

Murodul Orifin as a Written Monument of the Chaghaniyan Literary Milieu: A Textological and Linguocultural Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the scholarly and Sufi significance of Murodul Orifin ("The Desire of the Gnostics"), a relatively understudied work by Sufi Olloyor, one of the prominent representatives of Sufi literature. From the perspective of literary source studies, the article analyzes the history of the work's composition, its role in combating pseudo-Sufism, and its structural organization. The study demonstrates that Murodul Orifin consists of 15 chapters (fasl) and presents the concepts of sharia, tariqa, and haqiqa in an integrated manner through both prose and poetic forms. An examination of the work's genesis reveals that the author drew extensively upon Qur'anic verses, Prophetic hadiths, and the intellectual and spiritual legacy of more than thirty Sufi scholars. Particular attention is devoted to Sufi Olloyor's definition of the term Sufi and to his view that inner spiritual purification cannot be attained without the observance of outward religious practices. The study thereby highlights the importance of Murodul Orifin as a written source for the study of Sufi thought and literary heritage.

Keywords: Sufi Olloyor, *Murodul Orifin*, Sufism, literary source studies, sharia, tariqa, perfect human being, Islamic enlightenment, outward and inward dimensions, spiritual heritage.

INTRODUCTION

The works attributed to Sufi Olloyor have been studied from various perspectives and to varying degrees up to the present day (Botirbek Hasan 2000: 6). Nevertheless, the work *Murodul Orifin* ("The Desire of the Gnostics") has not yet received a comprehensive study from the perspectives of literary source studies and textual criticism. Literary scholar R. Zohid notes that the study of Sufi Olloyor's literary legacy began as early as the period in which the author lived. Dictionaries were compiled and commentaries were written on his works composed in both Turkic and Persian. In particular, a glossary compiled for his work *Maslakul Muttaqin* is preserved in the Hamid Sulaymon Collection of the Institute of Oriental Studies named after Abu Rayhan al-Biruni. The nineteenth-century manuscript contains explanations of 950 specialized terms, with each term accompanied by its Persian equivalent (Rashid Zohid, 2015: 3).

Furthermore, the scholar Bulg'oriy composed a commentary on Sufi Olloyor's *Murodul Orifin*. This Tajik-language commentary is entitled *Tuhfatut Tolibin fi Sharhi "Murodul Orifin"*. Despite the existence of such early lexicographical and commentarial traditions, no separate comprehensive study of *Murodul Orifin* has been conducted by Uzbek scholars from the perspectives of textual criticism and literary source studies. Therefore, examining the textual composition and genesis of the work constitutes one of the pressing tasks of contemporary literary source studies.

Iranian scholar Dr. Abbasali Vafaei prepared the introduction, critical study, and critical edition of Sufi Olloyor's *Murodul Orifin* and published the work in 1387/2009. In the course of his research, the scholar provides information on Sufi Olloyor's life, his extensive scholarly and literary heritage, the principal directions of his creative activity, the characteristics of his works, and his individual artistic and intellectual contribution. He also emphasizes the particular scholarly significance of *Murodul Orifin* among the author's other works in terms of its treatment of Sufi and Gnostic themes (Sufi Olloyor 1387/2008: 25).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

Following the death of Muhammad Zahid, the Naqshbandi Sufi order moved from Chaghaniyan to Nasaf. Some time later, with the arrival of Sufi Olloyor from Samarkand to Chaghaniyan, the ideas and spiritual principles of the Naqshbandi order began to regain renewed vitality in the region. Sufi Olloyor, a prominent scholar, thinker, and major representative of Turkic poetry who settled in Chaghaniyan during the middle period of his life, has been the subject of significant scholarly research by both foreign and local scholars. Literary and historical sources contain important information about his biography and intellectual and literary legacy, providing a substantial basis for reconstructing the poet's life and activities. One of the important sources for the study of the lives and legacies of representatives of Turkic literature, *Tazkirai Qayyumi*, provides the following information about Sufi Olloyor:

This person was an Uzbek from the vicinity of Katta Qo'rg'on, and his name was Olloyor. His father was Olloqulbek, one of the prominent members and commanders of his tribe... Olloyorbiy flourished during the reign of Abulfayz Khan. He was appointed by the Bukhara Khan to serve first as amir of Katta Qo'rg'on and later of Samarkand. He became well known among the people while holding this position. Later, he devoted himself to Sufism, renounced government service, and withdrew from it. He devoted himself to scholarly pursuits and Sufism. Eventually, he chose the life of a dervish.

Finally, the people gave him the epithet 'Sufi'. Toward the end of his life, he left Katta Qo'rg'on and settled in a place called Dahana, near Hisor, where he spent the remainder of his life. (Po'latjon Qayyumi 1999: 61)

The preface to *Murodul Orifin* states that the work was written on the subjects of "Sufism and spiritual guidance" (*tasavvuf va rashod*). This statement demonstrates that the work is comprehensively devoted to Sufi thought and ethics. Although Sufi Olloyor addressed these subjects to some extent in his other works, *Murodul Orifin* was composed specifically in response to

the intellectual and spiritual needs of his time and at the request of his companions.

The work consists of 15 chapters (*fasl*). It addresses a broad range of theological, ethical, and Sufi subjects, including Sufi knowledge, sound monotheistic belief (*tawhid*), *sharia*, *tariqa*, spiritual knowledge (*ma'rifa*), the description of those who attain union with the Divine (*ahl al-wusul*), annihilation and subsistence (*fana* and *baqa*), the means of attaining divine love, the distinction between genuine and pseudo-Sufism, false spiritual guides, the position of Sunni Sufism, the etiquette governing the relationship between a spiritual master and disciple, spiritual wayfaring (*sayr wa suluk*) within the Sufi path, the portrait of the perfected spiritual guide (*murshid-i kamil*), and the ethical characteristics of the perfect human being (*insan-i kamil*). These subjects are presented through a combination of prose and poetic forms.

The genesis of the work is grounded in Qur'anic verses, Prophetic hadiths, the works of more than thirty Sufi scholars, and Sufi Olloyor's own intellectual and spiritual reflections.

In explaining the meaning of the term "Sufi," the thinker draws upon Mustamli Bukhari's *Sharh al-Ta'arruf*, seeking to present its conceptual meaning in a relatively accessible and comprehensible manner. In the exposition of each subject, he first presents information derived from Sufi sources. He then reinforces and illustrates these arguments by referring to Qur'anic verses, Prophetic hadiths, and exemplary accounts of the lives of saints (*awliya*) recorded in biographical and hagiographical works (*tazkira*). Finally, he compares these materials with his own views and presents his conclusions in a comparative manner.

Sufi Olloyor interprets the term "Sufi" not only in relation to the concepts of "purity" (*soflik*) and "spiritual cleanliness" (*poklik*), but also associates it with the notion of "those who stand in the first row" and with the "Sufis of Ahl al-Suffa." He also explains the term in connection with the notion of "travellers" (*sayyohhon*), referring to Sufis who travelled extensively across the world.

Of particular significance is the author's practice of supporting these lexical and conceptual interpretations with evidence from the Qur'an. For example, in explaining the notion of the "Sufis of Ahl al-Suffa," he refers to verse 8 of Surat al-Hashr:

For the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and deprived of their properties, seeking the bounty and pleasure of Allah, supporting Allah and His Messenger. They are indeed the truthful. (Mansur 2004: Surat al-Hashr, verse 8)

The thinker also refers to Sufi figures as "travellers" (*sayyohhon*) in another passage. As evidence for this interpretation, he cites verse 112 of Surat al-Tawbah:

Those who repent, worship, praise Allah, fast, bow, prostrate, enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and observe the limits prescribed by Allah. And give good news to the believers! (Mansur 2004: Surat al-Tawbah, verse 112).

This method of presenting Sufi concepts demonstrates that Sufi Olloyor does not limit his discussion to abstract theoretical explanations. Rather, he constructs his arguments through the interaction of Sufi intellectual sources, Qur'anic evidence, Prophetic traditions, biographical narratives, and his own interpretations. From the perspective of textual and literary source studies, this feature is particularly significant because it makes it possible to trace the intellectual sources underlying *Murodul Orifin* and to identify the mechanisms through which earlier Sufi knowledge was incorporated into the author's literary and didactic discourse.

One of the fundamental objectives of Sufism and literary art is to articulate both divine and human love, thereby fostering peace and harmony among people and strengthening the spiritual bond between God and the human being. Representatives of the Sufi tradition and Sufi poets have produced numerous works exploring the degrees, manifestations, and authenticity of love. Sufi Alloyor likewise expresses the following reflections on the perfection and authenticity of love:

ای عزیز آنها که دعوی محبت میکنند نشان محبت متابعت مصتفی علیه السلام است و متابعت او پاس داشتن شریعت است و دلیل صحتی محبت باطن در متابعت ظاهر نهاد پس صحتی باطن نباشد مگر به صحتی ظاهر (So'fi Olloyor 1387/2008: 60).

Translation: "O dear one! For those who claim to possess love, the sign of love is following Mustafa (peace and blessings be upon him). Following him means preserving and observing the Sharia. The proof of the authenticity of inward love lies in outward conformity. Therefore, the soundness of the inward state cannot be achieved without the soundness of the outward state."

This passage rests upon three fundamental principles of Islamic thought: love (*mahabbah*), adherence (*ittibā'*), and sharia.

The authentic criterion of love

In Islamic thought, love for God is not regarded merely as an emotional or inward experience; rather, its authenticity is demonstrated through practical conduct and adherence to religious principles. The Qur'an states: "Say: If you love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you..." (Mansur 2004: Surah Āl 'Imrān, 3:31).

This verse is traditionally regarded in Islamic scholarship as a fundamental criterion for testing the authenticity of a believer's claim to divine love. Accordingly, Sufi Alloyor's assertion that "the sign of love is following Mustafa" can be understood as a direct theological continuation of the principle expressed in this Qur'anic verse.

The author further advances the principle that the soundness of the inward state (*bātin*) is dependent upon the soundness of the outward state (*zāhir*). This represents an important principle within the theological and ethical framework of Sunni Islam. From this perspective, the claim to follow a *tariqa* or to possess divine love without adherence to *sharia* cannot be considered spiritually authentic.

Sufi Alloyor's expression *shariatni pos doshtan* – that is, "to preserve, honor, and adhere to the Sharia" – indicates that the purification and reform of the inner self are inseparable from disciplined outward conduct. Thus, according to the author's

conception, spiritual purification and genuine divine love cannot be attained independently of adherence to the Prophetic Sunnah and the normative requirements of *sharia*.

This understanding is also consistent with the classical Sufi emphasis on the inseparability of the *sharia*, *tariqa*, and *haqiqa*. In this conceptual framework, *sharia* constitutes the outward normative foundation, while *tariqa* represents the spiritual path through which the seeker disciplines and purifies the self, ultimately leading toward *haqiqa* – the realization of spiritual truth. Consequently, Sufi Alloyor's treatment of love in *Murodul Orifin* demonstrates that mystical experience, in his view, cannot be detached from religious law, ethical conduct, and the Prophetic model.

The author's position is particularly significant in the context of his criticism of pseudo-Sufism. By establishing outward adherence as a criterion for the authenticity of inward love, Sufi Alloyor distinguishes genuine spiritual practice from merely verbal claims to mystical attainment. His approach therefore combines ethical discipline, religious observance, and spiritual purification into an integrated conception of Sufi perfection.

In this regard, the statement attributed to Imam Malik – "Whoever practices Sufism without acquiring jurisprudence abandons the proper path" – is relevant to the broader intellectual context of this argument. It illustrates the classical concern that mystical practice should remain grounded in Islamic jurisprudence and religious norms. Accordingly, the concept of "preserving the Sharia" in *Murodul Orifin* should be understood not merely as formal observance but as an essential condition for the cultivation of the purified inner self.

Thus, Sufi Alloyor's interpretation of love demonstrates a clear correspondence between inner purity and outward religious conduct. In his conception, following the Prophet Muhammad, observing the Sharia, and cultivating inner love are mutually interconnected dimensions of a single spiritual process. This perspective constitutes one of the important theological and ethical foundations of *Murodul Orifin* and further demonstrates the work's significance as a source for studying the intellectual and spiritual traditions of the Chaghaniyan literary environment.

The foregoing passage leads to the logical conclusion that “an unsupported claim requires evidence.” For an individual seeking spiritual elevation, the fundamental criteria are the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad and the principles of the *sharia*. In this conceptual framework, outward religious practices – such as prayer, fasting, and observance of what is lawful and unlawful – constitute the roots, whereas inward divine love represents their fruit.

During the period of So‘fi Olloyor, certain individuals claiming to be Sufis advocated the rejection of the precepts of the Sharia and promoted the idea that spiritual perfection could be attained through “love of the heart” alone. In contrast, So‘fi Olloyor consistently maintained in his works the principle that a *tariqa* without adherence to the Sharia constitutes *zandaqa* (religious deviation or unbelief).

The statement in the aforementioned passage that “the soundness of the inner state depends upon the soundness of the outward state” represents one of the fundamental principles of So‘fi Olloyor’s thought. In his view, a person who does not follow the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), that is, the requirements of the Sharia, cannot substantiate a claim to divine love. Within his spiritual teaching, divine love in the human heart must be demonstrated through actual religious practice.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, various forms of religious innovation (*bid‘a*) and superstition became increasingly widespread among the population. So‘fi Olloyor sought to demonstrate that Sufism should not be associated with ignorance or idleness, but rather with knowledge and practical religious discipline. From the thinker’s perspective, the principle articulated in this passage is not merely a theoretical proposition; rather, it constitutes a practical program for attaining the ideal of the Perfect Human (*al-insān al-kāmil*). For him, *pos doshtani shariat* (“honouring and observing the Sharia”) represents the essential means of disciplining the lower self (*nafs*) and purifying the heart from attachment to everything other than God.

The thematic range, emotional expressiveness, and stylistic characteristics of So‘fi Olloyor’s poetry bear considerable

resemblance to the poetry of Khoja Ahmad Yasavi. It is well known that Khoja Ahmad Yasavi composed his *Hikmatlar* (*Hikmas*) in Turkic, whereas So'fi Olloyor wrote the present work in Persian. Nevertheless, the similarity between the two poets lies particularly in their use of a popular and accessible literary style. Like Khoja Ahmad Yasavi, So'fi Olloyor repeatedly criticizes in his work certain individuals who, while outwardly resembling dervishes, claim to have attained the spiritual stations of *sharia*, *tariqa*, *ma'rifa*, and *haqiqa* without possessing the necessary spiritual and moral qualifications.

The composition of *Murodul orifin* also demonstrates that, alongside his own intellectual reflections, the thinker drew extensively upon a substantial body of authoritative Sufi and religious literature. Among the sources used in the work are *Anvorul arbain*, *Tuhfatul fuqaho*, *Tuhfatul mutakallimin*, *Tarjimai Kifoya*, *Tarjimai shar'iya*, *Tafsiri Qoziy*, *Targ'ibus solat*, *Tafsiri Amir Husayn Voiz*, *Tanbihu zollin*, *Jomi'i Abi Xusrav*, *Jomi'ul mu'taqidot*, *Hasanul iymon*, *Xolisatul haqoyiq*, *Zaxiratul muluk*, *Risoi Nuriya*, *Risoi Sayyid Muhammad Bashog'ariy*, *Risoi Maxdumiy*, *Siyratul solihot*, *Sharhi Ta'arruf*, *Sharhi Xoja Abul Makorim*, *Aqoidi Shayxul Islom Alouddin*, *Aqoidi Mas'udiy*, *Aqoidi Nasafiy*, *Umdatul islom*, *Kofiy*, *Kashfur rumuz*, *Kimyoi saodat*, *Muxtasur mu'taqidot*, *Mir'otut tolibin*, *Miftohul hidoya*, *Minhoju rashod*, and *Nasoihul muslimin*.

The work is divided into fifteen chapters, each addressing a specific aspect of Sufi thought and spiritual cultivation. The first chapter, 'The Meaning and Qualities of the Name Sufi,' examines the etymology and conceptual meaning of the term *Sufi*, as well as the qualities that characterize a genuine practitioner of the Sufi path. The second chapter, 'The Sciences of Sufism and Their Reality,' focuses on the nature and epistemological foundations of Sufi knowledge. Subsequent chapters deal with such subjects as 'Knowing the Reality of the Self,' 'Understanding the World,' 'Knowledge of the Path of the Friends [of God],' 'The Spiritual Journey and Progress on the Tariqa,' and 'The Attainment of the Intended Goal.'

The work further discusses the means of attaining the spiritual stations of asceticism (*zuhd*), poverty (*faqr*), and patience (*sabr*); the nature, virtues, and means of attaining gratitude (*shukr*) and spiritual steadfastness (*tamkīn*); the principles of spiritual struggle (*mujāhada*) and humility (*tawādu*); the means of attaining the stations of sincerity (*ikhlas*) and certainty (*yaqīn*); and the spiritual significance of trust in God (*tawakkul*). Other chapters address charity (*sadaqa*), fidelity (*wafā*), piety (*taqwā*), fear (*khawf*), hope (*rajā*), and the means of attaining divine love (*maḥabba*). The work also contains a discussion of the interpretation of the symbolic expressions used by Sufis and concludes with reflections on the spiritual condition of the human being and the inevitability of death.

Each chapter contains between ten and fifteen or more thematically related discussions rich in Sufi terminology and spiritual-philosophical meaning. Thus, *Murodul orifin* presents a comprehensive exposition of the principal concepts of Sufi thought, combining theological, ethical, spiritual, and literary dimensions. Particularly significant is the fact that So'fi Olloyor interprets Sufism within the doctrinal framework of Ahl al-Sunna wa'l-Jama'a, thereby emphasizing the inseparable relationship between Sharia, spiritual practice, moral purification, and the attainment of spiritual perfection.

Textological and linguocultural features of Murodul Orifin.

The principle of ضبط المتن (*dabt al-matn*, establishing and critically verifying the text) occupies an important position in *Murodul orifin*. So'fi Olloyor carefully transcribed quotations from more than thirty religious and Sufi sources and explicitly identified the sources from which each quotation was taken. This practice not only demonstrates the author's careful treatment of textual materials but also provides readers with an opportunity to consult the original sources and obtain more comprehensive information on the subjects under discussion.

The scholarly apparatus of the work is presented in a systematic manner. In addressing each topic, So'fi Olloyor first examines the relevant sources and only thereafter formulates and presents his own position. Another notable feature is his use of

concise poetic compositions at the end of individual chapters to clarify and summarize the subject matter. This practice indicates that So'fi Olloyor followed the literary tradition of such prominent figures as Sa'di Shirazi and Abdurahman Jami, while adapting this tradition to the purposes of Sufi and theological discourse.

In the textual analysis of quotations related to matters of theology ('*aqida*) and Sufism, So'fi Olloyor initially provides an interpretation of the source author's position and subsequently presents his own conclusions at the end of the discussion. This method demonstrates a combination of textual criticism, source-based analysis, and independent scholarly interpretation.

A particularly significant example occurs in his analysis of the Persian verses transmitted in *Kashfur rumuz*. So'fi Olloyor explains that certain verses had been incorrectly interpreted by some uninformed Sufis over the course of centuries and strengthens his argument through textual and theological evidence. One such verse reads:

زان روی که چشم توست احول،
معبود تو پیر توست اول

So'fi Olloyor emphasizes that interpreting the second line with the reading *ma'bud* ("object of worship") could, according to scholars of Islamic theology, lead to an unacceptable theological interpretation and potentially to unbelief (*kufr*). Some scholars, he notes, argued that the word should instead be read as *manzur* ("that which is regarded or contemplated"). Others maintained that *مع* (*ma'*) and *بود* (*bud*) should be read separately. According to this interpretation, the original scribe may have written the two elements as a single lexical unit, thereby altering the intended meaning. The intended sense would then be that the spiritual guide of the *tariqa* must remain with the disciple. So'fi Olloyor consequently proposes the following corrected version:

زان روی که چشم توست اول،
منظور تو پیر توست اول
(So'fi Olloyor, 1387/2008: 292)

This example is particularly significant because So'fi Olloyor approaches the verse simultaneously from the perspectives of textual criticism and Islamic theology, assessing its wording against both textual and doctrinal criteria. His intervention demonstrates that textual correction in a religious and Sufi work was not merely a philological exercise; it could also have direct implications for the theological interpretation of the text.

Another passage of *Murodul orifin* addresses the dangers of approaching the Sufi path without adequate knowledge. So'fi Olloyor warns that religious practices performed with considerable effort but without sound belief and proper knowledge may ultimately prove spiritually ineffective. In criticizing those who falsely claim adherence to the tariqa, he cites a passage from a work entitled *Nomi Haq*:

داد مارا کتاب تا خوانیم
کرد مارا خطاب تا دانیم
(So'fi Olloyor, 1387/2008: 280)

Translation: He gave us the Book so that we might read and study;
He addressed and instructed us so that we might acquire knowledge
of His commands and prohibitions.

In correcting and interpreting the above verse, So'fi Olloyor again turns to an authoritative source, namely Shaykh Attar's *Mantiq al-Tayr*. By comparing the version found in *Kashfur rumuz* with the relevant source, he demonstrates that the transmitted text contains a scribal error and provides the corrected reading together with explanatory notes and scholarly references. He explicitly records that the textual correction was made with the participation of the author. As N. Jaborov notes, "Any editing of a text undertaken without the participation of its author is inappropriate insofar as it may damage the essence of the work" (Jaborov 2013: 7).

This approach demonstrates the importance of textual transmission, scribal accuracy, source verification, and critical emendation in *Murodul orifin*. The work therefore represents not only a Sufi-theological treatise but also a valuable example of the textual culture of the period.

In classical literary studies, the incorporation of Qur'anic verses and Prophetic hadiths into poetry or prose is traditionally regarded as the literary device of quotation (*iqtibās*). Literary scholar Olimjon Davlatov explains this phenomenon as follows: "One of the important factors in the emergence and development of the art of *iqtibās* was the fact that the Holy Qur'an and the noble hadiths of the Prophet became an integral and essential component of the spiritual life of society, were deeply internalized by people, and were applied in all spheres of everyday life as a guiding principle" (Davlatov 2017: 18).

The literary works produced in Mawarannahr within the traditions of Sufism and belles-lettres are often characterized by a remarkable density of meaning, in which extensive spiritual and philosophical ideas are expressed through highly concise verbal forms. In this regard, Shibli Nu'mani observes in *She'r ul-Ajam*:

"The West also takes pride in the elegance of its literature; however, its representatives are generally required to produce at least three or four lines in order to express an idea fully. In the history of Persian poetry, by contrast, it became customary to incorporate two or three, and sometimes even more, meanings into a single line or couplet" (Nu'mani Sh. 2001: 38).

So'fi Olloyor likewise combines prose exposition with poetry in *Murodul orifin*. He employs the mathnawi form, using the metre *mafā'ilun mafā'ilun mafā'il* and the *hazaj musaddas mahzuf* pattern, to express principles of Sufism and sound religious belief. Unlike the poems found in *Maslakul muttaqin* and *Sabotul ojizin*, the poetic passages of *Murodul orifin* make more extensive use of literary devices and Sufi-gnostic terminology.

Among the principal 'irfāni (gnostic and Sufi) terms employed in *Murodul orifin* are *hidāyat* (guidance), *shar'* (religious law), *wasl* (union), *hashr* (resurrection), *hawz* (the Pool), *shafā'at* (intercession), *'arsh* (the Divine Throne), *'ismat* (infallibility/protection from sin), *hādī* (guide), *manāhī* (prohibitions), *fayz* (divine grace), *fasl*, *fanā'* (annihilation), *baqā'* (subsistence), *sharī'a* (sharia), *tarīqa* (sufi path), *wādī* (valley), *mukāshafa* (spiritual unveiling), and *mujāhada* (spiritual struggle), among others.

Through this terminology and its systematic explanation, So'fi Olloyor seeks to present spiritual knowledge on the basis of authoritative religious sources. The work as a whole organizes and systematizes Sufi concepts within the normative framework of the sharia. At the same time, each chapter concludes with *amathnawi* poem that summarizes the principal ideas discussed in the preceding prose section. This structural feature demonstrates that So'fi Olloyor approached Sufi thought not only from a theological and didactic perspective but also through a distinctly literary and aesthetic framework.

Thus, the textual structure of *Murodul orifin* reveals an organic synthesis of textual scholarship, source criticism, Islamic theology, Sufi epistemology, and literary aesthetics. The author's careful verification of quotations, identification of their sources, correction of scribal variants, and integration of prose exposition with *mathnawi* poetry establish the work as a significant written monument for the study of the intellectual and literary environment of Chag'anixon.

DISCUSSION

An analysis of the semantic content of the Qur'anic verses cited in *Murodul orifin* demonstrates that So'fi Olloyor generally begins his explanations by referring to the views of earlier Sufi scholars and subsequently substantiates these views with evidence from the Qur'an. The thematic scope of the work, its relevance to the intellectual and spiritual needs of its time, and its use of arguments to refute various erroneous religious tendencies indicate that *Murodul orifin* functioned as an important Sufi source within the literary schools of Mawarannahr during the period in which it was composed. In this regard, literary scholar R. Zohid observes that "Murodul orifin is a Sufi work that promotes moral perfection" (Rashid Zohid 2017: 43).

On the basis of the textual evidence and analyses presented in this study, several scholarly observations may be proposed.

First, the research demonstrates that So'fi Olloyor adopted a firm intellectual position against the phenomena of "non-madhhabism" (*bemazhablik*) and "pseudo-Sufism" (*soxta*

so'fiylik) that he encountered in his historical context. His principle that "there can be no soundness of the inner state without the soundness of the outward state" reflects a fundamental principle of the doctrinal framework of *Ahl al-Sunna wa'l-Jama'a*. The fact that this position is supported in the work through Qur'anic evidence, particularly Qur'an 3:31 (the so-called "Test Verse"), demonstrates that So'fi Olloyor did not conceptualize Sufism as an isolated or esoteric form of knowledge, but rather as an integral dimension of the Islamic religious and ethical framework.

This aspect of his thought is also relevant to contemporary discussions concerning the transmission of religious knowledge. In a period characterized by the spread of religious extremism and various forms of misleading ideological discourse, So'fi Olloyor's emphasis on moderation, knowledge, ethical discipline, and adherence to the Sharia may be considered a significant intellectual resource for communicating Islamic ethical and spiritual principles to younger generations. At the same time, such historical material should be interpreted within its own intellectual and socio-cultural context rather than directly equated with contemporary religious or political phenomena.

Second, the incorporation of quotations from more than thirty authoritative religious and Sufi sources contributes to the encyclopedic character of *Murodul orifin*. Particularly noteworthy is So'fi Olloyor's identification of a textual error in *Kashfur rumuz*, his proposal to replace the reading *ma'bud* with *manzur*, and his justification of this emendation on theological grounds. This episode demonstrates that So'fi Olloyor functioned not only as a spiritual guide and Sufi author but also as a scholar with a sophisticated understanding of textual transmission and critical interpretation.

This observation reveals an important dimension of So'fi Olloyor's intellectual heritage: his works should not be regarded merely as emotionally oriented poetry or devotional literature. Rather, they constitute systematic texts grounded in logical reasoning, authoritative sources, textual evidence, and theological argumentation. The integration of transmitted knowledge (*naql*) with independent intellectual interpretation

(*ra'y*) is one of the characteristic features of his scholarly method.

Third, the metaphorical expression analyzed in the article – “Knowledge is the eye, and practice is the foot” – communicates the classical Sufi principle of the inseparability of *'ilm* (knowledge) and *'amal* (practice) in an accessible and popular form. This approach illustrates a distinctive feature of So'fi Olloyor's intellectual style: the popularization of scholarly knowledge. Rather than presenting complex philosophical and mystical concepts exclusively through specialized terminology, he renders them comprehensible through concise explanations and poetic passages in the *mathnawi* form. In this way, sophisticated spiritual and ethical concepts could be transmitted to a broader audience.

Discussion also suggests that So'fi Olloyor's intellectual heritage may be relevant beyond the fields of literary studies and Islamic studies. His reflections on moral self-discipline, purification of the self, the relationship between knowledge and practice, and the formation of a morally mature individual provide potentially valuable material for researchers in education, moral psychology, and the study of spiritual and ethical formation. Such interdisciplinary approaches, however, require careful contextualization and should distinguish historical Sufi concepts from modern disciplinary frameworks.

Finally, the fact that *Murodul orifin* was composed in Persian and employs a substantial body of specialized Sufi terminology – such as *hidāyat* (guidance), *fanā'* (annihilation), *baqā'* (subsistence), and *mukāshafa* (spiritual unveiling) – can be understood as a continuation of the bilingual literary environment of Mawarannahr. The coexistence and interaction of Turkic and Persian literary traditions constituted an important feature of the region's intellectual culture.

The analysis undertaken in this study further indicates that, in comparison with So'fi Olloyor's other works, *Murodul orifin* appears to have been oriented more toward learned readers and practitioners of the Sufi path (*sāliks*). Consequently, the scholarly and didactic dimensions of the work are more prominent than its purely aesthetic and artistic functions. Nevertheless, the

integration of prose argumentation, theological evidence, textual criticism, Sufi terminology, and *mathnawi* poetry gives the work a distinctive literary character. It is precisely this synthesis of scholarly knowledge, spiritual instruction, textual scholarship, and literary expression that establishes *Murodul orifin* as a significant written monument of the intellectual and literary culture of Chag'aniyon and Mawarannahr.

RESULTS

Sufi Olloyor interprets Sunni Sufism within the framework of Maturidi theology and the Hanafi school of jurisprudence, while critically examining various deviant trends within the Sufi tradition. The overall content of *Murodul orifin* encompasses not only the theoretical foundations of Sufism but also provides an extensive account of the practical dimensions of Sufi spiritual practice. The work addresses a number of major themes and concepts, particularly the relationship between knowledge and practice, the requirements for choosing a spiritual guide, the distinction between genuine and false spiritual authority, and the necessity of adhering to the Qur'an and Sunnah.

The work explains, through poetic passages, the qualities that a spiritual seeker (*salik*) should look for when pledging allegiance to a spiritual guide (*murshid*). One such passage reads:

طلب یک عارف سنت شعاری
مداری خویش با بدعت مداری
ز بدعت راه مقصد کی کشاید
بود کسب تو این کس بی تو باید
کسی را بوده باشد علت جهل
دوای معرفت را کی بود اهل
به دانستن ز حق ما را خطاب است
کتاب است از دلایل در که تاب است
عمل چون پای باشد علم چو دیده
نباشد راه به این دو گزیده
دریغا گشته در این دور ابتر
ز بی پایان به پایان سفر بر
ز کوران که ز کوران سرایند

در این دوران فاسد مقتدايند
 ز مرشد صورتان زشت کردار
 پری همچون پری ای طالب کار
 از آن صحبت که پاکش نیست پا کش
 برا خود را به مردان خدا کش
 (So'fi Olloyor, 1387/2008: 143)

Thematic and textual interpretation of the verses

First couplet

طلب یک عارف سنت شعاری
 مداری خویش با بدعت مداری

Translation: The aspiration of a true spiritual knower is to live in accordance with the Sunnah; therefore, do not associate yourself with those who follow innovation (*bid'ah*).

Synthesis: From a textual and intellectual perspective, the author establishes a contrast between *Sunnah* and *bid'ah*. Within the Sufi intellectual tradition, genuine Sufism is presented as a path that takes adherence to the Sunnah as its fundamental principle, whereas practices that depart from the principles of the Sharia are regarded as illegitimate.

Second couplet

ز بدعت راه مقصد کی کشاید
 بود کسب تو این کس بی تو باید

Translation: How could the path toward the ultimate goal ever be opened through innovation? Your efforts will yield no result unless you abandon the egoistic self on this path.

Synthesis: Here, the “path toward the goal” refers to the spiritual path of *tariqa*. According to the author, practices unsupported by the religious tradition cannot lead the seeker to the desired spiritual destination. Sufi practice becomes meaningful only when individual effort is accompanied by the renunciation of egotism and self-conceit.

Third couplet

کسی را بوده باشد علت جهل
 دواي معرفت را کی بود اهل

Translation: How can one afflicted by the illness of ignorance be worthy of receiving the remedy of spiritual knowledge (*ma'rifah*)?

Synthesis: In Sufi terminology, *jahl* (ignorance) is conceptualized as a spiritual illness, whereas *ma'rifah* represents its remedy. The author suggests that a person who has not overcome ignorance and purified the heart cannot attain the level of spiritual cognition and divine knowledge.

Fourth couplet:

به دانستن ز حق ما را خطاب است
کتاب است از دلایل در که تاب است

Translation: God has commanded us to seek knowledge and understanding; the Book provides evidence of this command, illuminating the truth for those capable of receiving its light.

Synthesis: Sufi Olloyor associates the obligation of acquiring knowledge with the Qur'an. From his perspective, the attainment of divine knowledge (*ma'rifatullah*) presupposes mastery of transmitted religious knowledge based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Fifth couplet:

عمل چون پای باشد علم چو دیده
نباشد راه به این دو گزیده

Translation: Practice is like the feet, while knowledge is like the eyes; without these two, the proper path cannot be discerned.

Synthesis: This couplet expresses one of the fundamental principles of classical Sufi thought: the unity of knowledge and practice. Knowledge without practice is insufficient, just as practice without knowledge cannot provide proper direction. Thus, the seeker requires both "eyes" to recognize the path and "feet" to walk upon it.

Sixth couplet:

دریغا گشته در این دور ابتر
ز بی پایان به پایان سفر بر

Translation: Alas, in this age the spiritual journey has become truncated; the journey toward the infinite has been replaced by a journey toward the finite.

Synthesis: The author expresses his concern about the spiritual decline of his age. The "infinite journey" may be understood as the journey toward the Hereafter and divine proximity, whereas the "finite journey" symbolizes attachment to the transient material world.

Seventh couplet:

ز کوران که ز کوران سرایند
در این دوران فاسد معتدایند

Translation: Those who learn from the spiritually blind have themselves become blind, yet in this corrupt age they have assumed the position of spiritual leaders.

Synthesis: From the perspective of the history of Sufi textual thought, these lines constitute a critique of false spiritual authorities. The author warns against individuals who, despite lacking genuine spiritual insight and knowledge, present themselves as guides and thereby lead others toward error.

Eighth couplet:

ز مرشد صورتان زشت کردار
پری همچون پری ای طالب کار

Translation: O seeker of the spiritual path, flee like a spirit from those who bear the outward appearance of spiritual guides but whose conduct is corrupt.

Synthesis: The expression *murshid-surat* refers to a person who outwardly resembles a spiritual guide but whose inner character and conduct are deficient. Sufi Olloyor characterizes association with such individuals as spiritually dangerous and urges seekers to distance themselves from them.

Ninth couplet:

از آن صحبت که پاکش نیست پاکش
برا خود را به مردان خدا کش

Translation: Withdraw from companionship that is not spiritually pure, and draw yourself toward the true servants and friends of God.

Synthesis: *Suhbah* (spiritual companionship) occupies an important position in Sufi spiritual pedagogy. The author emphasizes that an individual is influenced by those with whom he or she maintains close companionship. Therefore, spiritual purification requires association with sincere, knowledgeable, and spiritually accomplished individuals.

Taken together, the translation and synthesis of these verses demonstrate that Sufi Olloyor constructs a distinctive terminological and conceptual chain. Contrasts such as *bid'ah* and *Sunnah*, “blindness” and “sight,” and “finite” and “infinite”

constitute important elements of his stylistic and conceptual system. The study of such textual structures provides an opportunity to reconstruct aspects of the literary environment and intellectual attitudes of the period in which the work was produced. In particular, expressions such as *davron-i fasid* (“a corrupt age”) and *murshid-surat* (“one who outwardly appears as a spiritual guide”) serve as key semantic indicators revealing the reformatory purpose of the text.

CONCLUSION

Sufi Olloyor’s *Murodul orifin* possesses exceptional scholarly and educational significance for the study of the development of the Sufi tradition in Central Asia, particularly the development of the Naqshbandi tradition during the eighteenth century. The significance of the work can be identified in several major respects.

First, the author interprets Sufism not as a mere collection of ascetic practices or ritual observances, but as a path of ethical and spiritual purification grounded in the Qur’an and the Sunnah. His conceptualization of the relationship between knowledge and practice, expressed metaphorically through the formula “Knowledge is the eye, and practice is the foot,” demonstrates that genuine spiritual advancement necessarily requires a foundation in knowledge.

Second, the work clearly distinguishes between an authentic spiritual guide and a false *pir* or *murshid*. This distinction was particularly significant within the historical context of the author’s period, as it functioned as a means of criticizing religious superstition, intellectual ignorance, and distorted forms of spiritual authority.

Third, Sufi Olloyor succeeds in presenting complex Sufi concepts in an accessible language through the combination of prose and poetry. His integration of *masnavi* poetry into the exposition of theological and mystical ideas enabled him to communicate concepts of divine knowledge, spiritual discipline, ethical purification, and the perfection of the human being to a broader readership.

Thus, *Murodul orifin* should not be regarded merely as a Sufi instructional treatise. Rather, it may be understood as a comprehensive intellectual and spiritual program that calls the individual from ignorance toward knowledge, from enslavement to the lower self toward spiritual freedom, and from outward formalism toward a harmonious unity of knowledge, practice, and inner purification. From this perspective, the study of the work from the standpoint of textual scholarship, intellectual history, Sufi studies, and literary linguistics may provide important insights into the religious and literary environment of Central Asia.

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