

## A General Overview Of Şair Avni's Poems

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ABSTRACT

*Fatih Sultan Mehmet, one of the greatest rulers in Turkish and Islamic history, is also the first sultan poet to compose a divan. While renowned as a statesman and military leader, his poetic identity remains relatively less known. However, under the pen name "Avnî", Fatih Sultan Mehmet composed 84 poems, including 71 recorded in his divan and additional ones found in anthologies and other sources. This is a remarkable achievement for a sultan whose life was dominated by state affairs and military campaigns. He was known for his close interest in poets and often gathered with them in literary circles and poetry assemblies. His connection with poets is exemplified by the 185 poets who presented odes to him during his reign, 30 of whom were granted stipends by the sultan. Moreover, many of the statesmen in his court were also poets, including his mentor and vizier Ahmed Pasha and another vizier, Mahmud Pasha, who wrote under the pseudonym "Adnî". Fatih sought to establish contact with poets both nearby and distant. Following the conquest of Istanbul, he aimed to transform the city into a global center of knowledge and art by inviting numerous scholars and artists, many of whom were poets.*

*This article introduces and evaluates the poetry of Fatih Sultan Mehmet, composed under the pseudonym "Avnî". The study begins by examining the manuscripts of the Avnî Divan and reviewing the studies conducted on these works. Subsequently, the formal and thematic characteristics of the poems are analyzed, focusing on themes such as love for the Prophet, notions of love, the beloved, the lover, and the rival; reflections on nature, goods, social life, and individuals; Sufism; and the use of language and style. Selected poems are analyzed as examples to provide insights into the themes and stylistic features of the Divan. The findings are summarized in the conclusion, followed by a comprehensive bibliography.*

*Keywords*

*Fatih Sultan Mehmet, Avnî, divan, Classical Turkish Literature.*

## Şâir Avnî (Fâtih)'nin Şiirlerine Genel Bir Bakış

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ÖZET

*Türk ve İslam tarihinin gelmiş geçmiş en büyük hükümdarlarından olan Fatih Sultan Mehmet, aynı zamanda divan sahibi ilk sultan şairdir. O, devlet adamı olarak tanındığı kadar şairlik yönüyle tanınmamıştır. Oysa Fatih Sultan Mehmet "Avnî" mahlasıyla (divan nüshasına göre 71, mecmualarda ve farklı kaynaklarda bulunanlarla birlikte) toplam 84 şiir yazmıştır. Ömrü devlet işleriyle ve cephelerde düşmana karşı mücadeleyle geçen bir sultan için hiç de azımsanamayacak miktarda şiiri vardır. Ayrıca şairlerle ilgilendiği, onlarla şiir meclislerinde bir araya gelerek sohbet ettiği bilinmektedir. Döneminde 185 şairin ona kaside sunması şairlerle ilişkisinin derecesini göstermesi bakımından yeterlidir. O, bunlardan 30'una maaş bağlamıştır. Onun etrafındaki devlet adamlarının da çoğu şairdir. Şair Ahmet Paşa onun hocası ve veziridir. Adnî mahlasıyla şiirler yazan Mahmut Paşa onun vezirlerindedir. Döneminde yaşamış şairlerle uzak olsun yakın olsun mutlaka temas kurmaya çalışmıştır. İstanbul'un fethiyle beraber âlim ve sanatkârları İstanbul'da toplayarak İstanbul'u ilimde ve sanatta da cihanın başkenti yapmaya çalışırken davet ettiklerinin önemli bir kısmı şairler olmuştur.*

*Bu makalede, yukarıda sözü edilen Avnî mahlasıyla şiirler yazan Fatih Sultan Mehmet'in şiirleri tanıtılmış ve şairliği değerlendirilmiştir. Öncelikle Avnî Divanı'nın nüshaları ve Divan üzerine yapılan neşirler değerlendirilmiştir. Sonra Divanda bulunan şiirlerin şekil ve muhteva hususiyetleri tanıtılmıştır. Şiirlerindeki Hz. Peygamber sevgisi, aşk, sevgili, âşık ve rakip anlayışı; tabiat, eşya, sosyal hayat, şahıs değerlendirmeleri; tasavvufi düşünceleri; dil ve üslup uygulamaları vs. tespit edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Şiirlerinden örnekler verilerek kısmi tahlil niteliğindeki bu çalışmanın sonucunda elde edilenler bir sonuçla özetlenmiş ve kaynakça ile makale tamamlanmıştır.*

*Anahtar Kelimeler*

*Fatih Sultan Mehmet, Avnî, divan, Klasik Türk Edebiyatı.*

## Introduction

Fatih Sultan Mehmet was born on March 30, 1432, in Edirne. He was the son of Murad II (r. 1421-1451) and Hümâ Hatun (d. 1449). He became the seventh ruler of the Ottoman Empire. An inscription on the Hatuniye Tomb in Bursa identifies Hüma Hatun as a Turk and a Muslim, contradicting earlier claims about her origins.

Fatih Sultan Mehmet received his early education at Edirne Palace, where he spent his childhood, though the identities of his instructors from this period remain unclear. In 1443, at the age of 11, he was appointed as the Bey of Manisa Sanjak, accompanied by his tutors Kasapzade Mahmut and Nişancı İbrahim Bey. He was further educated by Mullah Gürânî and Mullah Ayas.<sup>1</sup> His first encounter with Akşemsettin, his revered teacher, likely took place during the early years of his reign.

In the spring of 1444, a year after his appointment, he was summoned to Edirne by his father and crowned as the new Sultan, while his father went into seclusion in Bursa. However, a series of unfavorable events unfolded both domestically and internationally following his ascension. Faced with these challenges, Sultan Mehmet II had to invite his father back to Edirne. Murad II returned and led the Ottoman forces to victory against the Crusaders at the Battle of Varna. After this victory, his father retreated to Manisa, but the Janissary Uprising broke out shortly after. Consequently, after two years of reigning, Sultan Mehmet II relinquished the throne back to his father.

At the age of 11, Sultan Mehmet II was already involved in state affairs. He pursued his education alongside these responsibilities, enriching his knowledge through scientific, literary, and religious discussions held in the palace. He became proficient in Arabic and Persian, and also learned Latin, Greek, and Serbian. In addition to his religious studies, he conducted extensive research into Turkish history and state traditions.

He remained in Manisa until his father's death. After his father's passing, he ascended the Ottoman throne for the second time on 18 February 1451, at the age of 19. He ruled until his death in 1481, during which he

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<sup>1</sup> For Fâtih's masters and the ulema of his time please see: Mecdî Mehmed Efendi, *Hadâiku's-Şakâik, Şakâik-ı Nu'mâniye ve Zeyilleri*, prepared for publishing by: Abdülkadir Özcan, Çağrı Publishing, C.I, İstanbul, 1989, 133-287.

significantly expanded the empire's borders and achieved numerous successes, including the conquest of Istanbul.

Avnî's father, Sultan Murad II, and his ancestor Beyazıt II were also poets. Born into a family of poets, Avni inherited a sultanate known for its patronage of poets, scholars, and artists. As a result, he was naturally inclined towards poetry and began writing from a young age. Influenced by his education, surroundings, and the spirit of his era, he developed his poetic voice early on. His poetic temperament played a crucial role in his work; indeed, a genuine poetic nature is essential for creating lasting poetry.

Avnî was surrounded by a vibrant community of poets during his time in Istanbul, where 185 poets had access to the sultan's court and could present *qasidas* to the Sultan.<sup>2</sup> Thirty of them received salaries from the Sultan. The poet Ahmed Pasha (d.1497) was his teacher and vizier. Mahmud Pasha (d.1474), who wrote poems under the pseudonym Adnî, participated in the conquest of Istanbul and also served as vizier and grand vizier. Hızır Bey (d.1458-59), the first kadi of Istanbul, wrote poems in three languages. Sinan Pasha, the son of Hızır Bey and a master of artistic prose, was also one of Avnî's teachers. Enverî, a poet and historian, participated in the Sultan's military expeditions and presented his work, *Tefekkürnâme*, to him. Hayâtî, known for his ghazals, would personally deliver his poetry, and the odes by Ulvî in his old age to the Sultan through Mahmud Pasha. The poet Huftî was a guest of honor in the Sultan's presence, introduced by Ahmed Pasha. Nahîfî Süleyman, who had poems in three languages, was a regular figure in court gatherings. During this period, the poet Sâfî also presented *qasidas* to Avni. Female poets such as Zeynep Hanım sent him poems and even received rewards. The period saw a flourishing of poetic talent, with notable figures like Aşkî, Cemâlî, Dâî, Duâyî, Eşrefoğlu Rûmî, Fakih, Fenâyî, Hâkî, Harîrî, Hâtemî Abdurrahman Çelebi, Haydar, İzârî, Kandî, Kâsım Paşa, Kemâl Ümmî, Kudsî, La'lî, Nişancı Mehmet Paşa, Mihrî Hanım, Necâtî, Necmî, Nûrî, Resmî, Rûşenî, Sa'dî, Safâyî, Sarıca Kemâl, Senâî, Seyfî, Şâhidî, Vâhidî, and Zaîfî, who collectively contributed to the rich poetic legacy of the time.

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<sup>2</sup> Haluk İpekten, *Divan Edebiyatında Edebî Muhitler*, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı., İstanbul 1996, p. 28.

Fâtih invited religious scholars, such as Avnî, Molla Câmî, as well as scientific scholars like Ali Kuşçu, to Istanbul. He also invited poets from the Turkish and Islamic world, including Nizâmî. When Mahmut Pasha praised Nizamî to the Sultan, Fatih promptly invited him to Istanbul. However, Nizamî died at a young age on his way there.<sup>3</sup>

This strong circle of poets played a great role in Fâtih's poetry. Fâtih gathered them around him, encouraged and honoured them, and in doing so, he also developed his own skills in poetry. With the conquest of Istanbul, the city and the Ottoman Empire became the centre of politics, science, art, and poetry. Thanks to Fâtih's encouragement of poetry, Encümen-i Şuara, namely poets' assemblies were established not only in Istanbul but also in centres of knowledge and culture such as Edirne, Amasya and Kastamonu. In addition to Fâtih, the Grand Vizier Mahmut Pasha in Istanbul, Cem Sultan (d. 1495) in Konya, and Bayezid II (1481-1512) in Amasya established gatherings of poets, protected poets, and contributed to the development of poetry and literature.

It is unclear when Fâtih began writing poetry, where he wrote his first poem, or which poems he wrote before and after the conquest. In classical Turkish literature there is often a lack of specific dates and places for poems. Information about the time a poem was written can only be inferred from hints within the poem itself. Towards the end of their lives, poets would usually collect the poems they had written throughout their lives as much as they could, and organise their divan by selecting the complete and appropriate poems. For sultan-poets like Avnî, who spent much of their lives on horseback and on the front lines, with poetry not as their main occupation, this was often not possible. An analysis of Avnî's poems shows that most of them were written during his sultanate and after the conquest of Istanbul. Very few of them could have been written before the sultanate. This is because most of his poems contain sultanic expressions. There are poems that seem to have been written in and for Istanbul. It is known that Fâtih held assemblies and conversations with poets in Edirne before the conquest of Istanbul, but it is unclear whether his poems were recited in these gatherings.

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<sup>3</sup> For literary movements in and around the palace during Fatih's reign please see: Haluk İpekten, *a.g.e.*, p. 25-44.

### The Poetry of Avnî (Fâtih), as Documented by Historical Sources:

In the Tezkires of Sehî Bey, Âşık Çelebi and Latîfî, which are among the most important sources of our literary history providing information about the poets of Turkish literature, the following statements are presented:

*Sehî Bey's states in his Heşt Bihîşt that...*

"In Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osmân, he is referred to as Fâtih Ebulfeth. His pseudonym was Avnî. He was a master of refinement and various arts, and he showed great interest and respect towards people of knowledge, even more so than the previous Sultans. After the conquest of Istanbul, he built the New Mosque and eight madrasahs around it. The Danishmends referred to it as Semâniye, and he would invite esteemed mullahs, appoint them as teachers, and provide them with positions. He respected the scholars so much that he used to register and keep records of the people according to their fields who were danişmend in madrasahs. He used these records to appoint individuals as madrasah or qadi. Additionally, he maintained records of the madrasah students. This has fostered a culture of the quest for knowledge and a desire to read among people."

It can be said that no other sultan ever showed as much respect and admiration to the community of poets. In his time, the poets who gathered together had never gathered at any other time. He granted large estates to each of them and would often bring them to his presence to recite poetry. He would find and bring knowledgeable people from Arab and Persian lands, showing them extraordinary favor. In summary, he was refined, talented, and interested in a wide range of artistic pursuits, including literature and conversation. He was a keen observer of human nature and a lover of art and discourse. He had a talent for writing poetry, characterized by a courageous and passionate tone and profound emotions. His poetry was unparalleled, with an exemplary style. Above all, he was a great supporter of the arts and held the community of poets in high esteem.<sup>4</sup>

Sehî Bey describes Avnî as:

1. Witty, skilful/talented,
2. The one who favours and compliments the wise,

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<sup>4</sup> Sehî Bey, *Heşt Bihîşt*, nşr. Günay Kut, Harvard 1978, p. 9-98.



3. Expert in reading,
4. His words are valiant, his ghazaliyat is befitting a saint, He is particularly exceptional in the ghazal genre
5. A sultan known for his support and appreciation of poets, surpassing all others
6. A sultan who had poets recite in his presence.

In Latîfî's *Tezkiretü'ş-Şuarâ* and *Tabîratu'n-Nuzamâ*, Sultan Mehmed is described as follow:

Fatih Sultan Mehmet was the most distinguished and prominent of the Ottoman sultans and the founder of various charity organizations. He conquered the throne of Istanbul and enforced the Islamic laws of the Prophet. He was glorified in the Prophet's hadith as 'the most beautiful sultan', and as a result, his life and death were celebrated and honoured with happiness in both worlds. In the books of history, his noble title is "Ebü'l - hayrât" (the father of charity) and his admirable qualities are evident from his title as "Ebü'l-hasenât" (the father of good deeds). His reign was characterised by the age of scholars and faqîhs, as well as the age of the individuals skilled in articulate expression.–Demonstrating his immense love and respect for intellectuals, he built numerous madrasas, tetimas, imarets and permanent institutions for their development. He was said to have kept a notebook of all the talented teachers and students in those madrasahs and tetimas, and carried it with him. When a vacancy arose in the madrasah or qadi positions, the appropriate person would be selected from this notebook. This emphasis on merit encouraged considerable amount of effort and hard work being put in by students each year, and therefore they had to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. At that time, individuals were valued based on their merit.

Verse: Tâlibi kâmil eyleyen rağbet ü i'tibâr imiş

"It is honour and respect that mature the young person"

Therefore, during his reign, unlike any other sultanate, there was an abundance of scholars, faqîhs and talented people. The great scholars emerged in this period and not in any other. Wherever there was an expert scholar in a particular field, whether in Hind or Sindh, Fatih would spend a

great deal of his wealth and property to provide them with generous gifts and financial support, and he would also encourage them with high positions, sometimes even forcing them to leave their homelands.

Verse: İ'tibâr u iltifât ile olur kesb-i kemâl

“Maturity and greatness are achieved through recognition and respect”

The viziers and beys were bound by the supreme Islamic principles and were not permitted to act beyond this jurisdiction. Kadis and qazaskars would not conceal or withhold the truth for personal gain, and beys and viziers would not blindly follow orders without question. In summary, during his reign, knowledge and wisdom were held in high esteem, and scholars were considered superior to other professions. He also admired both poetry and prose and respected their authors. For this reason, thousand florins were sent annually to Hâja-i Cihân in India and Mevlânâ Jâmî in Iran. Thirty poets used to live on his salary and allowance. Some of them would write his chronicles and others would praise him with stanzas and odes. As he was also inclined towards poetry, he adopted the pseudonym Avnî and occasionally, he would recite a ghazal, consisting of either a single verse or a complete ghazal. This matla is one of his valuable poems.

Matla: Sâkiyâ mey vir ki bir dem lâle-zâr elden gider  
İrişür fasl-ı hazân bâğ ü bahâr elden gider

The following matla, which describes his enmity with Karamanoglu, is also one of his poems:

Matla: Bizümle saltanat lâfın idermiş ol Karamânî  
Hudâ fırsat virürse ger kara yire karam anı

“Karamanoglu used to talk about the sultanate; if God gives me the opportunity, I will burn him to the ground”<sup>5</sup>

Latîfî describes Avnî as someone

1. who provide assistance to scholars and poets wherever they are,
2. who invites scholars and poets to Istanbul,
3. who has the right character,

<sup>5</sup> *Latîfî Tezkiresi*, haz. Mustafa İsen, Kültür Bakanlığı Yay., Ankara 1990, p. 69-71.

4. who was a unique sultan and poet as he wrote mufret and ghazals under the pseudonym Avnî.

Âşık Çelebi describes Fatih in his *Meşâiruş-Şuarâ* as follows:

It was during Sultan Mehmed's reign that it became known to everyone that the sixth heaven rotated in a wider circle than the other heavens. As a result, the favors bestowed upon this Sultan increased even more to the blessings God Almighty had bestowed on other Sultans. Because of this, the shadow of his Sultanate spread to the four corners of the world. The seven climates were filled with the sound of the drum of his state and sovereignty, and the seven stars of the seven climates, which resembled the seven-headed dragon, forming the small bear and the big bear, lost their strength in the face of the antidote of greatness and sublimity. Until that time, the name of the heavens was seven; it did not rise to eight, and no one could overcome fate. When a center was needed for sovereignty and a capital for the country, he conquered the city of Constantinople, and thus the seven heavens became eight with Istanbul, confirming the saying, 'Eight heavens are in the sky.' By annexing Constantinople to the land of Islam, he broke the hearts of the disbelieving rulers of Constantinople, each of whom, under the sharpness of his enlightened vision, fell into turmoil, as did the Europeans. Together with the other disbelieving rulers, they wondered, "What will become of us?" He made Istanbul his capital city, making it a treasure and a throne for his successors. By gathering valuable people there, he demonstrated that the honor of a place comes from those who dwell within it. The Sultan, the bestower of joy, the rider of the land of bliss and the apple of the country's eye, added a belt to the seven belts of fortune. He made the multi-columned hanging garden of Irem, with its many columns, in one corner. He built the palace of sovereignty and the place of fortune and glory, fulfilling the verse, "There was not created a like among the countries." He made the Güngörmez Palace a treasure vault to signify his conquest of the world, from the earth to the star Süreyya, with his jhangir sword. He repaired Yedikule, an example of the seven bastions of the heavens, and transformed that castle—whose walls were so strong they could shame even the bastioned heavens—into a source of jealousy for the Eighth Heaven, as it was grander than the bastions.

He knew that Divine blessings come to him one after another and are spoken of from person to person. Gratitude is the reason for the increase of blessings for the grateful servant.

Although the blessings of Allâh are beyond counting, he acted upon the saying "Preserve the blessings with gratitude" and "Paradise is in the shadow of swords", building a blessed mosque as a gesture of gratitude to Allâh and His blessings in order to earn eight gates of heaven. He also built Semân madrasahs, recognizing the importance of having buildings where scientific issues would be discussed. He surrounded the mosque, which gathered all good things in itself, with eight heavenly buildings, each of which was a source of beauty and luminous glory. He made himself the source of praise and glorification until the end of the world. It is evident that Istanbul became the epitome of a unified intellectual community, with the Semanîye madrasahs serving as a hub for scholars and intellectuals, a meeting point for virtuous and mature individuals, and a training ground for state and government officials. The city became a beacon of knowledge, with divine sciences gaining prominence, and minor sciences branching out as their extensions. The viziers Sinan Pasha, Ahmed Pasha, Mahmud Pasha and Monla; Hünkârôđlu Mehemed Pasha and numerous prominent statesmen were educated at this institution.

In accordance with the saying that "Even though you are superior to the creatures, you are one of them. Surely the odour of musk is from the blood of gazelles" he adopted the pseudonym 'Avnî' and wrote excellent ghazals, proper qasidas and stanzas".<sup>6</sup>

According to Âşık Çelebi, Avnî was...

1. a poet who used the pseudonym Avnî
2. a poet who wrote excellent ghazals
3. a poet who wrote proper qasidas and stanzas
4. a poet who is a sultan poet worthy of all kinds of praise that made Istanbul the centre of science and art.

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<sup>6</sup> Âşık Çelebi, *Meşâiru'ş-Şu'arâ* (Review-Text), prepared by Filiz Kılıç, C.I, İstanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, İstanbul 2010, p. 190-192.

## Copies and Editions of Avnî Dîvânı

The only known manuscript of Avnî Dîvânı is in Millet Library. In the library, this copy is registered in the name of Ali Emiri, Manzum, number 305. This copy has 24 pages and contains 68 ghazals, three of which are incomplete, 1 muhammes-i mütekerrir (7 lines), 1 stanza, 1 verse (there are also nazirs), totaling 71 poems. The great librarian Ali Emiri Efendi (d. 1924) reprinted this work twice.<sup>7</sup> However, there are some collections of verse, collections of poetry, tezkires and history books contain verses that are not included in Ali Emiri's copy of the Divan. The existence of these verses raises the possibility of a more complete version of the Dîvân than the one currently available.

Avnî's poems in the divan copy at Millet Library and other sources, such as mecmuas and tezkires, have been published six times by various researchers. Below is a chronological list and introduction of these publications.

### 1. Neşir: Dr. George Jacob, *Der Divan Sultan Mehmeds Des Zweiten, Berlin 1904.*

Dr. George Jacob was the first to undertake a comprehensive publication of Fâtih's poetry. Jacob published this work in Berlin in 1904, in which he reproduced 15 poems from a manuscript collection in the library of the Royal University of Uppsala and added 6 poems from tezkires, which are biographical dictionaries or anthologies containing information about poets, their works and their lives. A total of 21 ghazals by Fâtih are included in this work by Jacob.<sup>8</sup>

### 2. Neşir: Saffet Sıtkı (Bilmen), *Fatih Sultan Mehmed (Avnî), Fâtih Divanı, Ahmet Halit Publishing, İstanbul 1944.*

Fâtih Divanı, compiled by Saffet Sıtkı (Bilmen) on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the conquest, is the second edition of Avnî's poems and the first edition of the only known copy of Avnî's divan. This study is also significant as the first edition of Fâtih's Divan in Turkey. Additionally, six

<sup>7</sup> The copies made by Ali Emiri are registered under the numbers 530 and 531 of the same library and department.

<sup>8</sup> Georg Jacob, *Der Divan Sultan Mehmed des Zweiten des Eroberers von Constantiopol, Berlin 1904.*

more verses were included in this edition, bringing the total number of poems to 71.

**3. Neşir: Kemal Edip Ünsel, *Fâtih'in Şiirleri*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Publishing, Ankara 1946.**

This third edition is also based on the Ali Emiri's collection, with the addition of 10 new poems, for a total of 81 poems. The study includes transcriptions of the poems and a facsimile of the Ali Emiri manuscript.

**4. Neşir: Ahmet Aymutlu, *Fâtih ve Şiirleri*, İstanbul 1959.**

Although this study is also based on the Ali Emiri's collection, unlike the previous ones, it aims to provide explanations along with prose translations of the couplets. The study also includes fifteen additional verses. The poems are arranged in the order of the Arabic alphabet.

**5. Neşir: İskender Pala, *Şair Fâtih: Avnî (Fâtih Sultan Mehmet)*, Şule Publishing, İstanbul 1999.**

Unlike previous publications, in this study the prose translations of the couplets are presented with explanatory notes. This edition includes 81 poems arranged in the order of the Arabic alphabet.

**6. Neşir: Muhammed Nur Doğan, *Fâtih Divanı ve Şerhi*, Yelkenli Publishing, İstanbul 2006.**

This study presents the *Fâtih Dîvânı*, the prose translation of the poems and comprehensive explanations. The collection comprises a total of 84 poems.

7. A doctoral study on *Fâtih Dîvânı* should be mentioned, even though it has not yet been published. Şahmeran Baltacıoğlu, *Fâtih (Avnî) Dîvânı ve Tahlili*, Istanbul University Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Old Turkish Literature, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Istanbul 2004. This thesis presents an in-depth analysis of *Fâtih Dîvânı*. The text includes 21 additional poems to the ones found in the original divan copy, resulting in a total of 92 poems.

Apart from these, Şehabeddin Süleyman, Fuad Köprülü, Ali Emiri, İsmail Hikmet Ertaylan, Reşit Rahmeti Arat, Ahmet Caferoğlu, and Abdülkadir Karahan have also published articles on Avnî.<sup>9</sup>

The number of poems continued to increase in each of the six editions. Fâtih's poems that were not included in the previous copies of the Dîvân were added in the next edition as they were discovered in mecmuas, tezkires, etc. It is possible that more of Fâtih's poems can be found, thus the number of poems may increase in the future, considering that not all of the manuscripts in Turkey and abroad, especially the mecmuas, have been examined yet.

In the six studies listed above, it is observed that the texts in the divan of Fâtih have been strengthened by correcting the mistakes made in the previous editions.

It is important to note that scientific methods have been applied more extensively in later editions compared to the first editions. While George Jacob and Saffet Sıtkı (Bilmen)'s editions focused mainly on textual construction, Kemal Edip Kürkçüoğlu introduced transcribed editions and later editions aimed to produce the most accurate text possible by applying text repair methods that took into account elements such as meter, rhyme, artistic expression, meaning, poet's intention, and poetry technique.

The editions have been supplemented by prose translations and explanations. In the fourth edition, Ahmet Aymutlu translated the couplets into prose. In the fifth edition, İskender Pala provided explanations along with the prose translation. Finally, in the sixth and final edition, Muhammed Nur Doğan provided a comprehensive commentary along with the prose translations. The number of poems has increased with each edition. The text

<sup>9</sup> Important articles on this topic: Fuat Köprülü, "Fatih'in Devrinde Edebi Hayat", *Yeni Mecmua*, Mayıs 1918; Reşit Rahmeti Arat, "Fatih Sultan Mehmed'in Yarlığı", *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, C.VI, İstanbul 1936-1939, p.285-322; Kemal E. Ünsel, "Caminin Fatih Sultan Mehmet II'ye Gönderdiği Üç Kitap", *Dil ve Tarih Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi*, C. II, Ankara 1943, sayı 1, p. 113-114; Abdülkadir Karahan, "Fatih Şair Avnî", *TDED*, C. VI, İstanbul 1956, p. 1-38; Ahmet Caferoğlu, "Fatih'in Dili", *TDED*, C.VI, İstanbul 1956, p. 83-90; Nihat Sami Banarlı, "Aşk İnsanı Fâtih, Fatih'in Zafer Sırları", *İstanbul Enstitüsü Mecmuası*, C.V, sayı 12, İstanbul 1959; İsmail Hikmet Ertaylan, "Eski İstanbul Şairleri", *İstanbul Dergisi*, S. VII. İstanbul t.y.. S. VII, p.4 ve S.VIII. p.2-3.

has been strengthened and the prose translations and explanations have been improved.

It is important to mention that, in addition to these editions, there are also articles and papers by various scholars that contain their evaluations of The Divan and its poems. However, since this evaluation focuses on the publications of the Dîvân text, the examples provided in footnote 10 are sufficient.

## AVNÎ DİVANI<sup>10</sup>

### A- Stylistic Features

#### 1. Rhyming

When classifying Avnî's poems by verse forms, it is evident that there are 84 pieces. Of these, 73 are ghazals, 1 is a muhammes-i mütekerrir, 1 is a murabba-ı mütekerrir (not complete), 2 are kıt'as, 6 are couplets, and 1 is a single verse. This classification shows that he was predominantly a poet of ghazals, with the exception of murabba, muhammes and kıt'a. In fact, as a sultan poet, this is a natural consequence. The ghazal is the only form of verse in which the poets express themselves, connect with their own voices, and sympathise with themselves. Fâtih must have written the poem for these purposes. As is well known, ghazals are written in rhyme with each letter. However, since Avnî's divan is not a complete one, he does not have ghazals that rhyme with every letter. He has a total of 17 rhymed ghazals. 44 of his ghazals use redif rhyme, where words or suffixes with the same function are repeated at the end of lines. This repetition is a dominant feature, as at least one word is repeated in each line. The redifs used by Avnî are as follows: sana, bana, olup, şerâb, güç, şâh şâh, murâd, ümid, düşer, eyler, eyler, gelür, gelür, pass, midur, elden git, yeter, eylerüz, istemez, iderüz, Veyis, olmuş, revnak, eyledün, gerek, senün, eylegil, meyl, gönül, gönül, benimüm, yazam, idelüm, olalum, itdüm, hüsn, gören, var iken, iden,

<sup>10</sup> This study is based on the text in *Fatih Divanı ve Şerhi* (Eminönü Belediyesi Publishing, İstanbul 2004) prepared by Muhammed Nur Doğan. Examples of the couplets and their numbers are given according to this text. The evaluations are not based on the 71 poems, 68 of which are ghazals, in the original copy, but on the 84 poems, 73 of which are ghazals, in Doğan's work. The first number in parentheses at the end of the couplets indicates the poem number, and the second number after the hyphen indicates the couplet number.



var ise, bu gice, eyler seni, beni. Avnî's ghazals consist of 17 rhymed with the letter 'ra', followed by 9 with 'nun', 7 with 'kef', 6 with 'mim', 5 with 'lam', and 4 each with 'ne' and 'ya'. Additionally, there are 3 ghazals each rhymed with 'elif', 'za', and 'şın', and 2 with 'ba', 'dal', and 'kef', and 1 each with 'cim', 'ha', 'sin', and 'ayn'.

If we consider the 4 incomplete ghazals as having 5 couplets each, 51 out of the 73 ghazals have 5 couplets, 12 have 7 couplets, 7 have 6 couplets, 2 have 8 couplets, and one has 9 couplets. As is typical in classical literature, most of the ghazals consist of single digits, with the majority being five couplets. Therefore, it can be concluded that Avnî generally preferred five couplets in his ghazals.

## 2. Meter

We can list the aruz meters and patterns preferred by Avnî as follows: All the poems that form the basis of this study were written in the aruz meter. Aruz meter is designed according to the sounds in syllable and open and closed letters that characterize syllables. This meter is an important element that contributes to the harmony of the poem. Avnî preferred to write his poems in the aruz meter, and his preferred aruz meters and patterns are listed below:

### Remel

fâ'ilâtün fâ'ilâtün fâ'ilâtün fâ'ilün (37 poems)

fe'ilâtün fe'ilâtün fe'ilâtün fe'ilün (12 poems)

fâ'ilâtün fâ'ilâtün fâ'ilün (1 poem)

### Hezec

mef'ülü mefâ'ilü mefâ'ilü fe'ülün (6 poems)

mefâ'ilün mefâ'ilün mefâ'ilün mefâ'ilün (13 poems)

mefâ'ilün mefâ'ilün fe'ülün (2 poems)

müstef'ilün fe'ülün müstef'ilün fe'ülün (1 poems)

### müctes

mefâ'ilün fe'ilâtün mefâ'ilün fe'ilün (6 poems)

müzârî

mef'ûlü fâ'ilâtü mefâ'ilü fâ'ilün (3 poems)

mütekarib

fe'ûlün fe'ûlün fe'ûlün fe'ûl (2 poems)

hafif

fâ'ilâtün mefâ'ilün fe'ilün (1 poem)

## B- Characteristics of The Content

### 1. The Prophet and the Other Prophets

The first ghazal in Avnî's current copy of the divan is a 'na't-ı nabevi', which means a poem that praises the Prophet. In this poem, Avnî presents the Prophet as a beloved figure and describes his appearance as similar to that of the crescent moon, his hair as reminiscent of night, his gaze as akin to the miraculous hand of the Prophet Moses, his lips as reminiscent of the breath of the Prophet Jesus. He asserts that such a divine beauty was bestowed upon the Prophet by God alone, and that no painter on earth could create a likeness of his beauty. The sky, with all its stars, could not see a moon as bright as the Prophet's forehead or a full moon as beautiful as his face, even though he watched the earth every night.

Avnî depicts the world in which he lives separated from the Prophet, whose beauty he depicts and praises with bright words, as an assembly of gloom, and likens the flavors of the world to the air bubbles in the wine of love he drinks in that assembly, and thus expresses the transience of the flavors of the world like air bubbles as the life of an air bubble is short and its existence is not permanent. In the last couplet, Avnî describes the Prophet's face as "matla" which is a term used to refer to the initial rhyming couplet of the ghazal and qasida. This serves—as evidence of the manifestation of Allah. Furthermore, his mouth is described as "muamma"<sup>11</sup> which is a term used to refer to the couplets and stanzas of a poem in

<sup>11</sup> "As a literary term, muamma is defined as 'a word that indirectly refers to a name in poetry through remiz, implication or sign'. In poetry, concealing a name by describing its wording in a veiled way is called ta'miye, the concealed name is called muamma, the speaker of the muamma is called muamma-guy, and the

which a name is hidden. This is because it is the mouth through which many divine secrets are expressed.

Na't ghazal:

Yüzün meh-i 'îd ü ser-i zülfün şeb-i Esrâ  
Gamzen yed-i Mûsâ leb-i la'lün dem-i 'Îsâ

Bu hüsn-i Hudâyî ki Hudâ sana virüpdür  
Mânî-i cihân yazmadı tasvîrüne hem-tâ

Alnun kamerine yüzün ayına müşâbih  
Bunca göz ile görmedi bu çarh-ı mu'allâ

Şol câm ki nûş eylemişem bezm-i gamunda  
Bir sâde habâbıdur anun künbed-i hadrâ

'Avnî seni medh eyledi çün tarz-ı gazelde  
Matla' dedi yüzüne vü ağzuna mu'ammâ (the first ghazal)

Apart from this na't in praise of the Prophet, we think that Avnî refers to the Prophet's words in a few couplets. Avnî says, "Viran gönlüme hor bakma, sen asıl ondaki aşka bak. Zira gördüğün gizli hazine viran yerlerde bulunur" [Do not look down on my ruined heart, look at the love in it. The true value of the hidden treasure can be found in the context of a ruined place.] In this couplet, he compares his heart to a ruined place and the love he keeps alive in it to a treasure, while at the same time pointing to the tradition of hiding treasures in ruined places by way of allusion. In this couplet, we think that the poet also alludes to the holy hadith that means "Ben bir gizli hazine idim bilinmeyi istedim ve halkı varlık âlemlerini ve

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solver of the muamma is called muamma-küşa. Muamma emerged in Arabic literature, and after it passed into Persian culture, it was treated as an independent science and its rules were determined. In some Persian sources, it was claimed that the first person to tell a riddle was Hz. Ali. It is stated that Şerefeddin Ali Yezdi (d. 858/1454) made the first study on this subject. After Abdurrahman-i Cami, who developed the rules laid down by Şerefeddin Ali Yezdi, muamma became a very popular literary genre, ... Usually muamma is written in one couplet and the hidden name is mostly found in the second verse. Although mostly one name is hidden in a couplet, in some cases more than one word may also be hidden. In addition, muamma can be in a single word or more than one word can be used to obtain a single name. Yekta Saraç, "Muamma (Türk edebiyatı)", *DİA*, C. 30, İstanbul 2005, s. 322-323.

insanu yarattım”<sup>12</sup> [I was a hidden treasure and I wanted to be known and I created the creation to be known].

Hâr bakma dil-i vîrânuma ‘ışka nazar it  
Gördüğün genc-i nihân mahzen-i vîrâna geçer (10-3)

In the couplet below, Avnî says: “O Avnî, love is a treasure whose capital is inexhaustible. (I am the owner of such a treasure) One who possesses such a treasure does not desire another.” He claims to be the owner of such a treasure and suggests that those who possess it do not desire any other treasure. The couplet alludes to the same hadith.

‘Işk nakdi bir hazînedür ana yokdur zevâl  
Mâlik olan ‘Avniyâ bir gence gencûr istemez (28-5)

Although it is not very clear, it can be assumed that Avnî alludes to the hadith “The misers shall not enter Paradise” in the following couplet.

Gönül eşigün umar cânın itmedin kurbân  
Ne çâre cennete girmege kişi olsa bahîl (49-4)

It is important to note that Avni did not quote the hadiths directly.

Avnî’s *Dîvân* discusses several prophets including Adam, Jesus, Moses, Joseph, and Solomon, each with their unique characteristics. Of these, Adam and Solomon are mentioned in one couplet, Joseph in two couplets, Moses in three couplets, and Jesus in five couplets. Avnî’s *Dîvân* does not mention the names or stories of any other prophets.<sup>13</sup>

In one couplet, Adam is mentioned in reference to his weeping and begging for forgiveness for years after he was expelled from paradise and brought down to earth:<sup>14</sup>

Hâsılı çün mezra-ı dünyânun oldı gam bana  
Yıllar ile ağladı hâlüm görüp Âdem bana (3-1)

<sup>12</sup> Aclûnî, *Keşfu’l-Hafâ*, II/2016, Beyrut 1351(1932). It is reported in the work that the hadith is weak. For more information about the hadith, see. İsmail Hakkı Bursevî, *Kenz-i Mahfî (Gizli Hazine)*, Sad. Abdulkadir Akçiçek, İstanbul 1986.

<sup>13</sup> For couplets on other prophets see. Muhammed Nur Doğan, *Fatih Divanı ve Şerhi*, Eminönü Belediyesi Publishing, İstanbul 2004. Hz. Yûsuf (23-4, 60-4), Hz. Mûsâ (1-1, 47-1, 69-5), Hz. İsâ (1-1, 14-4, 17-7, 61-2, 71-5).

<sup>14</sup> Hz. Âdem’s repentance is mentioned in verse 37 of Surah Al-Baqarah.

In a couplet about Solomon, Avnî compares the beloved to Solomon and himself to a poor ant who is worried about being crushed under the feet of his army. In this couplet, Avnî alludes to the parable of Solomon and the ant in Surah Naml.<sup>15</sup>

Mesned-i hüsn üzre sen ben hâk-i rehde pâ-y-mâl  
Mûr hâlin niçe arz ide Süleymânüm sana (2-2)

## 2. Subjects

In his poems, Avnî also included individuals other than prophets, highlighting their diverse characteristics. The Prophet's uncle ̤amza ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, whose bravery became legendary; Veyselkarânî, one of the tabi'in; Nu'man bin Sabit (Imam Azam); Nemrud, the ruler of the Chaldean tribe who threw Hz. Abraham into the fire; Karun, a relative of the Prophet Moses, who was arrogant with his wealth and did not believe in Moses and therefore sank to the ground; Kâvûs (Keykâvûs), one of the legendary rulers of Iran; Zâl, the father of Rüstem, also one of the legendary heroes of Iran; Mahmud of Ghazni, the famous ruler of the Ghaznavids, the first Turkish-Islamic state; Alexander the Great, known for the mirror he had built and placed in the city of Alexandria in order to see far distances; Mani, famous for his miniatures and considered the founder of the Mani religion; Mecnûn, Leylâ, Ferhâd, Husrev, heroes of love; Nizâmî, Sa'dî and Selmân Avnî, well-known poets.

Upon analyzing the individuals listed, it becomes apparent that Avnî's subjects are primarily those who set a positive example for society. The number of negative figures, such as Nimrud and Karun, is minimal. The mention of their names serves as an example to society. For instance, in one of his couplets, Avnî highlights that the story of ̤amza ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib is a legend for the world.

Mihrün ey hüsn[i] bedî' ü leb-i la'li şîrîn  
Kıssa-i Hamza gibi âleme destân iderüz (29-3)

<sup>15</sup> The parable of the ant is mentioned in Surah al-Naml, verse 18: "And when they came to the valley of the ant, an ant said: 'O ants! Get into your nests, lest Solomon and his army crush you unawares.'" See. Kur'ân-ı Kerîm ve Açıklamalı Me'âli, haz. Ali Özek vd., Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Publishing., Ankara 1993, p. 377.

In this couplet, Avnî promises to make his love for his beloved, whose unique beauty and lovely lips are unique in the world, a legend like the story of ̤amza ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib.

### 3. Love

Avnî’s poetry is dominated by the theme of love. As a sultan poet, it would be disappointing to expect poems about conquest, war, army, soldier, commander, Istanbul, etc. from him. Although he occasionally touches on such subjects in his poems, he mainly uses them as elements that serve the feelings of love he expresses. Since the main attitude of the Classical Turkish poet in writing *divan*-style poetry or composing a *divan* is to deal with the subject of love, Fâtiḥ, like other poets, followed this attitude. In fact, this is what Fâtiḥ also needed. He was surrounded by poets who would write *fetihnâme* [epic of conquest], *cenknâme* [epic of war], *zafernâme* [epic of victory]. There are also poets who write about the qualities of Istanbul or other cities in *şehirngiz* [city narrative]. Therefore, there is nothing left for Fâtiḥ but to record the voice of his own heart.

Love, as understood, is the highest form of affection between lovers. Fâtiḥ’s interpretation of love aligns with the understanding of love in *divan* literature.

In one of his couplets, Avnî compares love to wine, suggesting that this wine reveals the image of both worlds to the one who drinks it.

İki âlem nakşını görmek dilersen âşikâr  
Devr içinde şîşe-i mey câm-ı İskender yeter (24-4)

In *Divan* poetry, wine symbolises love. The goblet that Avnî describes as capable of displaying a representation of this world and the next is a beverage that also symbolises love. As this wine reveals both the present and the afterlife, it can be considered the wine of divine love. It allows the drinker to perceive the manifestations of Allah in both realms.

In Sufism, wine is also regarded as a symbol of love. For the believer, the path to Allah is only accessible through love. Consequently, Sufi poets, or those versed in Sufi symbolism, frequently refer to the goblet that shows the world, with the intention of enlightening their hearts and filling them with love:

Tevârif-i Cem ü İskender itmez hâtırum hergiz  
Meğer câm-ı cihân-bîn eyleye anı yine rûşen (56-2)

According to Avnî's understanding, love is like a hidden treasure. Just as treasures are hidden in ruins, love is hidden in the ruined heart of the lover. Therefore, one should not look down on the miserable state of the lover and his ruined heart. The love hidden in the wretched heart of the lover oppresses him inwardly. Thus, in classical Turkish literature love is often compared to an architect.

Cevrünün vîrânı olmuşdur niçe ma'mûrlar  
Işkunun ma'mûridur niçe harâb-âbâdlar (21-3)

Avnî suggests that love is both a problem and a disease. According to their understanding, the reason for a lover's existence is to suffer from this affliction and to meet their beloved. This concept is also in line with Islamic Sufism, where the purpose of human existence is the love of God. Therefore, humans endure the pain of love in the world and strive for fenafillah (reunion with Allâh). The individual experiencing this issue does not desire another companion. The remedy for the distress of love is not found in *Kânûn*<sup>16</sup>. The antidote lies in the lover's lips, that is, the words the beloved will speak to them. Therefore, the lover seeks the solution to this problem at the beloved's door and not elsewhere. This is why the lover is always waiting for their beloved. Only this waiting can cure their troubles.

'Işk derdine şifâ olmaz ise Kânunda  
Nûş-dârû-yı lebün anı da dermân eyler (16-3).

Haste dil kapuna varsa n'ola tîmâr ister  
Yine bu derde anun derdine dermân iderüz (29-2)

Love is the Sultan, and this Sultan resides in Avnî's heart. The heart is also a tavern, a tekkeh. Avnî has taken refuge in this tavern of the heart, the tekkeh, where God is reached through love. The tekkeh is the strongest

<sup>16</sup> *Kânûn* is the short name of Avicenna's (d. 1037) work on the science of medicine known as "*el-Kânûn fi't-Tıb or Kânûnu's-Şifâ*". This work was translated into Latin a hundred years after Ibn Sinâ's death and was taught as a textbook in Islamic and European countries for many years in the Middle Ages. In the 17th century, a chair was established in his name at the University of Valloddid. For more information see. Arslan Terzioğlu, "İbn Sinâ (tıb)", *DİA*, C. 20, İstanbul 1999, p.331-336.

fortress that will protect him from the army of darkness. Therefore, it is not possible for the army of darkness to defeat the Sultan of Love, that is, to disturb Avnî's heart. For when love comes to the heart, the lover's mind, patience, ah, sorrow, and lamentation all leave their places to the Sultan of Love. It is not possible for love and anything else to coexist:

Leşker-i gam şâh-ı ıška niçe bulsun dest-res  
Avniyâ meyhâne gibi bir hisârüm var iken (62-5)

In this couplet, Avnî expresses in a verse that when he is overwhelmed by the worries of the world, administrative problems, worries about enemies, etc., he gives himself to love in order to remove them from his heart and pray to Allâh.

Avnî repeats in many couplets that he is also the Sultan of Love. Just as he emphasises that he is the Sultan of the world, he also says that he is the Sultan of love in the following couplet:

Şâh-ı ışkâm gam beyâbanı kişver yeter  
Âteş-i âhum livâ-yı ejdahâ-peyker yeter (24-1)

While the poet Avnî describes himself as the Sultan of Love in the couplet, he imagines the desert of darkness as his country and his oath as a banner with a dragon motif. He sees the desert as his land because he compares himself to Mecnûn. As we know, Mecnûn, the male protagonist of Leylâ and Mecnûn masnavi, had made the desert his home because of his love. He wandered around there, suffering for love.

Love is the land where the beloved dwells. In this land, the soil on which the beloved walks is like the lover's crown, the neighbourhood where the beloved lives is like the lover's throne, and in this way the lover is the sultan of this land. Even Cem and Cemşîd, known as the most powerful rulers of all time, were jealous of this crown and throne:

Hâk-i pâ-yi yâr tâcum kûy-ı dilber mesnedüm  
Reşk ider Cemşîd ü Cem taht ü külâhumdan benüm (51-3)

In this couplet, Avnî wants to be with his beloved and does not want to leave the vicinity of his beloved.

In another couplet, Avnî speaks of the fire of love, likening it to a burning ember in the heart of the beloved:



Avniyâ cismün yanup külli kül oldıysa eger  
Işk odın hıfz itmek için işbu hâkister yeter (24-5)

“O Avnî, when your body is burnt to ashes do not grieve, as these ashes are enough to preserve the embers of the fire of love.”

This refers to the preservation of the embers by the ash itself. The ashes on the embers actually ensure that the embers do not go out for a long time. Divine love in the heart is like that. Even if the body disappears, the soul and the love in it will not disappear. Avnî expresses this fact with the example of ashes and embers. In fact, Sufi poets have included this theme in their poetry. In one of his couplets, Yunus emphasises the fact that it is the body that dies, but the soul and the love within it do not. In this couplet, Avnî emphasises that the fire of love cannot be extinguished.

In certain instances, Avnî posits a parallel between love and capital. The analogous concept is the lover's tears, which may be considered the equivalent of this capital.

Gözyaşın harcandı vaslun almadı.  
Avnî bu bâzârda mağbûndur (25-5)

His love is so sublime that if the storytellers were to describe his love and the beauty of the beloved, their words would be true. As the popularity of this love has reached everyone, it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain its confidentiality:

Benim ışkum senün hüsnün beyânın kılsa râvîler  
Ne denlü vasf iderlerse ke-mâ-hî cümle vâkî'dür. (26-3)

Nice mahfî dutam esrâr-ı ışkı mekr ü hileyle  
Dutuptur iştihârı halk içinde hayli şâyidür (26-4)

In another couplet, he says that the walls of the city are full of traces of his love, so he can no longer hide his love:

Nice pinhân eyleyem ol dilbere âşıkluğum  
Pürdürür dîvârı şehrin âh şâhumdan benüm (51-2)

A ghazal by Avnî on the subject of love:

‘Işk ile vîrân iden gönlini ma’ mûr istemez  
Hâtırın mahzûn iden bir lahza mesrûr istemez

Hâk-sâr olup hevâ-y-ile gubâr olan gönül  
Hâk-i râh-ı yârdan bir dem özin dûr istemez

Hoş gören âkil fenâ tavrını şöhret gözlemez  
Künc-i uzlet isteyen kendüyi meşhûr istemez

Lâ'l-i nâba meyi kılmaz bađrını pür-hûn iden  
Dâmenin pür-eşk iden lû'lû-yı menşûr istemez

'İşk nakdi bir hazînedür ana yokdur zevâl  
Mâlik olan 'Avniyâ bir gence gencûr istemez (28. gazel)

#### 4. The Beloved

Although Avnî's poems seem to deal with different subjects, it is possible to say that all of them deal with the subject of love and the beloved. Avnî assigned himself the role of a lover and thus, in all his poems, he addressed the beloved and described his love. Similar to classical literature, he used names for his beloved that reflect her various characteristics through metaphor, metonymy and simile. Classical Turkish literature is very rich in this respect. As far as can be determined, in his couplets he describes the beloved as âfitâb, bî-vefâ, büt, cân, cânân, cânâne, dilârâ, dilber, dildâr, dilynâz, dilrübâ, dost, gülizâr, gülendâm, güzel, habîb, hûb, hûbân, hûnî, husrev, kâfir, mâh, mahbûb, ma'sûk, melek, mehlîkâ, mutrib, nâzenîn, nigâr, perî, sâkî, sanem, server, sultân, şâh, şeh, şûh, tabîb, yâr. His lover also bears the characteristics typically attributed to the lover in classical literature. Similar to other divan poets, Avnî has employed the body parts of the lover, including the hair, forehead, eyebrow, eye, dimple, eyelashes, cheek, mouth, lips, teeth, mole, line, neck, waist, hand, and foot, as subjects in his poems. Each of them possesses extraordinary beauty; they are flawless and perfect. Those who see them are attracted to their beauty. Her eyes are attractive and fetching, her eyebrows are smooth and pencil-like, her eyelashes pierce the heart of the lover like arrows, her lips are beautiful and precious, and when she speaks, she resurrects the dead and gives life to her lover. It is particularly noteworthy that Avnî's attention is focused on the subject of beauty in relation to the face. Her face is as bright as the moon and as beautiful as the sun.

Sultân-ı hüsn yüzün ü hâcib durur kaşun  
Cellâd çeşm ü zülf-i siyeh perde-dâr-ı hüsn (57-5)

In Avnî's poems, the beloved is free from all imperfections and perfect beyond imagination. She is so delicate. She has an extraordinary facial beauty. No intelligent person who sees her with these features can save himself from falling in love and losing his mind:

Bu melâhat bu letâfet kim nigârâ sende var  
Her niçe 'âkil varursa kûyuna şeydâ gelür (17-6)

The existence of the beloved, her body parts, her manners are wonderful. She is tall, walks gracefully, has a thin waist and shiny skin.

Avnî compares his beloved to a cypress tree because of her height. The cypress is a tall, neat-looking tree with leaves that remain green in summer and winter, it swings in the wind, and it is a fruitless tree, so a relationship is established between it and the beloved. Avnî's beloved is taller than all other beauties:

Seyr-i gülzâr eylese serv-i revânlarla nigâr  
Râstı bu kadd(i) ânun cümleden a'lâ gelür (17-2)

The beloved is so tall and beautiful that wherever she appears, the hearts of her admirers are devastated, the apocalypse seems to break out, and eyes cannot bear to look at her.

Ömr geçdüğü kıyâmet kopduğı olur ayân  
Çün hurâmân seyr idüp ol kâmet-i bâlâ giçer (19-2)

The beauty that the eyes cannot endure to see, the beauty that the apocalypse breaks out, can be considered as divine beauty, that is, the manifestation of Allâh. Essentially, all the beauties in the universe are from the Divine lover. Because God is beautiful and all beauty comes from God. Avnî refers to God when he talks about the beauty of the beloved in his couplets. The spring of beauty finds eternal life and happiness with the beauty of the beloved.

Bâğ-ı cemâl hüsnün ile pür-safâ durur  
Şâd-âbdur cemâlün ile nev-bahâr-ı hüsn (57/2)

The qualities of the lover as described by Avnî are sometimes comparable to those of Christian beauties. She is attired in black, adorned with a zünnar, and resembles the king of Galata. In one of his ghazals (ghazal 14), Avnî provides a comprehensive description of such a beauty from beginning to end. In fact, in the final couplet of this ghazal, he writes, "O Avnî, do not expect that Christian beauty to surrender to you." Given that you are the ruler of Istanbul, an Islamic city, and she is the Sultan of Galata, a Christian city renowned for its beauty, it is evident that the two are not suited to one another. In the concluding couplet of this ghazal, he asserts that she will not surrender to him.

Avniyâ kılma gümân kim sana râm ola nigâr  
Sen Sitanbul şâhısun ol [da] Kalata şâhıdur (14-5)

### 5. Lover

The defining feature of Classical Turkish literature is the expression of the love narrative between the beloved and her lover, as exemplified by the mesnevis with dual protagonists. The lover is situated in close proximity to the beloved character. In these works, the poets themselves serve as the lovers. In their poems, they delineate their profound affection for the beloved. Avnî's own status as a lover is made clear by the fact that he passes through the beloved's neighbourhood (10-5). In one of his couplets, he states, "It is not for him to love the beautiful, but his heart wants what it wants," which suggests that he is a sultan and acknowledges that he cannot control his heart, despite recognizing that loving the beautiful is not appropriate for a sultan.

Avniyâ dil virmek ol dildâra düşmezdi bana  
Bir düşecek yir arayuban gönül ammâ düşer (13-7)

For this reason, the duties between him and his lover change. Sultanate is for the beloved and servitude is for Avnî. At every opportunity he compares the beloved to the sultan and the lover to the slave. In one of his couplets, he says 'I have become a servant to such a sultan that all the sultans of the world are servants and slaves to the beloved (23-1)' and emphasises that the real sultanate is the beloved. Avnî is the sultan of the world but the servant and slave of his beloved.

According to Avnî, the lover is bound by divine love, he is a love beggar, so faithful on the path of love, and he endures the torment of the beloved, never complains about it, and cannot tell anyone about his condition.

Cismümüz râh-ı vefâda gerçi kim hâk eylerüz  
Bâd-ı âh ile reh-i yâri yine pâk eylerüz (27-1)

Through love the lovers obtain trouble and misery from this world. They endure love and never consider the possibility of trouble and misery. Once their hearts have been destroyed by love, they do not consider the possibility of making it perfect, because love is a treasure, and treasures are hidden in ruined places.

Avnî expresses divine love in some of his couplets about love. According to Avnî, the lover who hears the cry of love circumambulates around that beloved by saying 'lebbeyk'.

İreli cân kulağına senün 'ışkun nidasından  
Urup lebbeyk işigünde tavaf eyler safâsından (64-1)

Since the Ka'ba is the place that is circumambulated with the cry of 'Lebbeyk', the beloved is undoubtedly Allâh.

## 6. Rival

In Classical Turkish poetry, the third character emerges alongside the lover and the beloved: the rival. When discussing the relationship between the lover and the beloved, the rival is also mentioned. The rival is a negative character who attempts to disrupt the relationship between the two. The rival claims to be in love but lacks-genuine affection, and tries to prevent the lover from approaching the beloved.

Avnî, who has struggled against his enemies since childhood, also addresses the rival in his couplets. He became familiar with the rivalries among statesmen and the tactics of his adversaries even before he fully enjoyed playing with his friends as a child.-He was therefore well aware of the meaning of the term "rival". In this respect, he also mentions the rival in his couplets. Although he primarily uses the word "rival", he also employs terms like "ağyar", "it", "div", "zag (crow)" and "devil" for rival. In Avnî's perspective the rival is ugly, possessing of-a black heart, with a bad voice, malicious intentions and an unclean nature. He is a tormentor of the lover,

waiting at the lover's door like a dog and preventing the lover from coming near. The rival is of a devilish nature, and his role is to engage in deceitful and manipulative behaviour. He is merciless and seeks to provoke the lover into seducing her. He is also a slanderer, and it is therefore necessary to pray to Allah for protection against-his slander.

Because of these negative characteristics, Avnî also establishes a relationship between the rival and the infidel and the devil:

Görse ağyâr söger yüzüne âşık olana  
Görün ol kâfiri kim dîn ile îmâna geçer (10-2)

Avniyâ mekr-i rakîb-i dîvi def itsün diyü  
Peyk-i âhun boynına takdum hamâyil şâh şâh (7-5)

In one of his couplets, Avnî says "If the rivals see those who are in love with your face, they will curse them. Look at that unbeliever who pretends to be faithful and believer (10-2)" and describes the rival as an infidel who pretends to be believer.

Avnî expresses that there is no similarity between the rival and himself by saying 'There can be no similarity between ourselves and our rivals, as the thought and grief of being separated from our sweet-lipped beloved is like halva to us and like poison to the rivals (11-4)'. It is not even right to mention the name of a rival.

Beyti bozarsun rakîbi anma şî'ründe sakın  
'Avnî dilber vasfıdur çün şî'r ü inşâdan murâd (8-5)

The mention of the name of the rival, that is, the individual who harbours all kinds of ugliness and negativity, spoils the poem. The purpose of poetry and literary prose is to describe the beautiful.

Furthermore, Avnî demonstrated his poetic sensibility with this couplet. He posited that poetry is the domain where beauty, its manifestations, and love are articulated. It would be inappropriate to mention those who are ugly and ill-tempered, such as rivals, in such a context.

As a consequence of his combative personality, Avnî declares that "it is necessary to fight with the rival for the beloved, otherwise the beloved will be gone."

Yâr için ağyâr ile merdâne ceng itsem gerek  
İt gibi murdâr rakîb ölmezse yâr elden gider (22-5)

### 7. Nature

Although not particularly wealthy, the Avnî Dîvânı also contains material on the cosmic world, time and space, as well as the four elements, animals and plants. Compared to other divans, the frequency of these elements is relatively low, but when considered in the context of the volume of the divan, it can be said that they are used with a significant presence.

In his poetic compositions, Avnî incorporates a diverse array of floral imagery, including roses, rosebuds, tulips, hyacinths, narcissus, jasmine, and wild roses. Notably, he has a special affection for the rose, which he considers to be his most cherished flower. In the following couplet, Avnî successfully depicts the nightingale hopping from branch to branch: "it jumps from branch to branch in the rose garden in search of a rose with beauty akin to that of the beloved's face".

Bâğ-ı âlemde yüzün manend bir gül isteyüp  
Cüst ü cû idüp gezer gülzârı bülbül şâh şâh (7-3)

Avnî includes cypress, pine nut and boxwood trees in his couplets. However, the plane tree, one of the most important trees of the Ottoman period, is conspicuously not mentioned in Avnî's Divan. The most frequently referenced tree in the Divan is the cypress. The tree is employed as a simile in the couplets due to its tall, slender form, its graceful swaying in the wind, and its growth near water. In particular, the height of the beloved is compared to that of the cypress. In some instances, Avnî employs the term "cypress" in a manner similar to other divan poets, rather than the word "beloved". In the following couplet, the poet states that Narcissus became ill (from jealousy) and began to tremble (42-4) ever since he saw the beloved's beautiful eyes in the vineyard. In this couplet, Avnî directly uses the word "cypress" instead of the "beloved".

It can be argued that the cosmic world plays a prominent role in Avnî's poems. The sun (afitâb, gün, mihr, şems), the moon (hilâl, kamer, mâh meh), stars (encüm, kevkeb, Sitâre, süha, Süreyya), and the universe (felek, âlem, arz, cihan, eflâk, semâ, günbed-i hadrâ...) are common motives in his poems. Additionally, words such as çerağ, nûr, rûşen, and zulmet were

frequently employed in his couplets. In these couplets, he particularly employed the word mâh to refer to the beloved in a metaphorical sense. In the following couplet, the abundance of cosmic elements is striking:

Bir zerre mihr görmedüm ol mâhdan velî  
Eşküm sitâre eyledüm âhum Kehkeşân (60-5)

### 8. Goods

Goods used in daily life are frequently mentioned in Avnî's Dîvânî. Clothes, tools of war, musical instruments, eating and drinking utensils, items related to books, ornaments, items used in state affairs, etc. are included in the couplets:

*eating and drinking utensils* (kadeh, câm sifal, hum, şişe, peymâne, şem'...)

*ornaments* (âyine, dür, gevher, hamâyil, la'l, nakş...)

*tools of war* (hançer, alem, livâ, tiğ, tîr, peykân, nîze, sinân, kemân, kemend...)

*clothes* (câme, etek, dâmen, dîbâ, hurka, yaka, hurka, hülle, külâh, libâs, pirehen, tâc, zünnar, kisvet...)

In the following couplet, Avnî presents the rose as the beloved, her dress as rose-coloured, and her buttons as rosebuds. In these lines, Avnî has crafted a successful couplet in accordance with the imagination of classical Turkish literature.

Şâhid-i gül bâğda çün geydi gülgûn pîrehen  
Tügmeler takındı ana zînet için goncadan (59-1)

*items related to books* (evrâk, kalem, kitâb, mektûb, surh, levh...)

*musical instruments* (çeng, kânûn, nây, saz, inci, zîr ü bâm...)

In the following couplet, Avnî expresses the effect of the sound of ney on human beings:

Sîne çâk ü gözi nemnâk ider nâle vü zâr  
Kılsa te'sîr 'aceb olmaya nâyun nefesi (72-3)



### 9. Books Mentioned

As reported by various sources, Avnî was particularly interested in books. He was known to follow scholars, poets and artists from all over the world, and to extend invitations to them to come to Istanbul. It can reasonably be asserted that he devoted his life to following the works of these individuals and attempting to gather them in Istanbul.

Avni demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the techniques, language, and themes of classical Turkish literature. His poetry reflects a deep admiration for the prophet. He is well acquainted with the struggle for monotheism of the prophets Joseph, Moses, Suleiman, Jesus Christ and the parables related to them. Avnî's knowledge extends to historical figures like as Nemrud, Kârûn, Cem/Cemşîd, İskender, Mâni, Zal, Hamza, Mahmûd Şah, who have been either celebrated or condemned in history. He is familiar with stories iconic of classical Turkish literature, including Yûsuf and Züleyha, Leylâ and Mecnûn, Ferhat and Şirin, Gül-ü Bülbül, Şâh u Gedâ, and Şem u Pervâne. He is familiar with well-known works such as *Gülîstan*, *Kânûn*, *Muhtasar*, *Mutavvel*, *Teressül*, which were part of the curriculum in Ottoman madrasas and European educational institutions. Avnî's poems indicate an engagement with diverse literary works covering these themes. In addition to these, he is a person who follows and reads the local and foreign scholars and artists of his time without exception, demonstrating a willingness to make significant personal sacrifices in order to protect them.

Kânûn, one of the works mentioned in Avni's Divan, is the short name of Ibn Sina's *Kânûnu'ş-Şifâ*, a work on medicine. In particular, during the Middle Ages, this work was taught as a textbook in numerous Islamic and European states. Avnî mentions this work in one of his couplets, stating, "There is no remedy for the trouble of love even in Kânûn".<sup>17</sup>

İşk derdine şifâ olmaz ise Kânûn'da  
Nûş-dârû-yı lebün anı da dermân eyler (16-3)

*Gülîstan* is an ethical and didactic work by Sheikh Sadî-i Şirazî, which Avnî employs in one of his couplets to refer to both the rose garden and the aforementioned work.

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<sup>17</sup> For another example see. 25-2.

Hatt ü hâl ile bulur Avnî ruh-i yâr şeref  
Bâblarla nitekim buldı Gülistân revnak (36-7)

In one of his couplets, Avni refers to both Muhtasar and Mutavvel. In addition to the lexical meanings of Muhtasar as “short, abbreviated” and Mutavvel as “long, prolonged”, both works of Arabic literature are referenced.

Dehânun beyânı muhtasardur  
Mutavveldür saçunda muhtasarlar (15-2)

Taftazânî (d. 1390) wrote two separate commentaries, *Muhtasaru'l-Meânî* and *el-Mutavvel*, to the work entitled *Talhîs al-Miftâh*. These Arabic works, which were taught in madrasas for many years to explain the subject of eloquence, were briefly known as *Muhtasar* and *Mutavvel*.<sup>18</sup>

Another work mentioned by Avnî in his *divan* is *Teressül*, which is the shortened form of *Teveessül-i Teressül*, the title of Muhammad bin Muayyed al-Baghdâdî's work. The work is in Persian and concerns the art of writing beautiful prose. In one of his couplets, Avnî states that he memorised *Teressül* line by line/letter by letter in order to send the rosebud as a letter to his beloved:

Gonca-i ser-beste mektûb eyleyüp gül şâhına  
Gülşen içire bülbül ezberler Teressül şâh şâh (7-4)

### 10. Social Life

Fâtiḥ was a figure who maintained a close relationship with the public throughout his formative years and subsequent ascension to the throne. In point of fact, the courtiers and administrators of that period were closely integrated with the public and were, in a sense, considered part of it. Consequently, his poems provide insights into—the customs, traditions, behaviours, and other aspects of everyday life of the people. Thus, his poetry can be seen-as a reflection of the period.

In his poems, Avnî occasionally references specific customs and beliefs of the period directly, while at other times, he subtly alludes to them. The following examples illustrate some of the practices and beliefs that Avnî

<sup>18</sup> Mehmet Sami Benli, “Miftâhu'l-Ulûm”, *Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi (DİA)*, C.30, İstanbul 2005, p. 20-21.

references in his poems: hunting with falcons (24-2), dangling hunted animals on horseback (37-3), burning shirts in honour of reconciliation of resentments in drinking assemblies (71-5), giving alms by turning them over the head (44-2), applying kohl on the eyes (33-1). Archery (27-4), chess (58-3), threshing (40-2), slavery (40-1), adorning the bride (12-1), presenting gifts to honour the visits of important people such as loved ones, sultans, etc. (20-1), the practice of placing colourful, precious silk fabrics beneath the feet of the horses of the sultans when they visit a place (12-2), the custom of placing rose petals in the goblet (45-2), the tradition of hanging a picture of a sword with a prayer written on it on the walls of houses (63-2), the practice of making fake moles (7-2) are included in *Avnî Dîvânî*. Furthermore, there are a number of customs that are worthy of note. For instance, amulets are often hung around the neck (7-6), pearls are believed to be formed from April rain (9-4), and the red ruby stone called *la'l-i Bedahşan* is thought to have acquired its red colour from the light of a star (36-6). The custom of pouring the last sediment in the goblet on the ground and the belief that the deceased lovers will find life again with the poured sediment (37-3), the belief in fairies (40-5), the animal called salamander not burning in fire (47-2), and other such beliefs are also present in the poems. The poems contain a considerable amount of information pertaining to customs and folk beliefs, as well as the thoughts and behaviours related to these beliefs.

In one of his couplets, *Avnî* discusses secret communication methods that would be known only to a statesman. The couplet posits that the rosebud is an official who transmits secret information to the Sultan of Roses. The nightingale is the chosen messenger who will memorise this news and convey it to the sultan. In earlier times, when a written message risked interception, the news was sometimes memorised and delivered verbally. Consequently, even if the messenger was caught, the secret news would remain protected since there would be no evidence on him.<sup>19</sup> *Avnî* employs this custom, which he was well acquainted with as a result of his status as a sultan, and composed the following couplet:

Gonca-i ser-beste mektûb eyleyüp gül şâhına  
Gülşen içre bülbül ezberler teressül şâh şâh ( 7/4)

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<sup>19</sup> Muhammed Nur Doğan, *a.g.e.*, p.34.

In another couplet, Avnî deals with the custom of turning something on the head. In the couplet, the poet says, "(O beloved!) If the Sanevber (pine nut) tree has failed to serve and respect your stature, turn it on its head and set it free for the sake of your cypress-like height":

Ger sanevber hizmet-i kaddünde kıldıysa hilâf  
Serv kaddünçün çevir başundan âzâd eylegil (44-2)

In Samsun Vezirköprü, a custom exists whereby gifts presented to the bride's dowry are accompanied by the utterance of the phrase "eternal, eternal" by an individual. The gifts are then turned around the head of the person several times in a circle. In certain regions, money intended for charitable purposes is first turned around and then presented with the besmel. From an analysis of these customs, it can be surmised that the phrase "çevir başından [turn it over]" in the couplet is an idiomatic expression that may be interpreted as meaning "to give alms for the health of the person, to do good deeds, to direct the spiritual benefit and good deed (from something) to oneself (one's head, soul, being), and to make (something) a means of good luck and good fortune for oneself."<sup>20</sup> In his couplet, Avnî also posits that when something is released from its constraints, it should be released by turning it on the head.

The following example illustrates this custom:

Dâm-ı zülfünde olan mürğ-i dili yâd eyle  
Hayra gir anı çevür başuna âzâd eyle<sup>21</sup>

### 11. Language, Style, Sultanic Expressions

The language Fâtih employed in his poems is very simple and pure. There are no verses, hadiths, Arabic and Persian phrases that complicate the text and make it incomprehensible. Thus, his poetry is pure and clear. The words in his poetry are not chosen at random; they are used appropriately, reflecting a rich vocabulary. The masnavis he read such as *Bostan* and *Gulistan*, divans such as *Shaykhî Dîvânı* and other scholarly works did not make his language complex. Instead, he poetised the knowledge he gained from these works in his own language.

<sup>20</sup> Muhammed Nur Doğan, *a.g.e.*, p.148.

<sup>21</sup> *The Life and Works of Tâcî-zâde Ca'fer Çelebi, With a Critical Edition of His Dîvân*, haz. İsmail E Erünsal, Edebiyat Fakültesi Yay., İstanbul 1983, p. 391(ghazal 183 /1).

It is widely acknowledged that the defining feature of classical Turkish literature is its unique approach to poetic language. Unlike other periods of Turkish literature, classical Turkish poetry employs not only the literal meanings of words but also their figurative and symbolic values. This is also the case in Avni's poetry. In his poetry, Avni also employs elements associated with the beloved, such as wine, taverns, *pir-i mugan*, churches, and idols. These elements are utilized not only in their literal meanings but also as figurative and symbolic elements. In his poetry, these metaphors are even treated with characteristics of sufism.

Metaphors such as the cypress for the beloved's height, the daffodil for her eye, the rose for her cheek, the rosebud for her lips, and the tavern for her sect are very frequently used. Additionally, there are lesser-known and rarely employed metaphors, *telmih*, and *tawriya*, such as sacrifice representing alms, sorrow symbolizing old age, and the pain of a beautiful woman signifying cannabis.

These usages are indicative of Avnî's deep knowledge of the Turkish language of his time, as well as the Persian and Arabic words preferred in literary texts. He was able to use synonyms such as "*gönül-kalp-dil*" and "*güneş-şems-afitab*" which have the same meaning. His frequent discourse with religious scholars and statesmen, as well as the books he read, demonstrate that he possessed a profound and diverse reservoir of knowledge. In the following couplet, Avnî employs the term "*kurban*" (sacrifice) in the context of almsgiving, thereby enriching the meaning of the couplet by also alluding to the sacrificial connotations of the word.<sup>22</sup>

Ganzeler tîrini doldurmuş kaşı kurbânına  
Dil nişân olmak diler benzer susadı kanına (66-1)

The poetic language employed by Avnî is characterised by sincerity and simplicity. The vocabulary he employs gives his poetry a sincerity. As a sultan of the world, he is able to express his inner thoughts through poetry which allows him to convey his emotions in a way that is not constrained by the conventions of language. His poetry represents the language of his heart, a realm where he feels no obligation to communicate a message to anyone else.

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<sup>22</sup> Bak. Muhammed Nur Doğan, *a.g.e.*, s. 218.

Some examples containing Avni's sincere expressions may be found below:

Kurtarmasun Allâh beni bu derd-i hevâdan  
Derdün ile dil dađlamayan zevkini bilmez

Dindürmesün Allâh gözümün yaşını zîrâ  
Işkun ile kan ağlamayan zevkini bilmez (74)

Zülfünün zencîrine bend eyledün şâhum beni  
Kullıđından kılmasun âzâd Allâh'um beni (76-1)

Bilmezem bu hilkat-i âlemde mi insâf yok  
Olmadum mı yoksa ben hâlâ sezâ-yı merhamet (81)

Bizümle saltanat lâfın idermiş ol Karamânî  
Hudâ fırsat virürse ger kara yire karam anı (79)

Vaslum dileyen cevrümi çeksün dir imiş yâr  
Bu va'desi gûyâ ki degül cevrine dâhil (47-3)

Fatih's tanzîr of Ahmet Paşa's renowned poem, which initiated a transformative period within Turkish literary history, is crafted in an unadorned, accessible style.

Sevdün ol dilberi söz eslemedün vay gönül  
Eyledün kend'özünü âleme rüsvây gönül  
Sana cevr eylemede kılmaz o pervây gönül  
Cevre sabreyleyemezsen nideyüm hây gönül  
Gönül eyvay gönül vay gönül eyvay gönül (48)

Furthermore, Fâtih's poetry reflects his role as the Sultan of the World, a defining feature that distinguishes his style from that of other poets. Even in the absence of knowledge that Fatih's poems were his, it would be reasonable to posit that at least a significant portion of them were written by a sultan due to the stylistic similarities. His sultanic demeanor, understanding, and thoughts have infused his couplets with a sultanic expression. He employs expressions that evoke the notion that only a sultan could have uttered them. In addition to words such as "sultan," "sultan of the world," "shâh," etc., we observe the frequent use of tools and symbols traditionally associated with sultans, including swords, shields, edicts,

tughra, livâ (banner), and sultans' customs such as throwing coins (ulûfe), writing edicts, laying carpets and silk on the floor.

The following couplets may be given as examples:

Virselers mülk-i cihânun tâc u tahtı devletin  
'Avnî kûyun terkin itmez başına sultân olup ( 4-7)

Zülfünün vafında tûmâr eylesem eş'ârımı  
Kaşların vafında olan cümleye tuğrâ düşer ( 13-3)

Avniyâ kılma gümân kim sana râm ola nigâr  
Sen Sitanbul şâhısun ol [da] Kalâtâ şâhıdır (14-5)

Benüm sen şâh-ı meh-rûya kul olmak iledür fahrüm  
Gedâ-yı dilber olmak yeg cihânun her safâsından (64-4)

Ol şeh-i hüsn ü cemâle çün kul oldun 'Avniyâ  
Sana olmuşdur müsellemler mülk-i 'Osmân var ise (67-6)

His beloved is the sultan. The servant of that sultan is also a sultan:

Bir şâha kulam kim kulı sultân-ı cihândur  
Mihri ruhi şems-i feleğe nûr-feşândur (23-1)

Yarım ağız kime bendem dise ol şâh-ı cemâl  
Sanasın anı bütün âleme sultân eyler (16-2)

In his poems, in addition to the words such as fight, turmoil, noise, attack, conquest, etc., the words shout, fitna, calamity, slaughter, death are also used more than other poets:

Her kaçan seyr ide bâğa ol gül-i ra'nâ gelür  
Na'ra-i bülbülle bâğun başına gavgâ gelür (17-1)

In his poems, Avnî frequently refers to the throne he sits on, the cone and crown he wears on his head, and the army and soldiers he leads. He employs words that refer to himself, such as "sultan", "shah", and "sheh" in both their literal and figurative meanings more frequently than other poets.

Virselers mülk-i cihânun tâc u tahtı devletin  
Avnî kûyun terkin etmez başına sultân olup (4-7)

Additionally, Avnî demonstrated considerable strength and competence as a young commander. His courage, bravery, and valour are reflected in his expressions. In the corpus of literary works, this type of poetry is designated as "levendane poetry". The following couplets are among Avnî's levendâne couplets:

Âşnâlar gözlerüm yaşın görüben havf ider  
Bî-muhâbâ sâlik olmak kulzüm ü ummâna güç (6-2)

Kesmezem ağyâr çevri ile cânândan ümîd  
Kim kesilmez havf-ı şeytân ile îmândan ümîd (9-1)

Sabâ 'ıkd-ı ser-i zülfünü hall itmekte âcizdür  
Belî her kişiye âsân degüldür hall-i müşkiller (11-3)

Yâr için ağyâr ile merdâne ceng itsem gerek  
İt gibi murdâr rakîb ölmezse yâr elden gider (22-5)

## 12. Sufism

A literal interpretation of Avnî's poems might suggest that they contain expressions contrary to prevailing beliefs, customs, and traditions, and that they may be unacceptable to the public. Nevertheless, as is evident in the work of many poets-in Classical Turkish literature, when the figurative meanings of words are taken into account, more accurate results are obtained. This is also true for Avnî, who employs a considerable number of figurative expressions. A substantial proportion of the metaphors employed are drawn from the domain of Sufism. It is important to note that Avnî is not a Sufi poet. However, he does include Sufi terms in his poetry and uses some of the words in his poetry as symbols of Sufi words. For instance, in his poetry, he frequently employs the terms property/treasure-intelligence, mey/wine-love, mahhûb-Allâh's beauty, meyhane-tekke, meghanaji-tekke sheikh, sâkî-sheikh, meyhane regular-murid/salik, lover's eyebrow-mihrab, Ka'be-the station of vuslat, ayş-the pleasure of being with God, and so forth. In the following couplet, Avnî employs the tavern as a lodge, the old tavern keeper as a sheikh, and those who reach them as dervishes/saliks.<sup>23</sup> The couplet also underscores the notion that the station of the tariqa is difficult to attain and that it can only be reached with the assistance of Allah.

<sup>23</sup> For other examples see. couplets 3-7, 26-5, 28-3; ghazals 34 and 35.



Makâm-ı me'men-i meyhâne pîr-i deyr-i şefik  
Kime ki ola müyesser nasîbidür tevfik ( 35-1)

## Conclusion

This analysis of Fâtiḥ's Divan reveals the following information regarding his poems, poetry, and Divan:

- Fâtiḥ exhibited the qualities of a sultan in his poetry. Indeed, the veracity of this assertion is demonstrated by the pseudonym he selected. By adopting the name *Avnî* (meaning one who helps, comes to the rescue, or backs up), he embodies the actions typically associated with a sultan.
- It is evident from his poems that he is well-versed in classical Turkish literature, encompassing a comprehensive understanding of literary devices such as simile, metaphor, etc. He is not inferior to other divan poets in this regard.
- While he shares similarities with other poets, Fâtiḥ distinguishes himself by making beauty his Sultan rather than merely serving it.–He emphasises that true sultanate is the sultanate of beauty and love. The sultanate of the world has no value in comparison to those beauties. According to him, the sultan of the world is only a servant in comparison to the sultan of love.
- He reflected social life, various beliefs and customs of the public in his poems.
- Although his poems are mostly amorous, he also has his own unique expressions. His poems that reveal his valor, courage, and bravery are quite numerous.
- Given that the majority of his poems are ghazals, with the exception of a few poems in which he employs different verse forms, it can be argued that he was a ghazal poet.
- In expressing his love and ideas, he draws upon social life, elements and events of nature, the cosmic world, and other aspects that resonate with the human experience.

- According to his ghazals found in existing collections, the available copy of his divan (Millet Library, Ali Emiri Manzum, nr.305) does not reflect the entirety of his poetry, suggesting that he likely possessed a more extensive complete divan.
- Future studies should concentrate on identifying the complete copy of his Divan. In this context, it would be beneficial to conduct review studies in both Turkey and abroad.

Fâtih was not only a formidable ruler, a brilliant political strategist, and a successful military commander; he was also an accomplished poet. He stands out as one of the few individuals who possess such a remarkable combination of exceptional qualities.

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## SELECTED POEMS FROM AVNÎ'S DIVAN

**15th ghazal**

Eğer meyl itmese nâza güzeller  
 Gönül aldurmaz idi ehl-i diller  
 Dehânunun beyânı muhtasardur  
 Mutavveldür saçunda muhtasarlar  
 Harâmî gamzen ü tarrâr zülfün  
 Gönül şehrinde bilmem ne ararlar  
 Senün vaslun metâi cân değermiş  
 İşidürüz görenler şöyle dirler  
 Dile zülfünde gamzenden irişür  
 Gice içinde korhulu haberler  
 Kalur ayakda zülfüne uyanlar  
 Saçun sevda iden başdan çıkarlar  
 Gül-i dünyâda yokdur bûy-i rahat  
 Hemân 'Avnî irişür derd-i serler

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**18th ghazal**

Bir şâha kul oldum ki cihân ana gedâdur  
 Bir mâha dutuldum ki yüzi şems-i duhâdur  
 Sevdigüm ise seni günâhum behey âfet  
 Öldürme beni cevri ile kim 'ışk belâdur  
 Baş üzre yir itsem yiridür şu'le-i âha  
 Hicrân şebi yâr ışığıne râh-nümâdur  
 'İde yüzün Kadre saçun olalı teşbîh  
 Kadr ile bana 'id hemîn subh u mesâdur  
 Âhum feleğe irdi yaşum dutdı cihânı  
 Hâlûme benüm şâhid olan arz u semâdur

Avnî dile zulm eyledüm ol dilberi sevdüm  
Cevr ile cefâ bana cezâ olsa sezâdur

Bir dilbere düşürdi beni gerdiş-i eflâk  
Kim mâh ü güneş yüzi ziyâsında Sühâdur

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### 23rd ghazal

Bir şâha kulam kim kulu sultân-ı cihândur  
Mîhr-i ruhi şems-i feleğe nûr-feşândur

Katlüme ya müjgânı ya tîri sebep olmuş  
Çün öldüriser tîr hemân tığ hemândur

Zülfün şeb-i Kadr oldu kaşun 'îd hilâlî  
Vaslun dem-i 'îd oldu fırâkun ramazândur

Ol Yûsuf-i hüsn urdu dile nîze-i hecri  
Cânımı alan nîze degül belki sinândur

'Avnî gözi Mahmûd şehün bakduğı bu kim  
Mülkin dahîlar zabt ider ana nigerândur

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### 52nd ghazal

Gönül gamını niçe safha-i beyâna yazam  
Kalemnden od çıkuban korkaram ki yanayazam

Yüzünle zülfünü gıceyle güne nisbet idüp  
Kaşunla kirpigünü tîr ile kemâna yazam

Gözün ki kasd ide kan dökmeğe hüsâm okuyam  
Müjen ki sîneleri çak ide sinâna yazam

Sirişk seylini deryâlara idem teslîm  
Güneş yüzün gamını levh-i âsmâna yazam

Cefânı dûzaha teşbîh eylemiş 'Avnî  
Boyunla ruhlerini Sidr[e] vü cinâna yazam

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**53rd ghazal**

Yine mestâne gelün azm-i harâbât idelüm  
 Hizmet-i pîr-i mugân ile mübâhât idelüm  
 Hum-ı meyden götüri âlemi seyrân idelüm  
 Tûr-ı ‘ışka çikalum yine münâcât idelüm  
 Zâhid-i huşk kabûl eyleyüben özüümüzi  
 El virürse bir ayağ ile mükâfât idelüm  
 Ta’n idüp hâlete bize eger inkâr ide  
 Bâde vü beng şühûdı-y-ile isbât idelüm  
 Hüsn-i yâr âyine-i dilde görünmezse eger  
 ‘Avniyâ [bâ]de-i nâbı ana mir’ât idelüm

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**61st ghazal**

Bağlamaz firdevse gönlini Kalâtâyı gören  
 Servi anmaz anda ol serv-i dil-ârâyı gören  
 Bir Firengî şîvelü ‘Îsâyî gördüm anda kim  
 Lebleri dirisidür dir idi ‘Îsâyı gören  
 ‘Akl ü fehmin dîn ü îmânın nice zabt eylesün  
 Kâfir olur hey müselmânlar o tersâyı gören  
 Kevseri anmaz ol içdüğü mey-i nâbı içen  
 Mescide varmaz o varduğı kilîsâyı gören  
 Bir Firengî kâfir olduğun bilürdi Avniyâ  
 Belün ü boynunda zünnâr ü çelîpâyı gören

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**64th ghazal**

İreli cân kulağına senün ‘ışkun nidâsından  
 Urup *lebbeyk* işigünde tavaf eyler safâsından

Seherde bülbüle sordum niçün feryâd idersün sen  
Niyâz eylerem Allah'a rakîbün iftirâsından

Mahallen halkı incidür beni bilmezliğe urup  
Ne müşkildür cefâ irmek kişiye âşnâsından

Benüm sen şâh-ı meh-rûya kul olmak iledür fahrüm  
Gedâ-yı dilber olmak yeğ cihânun her safâsından

Perîşân zülfünü gören meğer kim miske benzetmiş  
Yüzi kara olup kaçdı Hatâya ol hatâsından

N'ola oldu ise Avnî cihân sultânları hânı  
Ki düşdi üstine sâye senün destün hümâsından

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#### 68th ghazal

Tan mıdur itse gönül nâle vü efgân bu gice  
Gelmedi meclise ol dilber-i fettân bu gice

Tâ seher kalsa gönül zulmet içinde ne aceb  
Yanmadı karşıma ol şeb-i şebistân bu gice

Ne aceb ağlar ise bülbül-i cân çünki gelüp  
Gülüp eğlenmedi ol yüzi gülistân bu gice

Sâkiyâ def'-i melâl itmeğe peymâne getir  
Çün sıdı dilberümüz ahd ile peymân bu gice

Gelüp ol serv-i revân olmadı yanumca revân  
Gözlerüm itdi revân yaşlar ile kan bu gice

Vuslatı şem'ini çün yakmadı ol yâr gelüp  
Fürkati nârına 'Avnî yürü sen yan bu gice

Bu kelâm ile Nizâmî işidürse sözünü  
İlteler sana hased Sa'dî vü Selmân bu gice

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