



DESCRIPTION AND HERMENEUTICS OF ARSHIY TERMIZIY'S LITERARY HERITAGE

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Article history:	Abstract:
<p>Received: 28th January 2025 Accepted: 26th February 2025</p>	<p>This article discusses the composition, themes, and hermeneutics of the works of Arshiy Termiziy, a member of the Termiziy Sayyid family. It also analyzes how the philosopher depicted the ethics of the perfect human being in a unique manner. The role of didactic poetic genres in the education of a well-rounded personality is also highlighted.</p>
<p>Keywords: Arshiy, Termiz, India, Baburids, Akbar Shah, Nizami Ganjavi, Sufism, Tariqa.</p>	

Arshiy Termiziy left behind a rich spiritual legacy during his fruitful life. His works, written in poetic form, encompass themes of spiritual education, which is an essential part of socio-ethical relations, as well as the views of the Qadiriyya Sufi order.

1. *Diwan*
2. *Masnavi Mehr-u Vafa*
3. *Shakariston*
4. *Shahidi Arshiy*

Diwan

Among Arshiy's works, one of the most significant literary compositions is his poetic *Diwan*. This work, structured in accordance with the tradition of compiling diwans, includes various poetic genres such as qasida, ghazal, qita, rubai, saqinama, and mufradat. Currently, a manuscript copy of the work is preserved under No. 94 in the Anjuman-i-Bangol Library in India. Another copy is reportedly available in the Ivanov Library of the Republic of Tajikistan, according to Ali Riza Yalmaho.

Masnavi Mehr-u Vafa

This work is one of Arshiy's masnavi compositions written on the theme of metaphorical and divine love. The author emphasizes that love without loyalty is not true love but rather a temporary passion. He asserts that the true source of pleasure in both this world and the hereafter is divine and human love. He states that love for parents, children, teachers, homeland, virtuous individuals, and good deeds ultimately leads to happiness. The only true means of attaining this happiness is through genuine love for Allah.

The *Masnavi Mehr-u Vafa* consists of 2,200 couplets and is written in the *hazaj musaddas maksur* meter. The work follows the tradition of Nizami Ganjavi's *Khosrow and Shirin*.

Shakariston

Arshiy's *Shakariston* is written in both prose and poetry, following the literary style of Sheikh Saadi Shirazi's *Gulistan* and Abdurrahman Jami's *Bahoristan*. This work is dedicated to social and spiritual relations, spiritual

education, Sufi themes, and the virtues of saintly figures.

The *Shakariston* was written in 1622 during Arshiy's youth. Currently, it is preserved under No. 823 in India and under No. 273-1969.M.N. in the National Museum of Pakistan.

The content of *Shakariston* is structured as follows:

1. *Narratives about the Imams;*
2. *Stories about Murshids and spiritual leaders;*
3. *The biographies of kings and viziers;*
4. *Ethics and discourse;*
5. *Lovers who witnessed the absolute power of truth;*
6. *Witty and delicate words, followed by a conclusion.*

Masnavi Shahidi Arshiy

The *Masnavi Shahidi Arshiy* was written under the influence of Jalaluddin Rumi's *Masnavi* and consists of 3,000 couplets. The theme of this work revolves around ethics and Sufi philosophy. The philosopher describes the essence of the work as follows:

عرشیا صد آفرین بر جان تو
تازه بادا همچو گل ایمان تو

دامن طبعت ز لطف مولوی
پر شد از لولوی بحر معنوی

مولوی خورشید عرفان آمده
لفظ چشم و معنیش جان آمده

مولوی باد بهار معنوی است



زیب بخش گلشن این مثنوی است

مثنویام یافت زیب از لطف او
همچو گل ز ابر بهاری آبرو¹

Oh Arshiy, countless praises to your soul, may your faith always remain pure like a flower. Your nature (human essence) is enriched with the precious pearls of meaning from Mawlavi's (Jalaluddin Rumi's) vast ocean of wisdom.

Mawlavi has always been the sun of divine knowledge (*irfan*), his words are like sight, and his character is the essence of the soul. Mawlavi resembles the gentle breeze of a spiritual spring, bringing beauty to this *Masnavi*.

This *Masnavi* has gained its charm from his spiritual generosity—just as flowers bloom from the spring clouds, this work too has attained widespread fame.

From these verses, it is evident that Arshiy wrote this work under the influence of Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi's compositions, drawing extensively from his artistic, ideological, and philosophical perspectives. Arshiy, through his works, calls people towards honesty, spiritual purity, moral perfection, and bravery. The author explains the title of his work in this way.

شاهد عرشى است نام این کتاب
میشود از بابهایش فتح باب

معنی این مثنوی فهمد دلی
کز محبت کرده باشد حاصلی²

The name of this book is "*Shahid Arshiy*", and each of its parts helps to open the doors of life. If a person with a pure heart were to understand the meaning of this *Masnavi*, they would attain a share of the blessing of love.

In another verse, the author refers to the title of the work as "*Aftabi Ma'navi*" (The Spiritual Sun).

آفتاب معنوی نامش بود
بر سر عرش برین نامش بود³

"*Aftabi Ma'navi*" (The Spiritual Sun) is the name of this work, and its name is also inscribed above the highest Throne (*Arsh*).

As a result, it can be said that this work serves as an important source for enriching the spiritual world of young people and purifying the soul.

In his works, Arshiy prioritizes the upbringing of the *Perfect Human*. The main themes of the book revolve

around love between people, the relationship between nature and humans, and the connection between God and His servants.

It is well known that arrogance (*pride*) is an evil trait. Allah never loves the arrogant. Arrogance is a calamity that strips joy from life and tranquility from the heart. On the contrary, humility fills a person's heart with peace and brings happiness into life. People admire humble individuals, and Allah raises the status of such servants, granting them honor and respect.

Humble individuals recognize that everything belongs to Allah and that all blessings are temporary trusts. Thus, they do not display arrogance over what does not truly belong to them. Those who are humble always have a broken (*soft*) heart and serve as role models in their interactions with others. Allah grants His love to those with a broken (*soft*) heart.

The magic of words always captivates people—it is an undeniable truth. Gentle words can bring joy to a heart, while harsh words can cloud it with sorrow.

The poet, writing about the significance of words, advises his son:

"**Sukhan chun tir boshad**" (*Words are like arrows*), meaning that once spoken, they cannot be taken back.

سخن چون تیر باشد کز زبان جست
نگردد باز چون تیر از کمان جست...

زبان را در دهان خود نگه دار
سخن بشنو زبان خود نگه دار...

...زبان خلق از دست زبان است
زبان زان رو که تصحیف زیان است⁴

Words are like arrows—once they leave the tongue, they are like arrows released from a bow; they cannot be taken back.

Learn to control your tongue, listen to advice, and continue to guard your speech. The harm people face often comes from the calamity of the tongue, for the tongue constantly encounters mistakes and destruction. Didactic literature serves as an essential tool for deeply understanding Sufi philosophy and guiding people toward purity and righteousness. The ultimate goal of Sufi literature and didactic literature is the same.

While Sufi poetry often employs symbolic and mystical terminology, didactic literature conveys messages in a simple, folk-oriented, and easily understandable manner. In Arshiy's works, Sufi themes and didactic expressions are used side by side.

¹ Arshiy Termiziy. Masnaviyi Shohid Arshiy. Copy No. 9056 from the Islamic Sho'ro Library of Tehran. – Vol. 5.

² Arshiy Termizi. Masnawi Shahid Arshiy. Copy No. 9056 of the Islamic Shora Library of Tehran. – V. 5.

³ Arshiy Termizi. Masnawi Shahid Arshiy. Copy No. 9056 of the Islamic Shora Library of Tehran. – V. 7.

⁴ Arshi Termizi. Mehru Vafo. Copy No. 9044 of the Islamic Council Library of Tehran. – V. 23



The trait of *nobility of character* has always been a fundamental principle of literature.

طلب کن مایه ی همّت بلندی
گه یابی زان بلندی ارجمندی
...مکن کاری کزان خیزد خجالت
که بنی زان خجالت ضد ملامت⁵

Learn to elevate your aspirations, for through this, you will attain great respect and honor. Do not engage in actions that cause shame, so that you do not bring reproach upon yourself.

Simplicity and the melodious nature of poetry are defining features of Arshiy's poetic style. The poet frequently encourages people to be virtuous and live in harmony. Through his advice to his son, he calls all of humanity to peace and self-awareness, like a wise mystic.

به نیک و بد نهان و آشکارا
مدارا کن مدارا کن مدارا...
...فضیلت را شعاع خویشتن کن
چو عارف فکر کار خویشتن کن⁶

Maintain good relations with people, whether they are virtuous or flawed, whether in secret or in public. Always make noble human qualities your guiding principle, and, like a wise mystic (one who knows himself and recognizes God), reflect on your duties.

Arshiy Termizi's work *Mehr-u Vafo* is rich in Sufi themes, depicting divine love through metaphorical affection, based on artistic and real-life events. He explains that the endurance of human love ultimately comes to life through divine love, illustrating this concept with various examples.

Towards the end of the book, the author hints at the sorrow he experienced after the passing of his son, Ismail. Additionally, he includes a separate *Masnavi* titled *Advice to a Son*, specifically focusing on child upbringing. The advice given to his son is integrated into the content and narrative of the work.

چو اسماعیل شد نامت مقرر
مکش زنه از حکم پدر سر

Your name was chosen to be Ismail, so never disobey your father's command.

به هر حالی که باشی با خدا باش
ز خود بیگانه با حق آشنا باش

No matter your circumstances, always be with God; renounce your ego and befriend the Truth.

مکن از خود شناسی ناسپاسی

که باشد خود شناسی حق شناسی

Do not be indifferent to self-awareness, for understanding oneself is equivalent to understanding the Truth.

جوانی گر توانی پارسا باش
ولیکن منکر اهل ریا باش

You are still young, so strive to be pious, but oppose those who show off (the people of hypocrisy) on this path.

مخور نان کسان و باش نان ده
منه منت به کس منت به جان نه

Do not get used to eating another person's bread; rather, be the one who gives bread. Do not burden others with favors; instead, care for your own soul.

Greed may seem desirable, but it is a heavy burden. A greedy eye will never see honor and dignity.

چرا از بحر روزی میخوری غم
چو روزی می رسد خوش باش و خرم

The poet writes these verses in a simple and relatable language to guide his son towards becoming a complete and virtuous person. His first words to his child are: "I have named you *Ismoil*, so you must live up to this name." He emphasizes that obedience to one's father ensures success in life, as honoring one's father is an act of worship toward Allah.

Thus, the first step in raising a child is to nourish them with lawful sustenance while still in the mother's womb. After birth, giving them a meaningful name that brings virtue is essential.

The poet teaches his son to fear Allah, live in accordance with the Qur'an and Sunnah, avoid coveting others' wealth, earn a lawful living, trust in Allah for sustenance, refrain from excessive worldly struggles, and seek all needs from Allah. He warns against arrogance, encourages kindness towards children, and emphasizes helping the poor—teaching that all these actions are forms of worship.

In *Masnaviy Shohid Arshiy*, the poet conveys that humanity can experience the bliss of divine love by contemplating and embodying the noble qualities that lead to this love.

ذات را در ذات بنگر ذات شو
مست از جام می آیات شو⁷

Meaning: Behold His Essence with His Divine Attributes and serve Him accordingly; be intoxicated with the manifestation of His power and the wine of His love.

⁵ Arshi Termizi. *Mehr-u Vafo*. Copy No. 9044 of the Islamic Council Library of Tehran. – V. 139

⁶ Arshi Termizi. *Mehr-u Vafo*. Copy No. 9044 of the Islamic Council Library of Tehran. – V. 140

⁷ Arshiy Termiziy. *Masnaviy Shohid Arshiy*. Copy No. 9056 from the Islamic Sho'ro Library of Tehran. – Vol. 5.



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Although our local scholars have not provided information about Arshī Termizī in their research, they have briefly mentioned his father, Vasfī Termizī, and his brother, Kashfī Termizī. The author of these lines published an article titled "*Tadqiqi Rūzgor va Osori Arshī-i Tirmizi*" in Tajikistan, which contains a descriptive account of the poet's biography and works. Among foreign scholars, Ahmad Riza Yalmeha, Kurushi Mansur, Sayyid Hisamuddin Rashidi, Ghulam Yazdani, Vahid Qurayshi, Ahmad Mudaqqiq Yazdi, and Muhammad Baqir have conducted research on the life and literary legacy of Arshī Termizī.

Like his poetic predecessors, Arshī wrote in the genres of ghazal, qasida, rubai, and masnavi. His works are distinguished from those of his contemporaries by their simple and folk-oriented language and style.

Arshī followed in the footsteps of literary geniuses such as Jalaluddin Rumi and Nizami Ganjavi, drawing extensively from their ideas to compose prose and poetry rich in ethical themes.

In conclusion, Arshī Termizī not only introduced the name of his homeland, Termiz, to India but also contributed to showcasing the talent and capabilities of its people to the world. Today, more than ever, our youth need to study the rich heritage of our ancestors, who fought ignorance with enlightenment through their noble character and meaningful contributions.

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