

ABSTRACT

Exploring Identity through Rūmi's Poetics: Zoroastrian Elements and Aesthetics of the Lens

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This paper discusses a practice-led, artistic inquiry into identity as articulated in the statement: آنچه شما به دنبالش هستید, به دنبال شماست 'What you seek, is seeking you' - as expressed by the Persian philosopher and poet Rūmi (Jalal al-Din Muhammad Balkhi, 1207-1273). The research artistically examines the themes of Seyr سیر and Soluk سلوک. Seyr and Soluk represent the comprehensive process of spiritual development in Sufism, where "Seyr" emphasises the stages and experiences of a journey, while "Soluk" focuses on the methods and practices employed to navigate that undertaking. Within this consideration I artistically orchestrate the four Zoroastrian sacred elements: fire, earth, water, and air. Methodologically, the study adopts a heuristic inquiry to compose two non-verbal films that, rather than resort to postproduction special effects, employ an interplay of cameras, lenses and composition to craft cultural allusions that serve as poetic metaphors. This project draws on a mode of cinematic design that references a tradition of Persian filmmakers who, like the researcher, were imprisoned because of their films, but employed poetic abstraction to foster philosophical contemplation (Güney, 1982; Parajanov, 1969). The study contributes to this corpus of work by demonstrating how non-verbal cinematic techniques can enhance a viewer's engagement with complex philosophical and cultural thinking. Through the lens of poetic abstraction, the study underscores the enduring relevance of Rūmi's insights into identity and the transformative potential of his poetic thought (Mani, 2019). The significance of the research lies in its demonstration of how visual, non-verbal representations of poetic themes can offer a deeper, more nuanced understanding of identity recovery and cultural heritage. Consequently, the study enriches discourses surrounding Persian film, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between poetic expression and philosophical inquiry.

References

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