

## INTERPRETATION OF SUFI IDEAS IN LYRICAL-ROMANTIC THEMES OF EASTERN MINIATURE ART



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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37547/ssa-V5-01-24>

**Abstract:** This article presents an interpretation of Sufi ideas in lyrical romantic themes in medieval Eastern miniatures. The teachings of Sufism are aimed at studying the human heart and psyche. The article highlights that in Eastern miniatures representing Sufi poetry through imagery, the romantic feelings of the characters and their Sufi interpretation are depicted using figurative artistic and visual means, colors, lines, metaphors, signs, and symbols. These are portrayed in a way that only those familiar with the Sufi teachings of the exoteric and esoteric can understand.

**Keywords:** Sufism, miniature, Sufi, image, symbol, love, color, metaphor, allegory, composition.

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqolada o'rta asr Sharq miniatyuralarida lirik romantik mavzularda tasvirlangan so'fiy g'oyalarning talqini keltirilgan. So'fizm ta'limoti inson qalbi va ruhiyatini o'rganishga qaratilgan. Maqolada so'fiy she'riyatini tasvirlar orqali aks ettirgan Sharq miniatyuralarida qahramonlarning romantik his-tuyg'ulari va ularning so'fiycha talqini badiiy va vizual vositalar – ranglar, chiziqlar, metaforalar, belgilar va ramzlar orqali ifodalanishi ta'kidlanadi. Ushbu elementlar faqatgina so'fiy ta'limotining zohiriy va botiniy ma'nolarini tushunadigan kishilarga ayon bo'ladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** so'fizm, miniatyura, so'fiy, tasvir, ramz, muhabbat, rang, metafora, allegoriya, kompozitsiya.

**Аннотация:** В данной статье представлена интерпретация суфийских идей в лирико-романтических мотивах средневековых восточных миниатюр. Учение суфизма направлено на изучение человеческого сердца и психики. В статье подчеркивается, что в восточных миниатюрах, представляющих суфийскую поэзию через образы, романтические чувства персонажей и их суфийская интерпретация передаются с помощью художественных и визуальных средств – цветов, линий, метафор, знаков и символов. Эти элементы изображаются таким образом, что их могут понять только те, кто знаком с суфийским учением о внешнем (захир) и внутреннем (батин) смысле.

**Ключевые слова:** суфизм, миниатюра, суфий, образ, символ, любовь, цвет, метафора, аллегория, композиция.

Sufism itself is a great romantic world. To consider the universe as a creation of the Absolute Lord, to understand the world as a mirror of God and to consider all beauty, power as God, to imagine existence in romantic colors, in the form of poetic imaginary images - symbols, in constant motion and creation from the radiance of the divine light is one of the Great Poetry. The source of all beauty, goodness, and possessions is the Absolute God. Power and strength, movement and activity are from Him. The overall beauty of the world is the opposite of its beauty. The beauty of a person is the brilliance of his beauty, the more brilliance this beauty has made in the universe, the more beautiful she can be. The thirst of the human soul for beauty and elegance is a consequence of thirst for the beauty of God. Material beauty and spiritual beauty, the beauty of ideas and thoughts are also distinguished and taken into account. Thus, the goal of beauty is to

understand the beauty of thought, the spiritual beauty, to accept the beauty of things like the supreme jewel - the spiritual eternity...

The idea of paternal love occupies an important place in Eastern classical literature. Numerous poems are dedicated to the works of Nizami "Husrav and Shirin," Navoi "Layli and Majnun," and Jami "Yusuf and Zulaikha." The legend "Shaykh San'an" in Navoi's epic "Lison ut-Tayr" also glorifies love. In the Eastern miniature, which expresses the Sufi community through imagery, the romantic feelings of the heroes, their Sufi interpretation are described with the help of figurative artistic and figurative means, colors, lines, metaphors, signs and symbols, in such a way that only people who are aware of the teachings of the Sufis are able to understand. The miniatures also feature a number of strictly religious thematic compositions, reflecting the mainplot of the literary work.



"Majnun in the Desert." A miniature illustration for Nizami Ganjavi's manuscript work "Khamsa." Calligrapher: Ali ibn Iskandari al-Kuhistani. Artist: Sultan Ali al-Bavardi.

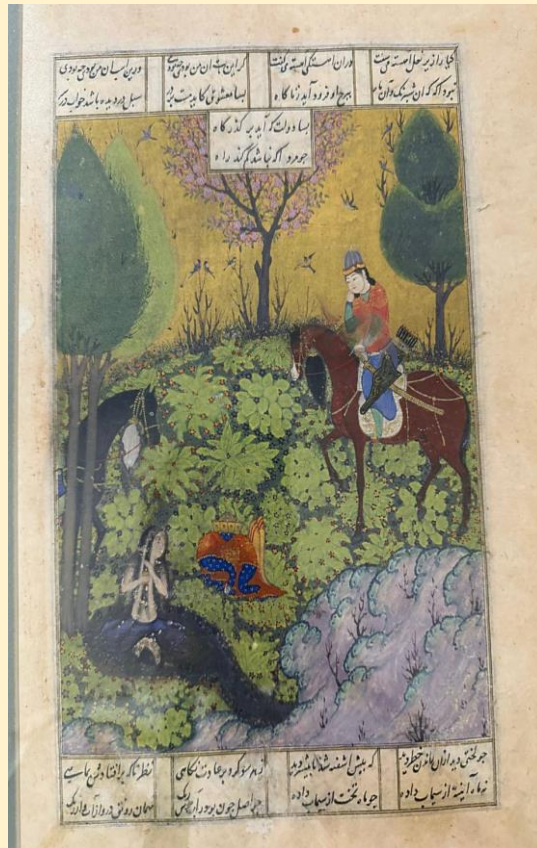
One of these is a miniature created based on the epic "Layli and Majnun" from Nizami Ganjavi's manuscript "Khamsa." Qays (Majnun), born with the flame of love, is drawn to fire. He leaves his home. He reaches the point of forgetting his indifferent tribesmen, his loved ones, and society in general, as this is characteristic of a true lover:

His own name and the name of his tribe and people,  
Not in his memory, except for Layli's name.

The lover occupies the status of such a state that he is deprived of loved ones, people in general; he longs for solitude and loneliness. Solitude creates an opportunity for the heart to turn to the Truth. Purification, that is, "chemization" is an amorphous metaphor, from which the lover who has become "golden" will now get rid of his identity and, if he looks at it, he will see the real Yor (Haq).

In Sufism, this state is called "tafrid" (isolation). The lover reaches such a state that he becomes weary of his loved ones and people in general; he yearns for solitude and loneliness. Solitude creates an opportunity for the heart to turn towards the Truth. Purification, or "transformation," begins with metaphorical love, from which the lover emerges as "gold," now freed from his identity and seeing the true Beloved (Truth) wherever he looks. In the center of the

composition, Majnun (Qays) is depicted with slightly disheveled black hair, wearing a blue cloth characteristic of the humble Majnun, holding the face of a gazelle with his right hand. Majnun, consumed by divine love, is a generalized image of a lover, embodying all the qualities of a lover - humility, modesty, harmlessness, and endurance of reproach. In the miniature, Majnun's image is depicted as sorrowful and helpless, humbled even lower than chaff before the fire of divine love. In the desert, he is intoxicated with thoughts of his beloved, and the animals seem to be his companions. Around him, deer, gazelles, rabbits, and a group of predatory animals including leopards, foxes, and wolves are depicted in a melancholic state, as if sharing his pain. However, all these depictions carry specific symbolism. This day is a day of separation, and this valley is the valley of love, with the wild animals symbolizing the calamities afflicting the lover. Majnun, a wanderer and estranged soul separated from the Divine, sits alone in this valley. In the golden sky, a white cloud floats in the middle, and green trees are visible on both sides. Various flowers and plants are depicted on a light violet background. There are inscriptions in the upper and lower parts of the work.



"Khusrav sees Shirin bathing" 15th century. The Central Asian School of Miniature Art. A miniature based on Nizami Ganjavi's work "Khamsa." Calligrapher: Ali ibn Iskandariy al-Kuhistani. Artist: Sultan Ali al-Bavardi. This work is a facsimile copy of the miniature taken from the manuscript preserved in the library of the Topkapi Palace Museum in Turkey.

According to the plot of "Khamsa," Shirin sees a portrait of Khusrav, falls in love with him, and sets out to meet him. After traveling for fourteen days and nights, she comes across a fountain and decides to stop beside it to rest and bathe. At that moment, Khusrav appears and unexpectedly sees Shirin bathing.

Next to the spring, Shirin's red and blue dress, royal crown, and shoes were placed. Khusrav, who is sitting on a purple horse in a red and turquoise dress that differs against the background of green adyr, is looking at Shirin in amazement, putting his right hand on his lip. Against the background of the golden sky, the thick branches of green cypress trees and a flowering tree are visible. On the right side of the lower part of the image, there is an image of bluish-grey rocks. The events take place on a dark green hill covered with light green bushes, as well as against

the background of a golden sky representing a warm day. The upper and lower parts of the miniature contain text.



"The appearance of the Prophet Yusuf to the women of the palace." 15th century. Bukhara School. Topkapi Palace Museum Library.

Zulaikha's love for Yusuf is depicted in accordance with Jami's poem as Sufi love, that is, in the sense of being alone with the beloved. Yusuf's garment is green. According to Sufi beliefs, green is the color favored by the Prophet. It brings peace and tranquility to a person; it is the color of transience, meaning one has reached the level of understanding that worldly affairs are worthless in the presence of Allah's beauty. This color represents vitality and passion. The green color also symbolizes momentary Beauty and the physical and spiritual beauty of Yusuf, who possesses a beautiful appearance. In the center of the miniature, located on the left side of the double manuscript, six noble women are shown turning their faces to the right, looking in amazement at Yusuf (peace be upon him) as he enters. The women, intoxicated by Yusuf's beauty, are cutting their fingers instead of the fruit with the knives in their hands. A gilded plate stands before them. On the left side, Yusuf (peace be upon him) is depicted wearing a white turban and green clothing, holding a vessel in his hand. On the right side of the miniature, Zulaikha sits on a reddish cushion on a mat, wearing green and purple clothing, with her hands concealed.

The red color in Zulaikha's state is associated with life, health, and blood. According to A. Schimmel, it is simultaneously "the color of divine glory" and a symbol of a woman achieving her goal. Symbolic numbers, the colors of garments, the actions of the characters, Yusuf's halo, and other elements remove the veil of external imagery from the plot, influencing the viewer's consciousness and preparing them to perceive the miniature from a Sufi perspective. It is astonishing how deeply the young Behzad understood the philosophical aspects of the theme. If he himself had not been a Sufi, he would not have been able to reveal the hidden meanings of the symbols so profoundly. The main events in the composition are shown through a red lattice separating the garden from the foreground during the daytime. The background is golden, surrounded by plants and a white-blossoming tree. The remaining parts of the work contain text.

Enlightened dervishes also loved ordinary people, including beautiful women, but this love was not one that ended with lustful desires. Rather, as Navoi said, it was "to cast a pure eye with a pure heart upon a pure face" and to derive pleasure from it. This pure face served as a manifestation reflecting divine grace for the lover. The singer, the Christian maiden, as well as Layli and Shirin, are all "manifestations of divine beauty." In general, love is one of the main pillars of Sufism. The interpretation of many mystical concepts is connected to love. Sufism can be succinctly described as the science of divine love. Because Sufism demands the acquisition of divine knowledge, understanding God's essence through His attributes and names, it teaches that

this can be achieved not through reason and theoretical-intellectual knowledge, but through a hidden inner feeling, inner insight, that is, through love.

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