

Samiha Ayverdi

Biography

Sâmiha Ayverdi was born in 1905 in Istanbul, to Mediha Hanım and Miralay İsmail Hakkı Bey. The family bestowed upon their daughter the name "Sâmiha," meaning "generous and open-handed." Sâmiha Ayverdi spent her childhood in historical districts of Istanbul, primarily in Şehzadebaşı. She began her education at the age of five, attending a neighborhood school. Later, she continued her education at Süleymaniye İnas Numune Mektebi and graduated in 1921. Her further education was private. Ayverdi, who was proficient in French, has one daughter and two grandchildren.

Sâmiha Ayverdi, who published her first book in 1938, is one of the prolific authors of the Republican era literature, known as "velûd," meaning "prolific and frequent." It can be said that death did not stop Sâmiha Ayverdi from producing works. With over forty works to her name, Ayverdi's writings produced during her lifetime are still being published by the Ayverdi Institute established after her passing. Ayverdi began her literary career by writing novels and stories, and continued with works of historical and social content, such as biographies, memoirs, letters, and articles.

In Ayverdi's works, there are three main themes drawn from her life: "Sufism, historical consciousness and civilization construction, Istanbul." In her novels and stories, Ayverdi focuses on human and existential subjects, making Sufi thought the subject of literary works for the first time in Turkish literature after the Tanzimat period. In her memoirs, history, research, articles, essays, and letters, she addresses the great civilization established by our nation under the name of the Ottoman Empire, Istanbul, which encompasses all the elements of this civilization, and the contradictions of civilization we faced at the end of the 19th and in the 20th century, and their effects on the Turkish nation. She discusses ideas of preserving the lost values of our history and culture, fortifying against challenges, and forming a new synthesis. Istanbul, narrated by many authors in Turkish literature, holds such an important place in her works that it earns her the title of "the writer of Istanbul."

Sâmiha Ayverdi, whose language and style are noted for their excellence, is considered to provide some of the finest examples of Turkish and Istanbul Turkish. This aspect of her writing has been acknowledged in literary history.

Ayverdi not only served our cultural life with her books but also with her actions. She took the first steps towards introducing and understanding Mevlana and Yunus Emre, the spiritual founders of our civilization, to younger generations. She was one of the pioneers in initiating the Şeb-i Arus Ceremonies in 1954 and ensured the distribution of the first poetry and hymn cassettes of Yunus Emre's poems. She was one of the first to implement important projects for the revival of traditional arts such as illumination and calligraphy. Ayverdi, who has contributed to many beneficial endeavors for Turkish culture and civilization, planted trees on Fevzipaşa Street in Fatih and in what is now known as Koyunbaba Park in Fatih, and supervised their care with the youth in the area. She actively participated in the establishment and activities of various associations and foundations such as the Istanbul Conquest Society, Yahya Kemal Institute, Kubbealtı Academy Culture and Art Foundation, and the Turkish Women's Culture Association.

She has also been awarded numerous awards. Some of these include the "Language Award of the Year" given by the Turkey Writers Union in 1988 for her memoir book "Hey Gidi Günler Hey"; the "Outstanding Service Gratitude Certificate" awarded by the Prime Ministry Family Research Institution in 1990; and the "Outstanding Service Award" given by the Turkey Association of Authors and Intellectual Property Owners in 1992. Sâmiha Ayverdi passed away on March 22, 1993. She is buried in the cemetery of Zeytinburnu Merkez Efendi.

Works

Aşk Budur (1938) • Batmayan Gün (1939) • Ateş Ağacı (1941) • Yaşayan Ölü (1942) • Bir Gece (1940) • İnsan ve Şeytan (1942) • Son Menzil (1943) • Yolcu Nereye Gidiyorsun (1944) • Yusufçuk (1946) • Mesih Paşa İmamı (1948) • Kenan Rifai ve Yirminci Asrın Işığında Müslümanlık (1951) • İstanbul Geceleri (1952) • Edebi ve Manevî Dünyası İçinde Fatih (1953) • İbrahim Efendi Konağı (1964) • Boğaziçinde Tarih (1966) • Misyonerlik Karşısında Türkiye (1969) • Türk-Rus Münasebetleri ve Muharebeleri (1970) • Bir Dünyadan Bir Dünyaya (1974) • Türk Tarihinde Osmanlı Asırları (1975) • Türkiye'nin Ermeni Meselesi (1976) • Âbide Şahsiyetler (1976) • Milli Kültür Meseleleri ve Maarif Davamız (1976) • Hatıralarla Başbaşa (1977) • Kölelikten Efendiliğe (1978) • Dost (1980) • Yeryüzünde Birkaç Adım (1984) • Rahmet Kapısı (1985) • Ne İdik Ne Olduk (1985) • Mektuplardan Gelen Ses (1985) • Rahmet Kapısı (1985) • Bağ Bozumu (1987) • Hey Gidi Günler Hey (1988) • Hancı (1988) • Küplücedeki Köşk (1989) • Ah Tuna Vah Tuna (1996) • Dile Gelen Taş (1999) • Ratibe (2002) • Ne İdik Ne Olduk (2002) • Ezeli Dostlar (2003) • İki Âşinâ (2003) • Dünden Bu Güne Ne Kalmıştır (2006) • Arkamızdan Dönen Dolaplar (2007) • Kaybolan Anahtar (2008) • Paşa Hanım (2009) • Ebabil Kuşları (2010) • O Da Bana Kalsın (2013) • Mülakatlar (2005) • Üç Günlük Dünya İçin (2014) • Sinan'ın Günlüğü (2015) • İthafılar (2002)