



Extended Abstract

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“The Green Expanse of Sky, I Beheld; and the Sickle of the New Moon”; A Description of a Verse by Hafez Based on the Theory of the Myth of Eternal Return

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Introduction

Shams al-Din Muhammad Hafez Shirazi (727–792 AH) is a poet of such remarkable expressive depth that the exploration of both the explicit and subtle dimensions of his thought, as well as the intricate nuances embedded in his verses, has continually invited sustained reflection and scholarly debate. Mircea Eliade (1907-1986 AD), the Romanian scholar, is also a famous and prolific contemporary thinker in the field of religions and mythology. One of his works, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, is his most authoritative work on time and history. “Time” is one of the profound and influential concepts that existed in the mind and language of this researcher. We know that time has superiority and dominance over everything and ultimately everything is defeated by time. It is only speech that can eliminate this dominance of time. Hafez's poetry is still alive and dynamic after all this time, and it has the capacity to be read in all ages. Eliade, in his aforementioned book has also considered time as an overwhelming and crushing phenomenon that contains the regeneration of concepts. In this research, we aim to examine Hafez's verse based on Mircea Eliade's theory of the myth of eternal return. The authors' attempt in the present research is to

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provide readers with a new reading of this verse by Hafez through an independent research and the application of the aforementioned theory.

Methodology

This is a qualitative content analysis using documentary or mythological criticism to interpret a verse by Hafez based on Mircea Eliade's theory of the myth of eternal return. The authors have tried to analyze and report on this verse by Hafez: "I saw the green field of the sky and the sickle of the new moon/ I remembered my own field and the time of harvest". After examining and presenting the material related to this verse, it is read in the light of Mircea Eliade's theory of the myth of eternal return.

Discussion

In his commentary on this verse, Ahmad Soudi Bosnavi says that seeing the green field of the sky and the sickle of the new moon, and remembering one's own field and the time of harvest signifies the remembrance of one's actions in this world and one's reward and punishment in the hereafter.

Khalil Khatib Rahber only briefly describes the images of Hafez's poem in this regard and then paraphrases it as follows: I looked at the green field of the sky and the sickle of the crescent, and I remembered my planting in the field of the world and the arrival of the time of harvest, which is the time to move and set off to the other world.

Abbas Zaryab Khoei says in his commentary on this verse that in this verse and several other verses of this ghazal, Hafez refers to time and its role in the existence of the world and man. He believes that in this analogy and in referring to the role of time, Hafez also refers to a story from the story of Zal, the father of Rostam in *Shahnameh*.

Baha al-Din Khorramshahi argues that the green field of the sky is a simile. Our predecessors did not see a difference between the colors green and blue; therefore, they called the sky or the sea green.

In Mohammad Iste'lami's commentary, Hafez sees the color of the sky as green. The comparison of the crescent moon with the sickle and harvest is related to the second stanza. Hafez sees the sky and the moon and thinks about the passage of time and laments the fact that his attempts in asceticism, his knowledge, school and monastery, have not led him to an understanding of the secrets of existence and the union with the beloved of eternity.

Saeed Hamidian, in his commentary on this verse points to its connection with a well-known hadith. Also, quoting Mohammad Amin Riahi, he considers a verse by Mu'izzi as the source of Hafez's theme. He also points to the similarity of Hafez's theme with a verse by Imad Faqih and a poem by Shamlu, and in this way deals with the intertextual relationships between Hafez's poem and other texts.

As we have seen, most of the commentaries on this verse by Hafez are focused on its linguistic and rhetorical aspects, its thematic similarities with the poems of other poets, and its connection with Arabic hadiths and proverbs. Among them, only Abbas Zaryab Khoei's commentary is of a different kind.

Mircea Eliade speaks of the heavenly fields. He believes that people first recognized the heavenly fields and then matched them with the lands of the earthly world. Eliade refers to a ritual in the ancient Egypt in which the regions and states of ancient Egypt were named after the heavenly fields.

In this verse, too, we can see remnants of the myth of the “sky field”. In fact, we can say that Hafez, based on the same mythological worldview, considers the green sky to be an example and a copy of the invisible green sky of the other world.

Conclusion

In the excerpts provided from the poems of Hafez and other poets, we can see remnants of the myth of the sky field. Looking at the sky field, which is the perfect, supreme, and perfect example of the earthly field, Hafez remembers his actions in this world. In other words, for Hafez, the sky field is reminiscent of the earthly field, and the earthly field is also a metaphorical reminder of his own actions. That Hafez sees the sky field first and then looks at the earthly field indicates that he has an idealistic outlook and builds his real world on the basis of the world of desirable and heavenly perfection.

Overall, regarding the meaning of the verse in question, it can be said that the god of time, with the sickle of death, reaps the fresh field of lives, hopes, opportunities and aspirations of human beings, leaving nothing but disintegration, terror and nothingness. After death reaps the lives of people, other people grow on the earth like plants and they too are reaped in their time, and this cycle will continue forever. In the second hemistich of the verse, Hafez reminds himself that he is not outside this cycle of birth and death, and one day the god of time will reap his sowing of life and hope, too.

Keywords: Hafez, Mircea Eliade, myth of the eternal return, field of heaven, sickle of the new moon

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