

## **Examining the Mystical Illustration 'Majnun among the Wild Beasts, Khamsa of Nizami' from the Perspective of Muhyiddin ibn Arabi based upon the Principle of Correspondence between the Macrocosm and Microcosm**

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### **Introduction**

Traditional Iranian miniature painting, as a prominent manifestation of Islamic art, has always sought to convey profound meanings and philosophical concepts. This art form, which emerged to express mystical ideas and religious worldviews, employs a unique visual language and traditional principles that require precise understanding. The miniature "Majnun Among the Beasts" is a striking example from the Safavid period, heavily influenced by the mystical teachings of ibn Arabi. Through the principle of correspondence between the macrocosm and microcosm, this painting depicts the experience of divine love and the unity of man with the source of existence. This article aims to analyze the inner meaning and philosophical structure of this artwork, demonstrating how Iranian miniature art conveys deep mystical concepts through composition and symbolism.

### **Research Method**

This research adopts a descriptive-analytical approach to examine the miniature "Majnun Among the Beasts." Initially, historical and theoretical sources related to Iranian miniature art and Islamic mysticism were reviewed to establish a theoretical framework for analyzing the artwork's semantic and visual aspects. Primary sources included mystical texts, classical Persian literature, and prior studies on Islamic art philosophy and miniature symbolism. The painting's composition, forms, colors, and visual symbols were carefully examined to reveal the relationships between the images' elements and mystical concepts. The analysis focused particularly on the principle of correspondence between the macrocosm (al-'alam al-kabir) and microcosm (al-'alam al-saghir), meaning that each component of the painting was considered a manifestation of a spiritual dimension. Special attention was given to the interaction between the human figure (Majnun) and nature (animals, plants, desert), illustrating the ontological unity between the physical and spiritual worlds. In addition to visual analysis, the historical and cultural context of the artwork—especially the influence of ibn Arabi's mysticism and Sufi traditions during the Safavid era—was investigated. Data were qualitatively analyzed, with an emphasis on decoding the inner meaning of the painting through the allegorical and symbolic language characteristic of Iranian miniature art.

### Research Findings

The analysis of the miniature “Majnun Among the Beasts” reveals that its composition is shaped by traditional principles and mystical beliefs. The desert setting symbolizes the path of spiritual asceticism and divine love, where Majnun, representing the microcosm, endures solitude and the madness of love. Various animals coexist harmoniously within the scene, symbolizing the unity and coherence of existence, in which divine love transcends conflicts and enmity. Majnun’s gentle gaze toward the gazelle, a symbol of beauty and the beloved, manifests the relationship between the physical and metaphysical realms. The artist’s use of blue in Majnun’s garment evokes the Sufi cloak, indicating the seeker’s spiritual journey and status. Curved lines and the arrangement of animals guide the viewer’s attention toward Majnun and the gazelle, exemplifying the correspondence between different levels of existence. The soft textures and gentle colors of the hills and plants reflect Majnun’s inner feelings, merging symbolic expressions of love, beauty, and sorrow with nature. The combination of spring and autumn elements in a single frame symbolizes the cycle of life, death, and renewal—a process deeply connected to the spiritual journey toward unity with existence. Ibn Arabi’s mystical philosophy profoundly influences the artwork; the principle of correspondence between macrocosm and microcosm is clearly depicted here. Majnun not only symbolizes a loving human and spiritual seeker but also possesses a transcendent power that harmonizes with nature. This portrayal presents madness as a sacred force linked to the divine. Ultimately, the miniature serves as a medium for expressing the seeker’s mystical experience and conveying philosophical concepts. It invites the audience to contemplate the nature of love, existential unity, and the human relationship with the cosmos. This work exemplifies art that goes beyond aesthetic beauty to explore profound inner meanings and existential mysteries.

### Conclusion

The miniature “Majnun Among the Beasts” stands as a prominent example of the fusion of Iranian miniature art with Islamic philosophy and mysticism. Through allegorical language and skillful composition, it vividly depicts the profound concepts of divine love and existential unity. This study demonstrated how the artist, by applying the principle of correspondence between the macrocosm and microcosm, conveyed the spiritual experience of the seeker in a symbolic and innovative manner. The artwork not only reflects the cultural and artistic traditions of the Safavid era but also opens a window to a deeper understanding of spirituality in Islamic art. Alongside its historical and aesthetic values, recognizing the philosophical and inner dimensions of Iranian miniature art is essential for transmitting lofty mystical and cultural messages. Future interdisciplinary research can further illuminate the role of this art in shaping Islamic culture and spirituality.

**Keywords:** Mysticism, Islamic art, Miniature Painting, Majnun in the desert, macrocosm, microcosm.