



Nightingales and Pleasure Gardens: Turkish Love Poems (Middle East Literature In Translation)

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The earliest Turkish verses, dating from the sixth century A.D., were love lyrics. Since then, love has dominated the Turks' poetic modes and moods pre-Islamic, Ottoman classical, folk, modern. In style, form and sensibility, this collection offers a broad spectrum: virtually all types and varieties are represented here. The English versions are loyal to the originals and strive to be authentic poems in English. Here are lyrics from pre-Islamic Central Asia, passages from epics, mystical ecstasies of such eminent thirteenth-century figures as Rumi and Yunus Emre, classical poems of the Ottoman Empire (including Süleyman the Magnificent and women courtly poets), lilting folk poems, and the work of the legendary communist Nazim Hikmet (who is arguably Turkey's most famous poet internationally) and the greatest living Turkish poet, Fazil Hüsnü Dâğlarca. The verses in this collection are true to the Turkish spirit as well as universal in their appeal. They show how Turks praise and satirize love, how they see it as a poetic experience. Poetry was for many centuries the premier Turkish genre and love its predominant theme. Some of the best expressions of that happy coalescence can be found in this volume.

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