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The Description of "Light" in The Poetry of Ja'far Muhammad Termizi: Artistic and Sufi Analysis

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Abstract: The symbol of "light" in the Uzbek and Persian poetry of Jafar Muhammad Termizi, a literary place of a great bilingual poets, philosophers and researcher of Sufi philosophy is discussed from the mystical and artistic points of views in this article. Light, in his writings, is not only a poetic theme, but also becomes a mystical and philosophical borderline rooted in Sufism. Today the word nur (light) comes from the tradition of Islamic mysticism and refers to divine light, knowledge and spiritual perfection. And in "Divine love, truth, light and intellect" in this way, light is a reference to the set guiding the lane to purification and mental enlightenment, in the poetry of Termizi. This is a Sufi and artistic analysis of the poetic use of "light" in this poem, and shows how it creates a multilayered image of love, knowledge and spiritual awakening that the poet is intent on presenting. The results of this study showed that the light imagery in Termizi's poetry is a figure of speech the purification of the soul, the acquisition of the knowledge of God (ma'rifa), and closeness to God. Termizi skilfully weaves the philosophical notions of light (noor) and haqiq—Iraqi ālāh through metaphors and imagery throughout his poetry to showcase the individual process of enlightenment. The article ends by stressing the deep spiritual and philosophical significance of Termizi's work, claiming it helps and inspires us to elevate at least some aspects of Sufi mystical conception and its modern poetic realization.

Keywords: Jafar Muhammad Termizi, poetry, "light," sun, artistic, Sufi, Irfan, artistic analysis, Sufi analysis, love, symbol, symbol, poetic expression, poetic image, description, enlightenment, science.

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1. Introduction

The term "Nur" (Light) originates from the Qur'anic verse in Surah *An-Nur*: "Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth." Based on this verse, it became a central concept in the philosophy of Irfan (Islamic mysticism). For Sufis, "nur" represents the manifestation of Divine Truth — an inner illumination that leads the heart toward enlightenment, symbolizing spiritual brightness and divine guidance. In the teachings of such eminent Sufi scholars as Shahab al-Din Suhrawardi, Ibn Arabi, Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, Imam al-Ghazali, Najm al-Din Kubra, Baha al-Din Naqshband, and Mawlana Abdurahman Jami, "nur" is interpreted as the sense of communion with the Divine during the stages of spiritual perfection — *fana* (annihilation) and *baqa* (subsistence) [1].

"Nur" as a Poetic Image in the Works of Ja'far Muhammad Termizi

In the poetry of Ja'far Muhammad Termizi, the image of "nur" appears not merely as a metaphor but as an ontological and spiritual structure. In his verses, "nur" symbolizes knowledge, love, truth, and the clarity of intellect, serving as the spiritual fruit of divine love. In other words, divine love generates light within the heart, and this light frees the

human being from darkness. This is not simply a poetic expression, but an aesthetic embodiment of mystical perception [2].

The Role of “Nur” in the Mystical Process: On the Path of Spiritual Perfection

In Termizi’s poetry, “*nur*” functions as the agent of inner purification, the journey toward divine truth, and the indicator of spiritual perfection. “*Nur*” is the symbol of enlightenment — for without knowledge and gnosis, a person cannot open the door of Truth. Thus, “*nur*” represents knowledge, particularly the kind of learning that illuminates the heart.

“Nur” as a Symbol of Divine Love

In Ja’far Muhammad Termizi’s poetic collection “*The Wonder of the Mirror*”, particularly in the poem “*Journey to the City of Light*,” “*nur*” is depicted as the manifestation of divine love [3].

Shadows
Shadows —
The reflections of the Goddess of Cold.
A place that belongs to the Painter of Silence.
Drinkers of the blood of light.
The nest of the banished ones
From the City of Radiance...
Now I shall depart
From the City of Shadows.
Then, turning toward the City of Light,
I shall drink warm rays
From the divine chalice of the Sun.
Into the frozen veins of my thoughts
I shall inject warm blood
With the healing needles of love.
I shall become luminous again —
Purely luminous.
For the life I have lived in the prison of shadows,
I shall weep within,
And smile without.

2. Materials and Methods

This study employs a qualitative and analytical research methodology, combining literary, hermeneutic, and comparative approaches to examine the symbolic and mystical representation of “light” (*nur*) in the poetry of Ja’far Muhammad Termizi. The research is based primarily on textual analysis of Termizi’s poetic collections, including *The Wonder of the Mirror* and *The Sun’s Path*, supported by references to Qur’anic verses, classical Sufi treatises, and commentaries by leading scholars such as Najmiddin Komilov and Shukhrat Sirojiddinov. The analysis focused on identifying recurring metaphors, symbols, and allegories associated with light, shadow, and illumination, and interpreting them within the framework of Sufi philosophy, particularly the doctrines of *Irfan* (mystical knowledge), *Ishraq* (illumination), and *Tajalli* (divine manifestation). The study applied close reading techniques to uncover the layers of spiritual meaning underlying Termizi’s imagery and to trace how the poet connects aesthetic expression with philosophical depth. Comparative analysis was used to relate Termizi’s depiction of light to the mystical traditions of Rumi, Suhrawardi, and other representatives of Islamic illuminationist thought, while maintaining focus on the poet’s original interpretation and artistic individuality. This interdisciplinary methodology, combining elements of philology, Sufi hermeneutics, and literary stylistics, allows for a comprehensive understanding of Termizi’s poetic system. Through this approach, the study demonstrates how his use of “light” transcends mere poetic ornamentation and becomes a central symbol of divine love, knowledge, and spiritual awakening, revealing the depth of Sufi metaphysical ideas in modern Uzbek poetry [4].

3. Results and Discussion

Artistic and Mystical Analysis

Thematic and Structural Analysis: Symbols and Metaphors

The poem is generally devoted to the theme of spiritual awakening and mystical migration. The author opens the poem with a dramatic depiction — “*The City of Shadows*”, symbolizing a realm of darkness and spiritual crisis:

Shadows —
Reflections of the Goddess of Cold.
A dwelling place of the Painter of Silence.
Drinkers of the blood of light.

These depictions are artistically grounded in allegory and metaphor. The “*City of Shadows*” represents a spiritually devastated state, deprived of light — that is, a symbol of ignorance, lovelessness, and immersion in the material world. Images such as “*the Goddess of Coldness*” and “*the Painter of Silence*” in mystical language refer to the heart cut off from enlightenment, to a person who has lost their divine connection[5].

The prominent literary scholar and Sufi expert Professor Najmiddin Komilov — one of Ja’far Muhammad’s teachers in the field of Sufi studies — did not randomly name his foreword to the poet’s collection “*The Wonder of the Mirror*” as “*A Hymn to the City of Light*.” Najmiddin Komilov perceptively observed the poet’s aspiration toward light, the sun, and illumination, and vividly expressed his impressions:

“For him, life is a river of light — an endlessly flowing stream of existence and time. These images at times echo the ancient hymns of the *Avesta*, sometimes the ideas of the *wahdat al-wujud* (unity of being) philosophy, and at times the unexpected depths of human emotion. They merge into a single radiant Light — *Nur* — that enters the heart and calls one into the valley of wonder. No, Ja’far’s verses are not mere repetitions of philosophical concepts, nor are they poetic interpretations of ready-made ideas. Rather, he succeeds in penetrating the deeper layers of the human spirit, revealing the divine mysteries hidden within human nature. He inspires the reader to look at the world and at themselves from a renewed perspective. Take, for instance, the poem ‘*Journey to the City of Light*’. Its general meaning is the awakening of the feeling of escaping from spiritual stagnation and indifference to sense the beauty of life and light, to be nourished by it. Yet, this feeling is imbued with unique emotional power and freshness through the contrast between the symbols of light and shadow.”

What distinguishes Ja’far Muhammad’s poetry most is his **mystical language**. In this language of Irfan, the poet speaks through **symbols and metaphors**. Indeed, “*at first glance, the poet seems to express his thoughts in a simple, clear, and comprehensible manner — yet, in reality, this is not so: he speaks in a highly eloquent and articulate style. His expression differs from others — filled with unexpected poetic meanings, surprising chains of imagery, and unanticipated artistic devices such as simile, irony, metaphor, allusion, and personification. These complex compositional elements demonstrate the intricacy of his expressive style. Most importantly, the sudden emergence of unexpected ideas astonishes the reader.*”

Mystical Meaning: The Journey Toward Light — The Path of Gnosis and Love

Now I shall
Leave the city of shadows.
Then, turning toward the City of Light,
I shall drink warm rays
From the divine goblet of the Sun.

In these lines, the poet’s spiritual revival begins. The “*City of Light*” in Sufi thought symbolizes the city of Truth — the source of knowledge and divine love, an allusion to the Presence of the Lord. The expression “*to drink light from the divine goblet of the Sun*”

signifies direct participation in the Divine Light, purification of the heart through knowledge (*ma'rifa*) and love (*'ishq*).

These verses reflect the mystical ideas of Shams and Mawlana Rumi: Shams Tabrizi's symbolic role as the Sun, and the act of "drinking from the light" — as Mawlana did — represent the absorption of divine love and wisdom into the heart [6].

Spiritual Purification and the Aspiration Toward Perfection

*Into the frozen veins of my thought,
I wish to pour warm blood
From the healing needles of love.*

Here, the human consciousness and spiritual state are symbolically described as "frozen veins." Love in this context is divine love — *'ishq ulloh* — the love of God. Divine love bestows upon the human heart "warm blood", that is, life and light. These lines vividly express the Sufi notion of "therapy through love."

*Once again, luminous,
Luminous may I become.*

The repetition of the word "luminous" (*nuraniy*) reflects the Sufi states of *fana* (annihilation of the self) and *baqa* (spiritual subsistence). The human being is freed from the ego, spiritually reborn, transformed into light — not only becoming light but also becoming a transmitter of light to others[7].

*For the life I spent imprisoned in shadows,
Inwardly I shall weep,
Outwardly I shall smile.*

Here, inner sorrow is portrayed as a sign of piety and spiritual insight. In Sufi tradition, a person laments inwardly for the times they lived distant from God, while their outward *smile* expresses patience and contentment with divine decree.

In this poem, Ja'far Muhammad Termizi, through a deeply spiritual journey, conveys the human movement from darkness to light — from ignorance to enlightenment, from the nafs (ego) to divine love, and from the material to the spiritual realm. Through mystical poetics, he portrays this inward migration from shadow to illumination[8].

As the distinguished scholar Najmiddin Komilov insightfully remarks about Termizi's poem "Journey to the City of Light":

"Within the essence of this poem, the Demons of Shadow — those who fear or block the Light — are condemned. The horror of coldness and lifelessness, the oppressive silence and heavy stillness of spiritual death are depicted with deep aversion. Through powerful similes, these life-denying forces appear as insects and creatures gnawing at the heart and mind. Against this background, the poet celebrates the movement of warm, life-giving blood, stirred by the radiant heat of the Sun of Life. I would not be mistaken to say that all of Ja'far Muhammad's poetry is infused with this very light."

Ja'far Muhammad Termizi's poetic ballad "The Sun's Path" (*Quyosh Siyrati*), included in his collection of the same title, is a work rich in artistic, mystical, and philosophical elements. Although outwardly it appears to be a sacred hymn to nature and existence, inwardly it embodies profound spiritual, Sufi, and humanistic meanings.

The renowned literary scholar and academic Shukhrat Sirojiddinov, in his preface to this poetic collection, offers the following assessment:

"The poet's cycle of poems such as 'The Sun Within the Heart', 'The Belated Word', and the ballad 'The Sun's Path' are composed in a modern spirit. They poetically illuminate — through philosophical reflection — the themes of homeland symbolism, historical memory, pure and sincere love, depictions of nature, the essence of human life, interpersonal relations, and moral values." [9]

In the following section, we shall analyze this ballad from **artistic, mystical-Sufi, and philosophical-gnostic** perspectives.

The Sun

by Ja'far Muhammad Termizi

Sun,

Planetary Sun,

Radiant Sun!

In the orbit of the cosmos,

Restless, wandering Sun!

For a hundred thousand years,

Or perhaps

A million years —

Or maybe

Countless millions of years —

Without sparing yourself,

Without looking back at yourself,

You scatter light,

You share love,

Brightness,

And joy.

Sun,

Smiling Sun,

Ecstatic Sun!

Above our heads,

Kind as a mother,

Devoted Sun!

While you exist,

There is night and day,

There is the difference

Between black and white.

While you exist,

The boundless universe

Has its North and South,

Its East and West!

Sun,

Sage-like Sun,

Resplendent Sun!

In the science of illumination,

Wise and radiant Sun!

From you

Philosophy and faith drew light.

From your light,

Shaykh Shahab al-Din

Created the science of Ishraq (Illumination).

From you took root

Thought and consciousness.

To you aspired

The inspired Zoroaster.

To you bowed

The sage Zoroaster.

With you began

The beautiful prelude

Of the Surah *ash-Shams*:

"By the Sun and its brightness."

Toward you yearned

Rumi, the Mawlana:
*"O Sun of the Sun of the Sun,
 O Sun, turn not thy face away from thy Sun!"*

You were praised by

Hazrat Navoi:

"...Min shamsi anwar il-huda!"

Sun,

Blossoming Sun,

Wine-like Sun!

Within Truth,

Legendary Sun!

With you,

Ahura Mazda

Manifested upon the world.

And Ahriman

Was banished from existence.

With you,

Navruz was born.

With you,

The farmer drove the ox

To the pasture.

And upon the Earth

He sowed the seeds of goodness —

Handful by handful.

And Zoroaster said:

"He who tills the soil

Angers the demons.

He who sows the seeds of goodness

Drives the demons to lament.

He who reaps the wheat

And bakes bread

Destroys the demons!"

Hazrat Solomon

Could not destroy the demons —

He merely chained them.

But you —

You purified the Earth from demons,

O sole Redeemer,

O Savior of light!

You are the pearl,

The shining gem

In the boundless ocean of the cosmos!

Sun,

Manly Sun,

Celestial Sun!

Bewildered Sun,

Astonished at the world's

Worries and whispers!

At the marketplace,

An old, greedy huckster —

Selling his sparrow-sized goods

For the price of a camel,

And loading upon his fly-like life

The sins of an elephant —
 I pity him,
 When I remember you.
 And on the riverbank,
 A lazy willow —
 Having drunk its fill of the river,
 Trembling, shivering,
 Guarding its shadow
 From the fourth passerby —
 I pity it too,
 When I remember you.
 Sun,
 Pearl-like Sun,
 Coral Sun!
 Eastern Sun,
 Lighting the West with love!
 Forgive the poet
 Who likened his beloved's face
 To yours —
 Or who likened you to someone else —
 And with poor metaphors
 And helpless similes
 Bled his words dry!
 For how could your light
 Be compared to a candle, a lamp?
 Or your generosity
 To that of Hatam Tai?
 I know —
 If I liken you to my mother,
 You will rejoice.
 For the soil and being
 Of you and my mother
 Are born of the same sacred essence of fire.
 Then tell me,
 Could one compare you
 To Iskandar (Alexander)
 Or to Jamshid?
 Sun,
 Fragrant Sun!
 Sun drunk with the wine of love!
 With eyes fixed on your path,
 I open my heart
 At early dawn.
 Enchanted by you,
 Praising you,
 Blessing you,
 I stretch my hands toward the East,
 Like an ancient Sogdian:
 "O Khurshid!
 O Aftab!
 O Sun!
 O Khur!
 O Angel,

O Heart!
 O Life!
 O Hour!
 And O Infinite Light
 Where Ahura Mazda
 Manifested Himself!
 Reveal your wonder to me —
 May I too be touched by your wonder!
 Reveal your essence to me —
 May I too be filled with your essence!
 Pour upon me your zeal —
 May I too be touched by your zeal!
 Grant me your wisdom —
 May I too be filled with your wisdom!
 Let your compassion reach me —
 May I too be touched by your compassion!
 Let your glory reach me —
 May I too be touched by your glory!"

Sun,
 Marghiana's Sun,
 Margilana's Sun,
 Fergana's Sun!
 I know that in the world —
 In India, China,
 And Japan —
 Many dynasties
 Have borne your name.
 They called Indra
 "The god of the Sun,"
 And others —
 "The child of the Sun."
 But for me,
 You shall forever remain
 The Eastern,
 The Uzbek Sun!
 You shall forever remain
 The Sun of Sogdiana,
 The Sun of Bactria,
 The Sun of Marghilan,
 The Sun of Bukhara! [10]

Genre and Form

The poetic form of the work is a **ballad**, characterized by elements typical of dramatic poetry — such as **narration, appeal, imagery, and emotional intensity**. The ballad's structure and title embody this form: in each section, the description of the word "Sun" (*Quyosh*) introduces a new poetic phase, marking a shift in tone, emotion, and symbolism[11].

Imagery and Symbols

- a. **The Sun** — the central image of the poem — is not merely an astronomical body, but a **symbol of life, light, knowledge, love, warmth, motherhood, and goodness**.
- b. It is described through a range of **epithets** such as "Radiant," "Mystic," "Wise," "Floral," "Pearl-like," "Margilani", reflecting its multifaceted nature.

- c. The **Sun** also serves as a **metaphor for divine truth, spiritual illumination, and moral purity**.
- d. *Poetic Style*
- e. The poet employs **rhyme, repetition, and parallelism** widely throughout the poem: “Sun... Sun... Sun...”, “Let it reach me... let it reach me... let it reach me...”
- f. Through direct **address and invocation**, the poet gives the poem a **monologic character**, as in: “As long as you exist...”, “When I remember you...”, “Forgive...”
- g. Figurative language — particularly **similes and metaphors** — enriches the text artistically. For instance:
“As long as you exist, light and darkness have meaning,”
“You are the pearl in the boundless ocean of the cosmos.”

Mystical and Philosophical Analysis

Ja’far Muhammad is a poet of **mystical reflection (irfoniy tafakkur)**. His poetry in both Persian-Tajik and Uzbek languages encompasses a wide range of mystical and philosophical imagery.

As literary scholar **Shokirjon Olimov** accurately notes:

“Ja’far Muhammad’s poetry is rich in figurative and symbolic images, infused with philosophical and mystical spirit, yet harmonized with folk melodies. His works focus on themes such as love, humanity, homeland, life, beauty, and virtue, creating an atmosphere of optimism and hope that leads the reader into the world of human spiritual experience.” [12]

The Sun as a Symbol of Divine Light

In **Sufism**, *light (nur)* represents **divine manifestation** — “**tajalli**.” Here, the **Sun** is portrayed as the **divine radiance of God’s light**, as expressed in the verse:

“The Sun... an endless light in which Ahuramazda is manifested!”

“Ishraq” – The Philosophy of Illumination

In **Islamic philosophy and Sufism**, *Ishraq* symbolizes **the form of light that transforms into knowledge**.

In the line “*Wise Sun in the science of Ishraq*,” the poet alludes to **Shaykh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi**, the founder of the **Illuminationist (Ishraqi) philosophy**, who viewed enlightenment as the essence of truth.

The Spiritual Journey

The appeals and supplications throughout the poem mirror the **pleas of a seeker (murid)** on the **path of spiritual perfection**, addressing the **Divine Light (or spiritual master)**:

*Reveal your essence to me,
 Let your essence reach me too...
 Grant me your strength,
 Let your strength reach me too!*

This Invocation — a Mystical Expression of Seeking Grace and Blessing

The poet’s appeal represents a **spiritual supplication**, an expression of the seeker’s plea for **divine power, generosity, and enlightenment**.

The Struggle Between Darkness and Light

In the poem, **demons (devs)** symbolize **darkness, evil, ego (nafs), and ignorance**. The verse “*Zarathustra scattered the seeds of goodness against the demons*” resonates deeply with the **Sufi concept of the inner struggle against the self (jihad al-nafs)** — a battle between light and darkness within the human soul [13].

The Sun — Source of Life

From both a **spiritual and scientific** perspective, the Sun is depicted as the **primary source of existence and life’s energy**.

In this sense, it represents the **natural foundation of all being**. However, in the mystical context, it not only emits physical light but also **gives birth to “thought and**

consciousness," thus serving as both the **physical and metaphysical origin of intellect and knowledge**[14].

The Sun in Culture and Civilization

The poem also carries **civilizational references** that connect the Sun to human spiritual evolution. Figures such as **Mawlana Rumi, Alisher Navoi, Zarathustra, and Prophet Solomon (Sulaymon)** are evoked as **symbolic bearers of light and goodness** across different epochs and cultures. The mention of the Qur'anic verse "*Wa-sh-Shamsi wa zuhāhā*" (By the Sun and its brightness — Surah Ash-Shams) ties the **Sun to divine revelation**, emphasizing its **sacred and oath-worthy nature** in Islamic cosmology[15].

In **Ja'far Muhammad Termizi's** poem "*Journey to the City of Light*" (*Nur shahriga safar*), the poetic images of "**light**" and "**darkness**" are presented within the **classical Sufi tradition**, imbued with profound **spiritual, artistic, and philosophical meaning**.

His ballad "*The Portrait of the Sun*" (*Quyosh siyrati*):

- a. Bridges **Eastern mystical traditions** with **modern philosophical ideas**;
- b. Celebrates **divine illumination, spiritual virtue, and moral life** through the image of the Sun;
- c. Integrates **key Sufi concepts** such as *light (nur)*, *illumination (ishraq)*, *supplication (iltiyo)*, *demons (dev)*, and *the seed of goodness*;
- d. Stylistically emerges as a **poetic hymn, mystical contemplation, and heartfelt spiritual prayer**.

In Ja'far Muhammad Termizi's poetry, **light** is not merely an **aesthetic or poetic image**, but a **spiritual perception — a force that guides the human heart toward divine truth and enlightenment**. Thus, his work stands not only as **artistic creation**, but also as a **spiritual-intellectual school**, offering insight into **humanity's inner awakening**.

In essence, **Ja'far Muhammad Termizi's poetry** deeply reflects **mystical and philosophical dimensions**, depicting **love, humanity, life, and nature** in a profoundly **awe-inspiring and contemplative manner**.

4. Conclusion

The study shows that although the symbol of light in Jafar Muhammad Termizi's poetry has an aesthetic aspect, as a Sufi poet, It has mystical and philosophical meanings. This research shows that the word "light" is used more as a metaphor for divine love, intellect and spirituality, leading to personal transformation and enlightenment. The results show that in on the whole poetics of light which is embodied in the verse of the Termizi symbolizing the purification journey of the soul reflects the nature of divine knowledge and gnosis which are at the core of Sufi doctrine. The vividness of metaphors and allegories that intertwine these themes in his art makes the mystical nature of his work profound. The impact of this research also reflects the mystical aspects of human life that are discussed in the poetry of Termizi, the effects of human nature that are philosophical and emotional. Future research could analyze light symbolism in Sufi poetry in a cross-cultural context and its influence on modern mystic writings. Perhaps exploring the dynamic between Termizi's mystical poetry and contemporary spiritual movements would deepen our understanding of the traditional Sufi ideas still being discussed today in formal contexts and in modern literary and philosophical thought.

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