here, and this is seen as the outermost narrative" (37). He also points out the multiple layers in the narratives in *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn* masnavis, the outermost narrative can be interpreted as the love of Hüsrev and Şîrîn. This narrative includes other narratives in the story, in other words framing. Ferhat's platonic love towards Şîrîn and the struggle to take over and protect the position of authority based on historical facts can be interpreted as a sub-plot. This situation can be explained by the distinction between "basic text" and "additional text" (Demir 37). In the titles of the book, the use of the phrase "The beginning of the story" for ten times refer to the multilayer structure

mentioned. *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn*'s multi-layered plot provides important clues to compare it with the novel. E. M. Forster, in his work *Roman Sanatı* states that the most important aspect of the novel is telling stories (63). The author, who thinks the story as the basis of the novel, defines story telling as the sequence of events according to the order of time (Forster 65). The author distinguishes the plot from the story in terms of showing a more developed structure (Forster 68):

The novel feature is that the novelist can both give information about his or her people, speak through them, and let the reader listen to them when they speak to themselves. He has the opportunity to show the thoughts that go through his mind. [...] Sometimes the reader asks: Well, how does the author know it? From which point of view does he see things? I think there is an inconsistency here; the author passes from a limited point of view to the omnipotent viewpoint and then to the old, limited state. (Forster 126-7)

In this sense, it can be claimed that both Forster and Yavuz Demir point out, in the narrative, it is important to tell and explain the words said and the words that are not said. It is seen that the addressing parts, such as the tevhid, münacat, na't, compliment and the advice to Sultan Murad, were written from Şeyhî's mouth. It is possible to talk about the existence of the narrator, as well as Şeyhî, when it comes to introduce the personas that come into play with the beginning of the story and their speech. In both cases, Şeyhî is in a position to dominate narrative. For example, the narrator, in the following couplets, introduces Hüsrev's teacher Büzürgûmîd to the reader:

Var idi bir hakîm ol asr içinde
Yog idi misli Rûm ü Mısr içinde (824)
[In that century there was a unique wise in Anatolia and Egypt]¹
Büzürgûmîd adı üstâd ü dâna
Kamu aksâm-ı hikmetde tûvânâ (825)
[The master of his work Büzürgûmîd, the name of the pedant, was strong in wisdom]
Tâbî'î vü riyâzî vü ilâhî
Mukarrer gönli levhinde kemâhî (826)
[Undoubtedly self-assured in nature, mathematics, and God-related sciences] (Timurtaş)

Sometimes, the task of introducing one of the characters falls to another character. In the following couplets, the beauty of Şîrîn is expressed by Şavur; but the narrator warns the reader about the change of the narrator by saying, "Pes açdı agzını Şavûr-ı nakkâş" [Then Nakkaş Şavûr (to speak) opened his mouth] (999/1) before Şavûr speaks:

Cemalinden güneş düşmiş zevâle
Kemâli bedri döndirmiş hilâle (1020) (Timurtaş)

¹ All translations are mine.

[The Sun lost his effect due to her beauty
Her maturity changed the full moon to the new moon.]
Gice zülfi sevâdınun nedîmi
Seher hüsni şu'â'nun nesîmi (1021)
[The night is the chat mate of her black hair
The dawn is the wind of her beauty lights]
Sanavber boyı sîmîn bûyı nesrîn
Şekerden dadı Şîrîn adı Şîrîn (1045)
[Her height is like a pine tree, in silver, with scent of the rose
Sweeter than the candy, named Şîrîn] (Timurtaş)

As seen in the above-mentioned couplets, the narrator described Şîrîn from the mouth of Şavûr and mentions the change. Yavuz Demir states that the narration of the character's identity is one of the most important clues in determining the narrator (94). According to Demir, "the role of the narrator is based on the style in which he is presented to the reader in his approach to the character" (94).

Another point to focus on related to issue of the narrator is the report of the mind of the character. One of the best examples of this can be the meeting of Hüsrev and Şîrîn by the fountain. In this section, the thoughts of the characters are reported to the reader in a monologue. The narrator tells the story of Şîrîn's finding herself in a secluded place to bathe, Hüsrev passing by chance and seeing Şîrîn when she is bathing, Şîrîn gets embarrassed and covers herself with her hair. Later, Şîrîn told her regret that she could not understand who Hüsrev was:

Didi kendüzine kim bu cüvan-merd
Ki devr itdi beni çün çerh-ı cân-gerd (1305)
[To herself, who this clean, noble, generous person is, said she
because he has put me through the mill]
Acebdür ol benüm yarüm degülse
Nedür dil derdi dil-dârum degülse (1306)
[Unless he is my lover
Unless he is my beloved, what the pangs of love is]
İşitdüm la'ldür la'l oldı kanı
Bu gevher ol ise kanı nişânı (1307)
[I have heard that your lips are in blood
If this is the jewel, where is the sign of it?]
Didiler tonı başdan ayaga al
Ger ol ise ne için eyleye al (1308)
[I have heard that your dress is in red, from top to toe,
If this is he, why did he need to cheat?] (Timurtaş)

One of the most important features that draws attention here is that the change of narrators is provided by the word "didi". Then again, the narrator, whose "existence is always felt" (Demir 21) appears in the God-like narrative position, and says "Ne bilsün kim şeh iz şaşırmiş idi/Hazerden tonını denşürmiş idi" (1809) [How does she know that the Shah has lost his way, changed clothes in fear] (Timurtaş) (throughout the whole context the narrator changes between first

personal narrator and the third), which makes the act comprehensible. To make the hesitation of the two lovers more realistic, the narrator reports Hüsrev's monologue. As he did when he was reporting his thoughts, the narrator made the change feel like the reader:

Kakırdı kendü kendüye sögerdi
 Gehî başın ü geç gögsin dögerdi (1843)
 [He cried out to himself, sometimes
 He used to beat his head and then his chest]
Didi yâ-Rab bu âdem miydi yâ kuş
 Hayâl idi mi k'oldı gözime tuş (1844)
 [Oh my God, was she a human or a bird, said he
 Was it a dream which appeared in my eyes]
 Hele bu iş dimezven serseridür
 Bu yâ Şîrîn idi yâ-hûd perîdür (1845)
 [I do not say this is bubble, this was Şîrîn or a fairy]
 Eger Şîrîn olaydı ol perî-veş
 Niçün kaçup uraydı câna âteş (1846)
 [Were she Şîrîn as beautiful as a fairy,
 Why would she shoot the soul by running away] (Timurtaş)

These couplets are also important in terms of illustrating how the narrator makes the report and the narrator changes. Yavuz Demir says, "It is possible to determine the different forms of speech presentation in a fictional text by the presence or absence of the reporting expression. [...] With transference, speech and thought transfer is reported to one of the figures in the world of narrative" (49) and he thus mentions the importance of the subject. In *Hüsrev ü Şîrîn* the expressions of report can be determined as follows and these are very important for the reader to remind the change of narrator.

Didi şol râhibi eglen görelüm
 Bu gussa kıssasından bir soralum (1333)
 [He told the priest to wait, let us see
 Let us ask what this misery story is]
Gülerek didi Şîrîn-i şeker-rîz
 Ki bugün Bîsütûna iderem hîz (4734)
 [Şîrîn, who scatters sweet (while speaking) said with a smile,
 I go to Mountain Bîsutûn by leaping, by running]
Pes açdı agzını Şavûr-ı nakkâş
 Hezârân reng ile oldı güher-pâş (999)
 [Then Nakkaş Şavur opened his mouth,
 Scattered gem with a thousand of colours]
Buyurdi getürün ol sûreti tâz
 Ki görünür gözime fitne-engîz (1210)
 [As she appears to me the one who raises cain,
 He ordered to bring the appearance]
Didiler yine eyledi perî rîv
 Du'â kilun ki olmaya yavuz dîv (1243)

[The fairy played a trick again,
Pray that this is not an evil, *they said*] (Timurtaş)

Another method used in the narrative text is to include dialogues. This method can be considered to eliminate the dominant attitude of the narrator because the intervention is minimal. Yavuz Demir articulates this situation with these sentences: "In the plot, the character, the description and so on, the narrator, who chooses the form "Narrative Report of Speech Act," in which the narrator is totally dominated, uses "independent direct speech" for the communication in dialogues" (62). The following example is between Hüsrev and Ferhat, and as it is seen, the narrator does not interfere in this dialogue:

Didi evvel ne yirdür şehrin üstâd
Eyitdi gam-zemîn ü mihnet-âbâd (4551)
[First *he asked* the master where it is in the city,
A place full of grief and a place of misery, *said he*]
Didi ol yirde san'at ne bilürler
Eyitdi cân satarlar derd alurlar (4552)
[*He asked* which art they knew there,
They sell the soul, buy the misery, *he said*]
Didi cân satmaga âkil dimez yol
Eyitdi 'âşigun kem harfidür ol (4553)
[The clever does not call selling the soul a way, *he said*
It is the bad word of the lover, *he told*]
Didi Şîrîn'e var mı âşnâlık
Eyitdi evvelîdür rûşenâlık (4560)
[*He asked* Şîrîn if there was familiarity
To shine out is the priority, *he said*]
Didi gel 'ışk- Şîrîn'den irag ol
Eyitdi öldüresin ivme sag ol (4568)
[*He told* to keep away himself from Şîrîn's love
He said he would not give up even if he killed him] (Timurtaş)

Conclusion

In this study, the problem of the genres' evolving and influencing each other which many researchers and theoreticians have dealt with has been discussed within the framework of the comparison of masnavi-novel. Although the novel is written in prose, and the masnavi is written in verse, and the reasons for the emergence of the genres in question are different from each other, their similar plots, setting, characters, narrative styles, and lengths might cause one to think whether these two genres have common features or not. From this point of view, firstly, it has been tried to explain what masnavi is and the opinions about the relationship between masnavi and novel are given. Since the subject, the time, the place, the plot and the characters are the significant elements in both genres, these features are addressed by focusing on the masnavi.

The fact that the narrator is one of the most important figures in both genres, gives rise to the idea that these two genres are coming close together. Although the genres of novel and masnavi differ in terms of time, place and character in the context of reality, the existence of a plot, a basic text and additional texts, as well as the use of alternative narrators in masnavis make the two genres, novel-masnavi, similar to each other. This study has tried to make sense of masnavi type with novel theory and aimed to open a window to the new studying opportunities in the field of masnavi literature. As a result, although the types of masnavi and the novel are compared in terms of the mentioned points above, this does not mean these two genres are articulated together.

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