



(REVIEW ARTICLE)



## The development of Alisher Navoi's passion for writing mystical ghazals

Dilnoza Olimova \*

*Bukhara state university.*

International Journal of Science and Research Archive, 2026, 18(03), 1433-1439

Publication history: Received on 17 February 2026; revised on 25 March 2026; accepted on 28 March 2026

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/ijrsra.2026.18.3.0611>

### Abstract

This work scientifically analyzes the factors that shaped the passion of one of the greatest scholars of Turkic literature, Alisher Navoi, for writing mystical ghazals, as well as the stages of his creative development. It is shown that the emergence and development of the mystical spirit in Navoi's work was inextricably linked with the philosophy of Sufism, the influence of the medieval spiritual environment, and the poet's personal spiritual maturity. The article substantiates that the formation of Navoi's passion for writing mystical ghazals is associated with several factors. It is scientifically proven that the poet's interest in science and enlightenment from his youth, his early acquaintance with the teachings of Sufism played an important role in his spiritual growth, and that the poet's creative contacts with his mentors and contemporaries further enriched his mystical views. As a result, it is scientifically concluded that the poet's passion for writing mystical ghazals was formed on the basis of an internal spiritual need and the harmony of traditions. At the end of the article, one of Navoi's ghazals, imbued with the philosophy of Sufism, leading a person to spiritual purification and understanding of divine truth, is analyzed.

**Keywords:** Sufism; Ghazal; Spiritual perfection; "Khazoyin ul-maoniy"; Divine love; Perfection; Ascetic

### 1. Introduction

One of the great figures who created high examples of mystical lyrics in the development of classical Eastern literature is Alisher Navoi. In his lyrics, the ghazal genre is of particular importance. Navoi's ghazals are not only a means of artistic perfection, but also have special scientific significance as a poetic expression of mystical thought, spiritual and spiritual search, and a mystical worldview. Although Navoi's work has been widely studied in literary studies, the issue of the factors of formation of his inner need and creative passion for writing mystical ghazals has not been studied as a separate, step-by-step process.

The relevance of the present study is that it shows that Navoi's mystical lyrics are the product of stages of spiritual and intellectual maturity. The main goal is to systematically identify the factors of formation of his passion for writing mystical ghazals in a historical-biographical, spiritual and social context.

#### 1.1. Research questions

- At what stages was Navoi's mystical worldview formed?
- How did the mystical environment and the influence of teachers affect the poet's creative direction?
- What is the connection between socio-political activity and spiritual search?

\* Corresponding author: Dilnoza Olimova

## 2. Literature review

Although the problems of mystical literature in world literature have been studied by literary critics and orientalists such as H. Ritter, L. Massignon, J. S. Trimingham, A. Schimmel, A. Zarrinko'b, M. A. Joshon, these researchers mainly relied on the works of Arabic and Persian-speaking authors [1]. In the 19th and 20th centuries, a special interest in the personality and work of Alisher Navoi was clearly evident in Russian oriental studies. Among the Russian orientalists, M. Nikitsky, V. Bartold, E. Bertels, A. Kononov, A. Borovkov, A. Semyonov, Yakubovsky, A. Boldyrev created significant studies [2]. However, an attempt to objectively assess the mystical and mystical views of Alisher Navoi is noticeable only in the studies of E. E. Bertels [3].

The scientific and educational views on Sufism and Sufism literature, as well as its artistic interpretation in Uzbek classical literature, have been discussed to a certain extent in Uzbek literary studies. A number of studies in this field of science have emerged during the years of independence.

In fact, the process of serious study of Navoi began in Europe in the 19th century. Today, the pace of this process has accelerated even more. For example, in 2003, the collection "Alisher Navoi" in Germany included articles written in German and English on Navoi's work, his personality, and the Timurid environment, as well as studies by German scholars such as Barbara Kellner Henkel, Jürgen Paul, Klaus Schönig, Erika Taubbe, Claudia Romer, Mark Kirschner, Sigrid Kleinmichel, and Joachim Girsich. These studies show Navoi's important place in the cultural environment of his time. Foreign experts study Navoi's work in relation to the environment in which he lived, in particular, the environment of the time of Hussein Baykara. They view this period as the period of the Eastern Renaissance, and see the development of literature, history, art, and architecture in connection with Navoi's activities[4].

---

## 3. Methodology

A number of scientific methods related to literary studies were used in the research process in a comprehensive manner. These methods helped us to fully reveal the content of our article. The methodological basis of our article is the historical-literary approach. Through this method, historical, social and cultural factors that influenced the formation of Alisher Navoi's work were analyzed. The comparative-analytical method was also used during the research. Through this method, the process of formation of Navoi's mystical ghazals was studied separately in separate stages. A systematic approach helped to determine the dynamics of the development of the poet's work and to show the gradual development of his mystical views.

---

## 4. Discussion

As the first source of information about the life and work of the genius of the word Hazrat Alisher Navoi, we can, of course, take his works. Because the sources that show the personality of any creator are, first of all, his own works. The spirit of the creator lives in them, we can find certain information about his life, the period in which he lived and his creative activity. In particular, works such as "Khamsa", "Munajat", "Khazoyin ul-maoniy" contain information about the personal life of the poet, works such as "Muhokamat-ul lug'atayn", "Khamsat ul-mutahayyirin" contain information about the history of writing some works belonging to the creator's pen, and works such as "Vaqfiya", "Munshaot" reflect the social activity of the great poet. In addition to his own works, we can also get information about Navoi from the works of his contemporaries. We can find this in the works of many artists, for example, Abdurazzoq Samarkandi's "Matlayi" sadayin va majmoyi bahrayn", Mirkhand's "Ravzat us-safo" (information about Navoi is in part 7 of the work), Davlatshah Samarkandi's "Tazkirat ush-shuaro", Jomi's "Bahoristan", "Haft avrang", Khandamir's "Makarim ul-akhloq", Zayniddin Vasifi's "Badoye ul-vaqoye" and many other works.

The issue we want to cover in our article is how the poet's passion for writing mystical ghazals was formed and what motivated him. Of course, it is impossible not to refer to the works of the poet himself and his contemporaries on the issue raised. Alisher Navoi was born into a high-ranking, enlightened and cultured family of Khorasan. His father Ghiyasiddin was a prominent member of the Timurid dynasty and was the ruler of some regions of the Khorasan state. Therefore... For his great devotion to folk art, he was given the title of "Bakhshi". The poet's maternal grandfather, Abu Said Chang, was also under the protection of the Timurid state. The poet's uncles - Muhammad Ali Gharib and Mir Said Kabuliyil - were talented individuals recognized by their contemporaries in music and artistic creativity. In the work "Majolis un-nafais" he notes that more than ten people in his family tree are associated with poetry. From these descriptions it is clear that he was brought up in an environment with a high devotion to poetry.

In his work "Majolis un-nafais" he mentioned an incident related to Sharafiddin Ali Yazdi:

"The perfection and maturity of Mawlana (Sharafiddin Ali Yazdi) are recognized by the whole world. Due to the turmoil during the reign of Shahrukh Sultan, my father, along with many people, fled from various intrigues and events in life and set off from Khorasan to Iraq. On the way, they reached Taft, the birthplace of Mawlana, at midnight. By chance, they were at the door of Mawlana's room.

At dawn, as usual, the children entered the room to play. I was also with them, I was six years old at that time. Mawlana was sitting on the veranda. They called one of the children and learned about the guests who had come. I managed to go to them. I replied that I gave them whatever they asked for. They smiled and praised me. Then I asked: "Do you go to school?" they asked. I said, "Yes, I will." They asked again, "How far have you studied?" I replied, "Until Surah Tabarak." [5]

Then they said, "There were other children here, we were going to call them, but you came and introduced yourself to us. So we will recite Fatiha for you," and encouraged me to join them in their prayers.

At that time, my father and the elders of that community also came and offered various respects and praises in the presence of Mevlana. After that, a realization dawned in my heart: "What a great person this man is."

In the chapter on the reason for writing the poem "Lison ut-tayr", it is stated that in his childhood, his teacher, in addition to memorizing the surahs of the Holy Quran, also taught young Alisher books such as "Guliston", "Bo'ston", and "Mantiq ut-tayr" to make his mind quick and fluent. Among these, "Mantiq ut-tayr" especially had a strong influence on the future poet, making him imaginative and personable. His parents, worried about this, hid the book [6]. Attar's status in Sufi literature is high. His work, especially his rubaiyats, which are rich in Sufi spirit and content, are dedicated to glorifying Allah, singing divine love in its peak, understanding the essence of humanity, reproaching the body, soul and world that are a veil on the path to perfection, describing the beloved, the hope of reconciliation and the pain of separation. In creativity, he is considered a successor to the teachings of Hussein ibn Mansur al-Hallaj and Bayazid Bistami. Attar is a person who sings of divine love with passion, spreads flames around, or rather, the heat itself, who interpreted the science of monotheism in poetic language. The basis of Attar's philosophy is the science of monotheism (recognition of the oneness of Allah). According to him, monotheism is not only a recognition of the oneness of Allah, but also an attempt to merge with Him, that is, a process that means a person's aspiration towards the absolute Spirit. His works emphasize that the universe is the creation of Allah, that He is hidden and manifest in His being, and that all things originate from the one Essence. If the work "Khusravnama" sings of figurative love, then the work "Mantiq ut-tair", which occupied Alisher Navoi's imagination since childhood, is considered the greatest literary monument of Sufism. The books of Abdurakhmon Jami, Davlatshah Samarkandiy, and Alisher Navoi contain a lot of information about the life and work of Fariduddin Attar. In particular, Navoi notes that F. Attar "is a jewel of mystery, whose goals are beyond poetry, whose secrets are divine, and whose enlightenment is unmatched (limitless, inexhaustible) in the word of God" [7].

Alisher Navoi began writing poetry at the age of 10-12. According to the historian Khandamir, Mawlana Lutfi, who was pleased with the talent of the young Alisher Navoi, listened to his ghazal with the theme:

When I close my eyes, tears fall from my eyes every moment,

Like this, a star will appear, a sun will disappear

and said: "If I had the means, I would exchange ten or twelve thousand Persian and Turkish verses for this ghazal..." Alisher Navoi became widely known as a poet at the age of 15. He wrote his poems in Turkish (under the pseudonym Navoi) and Persian (under the pseudonym Foni).

Later, he studied in various fields with many teachers and tried to raise his self-enlightened consciousness. In 1459-1460, his teacher-disciple relationship with Navoi Jami later rose to the level of murshid and murid. Alisher Navoi took lessons in the theoretical issues of artistic creation, theology, the teachings and history of Sufism under the direct participation of Abdurakhman Jami, a great spiritual figure of the Naqshbandi world. In his blessed court, he studied the history of the teachings of the order, their views on theoretical issues, and the commentaries and treatises of Persian Sufis such as "Lavoeh", "Lavome", "Sharhi Rubaiyat", "Nafohat ul-uns", "Qudsiya", "Lamaot", "Ilahiynoma".

Another of the teachers who expanded his worldview on Sufism was Khoja Fayzullah Samarkandi. In his work "Majolis un-nafais" he mentions that in fiqh he was called Hanifai Sani, that he studied fiqh under him for 2 years, and that he was called his son. Alisher Navoi's steps in theology are extensive and very instructive. As a true Muslim who had risen to the level of perfection, he fulfilled almost all the obligatory sunnahs of Islamic law. Alisher Navoi strictly adhered to

the pillars of Sharia. In one of his ghazals, the great poet interprets the necessity of harmony between faith (tawhid) and action (shariah) as follows:

You who seek to know the secret of Devine Unity

Know: who exceeds the rulings of Sharia strays from the path

That is, anyone who wants to understand the mystery of monotheism - the oneness of Allah Almighty - should know that if he goes beyond the boundaries of Sharia, he will go astray.

Alisher Navoi is a thinker whose words and deeds are one. As evidence of his views expressed in the above verse, he steadfastly adhered to the pillars of Islamic Sharia throughout his life.

According to Khandamir, Hazrat Alisher Navoi: "...participated in all five congregational prayers." He also showed special zeal in organizing Friday and congregational prayers. He built a beautifully decorated mosque in the Marghani Park of Herat, and appointed Khoja Hafiz Muhammad Sultanshah, who was the leader of the reciters of his time, as the imam of this mosque, and he himself regularly participated in the five congregational prayers here. Hazrat Alisher Navoi's treasury never accumulated enough gold to be required to pay zakat. Any income that came to the treasury was soon spent as gifts to representatives of various classes or was directed to the construction of mosques, madrasas, khanaqohs, and similar structures for the benefit of the people. Despite this, Amir Navoi also showed great zeal in giving zakat. Along with paying great attention to fasting during Ramadan, he especially increased the number of alms and donations during this blessed month. He honored the virtuous, poets, the poor, the disabled, and orphans with gifts of money and clothes. Hazrat Alisher Navoi tried to perform the fifth pillar of Islam, the Hajj pilgrimage, several times, but was unsuccessful.

Alisher Navoi diligently studied the following books by great Islamic thinkers and Sufi scholars and mentioned them in his works: Tafsir books: Najmiddin Kubro's "Ayn-l-hayat" on the interpretation of the Holy Quran, Abu Hamid Ghazali's "Jawahiru-l-Quran", Rozbehan Baqli's "Aroyisu-l-bayan fi-l-haqoyiqi-l-Quran", Abu Talib Makki's "Qutu-l-qulub", Najmuddin Razi's "Bahru-l-haqoyiq", Husayn Voiz Kashifi's "Jawahiru-t-tafsir", Mahmud Zamakhshari's "Al-kashshof fi tafsir-l-Quran", Sadruddin Qonawi's "Tafsiri Fatiha" on the interpretation of the first surah of the Holy Quran. The fact that these works have gained recognition throughout the Islamic world as authoritative sources in the field of tafsir (interpretation of the Quran) shows how much attention the great thinker paid to the science of the Quran. One of them, Husayn Voiz Kashifi's "Jawahiru-t-tafsir" was written directly under the recommendation and patronage of Hazrat Navoi [8].

Based on the above information, we can be sure that Navoi did not enter the world of Sufism all at once. The examples we have given show that his mystical worldview expanded over the years. This served as the basis for the absorption of almost all of his works into his soul. In particular, we can say that his works such as "Arbain", "Siraj ul-muslimin", "Munajot", "Nasayim - ul muhabbat", "Lison ut-tayr" are also irrigated with the same water of Sufism. However, we cannot say that his other works are free from this. It is natural that we find elements of Sufism in all of his works. Because the theme of most of his works is the "Holy Quran".

In 1492-1498, at the suggestion of Husayn Baykara, Alisher Navoi collected all his poems, including those included in his previous official divans, and created a large collection called "Khazoyin ul-maoniy" ("Treasure of Meanings"). Since the collection includes four divans, it is also called "Chor Divan". There are copies of the collection in St. Petersburg (1498-99, inv. Khanikov-55; 1592-96, inv. Dorn-558), Istanbul (1495-97, copied by the calligrapher Darvesh Muhammad Toqi, inv. No. 808) and Paris (1525-27, copied by the scribe al-Hijrani, inv. No. 316-317), on the basis of which Professor H. Sulaymonov created a scientific and critical text of the collection (1959-60). This text served as the basis for the divans that make up volumes 3-6 of the text. Alisher Navoi named each of the four divans according to the seasons of human life. In this sense, he called the period from 7-8 to 20 years of age the spring of human life and called the first divan of the collection "G'ar'ayib us-sig'ar" ("The Wonders of Childhood"). He defined the period from 20 to 35 years of age as the summer of human life and called it "Navodir ush-shabab" ("The Rarities of Youth"). He compared the age of 35-45 to the autumn of life and called it "Bado' ul-wasat" ("The Beauties of the Middle Ages"). He compared the age of 45-60 to the winter of life and called it "Fawayid ul-kibar" ("The Benefits of Old Age"). He included 650 ghazals in each divan and accordingly made room for other poetic genres. As a result of analyzing the ghazals in his collection "Khazoyin ul-Maoniy", we found that the poet's passion for writing mystical ghazals rose one level higher in each collection, and since his last collection, "Fawayid ul-Kibar", was written at a very old age, his mystical consciousness was at a high level and he had quite a few mystical ghazals in it.

"Fawoid ul-Kibar" in a poem:

In a ghazal, three alone can claim the perfect strain

For none beyond them can match such verse again

He admits that he was inspired by the romantic ghazals of Khusraw Dehlavi, the rindona of Hafiz Shirazi, and the orifon of Abdurakhman Jami. As a result of our study of his "Khazoyin ul-maoniy" divan, we came across more than a hundred pure sufism ghazals in the "Khazoyin ul-maoniy" divan. When we got acquainted with Navoi's artistic and educational ghazals, we witnessed that they covered issues such as mystical concepts, divine love, understanding the Truth, defeating the ego, striving for perfection, and understanding the transience of the world.

As proof of our words, let us pay attention to the analysis of Alisher Navoi's response ghazal in Uzbek, which begins with "Birovga musallam tariqi savvuf...", written in response to Jami's ghazal in Tajik, which begins with "Chand saavvuf, ey pizar ki chist tasawwuf...", which is an artistic interpretation of his thoughts on Sufism. This ghazal is located at number 306 of the "Favoyid ul-kibar" collection.

For are person the sufipath is an unquestioned truth

For in his very essence no trace of hupocrisy exists

The meaning of the verse is: "There is no disagreement in the understanding of Allah by a person who has entered the path of Sufism." That is, whoever chooses to enter the path of Truth, the path of truth, there should be no contradiction or inconsistency in his being.

For those content (Rizo ahli) with God's will, Sufism is pure noble character

Its true refinement is beauty, not ornament nor pretension

"Rizo ahli" - in Sufism, complete surrender to the will and will of Allah. Ruwaym bin Ahmad al-Baghdadi defines "rizo" as the ability to enjoy the misfortunes that are destined for a person. So, people of pleasure are those who have removed the impurities from their hearts, have left the satisfaction of the self and entered the pleasure of Allah. True Sufism is the beautiful morality of people of "rizo". In this sense, their "zebu takalluf" is to purify one's character by relentlessly putting oneself through hardships and overcoming internal resistance.

Sufism is not asceticism, piety, or worship alone

For in such deeds, hypocrisy enters without pause

This verse reveals one of the most subtle truths of Sufism. It is not correct to understand Sufism only as a set of external acts of worship. That is, asceticism, piety and obedience are important acts of religion, but they cannot be considered the essence of full-fledged Sufism. A person can follow the path of asceticism, abstain from worldly pleasures, protect himself from sins with piety and strive to draw closer to Allah with many acts of worship. But there is no doubt that these acts can become a means for the self. The poet refers to this very aspect and emphasizes that hypocrisy quickly and unconsciously enters such external acts. "Hypocrisy" is one of the greatest disasters that kills the spirit of action. Therefore, no matter how beautiful external acts are, hypocrisy (hypocrisy) should not be allowed to enter them.

It is pure piety, yet free from hypocrisy;

True servitude is wholly devotion and the essence of refinement

This verse represents one of the most subtle layers of mystical thought. The verse deeply emphasizes that the essence of true servitude (slavery) is not an external appearance, but an internal state. By the phrase "pure piety", the poet means pure, true piety. However, he emphasizes that it must be "without hypocrisy." Such purity leads a person to true "ubudiyat" (true servitude). Ubudiyat is not simple obedience, but a state of the heart saturated with the devotion of a delicate love for Allah.

He does not transgress upon the worlds and deeds of others,

Nor does he go beyond the divine commands and prohibitions

The first verse states that he does not encroach on the words and deeds of people, and the second verse states that he does not interfere with the commands and prohibitions of Allah. In this way, the couplet establishes a two-way balance: It expresses decency and gentleness in dealing with people, and complete obedience in dealing with Allah. Sufism is formed when these two principles are combined. A person who enters into Sufism neither judges others nor interferes with divine judgment. He only reforms himself, purifies his heart from hypocrisy, and behaves with decency in every matter.

Thus knowing himself beyond all will and claim

No doubt remains in him, nor any regret

This verse represents the highest stage of mystical perfection and describes in a deeply philosophical sense how a person's inner spiritual journey ends. The first verse mentions a person's "unintentional realization" of himself. This is the realization of the essence of the "I". The second verse describes the change that occurs in a person's heart as a result of this realization. That is, he no longer has any hesitation or regret. He no longer regrets his past or worries about his future, but finds inner peace in his present state.

Annihilating his being in the being of the Truth

Navoiy, know this as the path of sufism

Not to hesitate about anything and not to give in to despair is one of the requirements of tawakkul. The last verse of the ghazal illuminates the main condition and essence of Sufism. That is, "Wahdati wujud" – the unity of existence, the awareness of knowing that there is no other being than Allah, the union of the human being with the existence of the Truth. Navoi calls this tawfiq and tawhid the way of Sufism. We can find many examples of such lyrics dedicated to Sufism in his "Khazoyin ul-maoniy" divan.

## Conclusion

As a result of the study, it was found that Navoi's passion for writing mystical ghazals was formed in the following stages.

- Stage 1: Under the influence of the scientific and cultural environment
- Stage 2: Direct rapprochement with the teachings of Sufism
- Stage 3: Social activity and inner spiritual need
- Stage 4: Transformation of mystical thinking into a creative principle

The results obtained show that Navoi's mystical ghazals are not an accidental poetic experiment, but a logical result of the process of spiritual and intellectual maturation. In the poet's creative evolution, the scientific environment, the influence of teachers, and the traditions of the order were inextricably linked, creating the basis for the formation of mystical lyrics.

---

## References

- [1] Study of Sufi teachings abroad. Author of interpretations and translations Q. Ismoilov. – Tashkent: "Mumtoz so'z", 2008
- [2] Hallieva G.I. Study of Uzbek classical literature in Russian orientalism of the 20th century: Philology. PhD. Dissertation. Author's abstract. – Tashkent, 2016.
- [3] Bertels E.E. Selected works: Navoiy and Jami. – Moscow: "Nauka", 1965; Sufism and Sufi literature. – Moscow: "Nauka", 1965.
- [4] A. Hayitmetov Literature of the Timurid period. – T.: Fan, 1996. (p. 142)
- [5] Alisher Navoiy. 2011. Majolis un nafois. Prepared for publication by S. Ganiyeva. Complete works. Volume 9. Tashkent: Gafur Ghulom. P. 16
- [6] Sirojiddinov Sh., Yusupova D., Davlotov O. Navoiyshunoslik (Book 1). Tashkent: "Tamaddun", 2018;
- [7] Alisher Navoiy. Complete works. 10 volumes. Volume 9. Mahbub ul-qulub. – Tashkent, G. Ghulom Publishing House, 2013. p. 464.

- [8] Nurboy Jabbarov "The Master of the Maoniy ahlining sahibqironi" monograph. Tashkent. "Adabiyot", 2021. p. 20
- [9] Navoiy A. Complete works. 20 volumes, volume 6. -Tashkent: "Science", 1990. - P. 156