



## LAYLI AND HER RELATED IMAGES IN THE EPISTLES OF ABDURAHMON JAMI AND ALISHER NAVAIY “LAYLI AND MAJNUN”

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### ABSTRACT

Abdurakhmon Jomi and Alisher Navoi are creators who created unique and unique artistic images in their works. In their works, all the characters, from the main characters to the episodic characters, have individual characters and characteristics, which make a strong aesthetic impression on the reader. Such images encourage the reader to read the work again and again. It is known that the traditions of creating images in classical literature are characterized by repetition in certain circles. However, this repetition is not manifested in direct copying, but in the interpretation of existing images in a new way each time. Traditional artistic images are enriched with new meaning, aesthetic load and ideological interpretation within each period, author and work. This is especially clearly observed in the work of Abdurakhmon Jomi and Alisher Navoi. The article presents a comparative analysis of the image of Layla in the epics of Abdurakhmon Jomi and Alisher Navoi “Layla and Majnun”. Episodic images play an important role in revealing the character and inner experiences of the main characters. In particular, the role of episodic images such as Layla’s mother, nanny, and Layla’s friends in fully expressing the image of Layla is compared. The role of these images in revealing the atmosphere of that period is analyzed.

**KEYWORDS:** Sufism, epic, ghazal, image, episodic image, figurative love, social tragedy.

### INTRODUCTION

As we know, Layli is a word borrowed from Arabic meaning “night.” Layli — the name — means “daughter of the night, a girl born at night.” Night is a time of darkness, of obscurity, yet for Layli — who embodies faith, love, and light — this seems somewhat contradictory. On the other hand, the “night” in her name actually suggests the night of separation: it hints that for the lover, even the days are shrouded in darkness when his beloved is absent. More precisely: for the spiritual traveler (salik), the pains of separation and trials in this transient world become a means to reach the Beloved; without those, one cannot reach union. In other words, just as white on white drawn on white paper is invisible, or light cannot be seen in the presence of an even greater light, darkness too becomes a tool to perceive light. That is, from the flame of Majnun’s love, light seems to flow to the moon and sun continuously, and thus day and night shine with radiance. The spark of love ignites souls, and thus even ruins and desolations catch fire.

### Main Body

In the masnavis of Abdurahman Jami and Alisher Navoi, the heroine Layli is portrayed as an extremely beautiful girl, not only in outward appearance but in spiritual essence and conduct.

In both versions, although she is the only child of her parents and raised in a princely household, she is not spoiled by opulence or vanity. She greets life with noble hopes and ambitions. She judges a person not by wealth, lineage, or rank, but by human qualities. Layli is a faithful beloved; in virtue she stands above her environment, and love enriches and completes her spiritual world. She is connected to Qays not only through emotion, but also through thought and intellect. She regards love as lifelong companionship, intimacy of hearts.

Unlike in Jami's version, in Navoi's poem Layli is not a 14 15 year old girl. Just as Qays may have been sent to school at age 4 5, Layli might be of a similar youthful age. In Navoi, there is a depiction that Layli is absent from school due to illness. That image is not found in Jami. Scholars have given different interpretations — for example, that Majnun, before meeting Layli, must rapidly acquire all knowledge. At the same time, we would like to advance another hypothesis: this episode — which is incongruent with tradition (in the Layli and Majnun tales by Nizami, Dehlavi, Jami, such an episode does not appear) — could perhaps be explained by Navoi's first love: a certain girl becoming ill. Indeed, the following ghazal from his early collection *Ilk Devon* (page 129 of the 64a bet.pdf) caught our attention:

In this ghazal the poet expresses that the illness has debilitated his beloved; now he himself suffers and his soul is struck by illness. He says it is the pain from illness that torments his weak being. Then he wonders: will this pain also turn me into the sorrow of my beloved? He appeals to friends to sacrifice for her, lamenting that in a crowd of people the illness has weakened the one he selected. He prays to God that hundreds or thousands of people might make remembrances (*sadqah*) for her, but he prays the illness not afflict this young beloved. At the end of the ghazal, he says that as long as his beloved is ill, he will not cease shedding tears, and in calling upon himself, he states that the tears flowing are no longer tears but his blood.

Through Layli, Navoi seems to be subtly expressing the plight of his early beloved: women, already delicate and prone to illness, their powerlessness, their lack of right to love — perhaps he is strongly criticizing this. He describes Layli's beauty with "exceedingly delicate artistic taste and mastery" (12, 15), employing similes like "full moon," "bright sun," "sweet spoken" to praise her elegance.

In both masnavis the trials are heavy on Qays — yet heavier on Layli. Qays is a man; if nothing else, he can withdraw to mountains or desert, avoid harsh speech and the view of barbaric people. Nature gives him some solace. But Layli is deprived even of that. She cannot step beyond the courtyard.

In Navoi's poem, loving mothers, pure hearted girls have their rights defended. Layli's mother and her nurse (*enaga*) are merciful, affectionate women. They love Layli as the apple of their eye, pray for her welfare. But they cannot go against the father's will. In the courtyard, they shed bloody tears together with Layli. These characters enrich the humanistic views of the great thinker Navoi toward women. The characters Zayd and the Shepherd, who assist Layli and Majnun and act as mediators for their communication, are folk sons of pure hearts, who see doing good as a personal duty and honor. The poet introduces the nurse character for the logical continuation of events. She not only cares for Layli, but also treats Qays as her child; in school she was kind to him, and "in turn he would regard her as his own child."

In Navoi the nurse, mother, and understanding friends surround Layli — so that she has more people who understand her pain. In Jami Layli is utterly alone; even her mother does not wish

to understand her. Here we see Jami's realist view — not every girl has a kind nurse or loyal friends. But Navoi wants people who can understand the girl's heart to exist.

In Navoi, Layli's father, learning that Qays loves his own daughter, radically changes his posture. Although he admits her intelligence, sweetness, capability, and open heart, he rails against the fact she has entered a state of "madness" (junun) because of love. Amid rumors circulating in the community, he refuses to give his daughter to Qays on grounds of "honor," threatening Majnun and Qays with shame. He removes Layli from school and locks her in the courtyard. He shackles Qays by the foot. Yet the tyrant father's cruelty, ignorance, and coercion cannot conquer the lovers' hearts. Layli and Majnun themselves struggle with their environment heroically; they do not submit, but fall as sacrifice for love. Layli's father is arrogant, proud of his wealth and prestige, a brute. He knows neither mercy nor justice, love nor loyalty, compassion nor strength. He wants to resolve every matter by force, make all obey him like slaves.

So the outward looking father becomes the cause of Layli's early fading, Qays's tragic death, his clan's ruin, their children's suffering. He can destroy them physically but cannot annihilate them spiritually; during life he can separate them, but cannot separate their corpses or graves. Love prevails over him. The poet's goal: to expose the face of those who do not understand worldly love, and to show that spiritual love is powerful, that obstacles cannot oppress it. Vahob Rahmonov (14, 119) calls Majnunness a social tragedy and speaks of two types of majnunness:

- The first: external majnunness — in true love the individual loses self, consciousness. In the Sufi interpretation this is one stage of ultimate perfection — tawhid (unity).
- The second majnunness or madness is: craving for material wealth, false reputation and prestige, striving to be superior to others at all costs, adherence to innovations, arrogance, violence. Against these, feelings like love, parental affection, the fate of other people's children are worthless.

According to the scholar, such symbolic figures deserve public hatred; they are primary culprits behind social tragedies. In other words, Layli's father's refusal to heed wise counsel, his arrogant inflexibility, dragged his clan head and whole families into the vortex of tragedy: Qays's parents died with regret, Layli and Qays perished... tragedy upon tragedy.

In Jami, Layli's father is likewise blind to love; in both masnavis a man such as Layli's father cannot understand the degree of love. But Qays's death is not a moral defeat for him — his revolt is against the laws of a cruel age, against its authorities and moral codes.

Layli's tragedy was also the tragedy of countless Laylis whose rights are trampled. Through the depiction of Layli's disaster, Navoi rebels against the laws and customs that produced it; he defends individual freedom, love, and the rights of women. In Layli and Majnun, Navoi portrays the tragedy of people in a social system built upon injustice. He draws close to his characters, emotionally affected, sometimes even becoming one with them. At the end of the poem he says, "I finished this story weeping," which holds profound meaning.

The main idea expressed by both authors in Layli and Majnun is that every person living in this world should tread the path of love, should prepare themselves not for death, but to drink the elixir of union — because the only meaning of this world is that. In imagining the absolute spirit, human mind and consciousness fall short; that is why Navoi creates it in the image of Layli.

Lovers endure the most difficult trials of their time, considering loyalty a moral duty. The first characteristic trait of the lovers' images in Navoi is their unwavering fidelity (10, 23). Indeed, loyalty is a virtue that never abandons their hearts; it occupies a central place in their moral and spiritual value systems.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, in both epics, Majnun's love for Layli initially emerges as a metaphorical (earthly) love. The positive and sincere attitudes of the great humanist poets Alisher Navoi and Abdurahman Jami toward women held great significance in the 15th century and represented an unprecedented act of courage.

Through their works Layli and Majnun, Alisher Navoi and Abdurahman Jami deeply analyzed the social life of their time, its moral values, the role of women in society, and the truth of human emotions through artistic means. In both epics, the image of Layli is portrayed as a symbol of true love, loyalty, patience, and the dignity and modesty inherent to womanhood.

Thus, in the figure of Layli, Navoi creates not only the image of a beloved, or a woman, or a victim of circumstances — but also an exposed reflection of a world filled with oppression, ignorance, the lack of freedom for women, and betrayal of love. Through Layli, he seeks answers not only to the problems of his own era but to the most painful questions in the heart of all humanity.

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