



A survey of common mystic meanings and concepts in the works of Hafiz and Yunus Emrah¹

Hafız ve Yunus Emrah'ın eserlerindeki ortak tasavvufî anlam ve kavramların incelenmesi

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Abstract

This article compares common Sufi concepts and themes found in the poetry of Hafez of Shiraz and Yunus Emre, two renowned poets of Islamic Sufism. Based on his work, *Lisân-ül-Ghayb* (The Language of the Unseen), Hafez-ı Shirazi offers a brief overview of the poetry of Hafez and Yunus Emre, the founder of Turkish Sufi poetry. Both poets were renowned contemporary scholars of the shining galaxy of Islamic Sufism. Despite living in different geographies, both poets were nourished by the mystical atmosphere of the same period. Their poetic narratives, grounded in the Quran and the Sunnah, explored fundamental concepts such as *vahdet-i vücud* (unity of being), *fana* (Annihilation), divine love, universal unity, and the afterlife. While Hafez's Persian ghazals embody the idea of divine unity, steeped in profound contemplation and inner intoxication, Yunus Emre's Turkish poems convey a similar truth with simple language and a style that resonates with the people. This article exemplifies the parallels between the metaphysical perceptions of these two mystical poets: the nothingness of humanity in the face of God's oneness, and the idea that every being in the universe is a reflection of God. The mystical approaches developed by both poets, inspired by the Quran, offer not only an understanding of individual salvation but also a proposed moral system based on social peace and love. Yunus's simple truths, expressed in Anatolian Turkish, and Hafez's profound metaphors, adorned with symbols, are considered two interpretations of the same truth in two different cultural contexts. This study aims to illuminate the unifying power of mystical poetry in the Islamic world by revealing the shared intellectual and spiritual roots of these two poets.

Keywords: Hafiz, Yunus Emre, Monism, Annihilation, Comparison

Özet

Bu makale, İslam tasavvufunun iki büyük şairi olan Şirazlı Hafız ve Yunus Emre'nin şiirlerinde yer alan ortak tasavvufî kavram ve temaları karşılaştırmalı olarak ele almaktadır. Hafız-ı Şirâzi, *Lisân-ül-Gayb* (Gayb'in Dili), eserine dayanarak Hafız ve tasavvufî Türk şiirinin kurucusu Yunus Emre'nin şiirlerine kısa bir bakış sunmaktadır. Her iki şair de, İslam tasavvufunun parlayan galaksisinin çağdaş ve tanınmış âlimleriydi. Her iki şair de, farklı coğrafyalarda yaşamalarına rağmen aynı dönemin mistik atmosferinden beslenmiş, Kur'an-ı Kerim ve Sünnet temelli düşünce yapılarıyla vahdet-i vücud, fena (yok oluş), ilahi aşk, evrensel birlik ve ahiret anlayışı gibi temel kavramları şiirlerinde işlemişlerdir. Hafız'ın Farsça gazellerinde derin bir tefekkür ve içsel sarhoşlukla yoğrulmuş ilahi birlik düşüncesi varken, Yunus Emre Türkçe şiirlerinde sade bir dil ve halkı kucaklayan bir üslupla benzer hakikati dile getirmiştir. Makalede, bu iki

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mistik şairin metafizik algılarındaki paralellikler, Allah'ın birliği karşısında insanın hiçliği, evrendeki her varlığın Tanrı'nın bir yansıması olduğu düşüncesiyle örneklenmiştir. Her iki şairin de Kur'an'dan esinle geliştirdikleri mistik yaklaşımlar, sadece bireysel bir kurtuluş anlayışını değil, toplumsal barış ve sevgi temelinde bir ahlaki sistem önerisi sunmaktadır. Yunus'un Anadolu Türkçesiyle dile getirdiği yalın hakikatler ile Hafiz'in sembollerle süslenmiş derin metaforları, iki farklı kültürel bağlamda aynı hakikatin iki yorumu olarak ele alınmaktadır. Bu çalışma, bu iki şairin ortak düşünsel ve ruhsal köklerini ortaya koyarak İslam coğrafyasındaki mistik şiirin birleştirici gücüne ışık tutmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hafiz, Yunus Emre, Monizm, Yok Oluş, Karşılaştırma.

Introduction

Shams al-Din Muhammad, known as Hafez, Khajeh Hafez Shirazi, and nicknamed as "LesanolGheyb" and "TarjomanolAsrar", a great and famous Iranian mystic and sonneteer, was born in the eighth century Hijri. Date of birth, years of life and term of life, and conditions of his life are not well-known to us. Poems of this poet are not unraveling in this regard. From his poems, it can be inferred that he was a young man who began learning the Holy Quran, Arabic literature, and Islamic sciences at a young age. He was the elite of his age in music science and memorized the Quran in fourteen narrations.

To thy complaint, love reacheth, if like Hafez

Thou recite the Kuran with the fourteen traditions. (ghazal 94)

Therefore, adopted the pen name Hafiz. Thanks to his excellent knowledge and the journey of truth, he was at the center of reverence among wise men at that time. Finally, this mystic poet passed away in 791 Hijri and was buried in his hometown, Shiraz. (Halabi,1376,676; Moain,1319,78)

YunusEmre, or as he is called in most of his poems, "QolYunus", "AshegYunus", or "YuneuEmre", "MeskinYunus", "YunusDarwish", "QujehYunus", was a villager from the Turkmen ethnic group and an illiterate poor person who lived in the second half of the seventh century and the early eighth century and most likely passed away in the year 843 Hijri. During his lifetime, he chose a corner of solitude and reclusion, and his mystical journey took about forty years. There is no clear information about the time and place of his death, and his tomb is not precisely known. (Koprulu,1385,309-328)

Despite claims that he was uneducated, like some great mystics and the great Prophet of Islam (PBUH), Yunus Emre's mystical poetry reflects the richness and broad, deep knowledge he possessed in Islamic mysticism. His poems are seemingly contradictory, but in terms of reality, they reveal different mental states rooted in faith and purity that he possesses (Schimmel, 1384, 6-7). The life of this great Turkish poet, like that of his Iranian counterpart, Khajeh Hafiz Shirazi, is shrouded in ambiguity and is intertwined with legends. In his poems, he introduces himself as a follower of Topduq Baba. Asheg Chalabi, in his biography, has written: Although Yunus was illiterate, he studied in the school of God (Anushe, 1384, 919), just like Khajeh Hafiz Shirazi, who, it is claimed, achieved great mystical truths in the light of divine blessings. Today, despite the passage of centuries and political changes, the people of Iran and Turkey have kept the fire of Love for Yunus Emre and Hafiz still blazing in their hearts. By singing their heavenly songs, they make themselves happy. Although all religious and mystical schools refer to a single reality and share a common cultural tradition, intellectual, and philosophical language, there is a notable attunement between the two contemporary Gnostic poets who derive from the same origin. Conceptual agreements and balances between the ideas and mystical beliefs of the two poets suggest the existence of similar experiences and mystical tastes, although there are slight differences. Mystical affinity of these two divers in reality sea, and that there are no valuable comparative studies on ideas of the two, can be a good reason to compare the common mystical concepts and themes, such as Quran, Monism, Annihilation, repent, pondering over death, carpe diem, and loving fellow men are very few amidst their poems. By comparing them, we can gain



a deeper understanding of those key concepts. Indeed, more unity, empathy, and compassion among nations could be considered one of the best blessings of such a fruitful scientific discussion.

The Quran and the idea of Monism

Monism is undoubtedly one of the most significant achievements in the history of human thought, marked by both discovery and intuition. In this regard, Islam, as the seal of the divine religions and the guarantee of human attainment to ultimate perfection in all its scientific and practical aspects, is based on the unity of word and the word of unity. Naturally, the interpretations of Muslim philosophers and theologians differ significantly from those of mystics regarding the concept of unity. The Mystics' interpretation of unity, inspired by the Holy Quran, does not deny partnership in the essence of God and does not rule out the possibility of a co-partner in the essence of God. Still, it is the denial of all existence other than God. Therefore, it is natural that mystics such as Hafiz and Yunus Emre, who founded their intellectual foundations on the Quran, have composed wonderful and amazing poems derived from the Quran to be shared with human society.

Like Hafiz, I gained all my good habits
From the commandments, holy books entail. (319)

Muslim mystics consider belief in Monism to have emanated from the precious teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah, and a result of intuitive knowledge. The sublime fact that in the universe there is nothing except Allah has been mentioned in the Quran several times, such as

Wherever you turn, whether frontend or backend, you can observe God with all the names and attributes (Al-Baqara:114). Or all but the Almighty is mortal. (Al-Qasas:88) Beginning and End, Apparent and Hidden is God. (Al-Hadid:3)

Inspired by the divine scents of the Quran, Hafiz realizes all universe, including both seen and unseen, as manifestations of God in the world and says:

Yet bind, belt, and trap are from Kingly grace

To adore itself and show endless amour.

Friend and player, and bearer are all He

Water and clay to this path are but the door. (428)

Not alone is my eye the splendor-place of His cheek,

Revolving this very mirror, the sun and the moon are. (193)

He knows the whole universe as a manifestation of God, humming and chanting 'Analhaq' (I am God), and to perceive it, one must listen, just as Moses did.

According to the mystic insights of Hafiz and Yunus Emre, the world and appearances are not independent of mere existence, but rather a vast and comprehensive God that exists in a shadowy, conditioned form, and is accidental, interfaced, and dependent. The relationship between God and creation is akin to the relationship between waves and the sea, and shadow and its owner. If the mystic has any attention to the unsustainable and transitory world, it is because they see the divine beauty in the universe's landscape.

In the cup, we have beheld the reflection of the face of the Beloved

O thou void of knowledge of the joy of the perpetual wine-drinking of ours. (11)

To the world's work, never was 'attention mine;

In my sight, they face their happy adorer thus is. (22)

Not alone is my eye the splendor-place of His cheek:

Revolving this very mirror, the sun and the moon are. (193)

As we have stated, the mystic ethics that Yunus Emre was trying to develop had complete concordance with the Qur'an and Hadith, ranging from the principles of Islamic law down to the smallest derivatives. Because, in his view, the base is "Tarighat" and "law" (Koprulu, 1385, 351). In all his lyrics and divine poems, he has drawn inspiration from the Holy Quran and Hadith. Through a rigorous and profound study of Sufi literature, he has conveyed divine and eternal love, as well as a profound understanding of God's unity. (Golkarian,1387,9)

To show the influence of the teachings of the Quran on this Muslim mystic, it suffices to tell that he as his Turkish compatriot "Merkez Effendi" who brought a faded flower to his master, "Sonbol Effendi" to determine his successor, and in response to his master reasoned that: All the flowers are praying God, how could I stop them and I only saw this flower that has finished its prayers so I brought it along. He claimed that, along with the rocks, mountains, gazelles, and the prophets, he praises God, because he is a faithful companion and interpreter of the Qur'an, and the entire universe can see that he constantly praises God. (Schimmel,1377,104)

He says: O my God, God, God - I call You along with the mountains and rocks

O God, my God –I call You along with the birds at dawn

Along with the fish of the sea, with gazelles of free plains - with "Yahoo" of the dervishes I call You - O God, my God. (Emre,1948,562)

He holds so profound and unwavering a belief in the Quran and the teachings of the Quran that he says:

One who does not know the Quran is like one who has never been born. (Ibid.,508)

That is why he also likes Hafiz, who is trained under Quranic teachings, under the light of its monistic insights that are strongly influenced by monotheistic revelations. He defends the logic of unity vigorously, and amidst his poems, he refers to the absolute unity of God and interprets the whole universe in this regard. This great Muslim mystic considered himself to be the same as the entire world and, intoxicated with the wine of eternal unity and in an unconscious state, writes that:

I am the first, I am the end ... life, I am also lives - I bestowed Noah storm... I am who sees, I am who bestows, I am who gets. (Golkarian,1387,201; Emre,1948,531)

He continues: I am the Ka'ba and home of idols, it was me who became cloud and went up to heavens and became rain and rained, I am the one who looks, I am the one who gets, I am the one who gives, I am neither Gabriel nor Michael, I am Israfil, I am the poet, I am the one who speaks in every language. (Schimmel,1384,67)

He also likes his Iranian counterpart, Hafiz, who cries 'Anaal-Haq' (I am God), and says, 'I drink a sip of Unity wine – I say Ana al-Haq and I proceed toward the gallows.' (Ibid.,68)

Since he has achieved the great mystery that the world is mortal, illusion, and euthanized, he was proud of himself and declared:



This nature and this multiplicity are only a game, and knowing these multiplicities and that they are unrealistic affairs is an intuition of the actual reality and achieving unity. (Topçu,1994,434)

I understood whatever is in you is gone

The entire world and its work are baseless (Golkarian,1387,53)

Under the influence of such knowledge and insight, the veil before his eyes disappear, and he concludes by this great truth that God is not one except him.

As I found myself

It means I found God

I was afraid that...

How outstanding that I got rid of fear (Ibid.,64)

I am captive of a friend and really into him

Just lovers know what I say

I gave up dualism

Because I am here to achieve unity (Ibid.,66)

Of the unity, a sip

I drank out of his hands

The scent of beloved

I smelled. Then what profit is in musk? (Ibid.,87)

Wherever I look, I see You

Whatever I imagine you, I see you (Ibid.,93)

By referring to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, it turns out that he, with his divine love and Monism, which are depicted with unutterable feelings in all his poems, has not gone out of the circle of Islam, because in his view, true faith is the perception of cosmic unity. He refers to the number eighteen thousand and states that this number represents the emergence of multiplicity, which is based on the foundation of unity. A mere unity which is not born and does not bear, and all multiplicities refer to it and are assimilated in it. (Demirci,1997,7; Horata,1994,53)

As the Quran says: When a disaster happens to them, they say there is no doubt that everything comes from God and to Him we shall return. (Al-Baqarah,156)

Annihilation

The literary meaning of Annihilation is the concept of passing away, inexistence, deterioration, and destruction (Moain, 1319). In the Quran, it also means the conversion from one form to another (Al-Anbya, 104). Mystics' elders are also involved in interpreting the meaning of it in their own words, as Hojviri refers (Hojviri, 1358, 315). The highest degree of Annihilation is mystic submergence in God, so severe that even intelligence cannot be aware, i.e., Annihilation in Annihilation, which is the state of removal from duties

and sentences. However, God Himself protects faithful people and prevents them from committing a mistake. (Jami,1362,12)

Despite those who try to find the origin of mysticism and Sufism out of Islam, like who believe that Annihilation is rooted in Hinduism and Buddhism, the first person who made Islamic mysticism common was Bayezid Bastami disciple of Abu Ali Sendi that said (Khoramshahi, 1375, II,974): I went from God to God until I received a cry from myself: You are I. But the truth is that the conscience of Monism and understanding the sublime fact that determinations are extra and transient things, and, in fact, the second role of the squint eye.

In Islamic mysticism, the desire for Annihilation arises mainly from desolation in the material world, because once one was united with God, and now they are captured in the physical world. At this time, he recalls his heavenly origin and concludes that it is not worth limiting the spirit to an earthly cage. And by desiring Tawaf in the sacred realm and full of hope that, by fading determination, he can fly and in heaven whistle on his Tuba tree, he starts his journey and rips the veil between God and himself.

Such a cage is not worthy of a sweet-singing bird like me

I must go to paradise, for I am the bird of that garden

If the scent of yearning issues from my heart's blood, be not surprised

For I am the fellow-sufferer of the musk-deer of Khotan (342)

Or:

As a bird of paradise, to parting, I did agree
Fell into the trap of life and worldly tragedy. (317)

From Hafiz's perspective, like Mawlana's, he believes reason is inadequate at this stage; referring to grace and wisdom indicates a lack of understanding and a disconnection from the divine.

You won't gird your waist with such a binding belt.

If you see that it is yourself who becomes sore. (428)

If Hafiz settles the dust on the way and, in the shadow of actual knowledge, tears his material shirt that blocks the light from God, the heart will join the hearty, and duality will disappear.

"The day of separation from, and the night of disunion with, the Beloved is ended."

This omen, I cast; the star passed; and the work of grief is ended.

That agitation of long nights and the heart's grief,
All, in the shade of the idol's tree, is ended. (166)

Now, the stage of Hafez is the banquet place of the Kings.

To the Heart-possessor, his heart went; to the Beloved, his soul went. (170)

Yunus Emre, like Hafiz, knows himself from friend's territory and shows the nostalgia of the exile from his original home, and whining, he says:

Wow, here is a person? - alien as I- lonely, tear in his eyes- alien as I. (Golkarian,1387,43)



He, like many other predecessors and descendants of Sufis and mystics, even more than they, talks with a windlass, the sound of which is typically heard in all the countries of the Near East. This inspires the poet that the windlass is separated from its real root, and because of that separation, it laments. As the Reed of Mowlana, which laments separations and yearns to reunite with its origin. (Schimmel, 1384, 527) Yunus asks God nothing but God because, except God, everything is mortal and does not deserve attention and devotion, and just God is absolute and real beauty, and hence, he says:

I do not want that Halal nymph that you gave us. My only desire is to achieve you. Give the nymph to Sufis. Yunus is longing to meet you. If you are not oppressive, help him achieve his desire. And then he mentions the story of Rabia Adaviyya, who wants to extinguish the fire of hell with a bucket of water to worship Him solely because of Him, and to know that everything except God is mortal, including heaven and hell. (Schimmel, 1384,64) .He elsewhere, based on his insight, says: Even in heaven, everything, ranging from sound, aroma, breeze, or growth and love, is nothing but God, because everything has become mortal in God. For him, heaven is the same as seeing the beauty of the divine face and is not the number of palaces and nymphs. Everyone who is deprived of meeting God is in hell, even though he is in heaven. (Schimmel,1377, 529)

He appeals to the "love of home" hadith and looks for a friend crying, and he rebukes himself that one should continue his way to reach kith. Deniers never acknowledge your way, and the seeker must continue on his way and dissolve and fade his worthless and tiny existence in the absolute, boundless sea of God. Because those close to God who sacrificed themselves have become a part of God, and the true lover should immerse and swim in the ocean of beloved. (Golkarian,1387,32,72-73)

I shall proceed from here to there. In the midst of mine, I'm a drop

That is, among lovers- I need to parade

Each particle gets to mine –a drop tickles Oman

I will find my love – I do not need name or fame

If I am hanged to love gallows - it is a must. (Schimmel, 1384,81)

Yunus, like Hafiz, has voluntarily passed away in the material world and has become alive in the spiritual world. He says: I have come to a city whose name they do not say; I have immersed myself in a sea whose depth is not apparent. Thank God that I have bestowed my life before death; I have joined God, and thanks be to God that I have been annihilated in God, and there is no return.

Annihilation in God, according to Yunus Emre, is the transformation of human nature and qualities into the essence and attributes of God (Aktüccar, 1384, 131-135). The optional and voluntary death is dying before the determined death, and this kind of death is nothing but immortality and achieving God. (Kaplan,1991,256)

YunusEmre, my faith is complete - my soul was filled with God

My place is a placeless city now - I thank God for joining and surviving with God. (Schimmel, 1384,58-59)

I thank God for achieving to visit Him, and for being able to attain my sweetheart

I got rid of being You and I (Golkarian,1387,35)

Yunus has sunk into God and passed away - his mind cannot help him return. (Ibid.,78)

Conclusion

In the light of comparing ideas of these two relatively contemporary mystic poets who had a dramatic impact on the descendent and later poetry and mystical thought, it can be claimed that:

Since both characters discuss the sublime God and utilize valuable Quranic and Sunnah teachings, they share a series of common ideas and interests that make them appear identical in nature and substance, although there are a few differences.

Both of the compared mystics, in their monistic vision, inspired by the Holy Quran and Sunnah, and using intuitive logic, emphasize the presence of a real Essence behind all unstable beings that are considered transient and subordinate, and are manifestations of God's names and attributes; in essence, they do not exist.

Both concerning the mystical meaning of "Love of Home" Hadith and understanding the fact that they have been separated from the eternal home and are trapped in the material soil, by a longing to return to their origin and join eternity, tried hard to break the chains of dependency and affiliation and preferred optional dying to achieve Annihilation and salvation in this material world.

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