

SUFI TEXTS

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Editors: Vahit Göktaş, Ali Tenik

ISBN 978-605-4696-02-4

1. Baskı: Aralık 2013
Sertifika No: 13858

Mizanpaj: Tavoos
Sayfa Düzeni: Tavoos
Kapak: TN İletişim
Baskı: Arena Dijital

ilâhiyât

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ESAD EFENDI (1847/1931) AND THE SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE IN HIS DIVAN¹

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Abstract

This paper studies the Divan of Muhammed Esad Erbili (1847/ 1931), who is one of the most important figures and Sufis of the last period of Ottoman Empire and early years of the Republic of Turkey, and who is also shown as instigator of Menemen event, which is one of the most important events of the history of Republic, and his symbolic expressions in his work. Es'ad Efendi is a prominent Sufi who lived between 1847 – 1931, acted as the chairman of Majlis al Mashayih (Assembly of Sheikhs), lead the publishing of the journal named Jarida al-Sufiyya, acted as the master (sheikh) of

¹ This article published on pages 115-132 of Osh University Arashan Journal Of Social Sciences, Bishkek 2012.

Kelami *Dergah* (Sufi Lodge), and who has spiritual authority both from Naqshi and Qadiri Sufi paths. Divan is one of the greatest divans written in the last centuries. It is a composed (*murattab*) Divan. While Turkish and Persian prevail in the work, there are also some Arabic and Kurdish ghazals. Esad Efendi speaks in his Divan about drunkenness and intoxication, enthusiasm, wine and drinking house, pseudo-sheikhs, the cupbearer, singer and player, and the real Beloved. The Divan of Esad Efendi is full of symbols and poems which should be commentated on due to the clues it give from the realm of imagination. This paper first introduces the Divan of Esad Efendi, explains and comments on the metaphors mentioned in the Divan, and finally states the meanings of such metaphors in the terminology of Sufism.

Keywords: Esad Erbili, Divan, Metaphor, Symbolism, Poem.

Esad Erbili

Muhammed Esad Erbili was born in 1264 / 1847 in Erbil district of Mousul², and was the son of Sheikh Muhammed Said, who was the head of Khalidi lodge in Erbil. His grandfather is Sheikh Hidayetullah, who is a successor (khalifa) of Khalid al Baghdadi.³ He is said to be "Sayyid", a grand-

² Hüseyin Vassaf, *Sefine-i Evliya*, Süleymaniye Library Manuscript Donations Sec, no: 2306, p. 191. Date of Birth: There are different records about the date of birth of Esad Efendi. For example, in Sadık Albayrak's book named *Son Devir Osmanlı Uleması* it is mentioned 1259/1843 See. Sadık Albayrak, *Son Devir Osmanlı Uleması (İlmiye'nin Tercim-i Ahvali)*, (Medrese Yay.), Istanbul 1980. We are of the opinion that Esad Efendi was born in 1264 / 1847, as mentioned in many other books.

³ Câmîl Yılmaz, *Altın Silsile*, Erkam Yay., Istanbul 1994, p. 241.

son of Prophet, from both his father's and mother's ancestors. After his Sheikh Taha al Hariri passed away in Erbil, he started his guidance. Esad Efendi is a Sufi having permission from both Naqshi and Qadiri paths.⁴ Esad Efendi given an account of his initial training as follows: "I have received my initial education at the Sufi lodge and madrasa of my father, under the mastership of my special teacher Mehmet Efendi, and finally I have received my educational permission (ijaza) from Davud Efendi, who was one of the greatest masters of the time, in one thousand and eighty seven (1287 / 1870)"⁵ We understand from here that Esad Efendi completed his initial education in the Sufi lodge and madrasa, which was constructed by Mevlana Khalid Baghdadi in Erbil, where his father was a master in. After receiving special lectures from Davud Efendi, who is considered among the most reputed scholars of his time, he received permission from him when he was 23. He receives spiritual education from Taha al Hariri when he was 23. Sheikh Taha al Hariri assigns him to education worldly sciences to the new entrees of the path. This indicates that he was a qualified person who reached

Hasan Kâmil Yılmaz, "M. Es'ad Erbilî", *Sahabeden Günümüze Allah Dostları*, p. 369, Istanbul 1996.

⁴ Yılmaz, *Allah Dostları*, ibid. See also Muhammed Es'ad Erbilî, *Risâle-i Es'adiyye fi Tarîkati'l- Aliyye*, (Dersaadet Matbaası), Istanbul 1341-1343, pp. 29-30. For biography of Esad Efendi from his own words, see als Ismail Kara, "Meclis-i Meşayih, Ulema-Tarikat Münasebetleri ve İstanbul'da Şeyhlik Yapmış Beş Zâtın Kendi Kâleminden Terceme-i Hali", *Kutadgubilig*, Number: 1 (January 2002), pp.185-214. In the Sefine of Vassaf, it is said that he is Sayyid from both father's and mother's side, with the sentence "He is a Sayyid from the side of his blessed mother". See. Vassaf, *Sefine-i Evliya*, Süleymaniye Library. Manuscript Donations Section, no: 2306, c. II, p. 191.

⁵ Kara, *ibid.*, s.197.

to a level of perfection in worldly sciences at that ibid. Esad Efendi explains why he did not enter to path of his father or grandfather, despite the fact that they were both Sufi masters as follows: "Since my spiritual journey in the Great Path of Naqshbandiyya did not correspond to the teaching times of my father and grandfather, I have entered to the service of Taha al Hariri an-Naqshbandiyya al-Khalidi, who was the qutb al-irshad of that time."⁶ After completing his spiritual education (sayr al su-luk) in five years, upon the death of his sheikh, Taha al Hariri in 1292/1875, he starts the mission of guidance (irshad) in line with the order he received from his sheikh.⁷ Esad Efendi, who received his scientific permission from Davud Efendi in 1287/1870, received his Naqshi permission from Taha al Hariri in 1294/1877. Following this, he received the Qadiri permission in 1303/1883 from Sayyid Abdulhamid Rifqani, his Qadiri sheikh in Baghdad.⁸

Sheikh Esad Efendi makes his way to Hijaz in order to fulfill his duty of pilgrimibid in 1875, when he received permission after he completed his spiritual journey under the discipline of Taha al-Hariri, his Naqshi Sheikh. When he learnt that his sheikh passed away when he was in pilgrimibid, he comes back to Istanbul, locates there, and starts to give lectures to the son-in-law of Abdulhamid II, Dervis Pasazade.

⁶ Erbilî, Muhammed Es'ad, *Risale-i Es'adiyye*, pp.29-30. From these expressions, it is understood that he entered to Sufi path after his father and grandfather passed away.

⁷ *Ibid*

⁸ Speaking about these permissions, Esad Efendi says "my scientific and sufi permissions are in our library in Erbil", which he wrote on the printed document sent to him when he was the sheikh of Kelami Dergah. See Kara, *ibid.*, p. 197. However, we now do not know where these permissions are.

He lectures the Divan of Hafiz and Luccet al Asrar of Mawlana Jami in Fatih Mosque. However, the principle place of education of Esad Efendi is Kelami Dergah. Because many senior level administrators and scholars of that time have received spiritual guidance from him in this convent. Limitless number of people were raised in *Kelami Dergah*.⁹

Esad Efendi is assigned to his homeland, Erbil, by Abdulhamid Khan in 1316 / 1900. Esad Efendi has continued his guidance activities during these 10 years when he loved in Erbil, and organized the Turks here about not favoring the British administration. Meanwhile he assigned his son, Muhammed Efendi, for establishing the Society of Turkish Lovers and for encouraging Turks to apply the United Nations. When the British forces occupied Mousul (1918) Muhammed Efendi was exiled to Basra by the British for his actions in favor of Turks. During this ten-year period when he stayed in Erbil, Esad Efendi engaged in actions against the missionary activities of the British.¹⁰

After staying ten years in his homeland, Erbil, Esad Efendi returned back to Istanbul upon the invitation of his

⁹ This work comprises of the dairies kept in Kelami Dergah shortly before the Sufi convents were closed. Carl Vett, a Danish researcher who stayed as guest in the *dergah* for 15 days, highlights the homi-bid paid by the senior administrators and scholars visiting the *dergah* to Esad Efendi. These include such names as Gazi Mahmud Muhtar Paşa (1867-1935), Prof. Mehmed Ali Aynî (1868-1945), Ömer Ferid Kam (1864-1944). For broader information, see Carl Vett, *Kelâmî Dergâhından Hatıralar*, translated by Ethem Cebecioğlu, Ankara 1993, pp. 4-8, 92-95, 123, 167-171; This work has been retranslated and printed by Ethem Cebecioğlu. See Carl Vett, *Dervişler Arasında İki Hafta*, trs. Ethem Cebecioğlu, Anka Yay., Istanbul 2002.

¹⁰ For broader information, see TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre 3, Celse 2, Cilt 25, pp. 62-65, 1931. Esad Efendi's own statements.

lovers in 1324 / 1908, when constitutional monarchy was promulgated, and restarts his tasks in the *Kelami Dergah*. Meanwhile, he makes conversations in the Cadirli chalet in Erenkoy. When the Sheikh position in *Selimiye Dergah* in Uskudar became vacant, Esad Efendi is assigned to this position. He assigns his son, Mehmed Ali Efendi, to the *dergah* to act on behalf of him. He also continues his guidance efforts as he visits the *dergah* from time to time.¹¹

Esad Efendi acts as the head of the assembly of Sheikhs, and leads the publishing of a journal named "Ceride-i Sufiyye" and an organization named "*Cemiyet-i Sufiyye*", and he is assigned as the *Surre Emimi* by the Emperor, Sultan Reshad.¹²

With the collapse of Ottoman Empire and emergence of the Republic of Turkey, as a result of closure of all Sufi lodges in 1925, Esad Efendi takes himself to retreat in his chalet in Erenkoy. Esad Efendi is taken to Menemen, together with his son Muhammed Ali Efendi, with the claim that they had relation with the Menemen event that happened on 23 December 1930, and they are taken to trial for a capital punishment. Whereas his son, Mehmed Efendi, is executed, the capital punishment ruled for Esad Efendi is converted into life imprisonment due to his elder ibid. Esad Efendi passed away in the night of 3-4 March 1931 when he was 84 while being treated for uremia disease in the military hospital in Menemen.¹³

¹¹ Vassaf, *ibid.*, v. II, p. 192.

¹² Yılmaz, *ibid.*, p. 210-211; *DIA*, c.11, p. 348.

¹³ See. Yılmaz, *Altın Silsile*, p. 212.

Esad Efendi is an important Sufi who had a significant impact with his personal and spiritual charisma.

Esad Efendi has many works and writings about *tasawwuf*, *tafseer*, *hadeeth* and literature. His works are: *Kenzü'l-İrfân*, *Mektûbât*, *Dîvan*, *Risâle-i Es'adiyye*, *Fâtîha-i Şerîfe Translation*, *Articles and a translation named Tevhid Risâlesi*.¹⁴

Divan

It is a composed (murattab)¹⁵ divan. Poems are mainly written with *aruz* measure. Whereas Turkish and Persian¹⁶ poems prevail, there are also Arabic poems and a Kurdish ghazal. Esad Efendi has also written poems like Sufi folk literature poems and also *Tahmis'* for them.¹⁷ *Divan*, has been printed first in 1337/1918 with the name *Divan-ı Es'ad* in Evkaf printing house as 67 pages. It has been published by Cemal Bayrak with new Latin letters. There is also a poem named "*Mevlid-i Fatma*" in the Divan, which was separately printed.¹⁸

¹⁴ For a detailed account about the life and works of Esad Efendi, see Vahit Göktaş, *Muhammed Es'ad Erbilî'nin Hayatı Eserleri ve Tasavvuf Felsefesi*, Ankara Social Sciences Institute, Unprinted MA Thesis, Ankara, 2002.

¹⁵ Composed (*murattab*) *Divans* are those which contain *kasides* and ghazals, which are followed by *Rubais*, *Kitas*, *Murabbas*, *Muamma Sharkis*, and finally the *mufreds*, compiled according to the order of syllables concerning the rhymes of poems; and *Divans* which include poems which are not compiled as per the order of syllables are called *Gayr Murattab Dîvân* (Non-Composed Divan). see.: Pakalın, Mehmet Zeki, *Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü*, MEB, V.2, p.622.

¹⁶ Persian poems have been translated by Ali Nihat Tarlan.

¹⁷ Çelik, Ömer, "Muhammed Es'ad-ı Erbilî'nin Kur'an-ı Kerim Âyetlerini Yorumlama Yaklaşımı" *Tasavvuf İlimi ve Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* (Tasawwuf Journal), (May 2001), Number 6, p. 181.

¹⁸ This poem has been translated into Turkish by Ali Efendi, the son of Esad Efendi.

Despite the fact that Esad Efendi was a poet raised up in Sufi lodges, he adopted Divan literature rather than Sufi folk literature and used *aruz* measure dexterously.¹⁹

Whereas Esad Efendi skillfully demonstrated his literal aspect in his Divan, he has also clearly indicated in his introduction to the book that he is not aiming at giving reply to a certain group who are not of Sufi taste.²⁰

Analyzing the metaphors, which are means reflecting the spiritual experiences and metaphysical states of Sufis, is essential in terms of taking a glance at their view points and learning the secrets in their inner worlds. Esad Efendi speaks in his Divan about drunkenness and intoxication, enthusiasm, wine and drinking house, pseudo-sheikhs, the cupbearer, singer and player, and the real Beloved. The Divan of Esad Efendi is full of symbols and poems which should be commentated on due to the clues it give from the realm of imagination.

In the first section of Divan, there are texts and translations of Persian poems. In this section, there are 381 couplets, as we have determined, being separately for each letter, starting from the letter Alif to the letter Ya. In this section, there are also 13 *tahmis'* under the title "*muhammesat*", 2 of which are unnamed, others being *Tahmîs-i Hâfiz*, *Tahmîs-i Hâlis*, *Tahmîs-i Kelîm*, *Tahmîs-i Mesnevî*, *Tahmîs-i Mevlânâ Hâlid –Kuddise Sirruh-*, *Tahmis* to the two couplets of *Nûr Ali Mağribî*, *Tahmîs-i Câmi* (three). Also in this section there

¹⁹ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 6.

²⁰ Muhammed Es'ad, *Divân-i Es'ad*, Istanbul 1991, pp. 7-8. Here the Persian couplets are quoted from the translation of the late Nihad Tarlan.

are a *Terci'* of 21 couplets, the Third Encomium of Sheikh Riza and Sheikh Emin Efendi of 13 couplets, and a Kurdish ghazal of 7 couplets.

The second section of the Divan comprises of Turkish poems. This section contains ghazals, *rubais*, *na'ts*, *tahmis'* written to poems of others and his poems, and a Persian *mawlid* of 73 couplets written about Hz. Fatima.

The last section comprises of poems under the heading "A precious Tahmis written to the ghazals of me, the poorest, by some respected people".

Symbolism / Metaphor

The language, which is in practice a way of defining and expressing as well as a means of hiding and protecting,²¹ realizes this function of hiding and protecting with the metaphors it uses.

The expression "metaphor", which encompasses various literal arts such as figurative expression, comparison, analogy, proverb, allegory etc., is a word composed of two words, "meta" (meaning beyond) and "phore" (meaning transferring, carrying".²² Whereas metaphor is considered as a literal art used in poetry and rhetoric; it is also a way of expression frequently used in the field of philosophy and thinking.²³

²¹ Takyeddin Mengüşoğlu, *İnsan Felsefesi*, İstanbul, 1988, p. 214.

²² M. Kaya Bilgegil, *Edebiyat ve Bilgi Teorileri*, İstanbul, 1989, p. 154.

²³ Ahmet Ögke, *Vâhib-i Ümmî'den Niyâzî-i Mısrî'ye Türk Tasavvuf Düşüncesinde Metaforik Anlatım*, Ahenk Yay., Van, 2005, p. V; For use of metaphore in other fields, particularly in the field of philosophy and thinking, see: Müfit Selim Saruhan, *İslâm Düşüncesinde "İsti'are"(Metafor)*, Ankara, 2005

According to Sufi way of thinking, every existence in the universe is an imitation. That means, it is a reflection of the original. In this case, the connection between the original and its reflection could only be established based on reflection. In other words, the realm of existence is a world of symbols. Imitation of these symbols constitutes the roots of art.²⁴

Metaphoric expression is one of the ways that Sufis use for expressing their spiritual states and experiences to their addressees. Metaphoric style is the expression by a Sufi of some abstract experiences and subjects, that are hard to be expressed, using concrete concepts.²⁵ These expressions have a symbolic meaning; this meaning is encompassed in an artistic language, with a gnomic, impressive and mystic style called *logos spermatikus* in Latin.²⁶

The Symbolic Language in *Divan*

Tasavvuf is a discipline full of secrets. These secrets are covered with metaphors. The reason for this is to give a concealed message to those who could understand, and protect the secrets against those who are not qualified. The expressions such as **wine, drinking house, wine cup, music, dance, the wine cupbearer** etc., used by Sufis, are pronounced for metaphorically interpreting the worldly expressions under the impact of the state that the Sufi is

Erol Kılıç, *Sîfi ve Şîir: Osmanlı Tasavvuf Şîirinin Poetikası*, İstanbul,

75.

doğdu, "Mevlânâ'nın Şathiyye Türünde Yazdığı Bir Şerhi: Şerh-i Ebyât-ı Celâleddîn-i Rûmî", *Tasavvuf*, year:3,

3 1, January - June, 2002, p. 30.

exposed to, which is a state of annihilation, *fana*.²⁷ Use of metaphors have become widespread due to various reasons such as the possibilities granted by language being limited, the mystical experience being hard to be expressed and the Sufi who might not be eager to disclose his secret etc..²⁸ The intensity of emotions and feelings experienced by the Sufi is higher compared to other people experiencing what is religious. For this reason, it is the Sufism among all Islamic sciences where the symbolic expressions are most commonly used.²⁹

Esad Efendi states that the Sufis are unfairly criticized with the claim that they are away from all human tastes.³⁰ However, people who are the masters of this work, have lived this world and the world after death to the fullest extent, and used such symbolic expressions as "wine, drinking house, wine cupbearer, wine assembly, music instrument player etc." in their poems written for struggling with such criticisms. For Esad Efendi, it is the "muhabbetullah",

²⁷ Ethem Cebecioğlu, "Seyyid Burhaneddin Muhakkık Tirmizî'nin Bazı Tasavvufî Kavramlara Getirdiği Metaforik Yaklaşımlar", *Ankara Üniversitesi Journal of Faculty of Divinity*, v. XXXVIII, 1998, p. 128.

²⁸ İbrahim Emiroğlu, *Sûfi ve Dil (Mevlânâ Örneği)*, İstanbul 2002, pp141-143.

²⁹ For an account of religious experiences of Sufis and the epistemological value of these expressions, see Ramazan Ertürk, *Sûfi Tecrübenin Epistemolojisi*, Fecr Yay., Ankara, 2004; Omur Ceylan, who studied on 47 commentaries by 20 different commentators on 42 different poems of 23 poets, has determined that the Turkish commentary on Turkish poems are mostly related to Sufism and highlighted the contribution of Sufism to the tradition of commentary (*şarh*). This study has been published as a book titled "*Tasavvufî Şiir Şerhleri*" (Sufi Poem Commentations" See Ömür Ceylan, *Tasavvufî Şiir Şerhleri*, Kitabevi Yay., İstanbul 1999.

³⁰ Es'ad Erbilî, *Dîvan*, p. 7.

the love of God, which annihilates all the grief and worldly distress in man. The drinking house, *may-khane*, is the adobe of worship, constructed for the spiritual travelers who entered to Sufi path. The cupbearer, *pir-i mugan*, is the Sufi master who is to guide those on the Sufi path. The drink-giver, *saki*, is the successors and helpers of the Sufi master. *Bazm*, is the moment when the Sufis become intoxicated under the effect of remembrance (*dhikr*) and contemplation (*tafakkur*).³¹

Javad Nurbakhsh explains why Sufis use such symbolic expressions with three reasons.³²

1. Attract the attention of readers
2. Being in a state of annihilation (*fena*), thus being unaware of the condition
3. Interpreting worldly words in a metaphoric way

Now let us work on the metaphors used by Esad Efendi in his Divan:

Wine, Drink, Drink house, Wine Maker

Before taking a look at how these metaphors are used in the poems of Esad Efendi, we should first give their meanings as used in the terminology of Sufism.

Cupbearer: The person who gives, serves, distributes and sells wine and water. In its Sufi use, the Sufi Master,

³¹ In his book title *Sufi and Poem*, M. Erol Kilic states the following, supporting these words of Esad Efendi: "Those who look for references from the material world to the symbols and metaphors such as "beloved, lover, lovelock of the beloved, drink, cup, lip etc. are characterized as raw poets, living in a very superficial world" Kılıç, *Sufi ve Şiir*, p. 143.

³² Javad Nurbakhsh, *Sufi Symbolism, The Nurbakhsh Encyclopedia Terminology*, London and New York, 1986, p. 124.

or the God, who distributes love, spiritual knowledge and wisdom to the lovers, presenting them the water of life and the divine love.³³

Wine: The wine as it is normally used. The feeling of love which lets its taster loose his consciousness and makes him intoxicated. Divine love. The first cupbearer of man is God. Man has drunk this wine in "*Qalu bela*". Whereas wine leaves no carnal aspect in the drinker, it causes the person to loose consciousness and radiate the wisdom.

Cupbearer (*mugh*):

از یمن مغان بود که در ثانی
می تازه نمود از سر من عشق کهن را

بیرن شود از شیشهء دل شعر می آلود
اسعد که ز وصف تو کند باز دهن را

"It is from the fortune and blessings of the cupbearers that the wine, in the second taste, refreshed the old love in my heart"

"When Esad opened his mouth to describe you, a poem, mixed with love, is revealed from his bottle of heart"³⁴

Commentary:

The cupbearer (*mugh*) used in these couplets, are those who serve the wine of love to the person. In fact, in Sufi understanding, everything in the universe is a cupbearer (*saki*). Wine is love. What is meant in these couplets is that

³³ Ögke, *Metaforik Anlatım*, p. 171.

³⁴ Es'ad Erbili, *Dîvân*, pp: 12-13.

the heart moves as it remembers the God, and poems and couplets, mixed with love, come out of it.

دوش در میخانه میقر مود مولانای ما
مید هد نور بصیرت تشنه صبحای ما

"Last night, our master spoke in the drinking house;
The joy of our wine gives the light of foresight (*basirat*)"³⁵

Commentary:

The light of foresight is the ability of man to comprehend the reality of things. Our Sufi master said in the Sufi lodge last night that the joy of our love gave us the ability to see the inner aspects of things. The Sufi acquires foresight with remembrance (*dhikr*).

دل بفکر و وسوسه در مدرسه فیضی نیافت
از لب آمد پیمانہ آخر استغنائی ما

"The heart could not find any prosperity in the *madrassa* with intellect and delusion.

Our detachment from the world is what we had from the cup."³⁶

Commentary:

Here Esad Efendi exalts the group of lover Sufis, which he is included in. The worship and religious practices of the ascetic Sufis do not suffice for comprehending the reality (*haqiqa*), and only through love and loving it is possible to reach to the stage of abandoning from world, which is called *istighna*.

Again, Esad Efendi criticizes in another poem the ascetics who have no share from the divine love. He states the

following, meaning that he is at the place where the divine love is served, not among those who live for world and where a raw asceticism is practiced.

از بهر مرغ دنیا دام ریان ندارد
اسعد که گاه و بی گاه چرمعبد مفاست

“Esad, who had some time in the temple of cupbearers, does not lay a trap to hunt the bird of world”³⁷

Trap, Net: The carnal world / things other than God/ phenomena and world of dualism, which deviates the heart of man and pushes him to the trap. One should not set his heart on worldly goods in order to avoid this trap. For the goods of this world are like a feed at the entrance of the trap.³⁸

Setting a trap: A symbolic expressions used for meaning to work for world and for a raw asceticism.

هست و شیدا و قلندر چون حباب بی مقرر
از غم دنیا و عقباهم چو اسعد ساده باش

“If you want the water of immortality, be a drunk like the homeless Habbab, seek from the cupbearer as a demolished and easygoing wine-giver; save yourself from the worry of this world and the next world like Esad.”³⁹

فصل بهارست بیامی بنوش
از محن دهرد می چشم بوش

“It is spring, come and drink wine (divine love). Close your eyes for a moment to the worries of the world.”⁴⁰

Spring: *Devr-i Muhammedî* (the Mohammedan Cycle)

³⁷ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 34.

³⁸ Ögke, *Metaforik Anlatım*, p. 187.

³⁹ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 65.

⁴⁰ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 63.

بی لب پیمانہ نہ کیرد قرار
عشق کہ آمد بفرغان و خروش

"When love exults with clamor and groan, it could be calm only with a lip on the cup"

خندہ می گرنکند چارہء
کس نہ تشاند زسر کرہ جوش

"If the **glimpse of wine** fails to find a cure for it, no one else could stop my tears."

غم مخور از ماءدہ دہر دون
بادہ کش و درصد دعیش کوش

"Eat not any grief from the table of this bloody world. Drink **wine**, enjoy your self, taste the joy"

دست مکش از می نہب اسعدا
تاکہ زسرداری کمی عقل و ہوش

"Oh Esad, if you have a bit of mind, do not abdicate from wine"⁴¹

Lip of cup: The good news of divine love.

Wine is a metaphoric expression used by Sufis to express divine love, as indicated above. Pure wine, is the absolute divine love.

بی ثمر جویبست زاهد بکر از فکر سواک
کردن مینا بکیرو در خیال بادہ باش

"Oh ascetic, leave the idea of *miswaq*, because it is a wood. Hug the wine bottle and dream of wine"⁴²

Syrup: A sugary drink in liquid form. Love and loving which enraptures the lover. It is a spiritual drug. This syrup satisfies the fever of love in the heart of the lover.

⁴¹ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 64.

⁴² Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 65.

بیمار تر اشریت گفتار تو لازم
باداروی لقمان نه کند کسب افاقت

"Your patient needs the syrup of your word. That patient will not heal with the drug that *Lokman Hekim* gave."⁴³

Cup (*Câm-i cem/peymanek/kadeh*): Cup of drink The heart and spirit of the lover and Gnostic, who is full of divine love and knowledge. The Gnostic has tasted the cup of love since "*qalu bela*". Cup of love is full of divine knowledge and wisdom.⁴⁴

مست مدامم ز شراب فنا
نیست زدل آرزوی جام جم

"I am always drunk from the syrup of mortality. There is no desire for glass of unity (*cam-i cem*) in the heart"⁴⁵

مست شراب بقا ماندز عیش فنا
یافت زهر دو سرا جام جم و تاج کی

"The drunk of the wine of everlasting may not be satisfied with the carnal world, He is the one who found the glass of unity and the crown of the emperor in both worlds."⁴⁶

شاد بعیش و خروش صاف دل باده نوش
زاهد طاعت فروش ماندز دریای غی

"The pure hearted, as he drinks wine, rejoices with pleasure. The ascetic, who assumes worshipping, remains in the sea of grief."⁴⁷

من از تو یر خمارم عالم زنشده مل

⁴³ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 32.

⁴⁴ Ögke, *Metaforik Anlatım*, p. 252.

⁴⁵ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 89.

⁴⁶ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 105.

⁴⁷ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 105.

"I am fuddled with your love. The universe is fuddled from the joy of wine."⁴⁸

"The root of rightness and fear from God has been irrigated and rejoiced with wine. I learnt this lecture from the narcissist ascetic"⁴⁹

Esad Efendi criticizes the ascetic Sufis, and praises the lover Sufis:

در یناه خانقه کام دلم حاصل نشد
روکنم دیگر بسوی خانهء خمار به

"The desire of my heart was not satisfied by sheltering to the Sufi lodge. I would rather go to the house of wine-giver."⁵⁰

اسعد بی خانمان چون بگذشت از جهان
دردر پیر مغان زنده شد از فیض می

"The homeless, Esad, passed from this world, and revived with the blessing of the wine, at the door of the cupbearer"⁵¹

Cupbearer (Pîr-i mugân): The server of wine, the Sufi master in Sufi terminology.

گروود اسعد سوی میخانه معذورش بخوان
دارد از کلبستاد نشئهء بویت غرض

"Excuse him, if Esad goes to the drinking house, he brings the rose gardens, for getting the joy of your smell."⁵²

مست بی پروا خرامد برسر بازار عشق
اسعدا رجامی خورد درخانهء خمار عشق

⁴⁸ Erbili, *Divân*, p. 85.

⁴⁹ Erbili, *Divân*, p. 96.

⁵⁰ Erbili, *Divân*, p. 103.

⁵¹ Erbili, *Divân*, p. 105.

⁵² Erbili, *Divân*, p. 69.

"If Esad drinks a cup from the drinking-house of love, he wanders in the market of love, drunk and with no fear."⁵³

Metaphors About Some Organs of Human Body

Metaphors used in this section are such expressions as eyebrow, tallness, face, lovelock, bow, waist, black nevus. All of these metaphors are used for expressing the beloved in general, or an aspect of the beloved. The real friend of the lover in Sufism is Allah, and his prophet Hz. Muhammed (PBUH). The greatest stage of love is the love of the beloved. The lover rejoices only with His oneness. His place is the heart and the whole universe.⁵⁴ **Eye and eyebrow** are used for expressing the characteristics of the divine beauty. Eyelash symbolizes the proximity of the spiritual traveler on Sufi path to the divine reality. Expressions such as tallness and face are used mainly for symbolizing unity, oneness and ultimate reunion. This is the stage of reunion, where the lover and beloved are present together. In general, metaphors related to the body are those used for expressing the divine power and beauties, in the state of intoxication experienced by the Sufi.⁵⁵

Now let us study the metaphors related to body organs used by Esad Efendi in his Divan:

جاناقسم بآبروت سروقدت مراکشت
هرگز میند شمشیر در عزم کشتن ما

⁵³ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 81.

⁵⁴ Ögke, *Metaforik Anlatım*, p. 177.

⁵⁵ Nurbahksh, *ibid.*, p. 65.

“Oh my dear, I swear by your eyebrows that your tallness killed us. Do never use a sword to kill us.”⁵⁶

Eye-brow is a symbol of man's closeness to God. This stage is called the stage of “qab qawsayn” in Sufism⁵⁷.

Tallness symbolizes the union and oneness.

In the foregoing couplets, it says that “my reaching to the stage of union killed me before I died, I am already a death, there is no need for a sword”.

Another couplet where the metaphor of eyebrow is used in Divan is as follows:

هر عاشقد که بینم در صورت کمانست
دانم که سیرت او مفتون ابرونست

“When I see a lover, I see him bent like a bow. And I know that his soul is charmed to the (beauty in) eyebrows.”⁵⁸

هم چون هدف نشانم جسم نحیف خود را
تاتیر غمزه آبد زهن ابروی کشیده

“I post my weak body like a target so that the arrow of dimple comes from you eyebrow, which is like an installed bow.”⁵⁹

Another couplet where the metaphor of eyebrow is used in Divan is as follows:

یافت تعمیری عجب سال هلال ابروت
از شکست طاق کسرا سقف ودیوار فرح

⁵⁶ Erbili, *Divân*, p. 17.

⁵⁷ Reference is made to 9. verse of Surat al Najm. It means “two eye-brows” or “two eyelashes”.

⁵⁸ Erbili, *Divân*, p. 32.

⁵⁹ Erbili, *Divân*, p. 102.

“Thanks to your eyebrow that looks like a crescent, the ceiling of peace was reinstated as the palace of Kisra collapsed”.⁶⁰

Commentary:

There is a reference to Hz. Muhammed (PBUH). That means: Oh Muhammed, the palace of Kisra collapse with your birth.

از تیغ ابروت نشود گر شهید جان
سودی نمیدهد که به محراب رو کند

“ There is no benefit for a man to turn his face to the niche, unless he is ready to be martyred from the sword of your eyebrow ”⁶¹

Commentary:

Oh Muhammed (PBUH), while I was praying, I remembered the bend of your eyebrow (closeness to God). It was such a state that the niche (*mihrab*) started to cry.

The eyebrow and eyelash metaphor is also used for expressing the love of Hz. Ali:

کی کند باتیت لشکر پایه تدغ ذوالفقار
آنچه بامژگان ابرو کرد دلدار نجف

“Could Zulfikar do, with its power equal to an army, what the beautiful of Necef did with his eyebrow and eyelash?”⁶²

بار گران منت بیجا کشی از کمان
زنجیر زلف کافیسست از بهر بستنم

⁶⁰ Erbili, *Divân*, p. 41.

⁶¹ Erbili, *Divân*, p. 49; Other places where the eyebrow metaphor is used in his Divan are: *Divân*, p. 99, 102.

⁶² Erbili, *Divân*, p. 79.

"You are unnecessarily carrying the heavy burden of bow. The chain of your lovelock is enough for tying us."⁶³

Bow; the trap of unity (*wahdet*) Lovelock (*zulf*) is multiplicity, the opposite of unity. Chain of lovelock is the manifestation of divine attitudes. Face is the unity. Lovelock comes out of the face. Unity comes out of multiplicity.

Commentary:

Why do you need the trap of unity you prepared for tying us? All the universe is full of your attitudes. These are enough for us to be tied to you. Bounds of multiplicity are enough to take us to unity.

In another couplet in the *Divan*, the lovelock metaphor is used as follows:

جاه زقن بشهان از تخت مصر خوشتر
گر زلف وخال هند و زنجیر یاسیانست

"If lovelock and black nevus is a chain in the hands of the guardian, the chick bowl of emperors is more beautiful than the throne of Egypt"

Black nevus: Oneness; this is the seventh of seven attitudes. It is a point on the heart.

Commentary:

When the human attaches himself to multiplicity, if he has understood that the multiplicity is a multiplicity bound to the real beauty, sitting at the bottom of a well with this understanding is much better than being a sultan of Egypt.

زلف سکینت به یا افتاده از روی نیاز
تا که بخشند سایهء سروت باو عمر دراز

⁶³ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 18.

"Her odor of musk has fallen on the foot of lovelock, the shadow of her tallness begs her to grant her long life."⁶⁴

Commentary:

The shadow of your oneness beseeches you to grant it eternal life. Because when the multiplicity enters into oneness, it reaches to the eternity, becomes eternal.

جان بلب آمد که دارد دیدن رویت غرض
خسته چشم ندارد غیر دارویت غرض

"My heart reached to my lip to see your face. One who is captivated to you ey emay not find any healing other than your drug."⁶⁵

هر کجا بحث مجازی میکنم از زلف یار
در حقیقت نیست الا سنبل مویت غرض

"Whenever I speak metaphorically about the lovelock of the beloved, my purpose indeed is the jacinth of your crown."⁶⁶

آرزوی من بمحراب افتفاری یایست
ورنه مارانیست دردل غیر ابرویت غرض

"My desire at the niche is to abide by (the way of) your foot. Because in our heart there is no other purpose than your eyebrow."⁶⁷

کی فرودارم سرامید بر چرخ و فلک
من که کردم در دو علم قد دلجویت غرض

⁶⁴ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 59; Other places where the lovelock metaphor is used in his Divan are: *Dîvân*, p. 95, 102.

⁶⁵ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 68.

⁶⁶ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 68.

⁶⁷ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 68.

“In both worlds I desire for your beautiful tallness and stature. Likewise I request something by bowing my head in front of the passion flower.”⁶⁸

حاصلی هر دو جهان در مذهب من نقطه ایست
از حدوث آفرینش خال هندویت غرض

“In my sect, the whole world is a point. The purpose of creation is your black nevus.”⁶⁹

Another couplet in which nevus is mentioned in the *Di-
van* is as follows:

صد هزاران همچو من رسوای سوای سودای تواند
خال رویت نه همین تنهامرا دیوانه ساخت

“The nevus on your face made everyone crazy except me. Thousands of lovers like me were scattered for your love.”⁷⁰

آرزوی سبچه صد دانه و فکر کمند
داد اسعد در نثار زلف و خال دلنواز

“Esad has sacrificed his desire for a hundred-piece prayer beast, that means his connection with the world, for the sake of your lovelock and your nevus.”⁷¹

منت از زلف سیه تامرگ میخواهم کشید
مویمو کشتم زینش واقف اسرار عشق

“I am thankful to this black lovelock till death. I reach to the gentile secrets of love with its blessing.”⁷²

⁶⁸ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 68.

⁶⁹ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 68.

⁷⁰ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 35.

⁷¹ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 60.

⁷² Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 81.

Commentary:

I have attained the unity when I understood the reality of multiplicity.

خال و خط دلبران و زلف کیسوی بتان
کرم بازارند هر دم از گل رخسار عشق

"The condition and silhouette and lovelock of the beautiful are always in demand due to her chick which looks like a rose."⁷³

اسعدا هر چند احوالت پریشان شد ولی
قوت جان یافتی از تاب زلف نازنین

"Oh Esad, you have become desolate, however your life is saved from the lovelock of the coquettish hair."⁷⁴

The lovelock becoming desolate is an evidence that the person himself is desolate.

آرام دل عجب نیست در زلف یار اسعد
چون عندلیب دانا در دام آرمیده

"Oh Esad, wonder not, if your heart feels comfort under the lovelock of the beloved! It looks like a mindful nightingale resting (sitting in peace) on that trap."⁷⁵

Waist

باریک هم چو مویم در حسرت میانت
بی تاب و تیره روزم زان کیسوان سنبل

"I became thin like a piece of hair from the yearning of your waist. I am exhausted and miserable from your hair, looking like a hyacinth."⁷⁶

⁷³ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 81.

⁷⁴ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 95.

⁷⁵ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 102.

⁷⁶ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 84.

Commentary:

Waits is the part of man separating the sublime part from the menial part.

Face (Dîdâr/Vech /Yüz): The beauty of Haq (God), the divine beauty. It means the beloved. It is a name given to divine manifestations in Sufism. One who remembers God does not remain distant from His Face. The door of His face could only be opened with love, loyalty and unity.⁷⁷

“If a light for eyes falls abundantly from a cloud in the sky, my eyes only become enlightened with the light of your face.”⁷⁸

Face is the unity.

چون سوختی برویت یروانه وش یرمرا
درخاب هم نیینی زان شمع جستن ما

“You have burnt my wind with the fire of the beauty of your face. Now you will not even dream that we have stepped out and escaped from that candle”⁷⁹

Commentary:

The beauty of your oneness burnt me up. Now this path has no return.

محسود خلد پرینست گلشن گویش
گلها بداغ درونند زان رخ انور

“The paradise envies the gardens of His realm. The core of hearts are injured due to that bright face.”⁸⁰

تا بچشم خویش بیند دانهء خال رخت
مرغ دل دردام زلفینت ندارد اضطراب

⁷⁷ Ögke, *Metaforik Anlatım*, p. 341.

⁷⁸ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 29.

⁷⁹ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p.18.

⁸⁰ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 58.

"After the bird of heart sees with its eyes the nevus on your chick, it will not feel any further suffering at the trap of your two lovelocks"⁸¹

Black Point (Dâne-i Hâl): Black point, the unity

Lovelock: Multiplicity, events

Commentary:

While the bird of heart flutters in the webs of multiplicity, it stops to flutter when it reaches the black point (unity).

Lip:

Lip is annihilation in God (*fana fillah*) and lasting in him (*baqa billah*)

سيزه شادی ينادردر دلش باران اشک

شوره خاکی شدز شوق آن لب عالم فريب

"Her eyes, falling down like a rain, do not cultivate any fruit of happiness in her heart. The heart has turned into an arid soil from that fervent love for that lip that deceives the universe."⁸²

آواز بلبل آيد در مجمع حريفان

تا غنجهء دهنرا آن چشم باغبانست

"If that eye, being a gardener, has grown the bud of mouth, the voice of nightingale comes to the assembly of friends, very deep."⁸³

Mouth: The thing that carries the meaning and kills the material.

Eye: As opposed to the mouth, the thing that enlivens the meaning and kills the material.

⁸¹ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 22.

⁸² Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 22. For another couplet where the lip metaphor is used, see, *Dîvân*, p. 49.

⁸³ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 32.

Commentary:

If the eye has grown the mouth, the beauties they see cause a rose-like odor to be released from the mouth, and a nightingale comes to the assembly.

Eyelash/Arrow: The divine sight that heavily pierces the heart of the lover

به محراب دوا برویت چنان صف بسته شد مژگان

تو گوی از خدا خواهد شفای چشم بیمار

"Your eyelashes have stood on a line at the niche of your two eyebrows that you see them praying God for healing your ill eye."⁸⁴

Eye: The most important organ of man.

Ill eye (*çeşm-i bimar*): The burning and killing eye. This eye burns the things other than God. The overlapped bent standing of the eyelashes is an eligible position. These eyelashes have formed a line, opened their hands, praying for the life of the ill eye, which intends to kill me, so that I die not and live some more.

Esad Efendi expresses with the following couplet that he has not desire for any of worldly tastes after he becomes intoxicated from the eye of the beloved:

تا که از چشم تو باشم سرخوش مست و خراب

کی نماید آرزوی ساغر عیش و نشاط

"How could I, one who got drunk as a skunk from your eye, request for the cup of pleasure and life."⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 28.

⁸⁵ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 71.

"My eye did not have a light, neither throughout the day nor the night. The imagination of the bat sees better than itself."⁸⁶

My eyes await for long that a dust may come from the road of the crate from the broom of your eyelashes.⁸⁷

از بهر کشتن ما ابروت کشته مائل
مژگهد و چشم عارض کافست از دلائل

"Your eyelashes want to kill us. You eyelashes, eye and chick do not suffice."⁸⁸

Commentary: For getting closer to God, the material things and all things other than God should be ceased.

Other metaphors used by Esad Efendi in his Divan are as follows: **Rose**⁸⁹ (symbol of beauty.) **nightingale**⁹⁰ (Sufi Master)⁹¹ **dove**⁹² (slave), **chick** (unity), **tallness** (sultan), **curl** (multiplicity), **hümâ**⁹³ (godsend, the heart of the Gnostic) **phoenix**⁹⁴ (a mythological bird which is believed to live beyond *Qaf* mountain, whose name is known but appearance is unknown. Resembles the heart of the Gnostic in Sufism.)⁹⁵ **journey**⁹⁶ (the journey to God, which is a path of spiritual perfection), **darkness**⁹⁷, **water of life**, **pure water**

⁸⁶ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 85.

⁸⁷ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 85.

⁸⁸ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 85.

⁸⁹ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 27.

⁹⁰ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 19.

⁹¹ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 83.

⁹² Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 84.

⁹³ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 71.

⁹⁴ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 93.

⁹⁵ Ögke, *Metaforik Anlatım*, p. 154.

⁹⁶ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 25.

⁹⁷ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p.18.

⁹⁸(pure water), ultimate reunion⁹⁹ (it is only the key of consent that opens the door of ultimate reunion), mirror of heart¹⁰⁰ (cleaning the dust of heart) shadow metaphor¹⁰¹ (a reflection which could not be separated from its original), hunter¹⁰² (the attraction of world).

Conclusion

Analyzing the metaphors, which are means reflecting the spiritual experiences and metaphysical states of Sufis, is essential in terms of taking a glance at their view points and learning the secrets in their inner worlds. Because wording fails to fully express the spiritual experience. Metaphoric style is the expression by a Sufi of some abstract experiences and subjects, that are hard to be expressed, using concrete concepts. Sufi experiences many states such as unity – multiplicity (*vahdet - kesret*), annihilation – lasting (*fana- baqa*), union – separation (*cem- farq*). It is not possible to fully express this experience. It is apparent that the wordings coming out of the tongue will not suffice to describe the condition which the Sufi is in. Because a wording may not be substituted in place of an experience. However, words are like the forms of reality reflected to the mirror. If we read the form on the mirror well and understand the signs in words, we may take a glance at the experience. The

⁹⁸ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 76.

⁹⁹ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 23.

¹⁰⁰ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 29.

¹⁰¹ Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 19.

¹⁰² Erbili, *Dîvân*, p. 17; About the hunter metaphor, see.: Ahmet Ögke, "Mevlânâ'nın Mesnevî'sinde Avcı Metaforu", *Selçuk University Journal of Mevlana Researches*, Year:1, Number:1, Konya, 2007.

Divan of Esad Efendi is full of symbols and poems which should be commentated on due to the clues it give from the realm of imagination. Esad Efendi uses many metaphors in his Divan, such as "wine, drink, drink-house, cupbearer, syrup, glass of unity, cup, lip of cup, eyebrow, tallness, face, lovelock, bow, waist, black nevus, eye, eyelash, lip, waist as well as nightingale and rose, tulip, dove, cypress tree, *huma* bird, phoenix and reunion, hunter, water of life, mirror of heart, darkness, shadow" etc., and professionally integrates these to his writings, despite him being a Sufi raised in a Sufi lodge. To refer back to the introduction of Esad Efendi's Divan, we see the following words about these metaphors: *"What they say as wine is the love of God which leaves no trace of worldly dealings. Drinking house is a place of worship constructed for the spiritual traveler, and the cupbearer is the Sufi master. The wine givers are the successors of the Sheikh which are mediators for the guidance of hearts. The drinking gatherings are the moments when the spiritual Sufi travelers got intoxicated with remembrance of God, Sufi practices and finally the love."*