



Poetic and Functional Potentials of the "Line" Metaphor in Muhammad Füzuli's Layli and Majnun

Muhammed Fuzuli'nin Leyla ve Mecnun'unda "Çizgi" Metaforunun Şiirsel ve İşlevsel Potansiyelleri

Hummatova Khuraman¹

Email: hummatovax@mail.ru

Orcid No: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3015-3107>

ABSTRACT

One of the symbols and metaphors employed in Muhammad Füzuli's Layli and Majnun is the line (writing). In this work, the metaphor attains both an inner (esoteric) and an outer (exoteric) meaning. Majnun (Qays) is a lover who strives to practice the art of love through writing. The line, or writing, becomes both his object of inspiration and his instrument of cognition.

In Sufi teaching, before anything else, the concept of line (writing) is associated with the Divine Tablet (Lawh al-Mahfuz)-the celestial record in which all of God's decrees are inscribed. Fundamentally, a line represents the drawn form of a letter, Word, or thought. Within the discipline of Sufism, the beautiful rendering of this form gave rise to what is known as *ḥusn al-khatt* - the art of beautiful writing (calligraphy).

In the process of writing beautifully, the human being seeks to create aesthetic forms that reflect his love for al-Ḥusn al-Mutlaq - the Absolute Beauty. Everything inscribed with a beautiful line function as a mirror reflecting the Divine Being. From the Sufi perspective, the "line" metaphor we seek to interpret encapsulates "writing" as divine information that shapes and determines human destiny.

Keywords: Muhammad Fuzuli, Layli and Majnun, line (writing), divine information, relation between multiplicity and unity

ÖZET

Muhammed Fuzulî'nin Leylî ve Mecnun adlı eserinde kullanılan sembol ve mecazlardan biri "hatt (yazı)" mecazıdır. Bu eserde hatt mecazı hem batınî (içsel) hem de zahirî (dışsal) anlam katmanlarına sahiptir. Mecnun (Kays), aşk sanatını yazı aracılığıyla uygulamaya çalışan bir âşıktır. Hatt ya da yazı, onun için hem ilhamın nesnesi, hem de idrak aracıdır.

Tasavvuf öğretisinde hatt (yazı) kavramı, her şeyden önce Levh-i Mahfuz - yani Allah'ın tüm takdirlerinin yazılı olduğu ilahi levha - ile ilişkilendirilir. Özünde hatt, bir harfin, kelimenin veya düşüncenin çizilmiş biçimini temsil eder. Tasavvuf disiplininde bu biçimin güzel bir şekilde işlenmesi, *ḥusn-i hat* olarak bilinen güzel yazı sanatının (kaligrafi) doğmasına yol açmıştır.

Güzel yazı yazma sürecinde insan, el-Ḥüsnu'l-Mutlaq - yani Mutlak Güzellik - olan Allah'a duyduğu sevgiyi yansıtan estetik biçimler yaratmaya çalışır. Güzel hatla yazılan her şey, İlâhî Varlığın bir aynası olarak işlev görür. Tasavvufî bakış açısından, burada yorumlanan "hatt" mecazı, insan kaderini biçimlendiren ve belirleyen ilahî bilgi (yazı) kavramını özünde taşır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Muhammed Fuzulî, Leylî ve Mecnun, hatt (yazı), ilahî bilgi, kesret ve vahdet ilişkisi

INTRODUCTION

¹ Prof. Dr., Chief Researcher, Department of Turkic Peoples' Literature Nizami Ganjavi Institute of Literature, Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences; Full Member of the Turan Academy of Sciences; Baku, H. Cavid, 117.

Muhammad Füzuli's Layli and Majnun is replete with symbols and metaphors that reflect its deep Sufi content. Among these, the metaphor of the line (khatt), or writing, holds a central position, operating on both esoteric (batin) and exoteric (zahir) levels. In the poem, Majnun (Qays) seeks to practice the art of love through writing, in which the line serves simultaneously as a source of inspiration and a medium for understanding and expressing metaphysical truths. In Sufi thought, the concept of the line is intimately associated with the Divine Tablet (Lawḥ al-Maḥfūz), the celestial record of God's decrees. Furthermore, the aesthetic rendering of the line gives rise to ḥusn al-khatt, the art of beautiful writing, which reflects the human aspiration to mirror al-Ḥusn al-Muṭlaq – the Absolute Beauty. Within this framework, writing becomes a conduit for divine knowledge, shaping human perception and destiny. By employing this metaphor, Füzuli's poetry merges literary artistry with spiritual insight, creating a layered work that invites both aesthetic appreciation and mystical contemplation.

Main part

One of the symbols and metaphors reflecting Sufi content in Muhammad Füzuli's Layli and Majnun is the metaphor of the line (writing). As noted in the research literature, "Such scientific concepts and terms in Füzuli's poetry are not employed for the sake of formal scholarship or to display erudition; rather, they are introduced as a poetic necessity connected with imagery and the author's intention, serving as means of comparison and analogy, and thus emerge as additional poetic qualities" (Aliyev, 1986, p. 94).

By employing the Word khatt (line), the poet creates, throughout the work, various layers of meaning and hidden implications, producing a poetic beauty imbued with both overt and subtle significance.

Eylærdiler idi khætt-i væfa mæshq,
Artardı dæmadæm onlara eshq (Füzuli, 2005).

*(They were engaged in the practice of the line of faithfulness,
And their love increased with every moment.)*

This verse represents one of the central themes of Füzuli's poetry - the unity of devoted lovers, their faithfulness, the expression of their poetic and spiritual world through writing, and the gradual intensification of love over time. In the first hemistich, the poet declares that the lover practices fidelity through writing. In other words, in the relationship between lovers, writing becomes an act of intimacy and a manifestation of loyalty. Here, love is revealed through faithfulness (wafā) and the subtle expression of emotions (khatt, the line or script). The second hemistich expresses the ever-growing nature of their love. Through constancy and the discipline of expression, Majnun's love does not fade-it increases at every moment, becoming deeper, stronger, and more enduring.

In this way, Füzuli develops a spiritual-poetic concept of unity in which love abolishes all forms of duality. The Word mashq (practice) in the verse is not merely a physical act but the experiential training of the emotions-a continuous contemplation of feeling. Such "practice" prevents love from diminishing over time; rather, it allows it to intensify, be preserved in memory, and take root in the subconscious.

In the Sufi context, this couplet conveys the idea of perpetual fidelity and spiritual self-purification. Here, love is not a fleeting emotion but a path, a slowly kindled and ever-growing flame. Füzuli presents affection as the reward for faithfulness and conceives of love as a form of spiritual discipline worthy of mystical understanding.

In the given examples, the metaphor of the line (khatt) carries both exoteric and esoteric dimensions. From the Sufi point of view, the "writing" reflected in this metaphor represents the divine information.

Ey levh, o khættin eylæ yadın,
Bir nechæ gun ol æsir-i hijran (Füzuli, 2005).

*(O Lawh, remember that line once more -
Be captive of separation for a few days' score)*

In this couplet -laconic in form yet profound in meaning- Füzuli anticipates the depiction of separation through the imagery of writing and written signs.



In the first hemistich, the poet evokes the Tablet (or, symbolically, a mnemonic code), urging not to forget the beloved's attributes-to preserve her image, not to erase her form. In the second hemistich, the poet seems to imply that if one remembers the beloved, one inevitably becomes captive to separation, for the code of memory does not bring peace; rather, it reopens the wound. This couplet embodies the poetic essence in which memory, image, and suffering are fused into a single emotional movement.

The poet addresses the Tablet (lawḥ)-perhaps the surface of the heart, the symbol of memory, or the material page upon which the "line" is inscribed. Here, one of the central motifs of Eastern poetry emerges: memory does not soothe; it intensifies pain. Remembrance does not heal; it is a fire that rekindles again and again. Within this pain lies the lover's path-the Sufi's journey of the soul toward the Divine through the burning of love. Füzuli reminds us that to remember is to suffer, yet it also means not to forget.

In Sufi doctrine, before all else, the line (writing) refers to the Divine Tablet (Lawḥ al-Mahfuz)-the sacred register in which all of God's decrees are inscribed. As it is expressed, "The manifestation of the Divine Face (essence and reality) in the world of being, and the epiphany of Divine Beauty, is called the line" (Cümşüdoğlu, 1997).

From this example, it becomes clear that the lovers, as pupils in a literary-spiritual school, engage in writing exercises as a symbolic act of covenant and devotion. The recurrent use of the Word khatt (line, writing) shows that as the lovers practice writing in the "school," their communication and intimacy gradually increase.

Mæshg etmæyæ Geys alsa bir khætt,

Leyli gashi idi ona særkhætt,

Khætt üzre qilirdi ol gozællær

Min naz ilæ bæhslær, jædællær (Cümşüdoğlu, 1997).

(When Qays would take the pen to train his art,

Leyli's brow became his border and his chart.

Along that line, those beauties would contend,

With a thousand charms, their sweet disputes would blend.)

In this brief yet profound example, Füzuli presents Majnun's struggle expressed through his handwriting-the line (khett)-as a reflection of his love, while also revealing the poetic significance of the metaphor that he so masterfully constructs.

In the first hemistich, Füzuli states that Qays (Majnun) takes up a line to practice with. In the second, he notes that Layli's eyebrow appears to him as a great line, a verse upon which his whole art and beauty search are inscribed. In Eastern poetry, the motif of the eyebrow is traditionally associated with bending, the bow, delicate pain, and the sign of passion. Füzuli later suggests that the "line" also symbolizes the lovers' subtle play and interaction within the realm of love.

Majnun (Qays) is a lover who seeks to practice the art of love; the line or writing becomes both his object of inspiration and his instrument of understanding. Layli's eyebrow marks the beginning boundary of his love, the first line of his destiny. In turn, the lovers play their game of affection around this "line"-the written trace of their spiritual bond.

Füzuli skillfully unites the aesthetics of writing and imagery into a single harmony. Here, writing (khatt) represents the movement of love, the eyebrow signifies the beginning of passion, and the wordless dialogue between the lovers becomes the struggle of emotions.

Thus, within these four lines, Füzuli fuses the beauty of the line (writing), the subtlest details of the beloved's appearance, and the divine power of love into one poetic act. Love, for Füzuli, is an art-capable of expressing itself through every gesture.

The poet implies that whenever Qays began to write, the name of Layli, symbolized by the curved script of the eyebrow line, became the heading, the opening of all his writing.

Chun lovhælær uzræ khætt yazardı,

Doi No. <https://doi.org/10.32955/jsml2026211171>

Amdæn khættini gælæt yazardı.
 Yæni ki, khæta tævæhhum ædæ,
 Ol gul achilib tæbæssum edæ.
 Goftaræ gælæ ki: "Bu, gælætđir,
 Tærk et ki, khilaf-i ræsm-i khætđir!" (Füzuli, 2005)

*(When on the tablets he would write a line,
 He'd err on purpose - error made divine.
 So that she'd think: "He made a slip, indeed,"
 And with a smile, the rose of lips would heed.
 She'd softly say, "This line is drawn amiss -
 Erase it now; such writing is not his.)*

The six-line poetic fragment we have presented is not merely a lyrical piece but a text embodying Füzuli's subtle metapoetic and philosophical reflections on the nature of the line (writing). He unites the art of writing with the language of love, transforming it into a space of dual meaning.

In the first line, the poet describes a beloved who "writes" through glances, gestures, and signs-an illusion perceived by the lover. The second line speaks of a "mistaken" play: a deliberate inaccuracy is introduced, which itself becomes an art of signification, a delicate provocation within love. The following line reveals that this "error" offers an opportunity to imagine a mistaken intention-a kind of playful double meaning. In the fourth line, the outcome shifts: the "mistake" leads to a smile, suggesting that the lover's open and tender gesture elicits the beloved's smile. In the next line, the poet indicates the "error," though the lover himself fails to grasp its hidden depth and meaning.

In this brief poetic fragment, the poet completes the game of writing, a symbolic act of intentionally departing from the rules of beauty and allusion by embodying writing itself.

The example from Füzuli's work illustrates how this game of writing expresses the delicate poetics of love. Through the motif of writing (khett), the poet creates an allegory of love in which the lover intentionally misspells Layli's name. Yet this error is not accidental-it is a veiled invitation, an aesthetic provocation, and a play with convention. In response to the mistake, the lover anticipates a smile-a mutual inner reaction-and finds comfort in it.

Thus, in this poetic fragment, the deliberate mistake in writing (the line) becomes an intuitive expression of the path leading to love. Through the lover's voice, Füzuli suggests that the intentional miswriting of a word (in this case, Layli's name) may represent the highest form of Truth, so long as it is sustained by love. The lover who consciously errs upon the Tablet may, in fact, dream that his "mistake" will prompt Layli to smile and to speak to him, saying, "What you wrote is wrong."

Elmi-xætæ ömrün eylæyib særf,
 Mæshq etmiş idi hæmin iki hærf:
 Bu sæfhædæ "lām" ü "yā" mükærrær,
 Yazardı, onu qılardı æzbær.
 Kim: "Bu iki hærfđir muradı,ı,
 Rovshæn bular ilædir sævadım." (Füzuli, 2005).

*(He spent his life in the science of the line,
 Practicing two letters - subtle, divine.
 On every page he'd write them o'er and o'er,
 "Lām" and "Yā" - inscribed forevermore.
 Saying, "These two letters are my quest, my aim,
 Through them alone my knowledge earns its name.*

Through the letters "lām" (ل) and "yā" (ی), the poet introduces the reader to more subtle meanings. As S. Aliyev writes: "Füzuli says that Majnun, during his school days, devoted his life to the science of calligraphy (rasm-xatt) and learned only two letters - lām and yā, which, when repeatedly written



together, would form the name Layli. (This repetition not only produces Layli's name but also reflects Majnun's favorite occupation.) Majnun says that his eyes (savad, i.e., the ability to read and write, but also metaphorically sight) are illuminated by these two letters. Yet this is not the point where Füzuli's depiction ends - it is where it begins. Füzuli delves deeper and reveals a marvel before us: why should Layli give light to his eyes, be a source of illumination? The Word Layli ('leyl') is not merely the beloved's name; as is well known, in Arabic it means night. The night is the realm of darkness, the kingdom of obscurity. But Majnun does not see it so: for him, Layli is not darkness but a source of light - a symbol of illumination and the light of his eyes." (Aliyev, 1986)

Here, the author naturally refers to the semantic shades contained in the literal meaning of the Word Layli, and continues by developing a Sufi interpretation of the image - connecting the absence of Layli at school with the loss of divine light:

"Majnun, whose goal is light, seeks this light within his own 'darkness' and perceives his fulfillment within it. Indeed, if the lover is Füzuli's Majnun, then he must receive the light of his eyes not from day or the sun, but from the night - from Layli, from darkness itself." (Aliyev, 1986)

In Arabic and Persian lexicons, the word "khatt" (خط) carries multiple meanings:

Line, trace, or stroke; Writing, script; A row or sequence of things; The first signs of beard or mustache on a youth's face; Wrinkle or crease; Command, decree, or order; Obligation, pledge, or contract. Further compounds include khatt-i istivā (equator), khatt-i mikhī (cuneiform script used by ancient Assyrians and Iranians), xatt-i sabz ("green line," referring to the first facial hair of youth), and khatt-i Khudā (sacred or divine script) (FƏSL, 1985).

In 'irfānī (mystical) thought, the existence of the world and of the human being are unified through the metaphors of "the world as the Great Book" (Kitāb-i Kabīr) and "the human as the Small Book" (Kitāb-i Ṣaghīr). The structure of the world is reflected within the structure of man. Since the human is a microcosmic reflection of the macrocosm, he is also a book. Thus, the world is the Great Book, and the human is the Small Book.

A book implies writing, and the author of the writing of existence is God Himself. The Qur'an is not only a sacred book of divine revelation - it is also a cosmic model of writing, an inscription of the entire universe. The very essence of creation is reflected in the Qur'an, the "Book of Books."

From this perspective, the word "xatt", meaning writing, as used in Füzuli's poetry, carries profound esoteric connotations beyond its literal sense. Above all, xatt signifies the act of drawing the visible form of any letter, Word, or thought. In Sufi aesthetics, the graceful shaping of this form gave rise to the art of ḥusn-i xatt - beautiful writing or calligraphy.

In this artistic act, the human expresses divine love and inner feeling through writing - striving to manifest beauty itself, the reflection of the Absolute Beauty (ḥusn-i mutlaq). Every piece written in beautiful script becomes a mirror reflecting divine presence.

As we see in Layli and Majnun, Majnun practices repeatedly writing Layli's name in various forms, aspiring to write it beautifully - a symbolic act in which the art of writing becomes a form of devotion, a visible manifestation of love for the Divine through the beloved's name.

"Sæn gordun ola?" deyib sorardi.
Yæni, bu bæhanæ ilæ bir dæm,
Yarın göræ, ola shadu khurraem.
Elmi-xætæ omrun eylæyib særf,
Mæshq etmish idi hæmin iki hærf.(FƏSL, 1985, S.4)

*He'd ask, "Did you see her, tell me true?" -
Thus, finding a pretext, subtle and new,
To glimpse his love, his radiant flame,
And fill his heart with joy again.
He spent his life in the science of the line,
Practicing two letters - subtle, divine.*

Doi No. <https://doi.org/10.32955/jsml2026211171>

The act of writing - of tracing letters and repeatedly inscribing Layli's name - reveals a deep parallel between Majnun's devotion to writing and the Sufi path of *sayr wa sulūk* (the mystical journey). As has been observed:

"For the *sālik* (seeker), this state corresponds to the childhood stage of his spiritual journey. To become absorbed in the contemplation of outer lines - that is, to take delight in the beauty of the visible script - is like teaching a child to recite the Qur'an. The child reads the letters and words of the Qur'an but cannot comprehend its inner meaning. Likewise, the seeker who becomes enraptured by outward beauty remains bound to the world of forms (*‘ālam al-ṣūrat*) and remains unaware of the world of meaning (*‘ālam al-ma‘nā*)." (Cümşüdoğlu, 1997)

In the same way, Majnun, during his school years, becomes enamored of Layli's outward beauty and thus remains attached to the realm of form. However, by repeating certain acts - writing her name again and again - the lover gradually comes to perceive the realm of meaning. Just as the *murīd* (disciple) who seeks to attain the *ḥusn-i muṭlaq* (Absolute Beauty) must repeatedly fulfill the requirements set by his *murshid* (spiritual guide) to reach the state of *fanā fī'llāh* (annihilation in God), Majnun, too, through his repeated act of writing, experiences proximity and mystical unity with Layli.

In this way, his act of writing signifies a spiritual contact - a tactile form of intimacy through which he achieves nearness. Every line he draws is not merely a form, but a moment of union, a reflection of divine touch within the limits of human expression.

This state of nearness and unity is also beautifully expressed by Nizami Ganjavi in Layli and Majnun, as rendered in Samad Vurghun's poetic translation:

Qatlandı dizlərim qosha "lam" kimi,
 "Yey" kimi bukmushəm oz əllərimi.
 Ah, adın məni də adıntək edir,
 O da, bax, iki "lam", iki də "yey"dir (Nizami, 1983).
My knees are bent, like the twin "lām",
And my hands are curved, as the "yā" I am.
Ah! Your name does to me the same -
It too holds two "lāms" and two "yās" in its frame.

The passage cited from the work can be interpreted, based on Mubariz Alizade's philological translation, as follows: the letter "lām" (ل) is written in the shape of a hook or curve, while the letter "yā" (ي) takes the form of a bent or curved line. Majnun says: "Out of my sorrow, I have folded my knees like two letters' lām', and bent my arms like two letters' yā'; from their union, the name of my beloved - Layli - is formed."

In Alizade's philological rendering, the verse reads as follows:

Ayaghım və qıçlarım iki "lam" hərfi kimi əyilir,
 Elim və qollarım iki "ya" hərfi kimi qatlanır.
 Sənin adında da məlum olduğu kimi,
 İki "lam", iki "ya" vardır (Nizami, 1981).
My legs bend like the twin letters "lām" (ل),
My arms fold like the two "yā" (ي).
As known from your name as well –
There are two "lāms" and two "yās" therein.

Thus, Majnun inscribes the name "Layli" on his own body. At first glance, this may be interpreted as an expression of the depth of his love - his complete self-identification with Layli, his symbolic entry into her world of thought and emotion, his spiritual encounter with her in absence, and so forth. From an artistic and philosophical perspective, all these aspects appear logically connected with the Sufi



worldview of wahdat al-wujud (the unity of being). Majnun's act of forming Layli's name with his own body symbolically represents the divine act of creation.

The Almighty first brought the material world into existence through the Word. That is, God said "Be," and the world came into being. In other words, before its material manifestation, the world existed in the Creator's consciousness as an idea - divine information - which was then expressed through sound, through the Word, and only thereafter became material Reality. In religious and Sufi philosophy, all this is symbolized in the concept of Divine Writing (al-kataba al-ilahiyya). Here, writing signifies divine destiny, programmed knowledge, the sacred design of existence.

Having already considered himself dead to the material world, Majnun - who tears his garments and abandons worldly form - exists in a purely spiritual state. By shaping his own body into the form of Layli's name, he, in that moment, attains mystical union with her.

Sæn sanma ki, oldur ol, mænæm mæn,
Bir jan ile zindædir iki tæn.
Khurram oluram, ol olsa khurram,
Gæm yetsæ ona, mænæ yetær gæm (Füzuli, 2005).

*Think not that he is he, and I am I -
With one soul, two bodies are alive.
When he rejoices, I too am glad;
If grief reaches him, it reaches me as well.*

In Sufism, this state signifies the dissolution of the concepts of "you" and "I"-that is, the disappearance of duality. All manifestations of being, regardless of their material forms or natural properties, unite and become embodied in the One. Thus, by inscribing the name "Layli" with his own body, Majnun symbolizes the divine pattern of creation. This act represents the divine union (visal), for in the beginning of creation, the elements that later became separated in form and nature were originally one, united and undifferentiated. Through the symbol of Layli, Majnun returns to that primordial unity.

It is also important to note that every element belonging to the material world, including Majnun himself-is subject to the laws of time and space. Therefore, it would be impossible for Majnun, as a living human being, to literally return to the material origin of creation, to move backward in time. However, it must be remembered that Majnun already considers himself dead.

In Sufi thought, the concept of the line (khatt) is regarded as the medium that connects the material and spiritual worlds, the realms of multiplicity (kathrat) and unity (wahdat). In poetry, the khatt also functions as an equatorial boundary between the real and the imaginary worlds. In this sense, Majnun's body has already become a "mithali badan" -a symbolic or imaginal body situated in the intermediate realm (barzakh). He exists simultaneously as a spirit in the barzakh world and as a material image in the physical world.

As long as a person lives, he remains bound by the spatiotemporal logic of the material world. After death, however, he enters a realm beyond time and space. Majnun's return to the primordial, unified state of divine creation-by shaping his body into the form of the word "Layli"-becomes possible only through this symbolic death. In doing so, his act embodies the unity of all material existence.

In Füzuli's poetic universe, the word "khatt" carries multiple meanings. In Sufi poetry, khatt may also denote the fine hair on the beloved's face, or more broadly, a veil or covering. In the science of gnosis ('irfan), everything other than God is called hijab (veil) or masiwa (that which is other than the Real). A human being may attain ma' rifah (gnosis) and haqiqat (Truth) only by removing the veils between the heart and God (Göyüşov, 2004:158). Füzuli expresses this idea in one of his ghazals:

Yuzde sirishk-ı kāmı, söyler demi-nihānı,
Kad tazharu'l-ma'ānı bi'l-khattı fi'l-lavāyeh (Füzuli, 2005).

*The blood of tears upon the cheek reveals the hidden Word,
For meanings are made manifest — inscribed as lines upon the Tablets.*

The meaning of the couplet can be interpreted as follows: "The tear flowing down the face reveals what is hidden; meanings appear upon the Tablet through the line."

Here, the poet naturally refers to the Divine Tablet (al-lawḥ al-maḥfūz), on which a person's destiny, fortune, and fate are inscribed. The tear that flows from the lover's eye reflects what has been written in his destiny. The lover, however, tries to conceal what is fated for him with his tears. Yet everything that befalls him is nothing but the realization of what has already been written on the Divine Tablet of fate.

Since man does not know what is destined to happen to him, his fate remains a mystery. The fine layer of down on the beloved's face also symbolizes this hiddenness, serving as a veil that covers the secret within. The poet expresses this idea even more profoundly in another ghazal:

Bakhma, ey jān, khatt u rūxsārına maḥbūbların,
İhtiyāt eyle, gunāh üzre gunāh etme dahi (Füzuli, 2005).

(Look not, O soul, upon the line and cheek of the beloveds;

Take heed — not to sin again.)

The interpretation of the couplet is as follows: "O soul, do not look upon that line drawn as a veil upon the face of the beautiful ones; for if you do, you shall fall into sin-sin upon sin." On the surface level, the poet seems to advise the lover not to gaze upon the face of the beloved, for in Islamic thought, looking at one who is nāmaḥram (unlawful to look at) is considered a sin. Yet, beneath this apparent moral warning lies a deeper metaphysical meaning.

In the human face, the lines and expressions reflect one's inner world. The subtle curves and features of the face act as carriers of meaning, transmitting the emotions of the inner self to the outer world. Thus, the lines of the face form a bridge between the visible (ẓāhir) and the invisible (bāṭin)-between Reality and metaphor.

From the Islamic perspective, to gaze upon the beauty of the created form-especially the human body, is to become attached to the sensual manifestation of divine beauty. Such attachment arouses desire and pleasure, which is considered sinful because it distracts one from the contemplation of the Divine Source itself.

By using the word "khatt" (line), Füzuli alludes not only to the physical feature of the beloved's face (the fine down or the curve) but also to the Divine Script-the writing on the Lawḥ al-Maḥfūz (Preserved Tablet). In Sufi philosophy, this Tablet contains all God's divine decrees and destinies. Hence, the khatt becomes a symbolic veil (ḥijāb)-a covering that separates the seeker from the Truth (al-Ḥaqq).

The khatt thus functions as both beauty and barrier: it fascinates the lover with its charm but also pulls him toward illusion (majāz), distancing him from Reality (ḥaqīqat). To look upon it without falling into the snare of desire requires self-discipline and spiritual awareness. Only the true mystic ('ārif) can see the Truth beyond the veil of form. As the Sufis say: "Those who, upon seeing the face, perceive only the line are the ignorant; those who, upon seeing the line, perceive the face are the gnostics." (Mahir, 2012)

The word "khatt" also means "fine hair" or "covering." In classical poetry, khatt-i sebz ("green line") refers to the first down appearing on a youth's face. Füzuli frequently employs this image in his Divan, as in:

"O thou whose every utterance tells the tale of thy green line (khett-i sebz)!"

or

"The Scribe of Destiny inscribed the green line (khett-i sebz) upon the page of thy face."

In another poem about the Reyḥānī script, Füzuli extends this metaphor, blending the art of writing with divine beauty, turning the physical khatt into a sacred line that joins the earthly and heavenly realms.

Gülistānī-sa'irī-kūyin kitābın bāb-bāb, ey gül,
Khatt-i rayḥān ile jedvel chekib, gülzāre yazmışlar (Füzuli, 2005)



*(O rose, thy book of grace and beauty is set forth, page by page;
With lines of basil-script, they've drawn its margin and inscribed it in the rose garden.*

Concerning this, A. Safarli writes:

"In the old Arabic script, the lines of writing were called *husn-u khatt* (beautiful script). There were six main types of this calligraphy: *muhaqqaq* (accurate, true), *reyhānī*, *naskh*, *kūfī*, *shikasta*, *ruq'a*, and *thuluth*" (Safarli, 2015: 284). As we have observed, some of these calligraphic styles appear in Füzuli's poetry as poetic figures and metaphors. Thus, when speaking of Füzuli's creative legacy, it must first be noted that his concept of love is nothing other than the embodiment of Divine Love. His works, imbued with mystical devotion, represent a continuous quest for union with God and for the attainment of divine grace.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the symbolic and allusive language of Sufism provided Füzuli with an intricate poetic instrument through which he could articulate metaphysical realities that transcend the limits of rational discourse. In the Sufi tradition, language functions not merely as a communicative tool but as a veil - an aesthetic and spiritual medium that both reveals and conceals. By employing the subtle mechanisms of metaphor, paradox, and allegory, Füzuli transforms the ineffable experience of divine love and mystical union into an artistic form accessible to human perception, yet forever resistant to complete comprehension. Consequently, his poetry oscillates between concealment and disclosure, inviting the reader to embark on an interpretive journey toward inner understanding. What appears as mystery and enigma on the surface is, in essence, a reflection of the poet's inward illumination—a synthesis of spiritual longing (*iştiyāq*), intellectual contemplation, and aesthetic sensibility. In this unified poetic vision, beauty becomes a mode of knowing, and metaphor becomes the bridge between the visible and the unseen, the human and the divine.

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