

The Act of Grieving in The Philosophy of Aşık Veysel- The Role of Cultural Codes in the Healing Process in Spiritual Support and Guidance

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Abstract: Aşık Veysel is an important representative of the minstrel tradition in the context of Turkish thought. Looking at the philosophical depth of his poems, it is possible to see a philosophy of life. The subject of this study is to analyse the meaning of the image/metaphor of the act of pouring trouble in one of his poems and to determine how this image is effective in the healing process in spiritual support and guidance. In other words, it is to examine the effect of cultural codes on people in an anthropological context. In this sense, it is an applied study. The study was carried out in a tent city in Adıyaman, one of the provinces damaged by the earthquake that occurred in 11 provinces on 6 February 2023. The study was conducted in two different time periods. Four different groups were studied. In this study, the impact of spiritual support and guidance activities on "adults" was presented. In summary, when we look at the effect of cultural codes on the healing process, it can be seen that it contributes greatly to the search for meaning in such extraordinary moments of crisis.

Keywords: Aşık Veysel, Philosophy, Cultural code, Spiritual support

Introduction

This study has been prepared to explain the healing power of cultural codes in spiritual support and guidance in mobilising our local dynamics based on the philosophy of Aşık Veysel, who has an important place in the history of Turkish thought. What is meant by cultural codes is the customs, traditions and those ones that nations

have brought from the past to the present. This transmission includes both oral and written (poetry, epic, proverb, idiom, literature accumulation) and similar actions repeated in practical life. In short, in an anthropological context, it covers the process until today. The great earthquake that occurred on 6 February 2023, which constitutes an example of the practical aspect of our study, is a tent city area in Adıyaman region of 11 provinces.¹

Aşık Veysel and Philosophy

This year, with the circular of our Presidency, the year 2023 has been declared as the "Year of Aşık Veysel". Aşık Veysel's real name is Veysel Şatıroğlu. Aşık Veysel was born in 1894 in Sivrialan village of Şarkışla district of Sivas. He is a folk minstrel who spent his life as a bard due to the smallpox he had. He is known as a minstrel. Aşık is an artist who sings improvised poems in syllabic metre and quatrain, accompanied by a reed, and some of them are bâdeli and tell folk stories. The difference of minstrels from other poets is that they are the eyes, ears, heart, in short, the spokesperson of the society to which they belong; they express their pains, troubles, joys, hopes and expectations with their instruments and words. While the minstrels of the pre-Islamic period were also known by names such as shaman, baksı/bahşl, game and kam, they continued their art under the name of folk poet/ minstrel after Islam, undergoing some changes. In the profession of minstrelsy, there are some criteria that have been applied throughout time and uptill today and have been established as a tradition with these features. One of these features is to play an instrument and become interested in the art of poetry.

Aşık Veysel has many poems and most of them are performed as folk songs. Aşık Veysel is an important thinker in the history of Turkish thought. While reflecting life in his poems, he established a complete human philosophy with a philosophical depth. He tried to reflect the life experiences of Anatolian people through his art.

Uzun İnce Bir Yoldayım — I'm On A Long narrow Road

Uzun ince bir yoldayım — *On a long narrow road I am*

¹ It is not specifically stated "how many" tent cities there are.

Gidiyorum gündüz gece — *I'm going day and night*
Bilmiyorum ne haldayım — *I don't Know how I'm doing .*
Gidiyorum gündüz gece — *I'm just going day and night*
Dünyaya geldiğim anda — *Ever since the day I was born*
Yürüdüm aynı zamanda — *I've been going on and on*
İki kapılı bir handa — *In an inn with two doors.*

Gidiyorum gündüz gece — *And I'm going on, day and night*

Aşık Veysel describes life in this poem. In a symbolic language, he explains that life is a road for human beings and that this road is long and special. The purpose of a road that is traveled day and night is again expressed that everything is possible in life. Like light and darkness: The fact that there is darkness at the end of light and light at the beginning of darkness explains that life can have ups and downs. This point shows us the dynamic aspect of life. How can someone position themselves in such a situation? It is in this dynamism that man becomes aware of himself and goes on to reinterpret himself. This is different from his physical birth. It is a re-enlightenment of consciousness. It is gaining the ability to make sense of life. The fast flowing state of life opens different doors for people in this perspective. «When I say I'm going but I don't know where I am», it is a reminder. Progress on this path/life is not just progress. It draws attention to the need to know the path one is traveling in life. In other words, it reminds people that they need to know themselves. It requires being aware of life. The sign of human vitality is to move forward knowing this difference.

In the other stanza, he talks about existing between these two by drawing attention to the fact that from the moment a person is born into life, a life movement begins and there is both the first existence that begins with birth and the extinction that ends with death. It is to live between these two gates knowing everything, that is, accepting everything. When one realizes the miraculous aspect of the moment of one's existence, one understands how precious life is. But on the other hand, it is essential to appreciate every moment of life, knowing the reality called death, that life will end one day. Time is precious for human beings, and the door of death is there for them not to use it in an unprofitable way. In this sense, he draws attention to the reality of nature and draws attention to conscious existence. This is the first interpretation.

The second interpretation of `with a two door inn` is to explain the first interpretation: In Anatolian lore and Islamic belief, death is not annihilation. There is a life after death. This life can be experienced by existing with the soul in a higher dimension. Physical death is a doorway to this special life. In this sense, there are two doors for human beings. The first gate is birth and the second gate is the one that applies to physical death. After passing through these gates, human beings reach their true home (Philosophical means real universe). It is necessary to understand and digest the life of the world, which is named as "a two door tavern."

In the other stanza, he points out that life consists of moments despite its seemingly long aspect. Life that seems very long is actually a moment. One should make good use of this moment and appreciate it. In short, one should accept this life as it is and enjoy it. This is a way of finding and interpreting happiness within oneself. In other words, this happiness is in one's own essence, in one's own life. Undoubtedly, this poem of Aşık Veysel contains a much deeper philosophy.

The Act of Pouring Sorrow According to Aşık Veysel

The subject of spiritual counselling and guidance, which we have chosen as the subject here, is to try to talk about the importance of the action of "pouring trouble," which has a place in our culture, based on a quatrain of Aşık Veysel, and to try to talk about the example of implementing the healing power in the practical field. «Dert dökmek» (Pouring) is an idiom used in Turkish. When we look at the meaning analysis of the words in which this idiom is formed, it is used in the meaning of trouble as the bad situation, problem and distress that the person is in. In this case, the person is spiritually sad, anxious and worried. "Pouring" as a word corresponds to an action in a general sense. You can also consult the dictionary of the Turkish Language Association or the scanning dictionary. The idiom "pouring out one's troubles" means to share one's problems and troubles that one encounters in life. In fact, this is a method of healing in the Anatolian tradition.

The idiom of pouring out one's troubles means sharing one's problems and distress encountered in life. In a sense, it is used in

the sense of transferring his / her trouble to something / someone. There is another idiom similar to that one; the idiom of burning trouble. This idiom corresponds to the situation when a person is quite overwhelmed by his troubles and tells the other person about his problem by whining and complaining. Pouring out one's troubles involves knowing one's own problems and believing that they can be solved by sharing them. In fact, this is a kind of healing method in Anatolian tradition.

When the idiom of pouring trouble is examined, the question of why trouble is poured can be answered as follows: When the action of pouring is analysed from the above meaning, according to the interpretation of meaning, something that is poured undergoes a change, it is not possible to replace the same thing. In other words, what is poured out turns into an essence different from its original one and moves away from its essence. In fact, when the person pours out his/her troubles, he/she wishes it to flow out or disperse from him/her. In order not to witness the original of that problem again and not to have the same sad experience, he/she aims to remove it from himself/herself. In a way, the one who pours out his/her troubles heals. He purifies himself. In a way, this is a cure. This purification brings with it an acceptance and makes a great contribution to the person's adaptation to the next life. The act of pouring out one's troubles can be transferred from human to nature in our culture. So much so that this is reflected in our culture from poetry to folk songs.

Our great folk poet and thinker Aşık Veysel also says the following in the stanza of one of his poems on pouring out troubles:

Derdimi dökersem derin dereye de
Doldurur dereyi düz olur gider hey

Our great folk minstrel and thinker Aşık Veysel also says the following in the stanza of a poem on "pouring trouble":

If I pour my troubles into the deep stream,
It will fill the stream making it sraight,

Aşık Veysel talks about pouring out his troubles in the above quatrain. He says that this trouble is such that it fills the stream and it becomes flat. As mentioned before, our thinker uses a symbolic language. So much so that when this trouble is poured out, it flows away, and when it is transferred, it changes shape. It flows

away, never to return to its original form. It does not return to its original form.

Trouble is a burden for human beings and disturbs them mentally and physically. Human beings have witnessed and experienced many difficulties in life since their existence. What is important for human beings is how and in what way the attitude they adopt in the face of these difficulties will enable them to continue their lives. Today, it has been clarified by modern science that being constantly stuck in negative experiences and keeping them in one's inner world/spirit triggers many diseases. In fact, many physical health problems are attributed to the stress caused by the problems people face. While people can sometimes overcome these problems, sometimes they need support. Today, in modern science, this support is provided by the science of psychology. Unlike the past, the situation of today's people seems very different: From time to time in life they may be under the influence of their troubles. In fact, the mechanisation of many things that regulate human life with modernisation have not prevented them from being dragged into an existential crisis. So much so that today's man has been left more alone with the effect of individualisation. This loneliness has dragged him into a spontaneous depression. The decrease in sharing has spontaneously developed a negative perception of life for human beings.

In ancient cultures and societies under the influence of tradition, there have been many traditions that continue in a positive sense. One of these is sharing one's troubles. In this sense, the act of "pouring out one's troubles" in Turkish culture, sharing one's troubles with someone from one's own environment and transferring them to nature in symbolic language, as in the lines in the folk song, accelerated one's recovery. In a way, people can feel better when they hear from someone other than themselves that they are not alone and that life still continues. Moreover, this is an example of spiritual and material solidarity. This example of solidarity is also accompanied by the Turkish proverb "one hand has nothing but two hands have a voice." Human beings are stronger and happier when they are a social being. In Turkish culture, the tendency to be in solidarity and unity still continues. In this sense, share with someone in troubles and shared troubles heal.

The act of pouring out one's troubles, which can also be interpreted as receiving support, is an act of revealing oneself to someone other than oneself / to nature. For this reason, it is also said in Turkish culture that he who does not tell his troubles cannot find a cure for his troubles. It is agreed upon that pouring trouble in therapy, which is one of the methods in psychology, can be likened to a kind of therapy method. In the therapy method, the person opens himself up to a counsellor whose knowledge he trusts and tries to find solutions to his problems. It is done to a competent person. Here, a competent person means someone who knows life and accepts experiences as they are. In other words, listening to the person as he/she is without judgement. Aşık Veysel said that especially to understand the trouble, the trouble is poured to someone who understands the trouble: «I don't tell those who don't suffer, those who don't suffer don't know the value of troubles, I was ignored that my troubles were a cure for me, the rose can never be without thorns.»

In the ancient past of Turkish culture, there is a tradition of sharing people's troubles with each other. Anthropologically, it is known that Turks are prone to live in solidarity and unity. It is known that this solidarity reaches the highest level especially in times of crisis. In the earthquakes that took place in our country on 6 February 2023, we experienced this example once again in a sad way. From the moment the earthquake occurred, the official institutions of our state, non-governmental organisations and our people tried to overcome the difficult days with their own individual initiatives. Efforts are still continuing in this regard.

As it can be understood from these lines, trouble is not a situation that can be told to everyone. Because the one who pours out his troubles wants to be healed. For this reason, the one who listens to the problem must be a virtuous person. He should know that anything can happen in life and accept people as they are. He should not judge. He should listen as he is. In other words, they should be tolerant and empathetic, so that the person who is grieving is able to express themselves fully. Then the grieving person can begin to heal. Disaster victims may have complaints and prejudices about the aid and rescue efforts, but the counselor should remain patient and listen to them sincerely.

The Case of Adıyaman in the Activity of Grieving and Spiritual Counseling and Guidance

As Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Theology, we have carried out a study under the name of "Spiritual Support and Guidance" in Adıyaman, one of the earthquake zones. These studies continue to take place in Adıyaman and Malatya among the other 11 provinces. Our aim here is to try to help overcome the traumatic situations experienced during the earthquake after the crisis. This study was carried out with four different groups of children, adolescents, adults and the elderly. Approximately 3500-4000 cases were reached as a total team. The spiritual support and guidance of each group was carried out differently. In this research, the study of the impact of spiritual support and guidance activity on "adults" is presented.

In this study, we have identified three methods of spiritual support and guidance: The first is to organise religious principles and values in the healing process, the second is to carry out the healing process by taking into account our cultural codes based on the anthropological importance of culture, and the third is to try to regain the meaning that people have lost for life with the traumatic effect of the event experienced. Again, the second method, which we will present as an example in this study, is to treat by using the cultural code. Samples of the other two methods will be discussed in other studies.

We worked on how we can implement the cultural code of pouring out one's troubles described above during and after the earthquake experienced by our people. We used the "rest" method as a method during the healing period. Our aim in choosing this method was to try to benefit from the healing aspect of pouring out one's troubles, whose conceptual framework we have drawn from the idiom and the line in Aşık Veysel's folk song. In this study, we mostly shared the data of the study conducted in a tent city in Adıyaman. The study was conducted by visiting the region at different times. The first was on February 6, 2023, the 1st month after the earthquake and the second on the 2nd month after the earthquake. We continued the study by interpreting and observing the data obtained at two different times and the data of our other teams. We evaluated the results of our own teams at two different times for

comparison purposes. Unlike the systematic methods used in psychology, a spontaneous method was preferred here. In the first stage, we listened to the experiences of our citizens during and after the earthquake. With the listening method, we listened to the person who poured out his/her troubles as they were without any intervention. We tried to empathize with what the person poured out his/her troubles. We specifically told the person who poured out his/her troubles that we came to share his/her troubles. We did not create a special environment/space while doing this, because we preferred this for the person to feel a sincere and genuine rapprochement. However, on some persons' requests, we met privately in a place. The person who poured out his/her problems managed the process. This was especially preferred because it was aimed for the person to express the incident in a comfortable way and gain self-confidence. This is one way to act to healing. We did not set a time limit for the person who confided. We did not interfere with the content of their speech. Whenever they wanted to finish their speech, we stopped listening. Since the content of the speech was generally traumatic, it was in the form of a speech with intense negativity. In the face of this intense negativity, we took short and restful breaks while conducting the study. This was done to avoid being affected by the same trauma.

After the act of listening/healing cure was over, they were guided to channel problematic points in a positive way. Suggestions were made that life goes on - taking into account the sensitivity of the grieving period. To increase one's resilience in the face of difficulties, it was expressed that they were not alone and that we were here for them. They were told that the situation of togetherness is continuous for a life time. Again, they were reminded that they should be patient in this sense, that time is the cure for everything and that we will overcome the process together in solidarity. Just as Aşık Veysel stated in his verses:

The thorny bush grows the rose
The bee makes honey from every flower
One finds perfection with patience
He who is not patient will not find his goal
Gülü yetiştirir dikenli çalı
Arı her çiçekten yapıyor balı

Kiři sabır ile bulur kemali

Sabretmeyen maksudunu bulama

They were reminded that they should not be alone, that they should be in contact with people in their environment and that they should benefit from the opportunities provided by the state.

At the end of the interview, the words "I am glad you came, I am glad you listened to us, I am glad you are here" were a sign that they had taken the first step towards recovery. After staying in the region for 6-7 days, it was observed that the interviewees were getting better. Finally, at the moment of farewell, despite the impossible conditions created by the earthquake, the earthquake survivors forgot their own victimization and presented small gifts, showing that the healing process continued in a positive way.

Our earthquake victims were not left alone and the process was and continues to be carried out in solidarity. This situation can be likened to the approach taken by family members in the face of a family problem. Apart from volunteers and civil society groups, when we look at our state policy in carrying out the process, a special effort was made to ensure that our earthquake victims were not left alone. In this sense, many institutions of our state were assigned to the earthquake region. The aim here was not to leave our citizens alone and to organize to meet all material and moral needs of our citizens when necessary. At the end of the process, the healing power of utilizing cultural codes was observed in a very short time.

Conclusion

In the spiritual counselling and guidance method, it was seen that the effect of cultural codes on human beings continues in a positive way. As one of our folk bards and thinkers Ařık Veysel expressed in his poems, the effect of the act of pouring out troubles continues to have an impact on the traditions in the life of Turkish society. Especially in times of crisis, it was personally observed that there was unity and solidarity with a spontaneous organisation outside the state authority. State policy was carried out through official channels with the same methods and solutions. It has been determined that cultural codes constitute the source of the basic philosophy of all these practices. In this sense, Turkish culture and

customs do not refrain from preserving their existence in the face of modernisation.

According to the data obtained from the visits to the region at two different times, it was determined that the trauma effect continued during the first visit and therefore treatment was provided, it also continued to take place during the second visit. In the second visit, it was observed that the counselling provided as a result of the treatment in the first visit was effective and that people were making efforts to create opportunities in their life routines. However, it should be noted that the work of other spiritual counselling and guidance teams that went outside the dates of our visits improved this process. The main thing here is to ensure continuity. In the process, we provided moral support to our earthquake victims by sharing the pain of their losses, to overcome the need to tell the memories about them, to hold on to life again and to adapt to the new situation. The healing power of the listening method was personally observed. This situation can be defined as a kind of healing method fed by the local dynamics / culture of societies. Again, if expressed as a concept, it can also be expressed as cultural healing. Spiritual counselling and guidance has many pillars. However, when we look at the effect of cultural codes in the healing process, it is useful to state that it contributes greatly to the search for meaning in such extraordinary moments of crisis.

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