



Foundations of Love in Mystical Contemplation of Yunus Emre and Hafez

Yunus Emre ve Hafız'ın Mistik Düşüncelerinde Aşkın Temelleri

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ABSTRACT

This study comparatively examines the foundations of Love in the mystical contemplations of Yunus Emre and Hafez. Despite their distinct geographical and cultural settings, both poets conceptualize Love as the ontological essence of existence and the ultimate source of divine truth. The article analyzes major themes, including the eternity and preexistence of Love, its role in cosmic creation, its revelatory function in unveiling metaphysical truths, its miraculous nature, its ineffability, and its tension with reason.

For both poets, love precedes creation and permeates the universe as a primordial divine principle. Through Love, the purified lover gains access to hidden truths that transcend rational inquiry. Reason is portrayed as limited and subordinate, whereas Love is exalted as the ultimate path to spiritual perfection. Love is further depicted as a turbulent and transformative force that produces bewilderment and suffering, yet ultimately elevates the seeker toward higher spiritual realization.

The study concludes that Yunus Emre and Hafez, grounded in Qur'anic teachings and the broader Islamic mystical tradition, share profound conceptual affinities. In their poetic systems, Love functions simultaneously as an ontological foundation of being and an epistemological means of attaining divine knowledge.

Keywords: Yunus Emre, Hafez, Sufism, Divine Love, Unity of Being, Mystical Epistemology, Reason and Love

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Anadolu'nun büyük mutasavvıf şairi Yunus Emre ile İran'ın lirik dehası Hafez'in mistik düşüncelerinde aşk kavramının temellerini karşılaştırmalı olarak incelemektedir. Farklı coğrafyalarda ve kültürel bağlamlarda yaşamış olmalarına rağmen her iki şair de aşkı varlığın özü ve ilahi hakikatin kaynağı olarak görmektedir. Çalışmada aşkın ezeliği ve ebediliği, kâinatın yaratılışındaki rolü, ilahi sırları açığa çıkaran bir güç oluşu, mucizevi etkisi, akıl ile çatışması ve ifade edilemezliği gibi başlıca temalar ele alınmıştır.

Yunus Emre ve Hafız'a göre aşk, yaratılıştan önce var olan ontolojik bir ilkedir ve tüm evreni kuşatan ilahi bir nurdur. Aşk sayesinde insan, varlığın sırlarına erişir; kalbi arınan âşık, hakikati doğrudan tecrübe eder. Her iki şair de aklı aşk karşısında sınırlı ve yetersiz görür; aşkı ise insanı kemale ulaştıran yegâne

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yol olarak yüceltir. Aşk aynı zamanda yakıcı, sarsıcı ve ıstırap verici bir deneyimdir; fakat bu ıstırap, hakikate ulaşmanın zorunlu bedelidir.

Sonuç olarak çalışma, Yunus Emre ile Hafız'ın Kur'anî ve tasavvufî gelenekten beslenen aşk anlayışlarında derin benzerlikler bulunduğunu ve aşkı hem ontolojik hem epistemolojik bir ilke olarak konumlandıklarını ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yunus Emre, Hafız, Tasavvuf, İlahi Aşk, Vahdet-i Vücut, Mistisizm, Akıl ve Aşk İlişkisi

Introduction

Yunus Emre, a berserk poet and mystic from the sophisticated land of Anatolia, was nurtured by the humanitarian, idealistic culture of Islamic mysticism. Having endured harsh austerity of all kinds and benefited from his mystical intuition and inner tranquility, he matured into an illustrious, innovative poet in his country's mystical style.

Yunus Emre drew on the intellectual foundations of Tapduq Emre and the prominent Iranian mystic Haji Bektas. As Rumi would be regarded as a quintessential example in Anatolia, Emre was inspired by Rumi's pure mystical origins. As a Rumi in his own time, he managed to articulate the finest mystical notions using contemporary, Turkish colloquialism. Influenced by mystical ideas of Tapduq Emre and in his intellectual maturity, He says:

Tapduq tapısında, qol olduq qapusunda *Yunus miskin çik idik, pişdik elhemdolellah*

"We arrived at Tapduq's abode and deified him. We were raw but got sophisticated thanks to God."

Yunus Emre's poetic themes revolve around God, monotheism, the afterlife, Love, mysticism, belief, and the unity of existence. He counts as a poet of Love, amity, and gentleness. He obtained this Love after heartily serving a nearly forty-year apprenticeship to Haji Bektas and Tapduq Emre. He says: "I am not born for war, my life vocation is love" (Monthly, 1392: 92-6).

Emre's mystical views stem from his mystical and intuitive experiences, but not from sophist classics. His mystical intuitions "betray influences of sophist concepts, monastic culture, and most of all, of personal perspectives, and contemporary environment and oral literature" (Golkarian, 1387:9). These influences and experiences have placed Emre in the same league as Gnostics and existential mystics in the realm of Love. This view is quite evident in the poetry of Hafiz.

The two poets have lived in different geographies, undergone dissimilar mystical experiences, and acquired distinct forms of knowledge. Nevertheless, they share significant similarities on mystical grounds, especially in Love, because their mystical contemplation is sourced in the Quran, Islam, and the beliefs of such mystical greats as Haji Bektas, Tapduq Emre, and Rumi. This study sheds light on some of these similarities.

1. Eternity and preexistence of Love

The first point is the eternity and preexistence of Love, which both poets have mentioned. Yunus Emre says:



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Before the creation of heaven and the earth, Love existed. Love is ancient and eternal. Love has earned you what you possess.

Since this court was not, O king! (Love) You were, oh, this Love, thereby cures malfunctioned as agony.

Hafiz also versifies:

*In the light of eternity, your virtue manifested
Love was found out, and it set the whole world on fire
Since before in that world be grapes and roses garden
Our soul was drunk with eternal wine.*

The genesis of this thought lies in several verses and anecdotes that mystics often cite. The hallowed anecdote or holy verse and Ebne Arabi.

Accordingly, Love is omnipresent in all nature and the universe. Zarrinkoub likewise remarks: "the universe, from particular to general and simple to conglomerate whatsoever are subject to love" (Zarrinkoub, 1379:94).

Hafiz writes:

*Spongers in the world are humans and fairies
Show some regard to win felicity
I heartened people with disabilities in two worlds
Except for your Love, the rest is mortal*

And in Rumi's words:

*Take the sphere of the earth as from the wave of Love
If there were not Love, the world would be dreary.*

Yunus Emre similarly considers all bits of the universe as subject to Love:

Love stole pen (tabula of creation), and the world was captivated by Love.

2. Love as revealer of universe secrets and truths

Mystical truths are accessible to those who have their heart cleaned up from inner, material veils and are emancipated from sensual and intellectual comparison. As the late Zarrinkoub puts it, "whatever comparison and rational arguments wrap up in doubt is unmasked to a mystic (lover) here." (1379: 549).

In the words of Rumi:

Do you know why our mirror is not suggestive?



Patina is not obvious on its face

Yunus Emre says:

From this life (Love), divine Love caused divine secrets to be uttered by tongue.

3. Miracle of Love

Both poets hold that Love is capable of working miracles. Yunus Emre observes:

Khedr's eternal life and Kosar's rhetoric

It's called aqua vita, but Love is divine

Creator of miracles in Jesus' body and soul is even the Love of God.

Hafez also regards Love as the medium of receiving mysteries of divine wisdom:

You ignorant! Try to get aware

Unless you follow, you will not lead

If the light of righteous Love falls on your heart and soul

You will absolutely outshine the sun

Hafez construes aqua vita of Love like this:

One whose heart beats for Love will never die

In the world's journal is registered our permanence

Yunus Emre says too:

A heart devoid of Love is like a stone

Lover, said to be dead, voices:

The dead is corpse of animals; lover doesn't die

4. Love as a turbulent tempest: raging and distressing

The Old of Herat said: "Love is not pain, but inflicts pain. It is not a disaster but brings disaster.

Hafiz says:

Wayfarers in the path of God, cover the path of calamity

Comrade of Love does not worry ups and downs

In Love there is no escape from regret and grief

I stand up like a candle; do not scare me with flame



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Yunus Emre also knows that passionate Love burns the hearts of lovers:

I flow like running water and grilles kidneys

I take vitality from his breath. Come and see what Love did to me

I've gone insane and resorted to that companion

I go to my sweetheart and get lukewarm. Come and see what Love did tome.

5. Love is unutterable and indescribable

Indeed, Love is a divine ecstasy or inner experience that grips the lover in a peculiar, mystical mood; thus, it can't be described or uttered in wakefulness and sobriety.

Einolghozat says: "If love were verbalized, the nonchalant are not unconscious of the meaning of love" (Moein, 1378: 446).

On the indescribability of the truth of Love, Hafez says:

Word of Love is not what comes out of the mouth

Wine pourer! Pour wine and shorten this dialogue

The pen hadn't the tongue to divulge the secret of Love

Recounting ambition is beyond reading

Yunus Emre also believes that true Love is divine, and so it cannot be likened to anything, let alone talking about its effect:

Love can't be likened to anything. Nothing can take the place of Love in this world and the hereafter.

6. Glory of Love and splendor of lover

Love of a lover is divine, so that lover climbs the ladder of Love up to the highest heaven and achieves felicity and perfection. Yunus Emre illuminates the heavenly glory of Love so:

Everybody is a drop in the sea of existence

But we offer all of it to the heavens

Roam riding on the clouds

Know the one who made it to heaven is me

Yunus Emre maintains that Love is a pure gem that not everybody deserves to attain, and therefore gem of Love is not enveloped in the shell of the material world:

We've become pearl divers

We dug out Gem of the Sea once again

Only a goldsmith appreciates a gem



As for the splendor of lover Emre rhapsodizes:

*The field of men is superior to the throne
For he is struck by a polo ball, but does not notice*

7. Conflict of reason and Love

In mystical contemplation, reason always holds a lower position than the sublime Love. In Javaher Alasrar, we read: "reason is to pose devotion; and love to comprehend divinity" (Moein, 1387: 444).

Hafiz observes:

*Torture of Love is beyond our forbearance
This fallacy can't resolve this problem
The Province of Love holds a much higher status than reason
One who kisses that door has heart on sleeve
All the magic of reason is getting around
Samaritan would do by stick and white hand*

The limited capacity of reason against the tremendous storm of Love in the field of knowledge has led Emre to repeatedly emphasize Love's importance, as though, in his mystical worldview, reason had no place and wasn't worth discussing. Thus, somewhere he versifies so:

*Yunus sank away in this type of monotheism
Even reason is unable to imagine his return*

And it is here that he contradicts the schools of reason, philosophy, and rationalism and turns to Love and mysticism.

*We are knowledge seekers and know the book of Love off by heart
Our instructor is God; love our school*

And therefore, he is certain of Love guiding his mystical persuasion and says:

*I drove insane, Yunus, my name
Love became my guide*

Tell His Holiness, I'm lonely, and it is me who rub face on his doorstep.

In another line, he lauds Love as his prayer, altar, and God:

*O heart person! Love is our Imam
For prayer, the visage of a sweetheart is our altar*



8. Love as a source of perplexity and desolateness

Love brings on perplexity, desolateness, and fascination. A lover continually bears mood swings because the face of the sweetheart frequently appears and vanishes. For this, lovers' moods are often shifting. In this regard, Yunus Emre says:

*I leave crying and moaning
I'm covered in the blood of Love
Neither insane nor sane
See what Love has done to me
I blow like a breeze occasionally
Like the pathway, I'm soiled and rough
Sometimes I flow in torrents
See what Love has done to me*

In his poems, Hafez has frequently hailed his astonishment, desolateness, and perplexity as a lover in the sea of Love. Indeed, he has captured the raging, stormy sea of Love:

*The heart that is set on her coiffure
Don't think that heart will calm down
Not to get desolate like Hafez
Don't be attached to the nice and don't follow them*

Conclusion

Yunus Emre is a Turk, a celebrated poet from Anatolia. Drawing on his mystical experiences and inspired by the teachings of grand mystics such as Haji Bektas, Tapduq Emre, and Rumi, he has expressed the most heart-touching mystical themes in a simple, melodious language. He has plenteous concepts and tenets in common with Rumi, Sa'di, and Hafez. Concept of Love is a recurring theme in the poetry of Hafez and his. Both deem the essence of Love and are descended from the heaven that exposes the secrets and truths of existence to humans. Love is a raging, choppy sea bearing gems of knowledge. The Love, in its knowledge-breeding light, makes humans astonished and desolate. Both poets extol the glory of Love and rank it above reason.

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