



**Research Article**

**AN EVALUATION OF TAŞLICALI YAHYA'S ELEGY FOR PRINCE MUSTAFA  
WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE KÜBLER-ROSS**

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**Abstract**

This study explores the elegy written by 16th century Ottoman poet Taşlıcalı Yahya for Prince Mustafa through Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's five-stage grief model: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Each couplet is analyzed in relation to these stages to reveal the emotional depth and psychological structure of the text. Denial reflects the rejection of death, anger expresses feelings of injustice, bargaining suggests inner negotiation with fate, depression conveys deep sorrow, and acceptance illustrates submission to divine will. The elegy's final verses portray death not as an end, but as a return to the divine, signaling the poet's arrival at acceptance. This interdisciplinary approach demonstrates how classical Ottoman poetry can be revisited through modern psychological theory. By integrating literary and psychological analysis, the study offers insight into the emotional complexity of Classical Turkish literature and illustrates its potential for reinterpretation through contemporary frameworks.

**Keywords:** Classical Turkish Literature, Taşlıcalı Yahya, Şehzade Mustafa, elegy, Kübler-Ross Model.

**TAŞLICALI YAHYA'NIN ŞEHZADE MUSTAFA MERSİYESİNİN  
KÜBLER-ROSS MODELİ ÇERÇEVESİNDE DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ**

**Öz**

Bu çalışmada, XVI. yüzyıl şairlerinden Taşlıcalı Yahya'nın Şehzade Mustafa için yazdığı mersiye, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross'un yas sürecine dair beş evreli modeli (inkâr, öfke, pazarlık, depresyon, kabullenme) çerçevesinde incelenmektedir. Çalışmada, Kübler-Ross'un bu beş evresinin, Taşlıcalı Yahya'nın Şehzade Mustafa için kaleme aldığı mersiyede nasıl şiirsel karşılıklar bulduğu araştırılmış; mersiyedeki beyitler her bir evre bağlamında sınıflandırılarak ayrıntılı olarak yorumlanmıştır. Her bir beyit, ilgili evreye göre sınıflandırılıp değerlendirilmiştir. İnkâr evresinde ölümün reddi, öfke evresinde zulme karşı tepki, pazarlıkta kaderle yüzleşme, depresyonda yoğun keder ve kabullenmede ilahi takdire teslimiyet temaları öne çıkmaktadır. Özellikle mersiyenin son bölümlerinde ölümün bir "sona eriş" değil, "ilahi huzura yönelik" ve "öz'e dönüş" olarak betimlenmesi, şairin yas sürecinin

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kabullenme aşamasına ulaştığını göstermektedir. Bu yaklaşım, klasik edebî metinlerin modern psikoloji kuramlarıyla yeniden okunabileceğini göstermekte ve edebiyat ile psikoloji arasında disiplinler arası bir köprü kurmaktadır. Çalışma, Klasik Türk Edebiyatı metinlerinin çok katmanlı yapısını ortaya koyması açısından da örnek teşkil etmektedir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Klasik Türk Edebiyatı, Taşlıcalı Yahya, Şehzade Mustafa, mersiye, Kübler-Ross Modeli.

## Introduction

Throughout life, every individual inevitably encounters numerous challenges. Human nature is inherently equipped to cope with such difficulties. Illness, financial hardship, and various other factors often disrupt the ordinary flow of life. Yet, among these, there is one reality that is both universal and inescapable: death. As stated in the verse, “Every soul shall taste death, and then you will return to Us,”<sup>1</sup> death is a certainty for every living being. Consequently, almost every person will, at some point, experience the loss of someone they know. Death, a profound mystery for humankind, has long been interpreted and explained particularly through religious and spiritual beliefs. It encompasses philosophical, psychological, religious, and social dimensions. The ambiguity and incomprehensibility of death and what follows make it a deeply emotional and complex experience. Grief is defined as the multifaceted emotional and psychological response an individual undergoes after the death of a loved one or following a significant personal loss.

In psychological literature, grief is not merely understood as an emotional collapse, but also as a process through which the individual attempts to make sense of the loss, cope with its impact, and reorient their life. In his seminal essay *Mourning and Melancholia*, Freud analyzes the psychic state following loss and defines mourning as a reaction to the loss of a loved person or an abstract ideal that has taken the place of such a person (Freud, 2014, p. 18). Grief is commonly associated with the profound psychological distress experienced after the death of someone deeply valued. During this process, the individual may feel a level of emotional pain comparable to physical suffering. This condition, difficult to endure and accept, stems from the confrontation with the inescapable reality of death, producing intense emotional trauma (Yandı Vargel, 2019, p. 14). Thus, grief is not only an emotional response to loss but also a profound inner transformation. Freud views mourning as a healthy, non-pathological process. After a loss, the libido (psychic energy) is gradually withdrawn from the lost object. In this process, the person reevaluates everything associated with the lost object memories, expectations, attachments. According to Freud, mourning is painful because the ego must detach all libidinal investments from the lost object. However, over time, this process comes to an end, and the libido may become available for new attachments be they people, goals, or ideals (Freud, 2014, pp. 19-20). From a psychoanalytic perspective, mourning is seen as a natural process that can resolve over time through the individual’s acceptance of reality. Although painful, the individual can eventually come to terms with the loss and restructure their life. Nevertheless, this process does not unfold uniformly for everyone. The duration and intensity of grief may vary depending on the nature of the loss and the individual’s psychological resilience. Therefore, grief can be regarded as a multilayered psychodynamic experience that shapes both the individual’s relationship with the past and their orientation toward the future.

<sup>1</sup> Ankebut-57- <https://kuran.diyonet.gov.tr/tefsir/Ankeb%C3%BBt-suresi/3397/57-60-ayet-tefsiri>

Grief, as a human experience, possesses a dual nature being both a natural psychological response and a socially constructed phenomenon. An individual's reaction to loss is not merely an internal emotional state but is also directly tied to the disruption of attachment bonds that have evolved as part of human survival strategies. The need to form bonds is a fundamental aspect of human existence, rooted in both biological and social dimensions (Seven, 2023, p. 34). In this context, grief reflects an evolutionary response inherent in the functioning of the attachment system, while simultaneously constituting a learned and shared process shaped by cultural norms, rituals, and collective meaning-making practices.

To fully understand the phenomenon of grief, it is essential to consider how individuals interpret the concepts of life and death. The way death is perceived both individually and culturally significantly influences the nature of grief responses. Death is often regarded as one of the most profound losses due to its irreversibility and the cessation of physical presence. In this regard, it is not only an ending but also a moment of existential awareness. The individual confronted with such a loss experiences a deep psychological upheaval caused by the loss of sources of security and attachment. This can manifest as a sense of emptiness, loneliness, and helplessness, often intertwined with emotions such as abandonment anxiety, anger, and guilt (Bassin, 1993, p. 425). Following this emotional and existential disruption, the bereaved enters a complex grieving process aimed at making sense of the loss and restructuring life according to a new reality. This process involves not only enduring emotional pain but also accepting the reality of the loss, processing intense emotions, adapting to a world without the deceased, and ultimately continuing life by maintaining a redefined relationship with the lost person. These tasks, though distinct, are interrelated and collectively constitute the multifaceted nature of grief.

The grieving process can also be understood as a process of meaning-making. Following a loss, the individual is confronted not only with a sense of emptiness but also with a "crisis of meaning." In this context, art and literature emerge as significant means of coping with grief. Poetry—particularly in classical literature serves as a powerful medium through which loss is articulated, interpreted, and reshaped through symbolism. The elegy (mersiye) functions both as a personal lament and as a record preserved in collective memory. At its core, the elegy expresses profound sorrow and the feeling of loss occasioned by an individual's death (Çavuş, 2008, p. 132). In Classical Turkish Literature, elegies not only convey mourning for the deceased but also emphasize the individual's societal role and the magnitude of the loss. Thus, personal grief is often transformed into a communal experience.

Classical Turkish Literature encompasses a rich tradition where individual and collective emotions are expressed through aesthetic forms. Among its significant genres, the elegy articulates pain in the face of death, the experience of grief, and the respect for the deceased. The elegy composed by the 16th century poet Taşlıcalı Yahya upon the tragic death of Prince Mustafa, the eldest son of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, resonates not only as a historical reflection but also holds substantial potential for emotional and psychological analysis as a narrative of mourning.

It is evident that grief does not follow a uniform or universally identical trajectory for every individual. Nonetheless, it is believed that there are shared psychological stages within the grieving process. In this regard, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's five stage model denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance offers an important theoretical framework that

emphasizes the universal dimensions of grief. While individuals may not experience these stages in a fixed order or with equal intensity, the model provides a valuable basis for understanding and interpreting grief. This study aims to analyze Taşlıcalı Yahya's elegy for Prince Mustafa in light of Kübler-Ross's model, demonstrating how a classical literary text can be interpreted through modern psychological theories. In doing so, it not only draws attention to the emotional depth of the elegy genre but also exemplifies how Classical Turkish literary texts can be reinterpreted through interdisciplinary perspectives.

Although Elisabeth Kübler-Ross originally developed her five-stage model to describe the emotional responses of terminally ill patients confronting their own mortality, the theory has since been expanded to encompass universal psychological reactions to various forms of loss, grief, and traumatic experiences (Kübler-Ross, 2010, pp. 11-13). Within this framework, the elegy for Prince Mustafa a classical literary text has been approached as a narrative of mourning. Its verses have been examined in relation to the five stages of grief, focusing on the corresponding emotional and thematic indicators associated with each stage. A qualitative content analysis method was employed in the textual examination. Each couplet (*beyit*) in the elegy was thematically analyzed, and through attention to imagery, discourse structures, and emotional tones, linked to one of Kübler-Ross's five stages. Selected couplets were categorized and interpreted according to their emotional intensity and the poet's linguistic choices. Quotations from the elegy were provided for each stage, with explanations of how they reflect specific psychological responses. The study's central premise is that the poet conveys both an individual grieving process and a collective trauma through emotional layers that align with Kübler-Ross's stages, articulated within the aesthetic and expressive conventions of the period. Thus, the analysis goes beyond mere historical contextualization, offering a psycho-literary interpretation focused on the universal dynamics of human emotion.

### 1. Kübler-Ross Model

The Kübler-Ross Model is a classification of the grieving process introduced by Swiss psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in her seminal work *On Death and Dying* (1969). This model outlines five fundamental stages experienced by individuals undergoing grief. In Kübler-Ross's approach, particular emphasis is placed on the emotional dimension of the patient-doctor interaction. Clinical observations and direct interviews with patients served as the primary data collection methods in the study. Through these interviews, Kübler-Ross analyzed patients' emotional responses such as denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance and structured her findings into a universal five stage model.

Widely known as the Kübler-Ross Model, this framework is generally used to understand the psychological responses of individuals confronting death or significant life crises. According to the model, when people are faced with the reality of death or a life-threatening issue, they typically experience an initial shock, followed by progression through the five stages: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. It is important to note that the stages do not necessarily occur in a fixed sequence. Individuals may experience these stages in a different order, revisit a stage multiple times, or even skip some stages entirely. Thus, the model should be regarded as a conceptual framework for understanding the general nature of the grieving process rather than a rigid progression. In conclusion, the Kübler-Ross Model primarily serves as a practical tool to better comprehend the emotional experiences of

individuals facing terminal illness and to provide support for both patients and their families during this challenging period.

### 1.1. Denial Stage

According to the aforementioned model, this is the first stage experienced after the initial shock. In this phase, individuals are unwilling to accept death or a problem of vital significance. Upon first receiving the news of a loss, the person struggles to acknowledge the reality. At this point, the individual tends to reject the event and avoids confronting the truth. According to Kübler-Ross, this stage functions as a psychological defense mechanism and helps the individual gain time to “prepare for the painful reality” (2010, pp. 13-14).

In her work, Kübler-Ross labels this initial stage as denial and isolation. Based on interviews conducted with approximately two hundred patients diagnosed with terminal illnesses, she notes that their initial reactions upon hearing the diagnosis were commonly expressed as: “No, not me, this can’t be true.” (Kübler-Ross, 2010, p. 47). Thus, this phase marks the point at which thoughts of death begin to enter the individual’s consciousness, and the person resorts to a personal defense mechanism, experiencing significant difficulty in accepting the situation.

Kübler-Ross further states that this stage is generally a temporary defense and often evolves into a partial acceptance within a short period of time (Kübler-Ross, 2010, p. 48).

### 1.2. Anger Stage

According to the Kübler-Ross model, this stage follows the denial phase. In this stage, the individual refuses to accept death or a life-threatening issue and experiences intense feelings of anger as a result of the situation. Often, the individual seeks to assign blame toward others, oneself, or the circumstances they are facing. As the reality of the situation begins to be gradually acknowledged, the person may experience a profound sense of anger and rebellion. This anger is frequently directed toward God, fate, healthcare professionals, family members, or even the deceased. Kübler-Ross emphasizes that during this stage, the individual experiences a strong sense of injustice, and that expressing this emotion is a natural and expected response (2010, p. 17-18).

In her study, Kübler-Ross notes that once the initial denial is no longer sustainable, it gives way to feelings of anger, rage, jealousy, and resentment. She observes that during this stage, the individual often poses the question: “Why me?” (Kübler-Ross, 2010, p. 59). As the name of the stage suggests, individuals typically exhibit heightened irritability and may, either directly or indirectly, inflict emotional harm on those around them.

### 1.3. Bargaining Stage

According to the Kübler-Ross model, this stage follows the anger phase. During this phase, individuals attempt to change or reverse the situation they are facing. In this context, depending on the person’s belief system, they may so to speak engage in bargaining with a higher power such as God. Prayers, vows, and internal promises often emerge in the hope of preventing or reversing the loss. According to Kübler-Ross, this stage represents the individual’s effort to regain a sense of control (2010, p. 22-23).

Kübler-Ross states that the third stage, bargaining, is very common and, although often brief, can be beneficial for the patient. She also notes that if the individual has not fully confronted the painful reality in the first stage and has expressed anger toward others or toward God in the second stage, they may now enter a mindset in which they believe some sort of deal might delay the inevitable (Kübler-Ross, 2010, p. 89). The bargaining process is usually one-sided and directed toward God. It often involves promises such as devoting one's life to God or committing to perform deeds previously neglected—on the condition that the person recovers from their illness.

#### 1.4. Depression Stage

According to the Kübler-Ross model, this stage occurs following the previous phases. Although Kübler-Ross presents it as the fourth stage in her work, she does not explicitly state that it directly follows the bargaining phase. As previously noted, the sequence of grief stages may vary. In this stage, individuals confronted with death or other harsh realities often experience deep sorrow accompanied by feelings of helplessness. As a result, their life energy may diminish, leading them to withdraw into their inner world.

In her study, Kübler-Ross explains that during the fourth stage depression the terminally ill patient can no longer deny the illness. This often coincides with the need for more frequent surgeries, hospitalizations, and the emergence of more severe symptoms. As the patient becomes physically weaker, they reach a point where they can no longer face the situation with a smile. Consequently, Kübler-Ross notes that the individual's emotional numbness, stoicism, or anger is eventually replaced by an overwhelming sense of loss (Kübler-Ross, 2010, p. 93). During the depression stage, significant negative changes are observed in various aspects of the individual's functioning, such as eating, speaking, and cognitive processes. In this context, it becomes apparent that the individual, to a large extent, ceases to function as their former self.

#### 1.5. Acceptance Stage

According to the Kübler-Ross model, this is the final stage experienced after the preceding phases. At this point, the individual acknowledges that their condition cannot be changed and begins to learn how to cope with it. This stage essentially represents a state of emotional surrender, in which the individual may feel a certain sense of peace.

In her study, Kübler-Ross comments on the final stage acceptance stating: "If a patient has had enough time (i.e., the death was not sudden or unexpected) and has received some assistance in coping with the earlier stages, they will reach a phase where they are neither angry nor depressed about their 'fate'." (Kübler-Ross, 2010, p. 119). However, she also offers the following clarification regarding this stage: "Acceptance should not be considered a happy stage. It is almost void of feelings. As one patient expressed it, it is as if the pain is gone, the struggle is over, and it is time for rest before a long journey." (Kübler-Ross, 2010, p. 120).

### 2. What is the Mersiye?

In the Turkish Language Association's dictionary, the term mersiye is defined as "lament" (<https://sozluk.gov.tr/>), and more broadly as "a poem written after someone's death to express sorrow and to commemorate the person's virtues and the pain caused by their loss; elegy, lament, sangu" (<https://lugatim.com>). In Persian, Turkish, and Arabic literatures, mersiye

refers to emotional poems composed after a person's death, intended to express grief and highlight the individual's admirable qualities (Kaska, 2019, p. 253).

Etymologically, mersiye derives from the Arabic verbal noun *risā*, which means "to weep while recalling the virtues of the deceased; to lament for them," and over time it began to be used as a noun referring to the words recited for this purpose. According to various sources, the first poem ever uttered by humankind is believed to be a mersiye; the oldest known mersiye is attributed to Prophet Adam after the murder of Abel by Cain (Toprak, 2004, p. 215).

Typically, mersiyes begin with an introduction that reflects on philosophical themes such as the transience, deception, or injustice of the world. This is followed by expressions of deep sorrow over the loss, and the poem concludes with praise of the deceased's heroism, generosity, and moral virtues (Akkus, 2007, p. 153). In elegies, although the profound sorrow felt after the death of the individual is treated as the central theme, the deceased's admirable qualities, virtues, and valuable characteristics are also emphasized. In addition, messages of patience and consolation are extended to the bereaved and those who loved the departed. Moreover, individuals who are directly or indirectly held responsible for the death are at times mentioned and criticized through various epithets (Vural, 2023, p. 991).

Although mersiyes have been composed in every period of Turkish literature, some have drawn particular attention. The *sagu* (lament) for Alp Er Tunga, found in *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, is among the earliest examples of this genre. In Classical Turkish literature, some of the most well-known mersiyes include Bâkî's elegy for Kanunî Sultan Süleyman, Şeyh Gâlib's for Esrar Dede, İbn Kemal's for Yavuz Sultan Selim, Cem Sultan's for his murdered son Oğuzhan, and Taşlıcalı Yahyâ's mersiye for Prince Mustafa (Tat, 2014, p. 280).

## 2.1. Taşlıcalı Yahyâ's Elegy for Prince Mustafa

Prince Mustafa, the second eldest son of Sultan Süleyman among his eight sons, was born in 1515 (Hijri 921) in Manisa, during the time his father served as governor (sancak bey) of the Saruhan province. His mother was Mahidevran Hatun, also known as Gülbahar Sultan, who was regarded as Sultan Süleyman's first beloved consort (Demirtaş, 2010, p. 205).

The execution of Prince Mustafa in 1553 by order of his father, Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, caused profound shock and sorrow among both the Ottoman intelligentsia and the general populace. Prince Mustafa was widely admired for his military skills and his closeness to the people; he was beloved by the Janissaries and the broader public and was seen as the most promising candidate for the throne. His death was perceived as the result of palace intrigues and power struggles, and it resonated deeply within society (Güler, 2011, p. 43-44).

As a figure regarded as a beacon of hope for the future of the state, Prince Mustafa's death led to profound grief and disillusionment among many intellectuals and poets. In response, numerous poets turned to the elegiac (mersiye) tradition to express their sorrow and outrage. The most renowned of these works is Taşlıcalı Yahya's *Mersiye-i Şehzade Mustafa* (Elegy for Prince Mustafa). These elegies go beyond mere lamentation; they often contain implicit or explicit criticism of the injustice of the event, rebellion against fate, and commentary on the political climate of the period. In this regard, such elegies serve as a form of literary resistance to the official historical narrative and act as a voice for public sentiment.

The table below presents Taşlıcalı Yahya's Elegy for Prince Mustafa, its modern Turkish translation, and the grief stage represented in each verse.

Table 1: Taşlıcalı Yahya's Elegy for Prince Mustafa<sup>2</sup>

Şiir	Günümüz Türkçesi	Yas Evresi
I		
1	Meded meded bu cihânuñ yıkıldı bir yanı Ecel celâflileri aldı Mustafâ Hâni	<i>Alas, alas! One side of this world has collapsed. The bandits of death have taken Mustafa Khan.</i> Shock + Shock
2	Tolundı mihr-i cemâli bozuldu dîvâni Vebâle koydilar âl ile Âl-i Osmâni	<i>The sun of his beauty set and his assembly broke up. They deceived the Ottoman dynasty and put the Ottoman dynasty under the guilt.</i> Anger + Anger
3	Geçerler idi geçende o merd-i meydâni Felek o cânibe döndürdü şâh-ı devrâni	<i>Whenever the name of the merchant of that battlefield was mentioned, they used to bicker. Fortune turned the sultan of the time to their side.</i> Anger + Anger
4	Yalancınuñ kuri bühtâni büğz-ı pinhâni Akıtdı yașumuzu yakdı nâr-ı hicrâni	<i>The liar's dry slander and hidden enmity have made our tears flow and lit the fire of separation.</i> Anger + Anger
5	Cinâyet itmedi câñi gibi anuñ câñi Boğuldı seyl-i belâya tağıldı erkâni	<i>His soul did not commit murder like a murderer. He was drowned in the flood of calamity, and those in his community were scattered.</i> Bargaining + Anger
6	N'olaydı görmeye idi bu mâcerâyi gözüm Yazuklar aña revâ görmedi bu râyi gözüm	<i>I wish I hadn't seen these events. Shame on me, my eyes didn't see this judgment on him.</i> Depression + Anger
II		
1	Tonandı ağlar ile nûrdan menâre dönüp Güşâde-hâtr idi şevk ile nehâre dönüp	<i>He became white like a minaret of light. His heart was as joyful as the day.</i> Depression + Depression
2	Görindi halka dıraht-ı şükûfe-dâre dönüp Yürürdi kulları öñince lâle-zâre dönüp	<i>He appeared to the people like a blossoming tree. His servants were walking in front of him like a field of tulips.</i> Depression + Depression
3	Tururdı şâh-ı cihân hiddetiyle nâre dönüp Otağı haymeleri karlu kûhsâre dönüp	<i>The sultan of the world turned red with anger. The tents in his tent looked like a snowy mountain.</i> Depression + Depression
4	Müzeyyen idi bedenlerle ak hisâre dönüp El öpmege yûridi mihr-i bî-karâre dönüp	<i>He had returned to a white fortress/Akhisar, adorned with bodies and fur. He walked to kiss hands like the unstable, unmoving sun.</i> Depression + Depression

<sup>2</sup> The poem in the table is taken from the work (Bozyigit, 2021).

5	Tutuldı gelmedi çün-kim o mâh-pâre dönüp Görenler ağladılar ebr-i nev-behâre dönüp	<i>When that piece of moon was eclipsed and did not return, those who saw it wept like a spring cloud.</i>	Depression + Depression
6	Bir ejdehâ-yı dü-serdür bu hayme-i dünyâ Dehâsına düşen olur hemîse nâ-peydâ	<i>The tent of this world is a two-headed dragon. Whatever falls into its mouth will always perish.</i>	Acceptance + Acceptance
III			
1	O bedr-i kâmil ü ol âşinâ-yı bahr-i ulûm Fenâya vardı telef etdi anı tâli'-i şûm	<i>That perfect full moon (prince), the one who knew the sea of sciences, has perished, the evil fortune has destroyed him.</i>	Bargaining + Anger
2	Dögündi kaldı hemân dâğ-ı hasretiyle nûcûm Göyündi şâm-ı firâkında toldı yaş ile Rûm	<i>The stars beat with the burning wound of his longing. Anatolia burned and grieved in the evening of his separation.</i>	Depression + Depression
3	Kara geyürdi Karaman'a gussa etdi hûcûm O mâhi ince hayâl ile kıldılar ma'dûm	<i>Gam attacked Karaman, made it grieve / dressed in black. They removed that moon with a subtle trick.</i>	Depression + Anger
4	Tolandı gerdenine hâle gibi mâr-ı semûm Rîzâ-yı hak ne ise râzî oldı ol merhûm	<i>The poisonous snake/lasso wrapped around his neck like a halo. The deceased was content with the will of the Almighty.</i>	Depression + Bargaining
5	Hatâsı gayr-i mu'ayyen günâhı nâ-ma'lûm Zihî şehîd-i sa'îd ü zihî şeh-i mazlûm	<i>His mistake is not known, his sin is unknown. He is neither a blessed martyr nor an oppressed shah.</i>	Bargaining + Acceptance
6	Yüz urdu hâke o meh aslina rûcû' etdi Sa'âdet ile hemân kurb-i hazrete gitdi	<i>That moon turned its face to the earth and returned to its original form. He immediately went to the presence of Allah with joy.</i>	Acceptance + Acceptance
IV			
1	Getürdi arkasını yere Zâl-i devr-i zemân Vûcûdına sitem-i Rûstem ile erdi ziyân	<i>Zal of the time brought him down. His body was damaged by Rustam's torment.</i>	Depression + Depression
2	Döküldi gözyaşı yıldızları çoğaldı figân Dem-i memâti kiyâmet güninden oldı nişân	<i>The stars of tears fell and the wailing increased. The time of his death resembled the Day of Judgment.</i>	Depression + Depression
3	Girîv ü nâle vü zâr ile toldı kevn ü mekân Akarsu gibi müdâm ağlamakda pîr ü cûvân	<i>The world is filled with wailing, shouting and moaning. Now everyone, young and old, is crying like a river.</i>	Depression + Depression
4	Vûcûd eline akın saldı akdî eşk-i revân Eyâ serîr-i se'âdetde pâdişâh-ı cihân	<i>The tears that were shed flooded and flowed into the land of the body. O sultan of the world on the throne of bliss!</i>	Depression + -
5	O cân-ı âdemiyân oldı hâk ile yekşân Diri kala ne revâdûr fesâd eden şeytân	<i>The lives of those people became one with the earth. Is it fitting that the evil one who creates mischief should survive?</i>	Depression + Anger

6	Nesîm-i subh gibi yerde koma âhumuzı Hakâret eylediler nesl-i pâdişâhumuzı	<i>(You) do not leave our lamentation on the ground like the morning breeze. They insulted our sultan's progeny.</i>	- + Anger
V			
1	Bir iki egri fesâd ehli nite-kim şemşîr Bir iki nâme-i tezvîri kıldı katline tîr	<i>One or two mischief-makers, crooked as swords, used one or two false letters as arrows for his slaughter.</i>	Anger + Anger
2	Gelür ezelde mukadder olan kalîl ü ketîr Hezâr kayserün oldı leyâl-i ömri kasîr	<i>Whatever is more or less written in eternity comes to pass. The nights of life of thousands of rulers have been short.</i>	Acceptance + Acceptance
3	Eceldür âdeme der-bend-i teng ü târ-ı asîr Zarûridür bu ki uğrar aña cûvân ile pîr	<i>Death is a narrow, dark and difficult passage for human beings. Young and old alike must pass through it.</i>	Acceptance + Acceptance
4	Yerini zîr-i zemîn eyledi o mihr-i münîr Yerini gitdi cihândan nite-ki merd-i fakîr	<i>That shining sun ate the gold of the earth. He left the world like a poor person.</i>	Depression + Depression
5	Bu vâkı'a olimaz halka kâbil-i ta'bîr Ki Erdişîr-i velâyetde ola âdet-i şîr	<i>This event cannot be explained to the people so that the blessed Erdeshir of the guardianship would have the custom of lions.</i>	Anger + Anger
6	Bunuñ gibi işi kim gördü kim işitdi aceb Ki oğlina kıya bir server-i Ömer-meşreb	<i>I wonder who has ever seen or heard of such a deed that a ruler of Omar's temperament would kill his son.</i>	Denial + Denial
VI			
1	Ferîd-i âlem idî âlim idî a'lem idî Muhammed ümmetine mevtî mevtî-i 'âlem idî	<i>He was unique in the world, a scholar, very knowledgeable. His death was the death of the world for the ummah of Muhammad.</i>	Bargaining + Anger
2	Ziyâde mâtem idî hayli emr-i mu'zam idî Salâh u zûhdî kavî i'tikâdî muhkem idî	<i>This death was a great mourning, a very big event. His ihllâ and taqwa were strong, his faith was strong.</i>	Anger + Bargaining
3	Meşâiyih ile musâhib ricâle hem-dem idî Kerâmetiyle kerîmü'l-hisâl âdem idî	<i>He was a friend of the sheikhs and the musahib statesmen. He was a person with sublime qualities.</i>	Bargaining + Bargaining
4	Nûcûm gibi cihân-dîde vü mükerrem idî Vücûdî muhteşem ü şevketi muazzam idî	<i>Like the stars, he had seen the world and was great and saintly. His body was magnificent and his majesty was immense.</i>	Bargaining + Bargaining

5	Tevâzu ile selâmında hod müsellem idi Aceb o bedr-i temâmuñ ne âdeti kem idi	<i>His humble greeting was also known to everyone. I wonder what was lacking in that perfect full moon?</i>	Bargaining + Bargaining
6	Hayflar oldu aña iftirâ ile gitdi Huzûr-i hakka du'â vü senâ ile gitdi	<i>It was a pity for him, he left with slander. He went to God with prayers and praises.</i>	Anger + Acceptance
<b>VII</b>			
1	Sipihrüñ âyinesinde görindi rûy-ı fenâ Kodı bu kesret-i dünyâyi kıldı 'azm-i bekâ	<i>The face of nothingness appeared in the mirror of the sky. (He) left the crowd of this world and turned towards eternity.</i>	Depression + Depression
2	Garîbler gibi gitdi o yollara tenhâ Çekildi âlem-i bâlâya hem-çü murg-ı hümâ	<i>He traveled those roads alone, like the strangers. He retreated to the spirit world like a hummingbird.</i>	Depression + Depression
3	Hakîkaten sebeb-i rif'at oldu düşmen aña Nasîbi olmasa tañ mı bu cîfe-i dünyâ	<i>Indeed, the enemy has been the cause of his ascension. Is it any wonder that he has no share in the carcass of this world?</i>	Depression + Anger
4	Hayât-ı bâkîye erişdi rûhi ey Yahyâ Şefîkî rûh-ı Muhammed refîkî zât-ı Hudâ	<i>O Yahyâ, his soul has attained eternal life. His Compassion is the spirit of Muhammad and his companion is the Essence of Allah.</i>	Acceptance + Acceptance
5	Enîsi gâ'ib erenler celisi ehl-i safâ Ziyâde ede yaşum gibi rahmetin mevlâ	<i>His friend is the people of the unseen, his conversation companion is the people of pleasure. May Allah increase His mercy like my tears!</i>	Acceptance + Acceptance
6	İlâhî cennet-i Firdevs aña turag olsun Nizâm-ı âlem olan pâdişâh sağ olsun	<i>Allah'im, Firdevs cenneti ona durak olsun. Âleme nizam veren padişah sağ olsun!</i>	Acceptance + Acceptance

The Elegy for Prince Mustafa is a terkib-i bend composed by the 16th century poet Taşlıcalı Yahya. The poem consists of seven stanzas (bends), each containing twelve couplets, and is written in the aruz meter *mefâ 'ilün fe 'ilâtün mefâ 'ilün fe 'ilün*.

This work reflects the public outcry following Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent's order to execute his son, Prince Mustafa, during the Nahçıvan Campaign. It carries particular significance not only due to its powerful emotional resonance but also because it was written by a poet who personally knew the prince. Also known as the 'Satire of Suleiman,' the elegy employs an intensely metaphorical language to convey the poet's thoughts and emotions (Eke, 2017, p. 220).

### 3. Application of the Kübler-Ross Model in the Elegy for Prince Mustafa

Prior to the commencement of this study, no research was encountered that applied the Kübler-Ross model -or more commonly, the five stages of grief- to literary texts. In this context, it is worth emphasizing that the present study holds significance as an early example of applying this psychological framework to a literary work.

As is well known, poems composed within the classical Ottoman Divan literature tradition-such as ghazals, qasidas, and other poetic forms-were not typically created in a single

instance or within a short time frame. Due to the intricate requirements of meter (aruz), rhyme, and various other poetic elements, poets were often compelled to make deliberate structural and stylistic decisions. Therefore, it is nearly impossible to determine the exact rationale behind a poet's sequencing of couplets or lines. In this regard, the arrangement of verses in the poem under examination should be considered a product of the poet's personal discretion, and it should not be expected that the sequence of emotional stages in the poem will correspond precisely to the order proposed in the Kübler-Ross model.

In this section of the study, each line of the aforementioned elegy is classified according to the Kübler-Ross model of grief.

### 3.1. The Commencement of Prince Mustafa's Elegy with "Shock"

Although not formally defined as a stage within Kübler-Ross's model, the initial reaction to news of death namely the state of shock constitutes a fundamental psychological response at the onset of the grieving process. This phase encompasses the individual's immediate and traumatic emotional upheaval, their difficulty in comprehending the reality of the loss, and a kind of stunned or frozen response. Shock represents an emotional void that precedes the denial stage and marks the moment when one's mental and emotional equilibrium is profoundly disrupted.

Even though the model does not categorize shock as an independent stage, it is acknowledged as a critical component preceding denial. According to the Kübler-Ross model, the "shock" state essentially refers to the moment the bad news is first received. In the elegy, Taşlıcalı Yahya's expression of "shock" is particularly significant, both in terms of its striking and poignant poetic introduction and its alignment with the internal progression of the psychological stages outlined in the model. It is appropriate, therefore, to interpret the first couplet of the elegy's opening stanza as representative of the shock response. When considered from this perspective, the poet's initial reaction to the reality of death manifests as profound emotional upheaval and a desperate call for help:

Meded meded bu cihânuñ yıkıldı bir yani  
Ecel celâlîleri aldı Mustafâ Hâni (B1/b1)<sup>3</sup>

The poet, through the repeated exclamations of "meded meded" (help, help) and his statement that the celestial agents of death (ecel celâlîleri) have taken Prince Mustafa, introduces the initial confrontation with the reality of death. The phrase "meded meded" is not merely a poetic device; it reflects the poet's psychological collapse, his state of bewilderment, and a subconscious cry for help. This expression serves as a natural manifestation of the emotional breakdown and inability to cope with the loss at the onset of the grieving process. The line "bu cihânuñ yıkıldı bir yani" ("one side of this world has collapsed") presents an exaggerated yet psychologically meaningful depiction of the devastating impact of the news. While seemingly describing a cosmic destruction, the poet is, in fact, metaphorically externalizing his own internal devastation.

Additionally, the verse "Ecel celâlîleri aldı Mustafâ Hâni" underscores the sudden and unexpected nature of death. The term "celâlîler," usually associated with aggressive looters, can also be used metaphorically to represent death as a violent force that takes its victim without

<sup>3</sup> The coding system of the poems is as follows: "B: Bend; b: Beyit."

resistance (İlgürel, 1993, p. 253). This choice of language reveals that Taşlıcalı Yahya has not yet come to terms with the loss; he comprehends the shocking nature of the event but is not yet able to rationalize or fully process it.

### 3.2. The Denial Stage in the Elegy for Prince Mustafa

According to the Kübler-Ross model, the first stage following the initial shock is denial. As previously mentioned, in this phase, the individual refuses to accept death or a life-altering event, often reacting with phrases such as “No, not me; this cannot be true.” While the person may cognitively understand the loss, they emotionally reject its acceptance, creating a psychological buffer zone by denying the reality of the situation.

The following couplet from Taşlıcalı Yahya’s elegy articulates precisely this state of mind:

Bunuñ gibi işi kim gördü kim işitti aceb  
Ki oğlına kıya bir server-i Ömer-meşreb (BV/b6)

In the first line of the couplet, the poet emphasizes the inconceivability, unprecedented nature, and unacceptability of the death by stating, “Has anyone seen or heard of such a thing?” This rhetorical question suggests that the event lies outside the realm of ordinary experience and implicitly conveys the sentiment of “This cannot be true!” In this way, the poet attempts to deny the reality of the death not through direct rejection, but by highlighting its extraordinary and historically unparalleled nature.

In the second line, the phrase “server-i Ömer-meşreb” (a sovereign in the path of ‘Ömer) underlines the expectation that a sultan should possess a character associated with justice—specifically, the justice of Caliph ‘Ömer. For the poet, the idea that such a just ruler could order the execution of his own son represents an intolerable contradiction. Implicit in this is a deeper interrogation: “If he is truly just, he could not have done such a thing.” Thus, the event is rejected through a logical conflict constructed at the level of conscious reasoning. At this point, the poet is still struggling to mentally reject the reality of the loss, following the emotional shock he has experienced.

### 3.3. The Stage of Anger in Elegy for Prince

According to the Kübler-Ross model, the stage of anger follows the stage of denial. As previously noted, this stage is characterized by the individual’s refusal to accept the death or a critically important loss, accompanied by intense feelings of anger. During this stage, individuals often seek to assign blame—whether to others, to themselves, or to the situation they are in. Therefore, the dominant emotional feature of this phase is accusation.

In elegy for Prince Mustafa, the poet expresses his anger regarding the prince’s execution by assigning blame. Although specific individuals are not explicitly mentioned in the elegy, based on historical sources, it is widely acknowledged that Hürrem Sultan and Rüstem Paşa were involved in the execution of Prince Mustafa. Additionally, there are scholarly interpretations suggesting that Kanunî Sultan Süleyman was deceived or manipulated by these individuals into turning against his son (Çakır, 2021, p. 18).

Within this context, it is understood that the expressions of anger and blame in Taşlıcalı Yahya's elegy are primarily directed toward these figures. The elegy contains numerous couplets that can be interpreted within the framework of the anger stage.

Tolundı mihr-i cemâli bozuldı dîvâni  
Vebâle koydilar âl ile Âl-i Osmâni (BI/b2)

In the first line of the aforementioned couplet, the poet expresses that the “sun of the prince’s beauty has set” and that his assembly has dispersed—marking an initial sign of anger following the death. The phrase “Bozuldı dîvâni” conveys not only the literal disbanding of a physical court or gathering but also symbolically signals the collapse of order, justice, and stability. This expression carries not merely grief, but also a strong sense of inner anger and reproach. Here, the lament goes beyond the personal and reflects a broader political and societal trauma.

In the second line of the same couplet, the poet asserts that the Ottoman dynasty has been burdened with guilt through deceit. This suggests that the process leading to the prince’s execution involved trickery, deception, and manipulation, and those responsible for his death have simultaneously cast a moral stain upon the entire Ottoman dynasty. The poet’s expressions suggest that the grief over Prince Mustafa’s death is perceived not merely as a personal loss but also as an event that undermines the dignity of the dynasty. From this perspective, the incident transcends the realm of mourning and acquires dimensions of political and moral inquiry.

Geçerler idi geçende o merd-i meydâni  
Felek o cânibe döndürdi şâh-ı devrâni (BI/b3)

In the first line of the above couplet, the poet alludes to those who, during Prince Mustafa’s lifetime, spoke ill of him and spread slanderous rumors. The verb “geçmek” is also used figuratively to mean to speak against, “to criticize, to complain about, to disparage, or to denigrate” (<https://lugatim.com>). The fact that the prince-described by the poet as a “merd-i meydâni” (a man of valor, a brave warrior)-was subjected to such a campaign of slander and defamation evokes in the poet a deep sense of anger, as well as a profound disillusionment with notions of justice and loyalty. The poet’s implication that these individuals played a role in the process leading to the prince’s death constitutes an indirect accusation. In the second line of the same couplet, the poet expresses his anger toward felek (the celestial order or fate), which he blames for turning the reigning sultan toward the side of these malicious figures. This line thus reflects the poet’s broader frustration not only with human agents of betrayal but also with the cosmic forces that, in his view, allowed such injustice to prevail.

Yalancınıñ kuri bühtâni büğz-ı pinhâni  
Akitdi yaşumuzı yakdı nâr-ı hicrâni (BI/b4)

In the first line of the couplet above, the poet states that the tears shed and the fire of separation that now burns were caused by a deceitful person who harbored hidden enmity and hurled baseless slander. While in the previous couplet the phrase “geçerler idi” refers collectively to several individuals—such as Hürrem Sultan, Rüstem Paşa, and even Mihrimâh Sultan—this couplet mentions only a single “liar,” suggesting that the direct subject of this line is likely Rüstem Paşa, who, according to scholarly interpretations, was the primary executor of the plot against Prince Mustafa (Şentürk, 1998, p. 11).

The poet's description of this figure as a liar who engaged in "kuru bühtan" (baseless accusation) and "buğz-ı pinhân" (concealed malice) reflects a strong projection of anger. These expressions serve as explicit indicators of the poet's fury. Taşlıcalı Yahya, by identifying not only the events but also their underlying causes, appears to be attempting both to name the culprit and to unburden himself emotionally. This act of naming and attributing responsibility is thus an integral part of the grief and anger stages articulated in the Kübler-Ross model.

In the line "Akıtdı yaşamuzu, yakdı nâr-ı hicrâni", the poet expresses the emotional consequences of the events—namely, the shedding of tears and the burning pain of separation. This line conveys not only the outward manifestation of grief but also the internal turmoil sparked by anger. The "fire of separation" serves as a symbolic representation of the profound sorrow and anguish caused by the death of Prince Mustafa. However, since the "liar" mentioned in the previous line is implicitly held responsible for this suffering, the dominant emotional tone of the entire couplet is marked by anger and accusation. Thus, the poet channels his mourning through a lens of indignation, attributing the cause of the emotional devastation to a specific figure.

Cinâyet itmedi câñî gibi anuñ câñî  
Boğuldı seyl-i belâya tağıldı erkâñî (BI/b5)

In the second line of the couplet above, the poet states that the prince was drowned in a flood of calamities and that his assembly was dispersed. In this verse, the poet implicitly compares Prince Mustafa's death to that of a criminal, suggesting that those who took his life in fact committed an act of murder. While the prince is portrayed as an innocent and blameless figure, the manner of his execution is described as befitting a felon. This ironic juxtaposition reflects a profound sense of anger and rebellion, indicating that the poet's sense of justice has been deeply shaken. Though expressed indirectly, the emphasis is on the prince's innocence, while those who killed him are implicitly depicted as cruel and tyrannical. Here, the anger is directed toward an unjust fate.

N'olaydı görmeye idi bu mâcerâyı gözüm  
Yazuklar aña revâ görmedi bu râyı gözüm (BI/b6)

In the second line of the couplet above, the poet expresses his anger at the command for the prince's execution with a phrase that can be interpreted as "Shame on it; my eyes did not deem this judgment worthy of him." Here, the reflected anger is directed not so much at the sultan who issued the command, but rather at the act of the judgment itself. These expressions carry both an outpouring of grief and a direct sense of rebellion and fury. The sorrow within the poet is so intense that he even begrudges his eyes the sight of such a scene; he wishes that his eyes had not witnessed this injustice. This is an emotional manifestation of profound inner rage felt in response to the injustice and tragedy. There is a clear rejection and indignation toward the treatment inflicted upon the prince. The judgment pronounced by the poet's eyes is not merely a personal lament, but also a reaction to perceived injustice. The phrase "bu rây" symbolizes an unworthy decision, action, or fate.

O bedr-i kâmil ü ol âşinâ-yı bahr-i ulûm  
Fenâya vardı telef etdi anı tâli'-i şûm (BIII/b1)

In the second line of the couplet above, the poet identifies ill-fated destiny as the cause of the prince's death. Within this context, such an expression may be interpreted within the framework of the "anger stage". Here, the anger is not directed at a specific individual but rather at the injustice of fate itself. In the Kübler-Ross model, the anger stage can manifest not only as anger toward people but also as rage directed at misfortune, divine justice, the order of the world, or even God. In this instance, the poet attributes the responsibility for death not to personal enemies, but to ominous fate, thereby redirecting his anger toward destiny.

Kara geyürdi Karaman'a gussa etdi hûcûm  
O mâhi ince hayâl ile kıldilar ma'dûm (BIII/b3)

In the second line of the couplet above, it is stated that the prince was eliminated through a subtle act of deception. The language and metaphors used in this couplet indicate that the poet is not merely mourning; he also harbors a deep-seated anger toward the act and its perpetrators that gave rise to this grief. Therefore, when evaluated within the framework of the Kübler-Ross model's "anger stage," the couplet can be read as a classical poetic expression of accusatory sentiment and a reaction of indignation against injustice.

O cân-ı âdemiyân oldı hâk ile yeksân  
Diri kala ne revâdur fesâd eden şeytân (BIV/b5)

In the first line of the couplet, the poet states, "the soul of humanity (the prince) became one with the earth," thereby emphasizing the depth of Prince Mustafa's death. The second line, however, conveys a much more direct expression of anger and blame, meaning: "As long as the devil who incited corruption remains alive, is this injustice acceptable?" Here, the term "devil" is used metaphorically and likely symbolizes Rüstem Paşa or other individuals held responsible for the prince's death. The implication that the "devil," seen as culpable for the prince's murder, should not have remained alive reflects a sentiment consistent with the anger stage in the Kübler-Ross model.

Nesîm-i subh gibi yerde koma âhumuzı  
Hakâret eylediler nesl-i pâdişâhumuzı (BIV/b6)

In the second line of the couplet, through the expression "Hakâret eylediler nesl-i pâdişâhumuzı", the poet perceives the death of Prince Mustafa not merely as a personal loss, but as a degrading assault against the dynasty, the state, and the royal bloodline. The poet frames Prince Mustafa's execution as a deliberate insult to the honor of the entire dynasty, rather than as the death of an individual. This perspective reflects the stage of anger in Kübler-Ross's model, where the initial question of "Why him/me?" is replaced by "This should not have happened-who is responsible?" The couplet vividly expresses this outward-directed anger, making it a poignant example of the model's anger phase.

Bir iki egri fesâd ehli nite-kim şemşîr  
Bir iki nâme-i tezvîri kıldı katline tîr (BV/b1)

In this couplet, the poet directly blames "a few seditious individuals" (bir iki fesâd ehli) and their slanderous letters (tezvîri mektublar) as the cause of Prince Mustafa's execution. This expression, which clearly identifies the agents of discord and their written conspiracies, can be evaluated within the framework of the anger stage in the Kübler-Ross model. The explicit act of targeting specific individuals or groups reflects the poet's channeling of his anger toward

identifiable sources. Moreover, metaphors involving violence, such as the sword and the arrow, emphasize the intense and uncontrolled nature of this emotional outburst. Thus, the couplet embodies core elements of the anger stage—namely, accusation, enemy identification, and a yearning for justice.

Bu vâkı'a olımaz halka kâbil-i ta'bîr  
Ki Erdişîr-i velâyetde ola âdet-i şîr (BV/b5)

In the couplet above, the poet expresses that it is impossible to explain the incident of the prince's execution—an event he likens to a lion killing its own cub—to the public. Here, the act of a sultan (symbolized by the lion) killing his own son is portrayed as unnatural and incomprehensible. The phrase ““âdet-i şîr” (the custom of the lion) refers to an extremely rare, if not impossible, occurrence, thereby emphasizing the unnaturalness and severity of the act. By describing such a tragedy as beyond justification or explanation, the poet powerfully reflects the sense of injustice—a fundamental marker of the anger stage in the Kübler-Ross model of grief.

Ferîd-i âlem idi âlim idi a'lem idi  
Muhammed ümmetine mevti mevt-i 'âlem idi (BVI/b1)

The poet describes Şehzade Mustafa as the “unique individual of the world (ferîd-i âlem),” a “scholar,” and “the most knowledgeable person (a'lem).” His death is not merely a personal loss but is equated with the death of the entire world for the ummah of the Prophet Muhammad. In other words, this event is portrayed as a catastrophe concerning the entire Islamic world. Particularly, the expression “mevti mevt-i 'âlem idi” (“his death was the death of the world”) symbolizes the transformation of personal grief into collective anger. Although the poet does not explicitly identify a perpetrator, he implicitly raises the question of who caused this devastation, thereby directing his anger in a subtle but pointed manner.

Ziyâde mâtem idi hayli emr-i mu'zam idi  
Salâh u zühdi kavî i'tikâdi muhkem idi (BVI/b2)

In the first hemistich of the couplet, the poet emphasizes that the death of Prince Mustafa is a great mourning and a profoundly significant event. The phrases “ziyade mâtem” (immense grief) and “emr-i mu'zam” (a momentous affair) highlight that this death is portrayed not merely as a loss, but as a shocking and traumatic occurrence. In the second hemistich in particular, the poet underscores the prince's moral and religious virtues, implying that the killing of someone with such elevated qualities was deeply unjust and unfair. These expressions can be interpreted within the framework of the anger stage in the Kübler-Ross model, reflecting a strong emotional reaction against perceived injustice.

Hayflar oldı aña iftirâ ile gitdi  
Huzûr-ı hakka du'â vü senâ ile gitdi (BVI/b6)

In the first hemistich of the couplet, the poet's emphasis on the phrase “iftirâ ile gitdi” conveys that Prince Mustafa was executed as a result of unjust and defamatory accusations. This expression reflects the poet's emotional rebellion against such injustice. The inclusion of a phrase such as “Hayflar oldı” indicates not only sorrow, but also an inner anger directed toward the circumstances or individuals responsible for the prince's death. The expressions in this couplet clearly articulate Taşlıcalı Yahya's anger. The slander cited as the cause of death is not

only a source of personal grief, but also represents a broader moral and political protest against the intrigues of the period.

Hakîkaten sebeb-i rif'at oldı düşmen aña  
Nasîbi olmasa tañ mı bu cîfe-i dünyâ (BVII/b3)

In this couplet, the poet's depiction of the world as a "carrion" (leş) reflects a profound anger and disgust toward injustice and the cruelty of the world. The poet expresses dismay that a prince could find no place in such a corrupt world, adopting a tone of bitter resignation that suggests life itself is meaningless and devoid of value in such a context. The notion that even a death caused by enemies could serve to elevate the prince becomes a vehicle through which the poet conveys his anger in an ironic and accusatory manner. Through this couplet, the poet articulates his indignation toward the wickedness of the world, the betrayal of enemies, and the caprice of fate in a tone that is both bitter and ironic.

Taşlıcalı Yahya's elegy functions as a powerful literary embodiment of the "anger stage" in Kübler-Ross's model of grief. The poet expresses multifaceted anger-directed at enemies, fate, the celestial order, and even life and the world itself. This anger, proportional to the magnitude of the loss, pervades the entire poem and manifests in both explicit accusations and veiled, ironic remarks. In this context, the elegy may be read not only as a lament but also as a manifesto of defiance and protest.

### 3.4. The Bargaining Stage in the Elegy for Prince Mustafa

In Kübler-Ross's model, the bargaining stage is defined as the phase in which the individual partially accepts the loss but attempts to "negotiate" in hopes of altering the outcome or mitigating its impact. This negotiation is often directed toward higher powers such as God, fate, or destiny. However, since elegies are composed after death has already occurred, the bargaining stage cannot manifest in the traditional sense. Nevertheless, certain indirect reflections of this stage can be identified in the text.

In particular, the exaggerated emphasis on the virtues, goodness, and exalted nature of the deceased can be interpreted as a literary reflection of the bargaining stage. This exaltation serves to underline the perceived "injustice" of the death. Within the framework of the bargaining stage, the poet persistently underscores how valuable and exceptional Prince Mustafa was. This insistence implies a desire to convey that—even if the death cannot be reversed—its unfairness and meaninglessness must at least be acknowledged and remembered.

Cinâyet itmedi cânî gibi anuñ cânî  
Boğuldu seyl-i belâya tağıldı erkânı (BI/b5)

In the couplet above, the poet emphasizes the prince's innocence in an attempt to exonerate him. The phrase "He did not commit a crime like a criminal" functions almost as a protest against his death: "He was innocent, so why was he killed?" Such efforts to vindicate the deceased reflect the mourner's inner search for a rational explanation in the face of an incomprehensible loss. By dramatizing the prince's victimhood in the face of a cruel fate (seyl-i belâ), the poet both blames destiny and, implicitly, engages in a form of bargaining—an internal sentiment that "this should not have happened." In this respect, the couplet can be read as a poetic manifestation of the bargaining stage in Kübler-Ross's model, where emotions like "if only" and "what if" emerge in indirect, literary form.

O bedr-i kâmil ü ol âşinâ-yı bahr-i ulûm  
Fenâya vardı telef etdi anı tâli'-i şûm (BIII/b1)

In the first hemistich of the couplet, the poet likens the prince to a flawless full moon, emphasizing that he was well-versed in the ocean of knowledge. The phrase “âşinâ-yı bahr-i ulûm” not only highlights the prince’s intellectual depth but also underscores his moral and political virtues. The couplet further expresses that such a noble figure has perished—specifically, that he was unjustly killed due to a “sinister fate” (tâli'-i shûm). The references to the prince’s exceptional qualities (bedr-i kâmil, âşinâ-yı bahr-i ulûm) juxtaposed with the unjust nature of his death suggest that the poet is still grappling with the loss and struggling to accept it. By emphasizing the prince’s virtues, the poet attempts to symbolically reclaim him from death. While coming to terms with the irreversibility of mortality, the poet simultaneously constructs meaning around the event by elevating the moral and intellectual stature of the deceased.

Tolandı gerdenine hâle gibi mâr-ı semûm  
Rızâ-yı hak ne ise râzî oldu ol merhûm (BIII/b4)

In the second hemistich of the couplet, the poet expresses that the late prince accepted God’s divine decree. The bargaining stage often involves an internal effort to reconcile with the loss. Although the poet begins to recognize that the prince cannot be brought back, he does not fully accept this reality; instead, he seeks to frame it in a way that renders the pain more bearable. In this context, the poet’s emphasis on the prince’s submission to divine will reflects his own psychological need to believe that the prince willingly embraced this fate. While not a direct articulation of bargaining, this notion mirrors an inner negotiation: “If he accepted it, then I can find meaning in his death.” This represents the poet’s psychological preparation for acceptance by attempting to interpret the loss as meaningful. At the same time, the poet tries to convince himself: if the prince, in all his nobility, accepted death with such serenity, perhaps there is a hidden wisdom in this loss.

Hatâsı gayr-i mu’ayyen günâhı nâ-ma’lûm  
Zihî şehîd-i sa’îd ü zihî şeh-i mazlûm (BIII/b5)

The phrase ‘Hatâsı gayr-i mu’ayyen, günâhı nâ-ma’lûm’ in the first hemistich emphasizes that Prince Mustafa’s fault or sin was never explicitly established. This highlights the sense that his death occurred without justification and in an unjust manner. At this point, the poet opens a space of inquiry in the reader’s mind: ‘If no specific crime existed, what then was the reason behind this death?’ Thus, the couplet not only articulates a sense of injustice but also reflects an effort to ascribe meaning to the event. In the second hemistich, the epithets ‘şehîd-i sa’îd’ and ‘şeh-i mazlûm’ elevate the prince to both a sacred and a victimized status. This elevation represents an attempt to mitigate the pain of loss by conferring moral and spiritual dignity upon him. By presenting Mustafa as both a martyr and a wronged sovereign, the poet conveys not merely personal mourning but also a pursuit of moral vindication and symbolic consolation.

Ferîd-i âlem idi âlim idi a’lem idi  
Muhammed ümmetine mevti mevt-i ‘âlem idi (BVI/b1)  
  
Ziyâde mâtem idi hayli emr-i mu’zam idi  
Salâh u zühdi kavî i’tikâdi muhkem idi (BVI/b2)

Meşâyîh ile musâhib ricâle hem-dem idi  
 Kerâmetiyle kerîmü'l-hisâl âdem idi (BVI/b3)

Nücûm gibi cihân-dîde vü mükerrem idi  
 Vücûdî muhteşem ü şevketi muazzam idi (BVI/b4)

Tevâzu ile selâmında hod müsellem idi  
 Aceb o bedr-i temâmuñ ne âdeti kem idi (BVI/b5)

In these couplets, Taşlıcalı Yahya exalts Prince Mustafa with high praise, enumerating his virtues, moral excellence, and superior qualities. This can be interpreted not only as part of the classical elegy (mersiye) tradition, but also as an emotional attempt by the mourner to “make sense of” and “justify” the loss. In the couplets, the prince is described as a unique and unparalleled figure, not only for the Ottoman Empire but for the entire world. His death is portrayed as a loss that affects not merely an individual, but the entire community (ummah). Such expressions represent an effort to construct meaning through glorification of the deceased. Prince Mustafa is depicted as a person endowed with spiritual insight, moral integrity, and the rare ability to stand alongside both religious and political leaders. The portrayal of the deceased as flawless in both worldly and spiritual dimensions reflects a meaning-making strategy characteristic of the bargaining stage. He is described as wise, experienced, and magnificent in presence. These expressions by Taşlıcalı Yahya suggest an attempt to reframe the prince’s death not as a tragic mistake or whim of fate, but as the inevitable price of greatness.

### 3.5. The Depression Stage in the Elegy for Prince Mustafa

According to the Kübler-Ross model, the depression stage is characterized by an intense feeling of sorrow and helplessness as the individual confronts the reality of death or loss. It was previously noted that during this phase, the person’s life energy tends to diminish, often leading to emotional withdrawal into the inner self. In this stage, many aspects of the individual’s behavior and psychological state may undergo significant changes.

N’olaydı görmeye idi bu mâcerâyı gözüm  
 Yazuklar aña revâ görmedi bu râyi gözüm (BII/b6)

The depression stage in Kübler-Ross’s model represents the phase in which the individual can no longer deflect the reality of death or loss through denial or anger and is forced to confront it directly. The expression in the first line of the above couplet, where the poet says “If only I had not witnessed these events,” can be interpreted within the framework of depression. The phrase “N’olaydı görmeseydim” conveys a sense of exhaustion, weariness, and emotional depletion. At this point, anger is no longer present; instead, there is a tired sorrow and a wish that the painful reality had never occurred. The poet’s eye no longer desires to see this bitter truth, reflecting a psychological state of being unable to cope with reality.

In the first five couplets of the second stanza of the elegy, expressions reflecting the poet’s emotions regarding the events leading up to and immediately following the prince’s execution can also be interpreted within the framework of the depression stage.

Tonandi ağlar ile nûrdan menâre dönüp  
 Gûşâde-hâtır idi şevk ile nehâre dönüp (BII/b1)

In the couplet above, the poet's expression "a minaret of light and tears" (ağlar ile nûrdan menâre) depicts a majestic yet grief-laden scene of death. While the inner peace (gûşâde-hâtır) and joy (şevk) of the prince are described, the reader understands that this portrayal belongs to a past that can no longer be reclaimed. In the depression stage, the individual does not explicitly state, "I am broken"; rather, through poetic expression, the beauty of the loss is emphasized, and a sense of psychological rupture and emptiness is conveyed. In this couplet, the poet articulates his deep sorrow not directly, but by recalling the prince's past virtues and responding with silent helplessness and admiration. This represents a poetic manifestation of the depression phase.

Görindi halka dırahtı şükûfe-dâre dönüp  
Yürürdi kulları öñince lâle-zâre dönüp (BII/b2)

In the couplet above, the depiction of the prince as a blossoming tree reflects not only his beauty but also the profound sorrow arising from the fading of that beauty. The servants who once surrounded him in admiration-now likened to a "lâle-zâre"-have been transformed into silence, dispersion, and loss. This imagery of splendor becomes a mental relic, a symbol of a past that can no longer be reclaimed. It conveys the mourner's sentiment that "nothing will ever be the same again." While the metaphors in this couplet-such as the blossoming tree and tulip fields-may appear laudatory on the surface, when read in context, they reveal the poet's sense of helplessness and inner emptiness in the face of irretrievable beauty. Thus, the emotional state expressed here reflects the depression phase of grief.

Tururdı şâh-ı cihân hiddetiyle nâre dönüp  
Otağı haymeleri karlu kûhsâre dönüp (BII/b3)

Although the couplet does not contain an explicit expression of internal collapse, the imagery employed conveys emotions characteristic of the depression stage in an indirect manner. The phrase "karlu kûhsâr" is not merely a physical description; it also evokes emotional coldness, stillness, and a sense of emptiness. It symbolizes the inner silence and emotional numbness that follow loss, much like the withdrawal, emotional freezing, and desensitization commonly observed in the depression phase of grief. The contrast between the sultan turning into fire in the first line and the tent being likened to snow-covered mountains in the second line reveals an emotional conflict, emphasizing the dissonance between inner turmoil and external stillness.

Müzeyyen idi bedenlerle ak hisâre dönüp  
El öpmege yürüdi mihr-i bî-karâre dönüp (BII/b4)

In the first line of the above couplet, the prince's appearance is described as majestic and adorned, likened to "white fortresses" (ak hisâr). While this imagery conveys a sense of splendor and grandeur, it simultaneously evokes the coldness and silence associated with death. The image of the "mihr-i bî-karâr" suggests that the prince, like a sun destined to fade after shining brightly, was not meant to endure. This metaphor serves as a poetic expression of the sense of meaninglessness and existential emptiness that emerges in the depression stage of grief.

Tutuldı gelmedi çün-kim o mâh-pâre dönüp  
Görenler ağladılar ebr-i nev-behâre dönüp (BII/b5)

In this couplet, the expression “he was eclipsed, he did not return” clearly represents an irreversible loss. The eclipse of a being as radiant and graceful as a mâh-pâre signifies both the intensity of death and the extinguishing of light and hope in life. In the second line of the couplet, the phrase “those who saw him wept like spring clouds” employs the metaphor of spring clouds to convey both the abundance of tears and the freshness and depth of emotion. The couplet contains neither anger, denial, nor bargaining. Instead, it reflects a jarring realization, a heavy acceptance, and the deep sorrow that accompanies it-capturing the essence of the depression stage of grief.

Dögündi kaldı hemân dâğ-ı hasreTİyle nûcûm  
Göyündi şâm-ı firâkında toldı yaş ile Rûm (BIII/b2)

In the first hemistich of the couplet, the stars are described as wailing in longing for Prince Mustafa’s death groaning with yearning. Even the heavens are not indifferent to this pain; the universe itself is portrayed as mourning. In the second hemistich, “the weeping of Rûm,” referring to all of Anatolia, indicates that this tragedy was not confined to the palace but deeply affected the public as well. This conveys a pervasive sense of despair and emotional collapse. The darkness within the poet’s inner world appears to have spread across the entire cosmos. Such imagery reflects the helplessness, intense emotional turmoil, and resigned sorrow characteristic of the depression stage. Here, death is not merely an event but a collapse that shakes time, space, and even the heavens-a profound silence and descent into grief.

Kara geyürdi Karaman'a gussa etdi hûcûm  
O mâhî ince hayâl ile kildilar ma'dûm (BIII/b3)

In the first hemistich of the above couplet, the city of Karaman is depicted as being shrouded in black following Prince Mustafa’s death; grief has descended upon it. This represents a regional collapse and a collective state of mourning. The expression “kara geyürmek” symbolizes not only an external, physical condition but also an internal psychological breakdown. The phrase “gussa etdi hûcûm” illustrates that emotional resilience within the poet’s world has disintegrated, and pain has pervaded everything. This corresponds to the overwhelming sadness characteristic of the depression stage. The poet does not merely describe the prince’s death, but also the collapse of hope, the silenced cities, and the desolation of his own inner world.

Tolandı gerdenine hâle gibi mâr-ı semûm  
Rîzâ-yı hak ne ise râzî oldı ol merhûm (BIII/b4)

In the first hemistich of the above couplet, a venomous serpent coils around Prince Mustafa’s neck like a halo. The depression stage is characterized by the individual no longer being able to deny the reality of death, accompanied by profound sorrow, helplessness, emotional withdrawal, and exhaustion. This verse metaphorically expresses precisely that emotional state. The noose encircling the prince’s neck signifies a merciless end and marks, for the poet, the beginning of a profound psychological collapse.

Getürdi arkasını yere Zâl-i devr-i zemân  
Vûcûdına sitem-i Rüstem ile erdi ziyân (BIV/b1)

In the above couplet, the depiction of the era’s “Zal” bringing Prince Mustafa to the ground and the reference to Rustem inflicting harm upon his body during the moment of

execution can be interpreted within the framework of the depression stage. The poet has now moved away from metaphorically embellished eulogies and directly articulates the brutal reality of the prince's fall and the violence inflicted upon his body. This shift signifies the end of earlier stages such as denial and anger, giving way to a painful and shocking acceptance: "What's done is done. He cannot be brought back. All that remains is sorrow and grief." The intense emphasis on the physical reality of death here exemplifies the classic characteristics of the depression stage, which represents the most profound form of mourning.

Döküldi gözyaşı yıldızları çoğaldı figân  
Dem-i memâti kiyâmet güninden oldı nişân (BIV/b2)

In the first hemistich of the above couplet, the references to the shedding of tears and the intensification of wailing can be interpreted within the framework of the depression stage. These expressions serve as emotional responses to the magnitude of the loss. The phrase "Dem-i memâti kiyâmet güninden oldı nişân" suggests that Prince Mustafa's death is portrayed as an apocalyptic event-an end not only of a life, but of an entire order, hope, and structure. This mourning goes beyond personal grief and reflects a collective, existential sorrow. With this couplet, it may also be said that the poet is nearing the end of the depression stage, as the tone shifts from anger to a sorrowful resignation imbued with deep emotional surrender.

Girîv ü nâle vü zâr ile toldı kevn ü mekân  
Akarsu gibi müdâm ağlamakda pîr ü cüvân (BIV/b3)

In the above couplet, the depiction of the world being filled with cries, wails, and lamentations following the prince's death and the reference to both the young and the old weeping-can be interpreted within the framework of the depression stage. The intensity of mourning is so great that it is not only the individual but the cosmos itself that seems to grieve. This illustrates a psychological state in which inner turmoil has expanded beyond the personal, manifesting in the external world as a universal sorrow. The phrase "Akarsu gibi müdâm ağlamakda pîr ü cüvân" is one of the most characteristic expressions of the depression stage. It reflects continuous weeping, emotional disequilibrium, and an overwhelming tide of sorrow that transcends personal will. The inclusion of both young and old emphasizes the collective depressive impact of the loss on the entire society.

Vücûd eline akın saldı akdî eşk-i revân  
Eyâ serîr-i se'âdetde pâdişâh-ı cihân (BIV/b4)

In the first hemistich of the couplet, the image of tears flooding the realm of the body suggests that the poet has lost all emotional control, surrendering entirely to sorrow. The metaphor of tears launching an assault on the "Vücûd eline akın salmak" conveys a sense of overwhelming grief, likened to an army invading the poet's physical being. This reflects both a physical and psychological collapse-a bodily manifestation of emotional disintegration. The verse does not contain anger or rebellion; rather, it portrays a state of complete surrender to a torrent of emotion.

O cân-ı âdemiyân oldı hâk ile yeksân  
Diri kala ne revâdur fesâd eden şeytân (BIV/b5)

In the first hemistich of the couplet, the expression indicating that people's souls have merged with the earth due to grief over the prince's execution can be interpreted within the framework of the depression stage. With the death of the prince, it is as if the vitality, spirit, and hope of the people have also been extinguished. Taşlıcalı conveys not only an individual but also a collective sense of collapse. The metaphor "Canların toprakla bir olması" symbolically expresses a loss of life force among the people. This couplet reflects one of the most intense and hopeless states of the depression stage.

Yerini zîr-i zemîn eyledi o mihr-i münîr  
Yerini gitdi cihândan nite-ki merd-i fakîr (BV/b4)

In the couplet above, the poet expresses that the murdered prince has found his place beneath the earth and departed from the world like a poor man. The phrase "Mihr-i münîr", meaning "radiant sun," now lies in darkness beneath the ground, symbolizing the severance of the poet's and society's connection to light. It evokes a sense of hopelessness and collapse. The statement, "he departed from the world like a poor man," despite the prince being an heir to the throne, conveys a sense of deep injustice, void, and deprivation—he left quietly, as if he possessed nothing. The prince's death in this manner is not merely a matter of personal mourning; it also creates a profound rupture and emptiness concerning grand concepts such as justice, truth, and fate. This reflects the philosophical dimension of the depression stage.

Sipihrûn âyinesinde görindi rûy-ı fenâ  
Kodı bu kesret-i dünyâyi kıldı 'azm-i bekâ (BVII/b1)

In the couplet above, the poet conveys that the face of absence has appeared in the mirror of the sky, and that the prince has departed from the crowds of this world and turned toward eternity. The expression "Göögün aynasında yokluğun yüzü göründü" depicts the heavens as a mirror in which no longer presence, but absence, is reflected. Even in the sky—a sublime space that traditionally symbolizes hope—rûy-ı fenâ, that is, the visage of death and annihilation, is now visible. This reflects the poet's weakening connection to the world, as he begins to perceive absence and pain in all things. The phrase "Kesret-i dünyâ" symbolizes the transient and deceptive plurality of worldly life. The poet emphasizes that Şehzade Mustafa has abandoned this realm of impermanent existence and turned toward *baqâ*—eternity. This idea of renouncing "kesret-i dünyâ", or the ephemeral world, indicates an existential inquiry, one that is frequently observed during the depression stage. It reflects a deep contemplation on the meaning of life, the futility of worldly pursuits, and the inevitability of death. While the couplet contains no direct protest or rebellion, it is dominated by a state of grief and withdrawal rather than confrontation or acceptance. This demonstrates that the emotional impact of the depression stage continues to prevail.

Garîbler gibi gitdi o yollara tenhâ  
Çekildi âlem-i bâlâya hem-çü murg-ı hümâ (BVII/b2)

In the first hemistich of the couplet above, the phrase "O, garipler gibi tek başına yollara gitti" strongly conveys a sense of loneliness and abandonment. The death of the prince is depicted as a journey, yet this journey is portrayed as one undertaken in solitude and desolation—like that of a forsaken soul compelled to walk an unfamiliar path alone. This metaphor reflects both the helplessness inherent in death and the profound dimensions of betrayal and isolation experienced. The second hemistich—"Hüma kuşu gibi yüce âleme çekildi."—suggests that with

his death, the prince attained a form of exaltation. However, this elevation is marked by a painful solitude. It also emphasizes the separation of the soul from the body and the complete severance of all earthly ties.

Hakîkaten sebeb-i rif'at oldu düşmen aña  
Nasîbi olmasa tañ mı bu cîfe-i dünyâ (BVII/b3)

In the first hemistich of the couplet above, the poet expresses the idea that the cause of death served as a means for the prince's spiritual or transcendental elevation. Although those responsible for the execution of Şehzade Mustafa seemingly inflicted harm upon him, they inadvertently facilitated his attainment of a sacred status-namely, martyrdom. In the second hemistich, the phrase "Nasîbi olmasa, tañ mı?" reveals an attempt to normalize or make sense of what transpired. This reflects not denial or rebellion, but rather a form of submission. The expression "Cîfe-i dünyâ" conveys a deep sense of disillusionment and despair toward worldly life. This language resonates with the symptoms of the depressive stage of grief, such as a loss of vitality and existential pessimism. Therefore, this couplet can be seen as representing a transition between the depression and acceptance stages of mourning. While it still contains bitterness, sorrow, and a sense of loss regarding worldly existence, the poet also begins to seek meaning in the experience and shows signs of a willingness to accept fate.

### 3.6. The Stage of Acceptance in the Elegy for Prince Mustafa

In the Kübler-Ross model, the final stage of grief is the stage of acceptance. At this point, the individual comes to terms with the fact that their situation cannot be changed and begins to learn how to cope with it. This stage is characterized by emotional surrender and is typically associated with a sense of inner peace.

Bir ejdehâ-yı dü-serdür bu hayme-i dünyâ  
Dehânnâna düşen olur hemîse nâ-peydâ (BII/b6)

In the couplet above, the poet compares this world to a two-headed dragon and states that those who fall into its mouth are inevitably doomed to perish. This imagery can be interpreted within the context of the acceptance stage. The poet has come to terms with the inescapable reality of worldly existence. The transience of life and the inevitability of death are expressed with a sense of surrender. The "dragon" metaphor serves as a powerful symbol of death and annihilation; however, this notion is now conveyed not through rebellion, but through acceptance.

Hatâsı gayr-i mu'ayyen günâhi nâ-ma'lûm  
Zihî şehîd-i sa'îd ü zihî şeh-i mazlûm (BIII/b5)

In the second hemistich of the couplet above, the poet exclaims, "Ne mutlu o kutlu şehide, ne yüce o mazlum şaha!" by referring to Prince Mustafa with the epithets of martyr and oppressed ruler, the poet elevates his status and frames death within a more positive perspective. This manner of expression indicates that emotional rebellion has been left behind, and death is now regarded not as an end, but as a transition to a higher spiritual rank.

Yüz urdu hâke o meh aslina rüçû' etdi  
Sa'âdet ile hemân kurb-i hazrete gitdi (BIII/b6)

In the couplet above, the poet's expression in the first hemistich, where the prince's face is said to have turned to the earth and returned to his origin, along with the second hemistich, which suggests that the prince joyfully entered the presence of God, can be interpreted within the framework of the acceptance stage. In the poet's view, death is not an "end," but rather a destination-a return to the essence, and a means of attaining divine proximity.

Gelür ezelde mukadder olan kalfl ü ketîr  
Hezâr kayserün oldu leyâl-i ömri kasîr (B5/b2)

The couplet above can be interpreted within the framework of the acceptance stage. In the first hemistich, the poet expresses his belief in fate, stating that "Ezelde ne yazılmışsa azi ve çoğuyla başa gelir". This reflects the core of the acceptance stage, wherein the individual recognizes the inevitability of events and submits to divine decree, acknowledging the limits of human agency. In the second hemistich, with the phrase "Hezâr kayserün oldu leyâl-i ömri kasîr" the poet emphasizes the transience of worldly power and reminds the reader of the impermanence of life and the universality of death.

Eceldür âdeme der-bend-i teng ü târ-ı asîr  
Zarûrîdür bu ki uğrar aña cüvân ile pîr (B5/b3)

In the couplet above, the poet's depiction of death as a narrow, dark, and difficult passage through which all-young and old alike-must inevitably pass can be interpreted within the framework of the acceptance stage. At this point, the poet no longer protests nor seeks meaning; rather, he acknowledges that death, though arduous, is an inescapable reality shared by all human beings.

Hayflar oldu aña iftirâ ile gitdi  
Huzûr-ı hakka du'â vü senâ ile gitdi (BVI/b6)

In the second hemistich of the couplet above, the poet states that the prince departed for the presence of God with prayers and praises. This expression can be interpreted within the framework of the acceptance stage. The line emphasizes the idea that the prince's death is not an end, but rather a transition toward divine presence. By noting that the prince approached God not with anger or protest, but with "du'â vü senâ" (prayers and praises), the poet portrays him as entering the afterlife in a state of spiritual serenity.

Hayât-ı bâkîye erişdi rûhı ey Yahyâ  
Şefiki rûh-ı Muhammed refîki zât-ı Hudâ (BVII/b4)

In the couplet above, the poet expresses that the prince's soul has attained eternal life and that his comforter is the spirit of the Prophet Muhammad, while his companion is the divine essence of God. These expressions can be interpreted within the framework of the acceptance stage. The poet presents death not as a tragic end, but as a spiritual reunion with sacred figures, emphasizing a sense of peace, transcendence, and divine closeness that characterizes the final stage of grief.

Enîsi gâ'ib erenler celîsi ehl-i safâ  
Ziyâde ede yaşam gibi rahmetin mevlâ (BVII/b5)

In the couplet above, the poet states that the martyred prince's companions are the saints of the unseen and that his interlocutors are those devoted to spiritual joy. He follows this by offering a prayer: "Allah rahmetini gözyaşlarım gibi ziyade etsin". This couplet reflects the poet's transition to a level of acceptance in which he no longer seeks to maintain a worldly connection with the deceased but instead focuses on praying for his soul and invoking divine mercy. These expressions can be evaluated within the framework of the acceptance stage.

İlâhî cennet-i Firdevs aña turag olsun  
Nizâm-ı âlem olan pâdişâh sağ olsun (BVII/b6)

In the couplet above, the poet prays for the martyred prince by saying, "Allah'im, Firdevs cenneti ona durak olsun," and concludes with a prayer for the sultan: "Âleme nizam veren pâdişâh sağ olsun,". This couplet represents a state of inner peace that follows the most intense period of mourning. With the acceptance of death comes a turning toward divine mercy and a wish for the continuation of worldly order. an expression that reflects the maturity of the acceptance stage.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this study, Taşlıcalı Yahya's elegy for Prince Mustafa was analyzed within the framework of the Kübler-Ross Model. Each distich (mîsra) of the elegy was categorized and examined in light of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

The elegy consists of 7 stanzas, each comprising 6 couplets, totaling 94 lines. Except for the second line of BIV/b4 and the first line of BIV/b6, each line reflects a stage of grief within this model.

Both lines of the opening couplet (BI/b1) represent the "shock" reaction to the news of death. Although the Kübler-Ross Model does not list shock as a distinct stage, it serves as a significant psychological starting point in the grieving process. The phrases such as "Meded meded" and "bu cihânun yıkıldı bir yani" powerfully reflect the emotional turmoil triggered by the initial impact of loss. Furthermore, the metaphor of "ecel celâlîleri" captures the sudden and aggressive nature of death.

Instances corresponding to the denial stage are identified in both lines of BV/b6. Here, the poet questions the reality of the death by emphasizing its extraordinary nature. The line "Bunuñ gibi işi kim gördü kim işitdi aceb" indirectly expresses the classical form of denial through a sense of disbelief

Lines corresponding to the anger stage are found in the following couplets: BI/b2, BI/b3, BI/b4, the second line of BI/b5, the second line of BI/b6, the second line of BIII/b1, the second line of BIII/b3, the second line of BIV/b5, the second line of BIV/b6, BV/b1, BV/b5, the second line of BVI/b1, the first line of BVI/b2, the first line of BVI/b6, and the second line of BVII/b3 -amounting to 20 lines across 15 couplets. In the Kübler-Ross Model, anger emerges as the second psychological stage following the realization of the loss. This emotional reaction, often found in elegies, is reflected in Yahya's verses both through implicit and explicit grievances. While the poet never directly addresses Sultan Süleyman with anger, the implications suggest critique toward his decisions. The real targets are Hürrem Sultan and Rüstem Paşa. Yahya's anger arises from his belief that Prince Mustafa's death was a result of

political conspiracy and injustice. His fury is not only personal but also reflects a collective outcry against tyranny and the loss of justice.

Lines reflecting the bargaining stage are found in the following: the first line of BI/b5, the first line of BIII/b1, the second line of BIII/b4, the first line of BIII/b5, the first line of BVI/b1, the second line of BVI/b2, and all lines of BVI/b3, BVI/b4, and BVI/b5- totaling 12 lines across 9 couplets. This stage, defined by Kübler-Ross, is characterized by attempts to negotiate or alter the consequences of loss. In the elegy, this is represented by exaggerated praise for the deceased and emphasis on his virtues, suggesting that “if death cannot be reversed, then at least it must be known how unjust it was.”

Instances of the depression stage occur in the following couplets: the first line of BI/b6; all lines of BII/b1 through BII/b5; the first line of BIII/b2; the first line of BIII/b3; the first line of BIII/b4; all lines of BIV/b1 through BIV/b3; the first line of BIV/b4 and BIV/b5; BV/b4; BVII/b1 through BVII/b3 (first lines) — totaling 30 lines across 18 couplets. This stage reflects the sorrow, helplessness, and emotional withdrawal that occur upon confronting the irreversibility of the loss. Yahya laments not only Mustafa’s death but also the collapse of justice and order.

Lines illustrating the acceptance stage include BII/b6; the second line of BIII/b5; all lines of BIII/b6, BV/b2, BV/b3; the second line of BVI/b6; and all lines of BVII/b4 through BVII/b6 -totaling 16 lines across 9 couplets. The metaphor of the “dragon” (referring to death) demonstrates Yahya’s surrender to the fatal nature of life. At this point, death is no longer portrayed as a tragedy but rather as a reunion with the divine. The imagery shifts toward themes of prayer, divine mercy, and serenity, indicating the poet’s emotional equilibrium. Thus, the elegy is not only a poetic lament but also a record of inner transformation.

Ultimately, this study demonstrates that classical Ottoman literary texts can be examined not only through philological and historical lenses but also through the perspective of modern psychological theories. Such interdisciplinary approaches add new dimensions to literary scholarship. This work is expected to serve as a model for future research in similar areas.

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