SciencePG
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An Intertextual Study of Nizami's Poetry and Behzad's Painting in "Chinese and Roman Painters' Debate" Tale

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Abstract: One of the brightest schools of painting was Herat School from whose greatest artist, Behzad, beautiful paintings have remained. Some of these paintings are associated with poetry and literature and reflect verbal narratives. Using Gérard Genette intertextuality approach, the present study investigates one of the paintings which exists in both verbal and pictorial forms: the verbal form is derived from Nizami's Sharaf-nama which was painted by Behzad. The purpose was to investigate the meaning of a text in its connection with other texts; in other words, this study tried to find the relationship between words and image, and uncover the underlying theme that ties them together.

Keywords: Behzad, Chinese and Roman Painters' Debate, Intertextuality, Nizami, Painting

1. Introduction

There has always been such an everlasting tie between literatures and painting that artists turned to literature to convey literary and cultural concepts to common people. Through their bond, poetry and painting expressed honorable goals and created new meanings which narrated the purposes of poets and painters [1]. This type of close tie is evident in great and immanent masterpieces such as Jami's Haft Awrang (Seven Thrones), Divan-e-Hafez, Saadi's Bustan (The Orchard) and Gulistan (The Rose Garden) [2]. But among all these literary works, Nizami's Khamsa (Quinary), as one of the most famous literary books, is the paragon of this tie [1]. The painting under study here is "Roman and Chinese painters' debate" tale depicted by the great artist of Herat school, Kamaleddin Behzad. This painting is based on Nizami's famous masterpiece 'Sharaf-nama' which is a part of 'Eskandar-nameh' (The Book of Alexander) [3]. Nizami was a literary, punctilious, and mythmaking figure who had a unique imagination and literary power replete with grandeur and humor, while Behzad's main focus was on brevity and

theosophical expression [4].

This article aims at a critical investigation of this image using an intertextuality approach. To achieve this, it is accompanied by a brief introduction to the concept of intertextuality, especially from Gerard Genette's viewpoint [5] and an awareness of intellectual views and literary and mystic ideas of Nizami and Behzad. The purpose is to reach a greater understanding of the text, illustrations, and aesthetics along with a true perception of the identity of Persian miniature and painting. Although there have been numerous studies on images and debates in Persian poetry and the depth of their thinking have always fascinated the researchers, there is no study about 'Roman and Chinese painters' debate' tale and its painting as the works of two great artists, and thus justifies the need for the present study.

2. Theoretical Background; Intertextuality

The term 'intertextuality' was first introduced in late sixties by Julia Kristeva (1985) in her investigations of, and

inspired by, Michael Bakhtin's ideas. Bakhtin believed that no work exists on its own as every work is inspired by previous works and situates itself in a social context while seeking an active response from them. Subsequently, Roland Barthes, Gerard Genette, Michael Riffaterre and many others expanded the concept [6]. Among these authors, Gerard Genette can be regarded as one of the most distinguished researchers in intertextuality and text permutation who, affected by these issues, has conducted systematic investigations of the relationship between two texts [7, 8].

In the past, the author was believed to create a single unit of meaning in his work by reading of which the reader comprehends the meaning and enjoys it. However, poststructuralists disintegrated the certainty and uniformity of meaning, and author presence was so diminished that Roland Barthes announced 'the death of the author'. Thereafter, the reader was considered as the creator of meaning in the process of reading, so that the meaning was no longer constrained by the author and the reader could perceive a particular meaning from the text based on his/her background knowledge. This uncertainty of meaning led to the emergence of intertextuality approach. Needless to say, intertextuality was not limited to literature, and included all artistic domains such as; cinema, painting, architecture, photography, etc. [9, 10].

Another distinguished contemporary structural theorist is the French writer and analyst Gerard Genette who, indebted and influenced by Russian formalism and French structuralism, came upon his literary theory known as "Narratology". Genette's narratology (1980), encompasses and extensively attends to the distinction between narration and story, discourse levels (concept of time and its subcategories, form, and tone) and transtextuality [5]. His theory greatly increases knowledge and schemas of narration aspects and time systems. In his theory, Gerard Genette was influenced by Ferdinand De Saussure's linguistic approach and intertextual aspects of the works of Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes. Based on his intertextual approach, no text is ever self-sufficient without taking into consideration its preceding and following texts [6]. Genette's theory meticulously attends to the narratology of the concept of time and interrelations of texts. Moreover, in dealing with 'point of view' or 'who is seeing', his main focus is on canonization [11].

3. Method and Materials

The present study, taking a narratological approach, aims at analyzing Nizami's words and Behzad's painting in 'Chinese and Roman painters' debate' tale based on Genette's intertextuality theory with a combined support of structuralism and precedent and successive formalism. The first passage is one of Nizami`s narrative poemsand the second passage is a picture drawn by Behzad.

3.1. Nizami Ganjavi and Sharaf-nama

Jamal ad-Dīn Abū Muḥammad Ilyās ibn-Yūsuf ibn-Zakkī,

known as Nizami Ganjavi, was born (573-608 AH) in Ganjeh which is now a city located in Azerbaijan. His ancestors are believed to be from Tafresh. He, after Ferdowsi, is considered the greatest romantic epic poet in Persian literature, who brought a colloquial and realistic style to the Persian epic. In addition to having literary elegance and subtlety, his poetry is a true reflection of the simple rural and civic life of ordinary people in its natural path [4]. Because they acutely and meticulously represent daily life experience of people and convey original sentiments and emotions to audience, most of Nizami's verses reside at the boundary of literature and painting [12]. Each of the succinct and meaningful messages that Nizami depicts through his literary illustrations are masterpieces in their own sense whose understanding requires reflection, assiduity and experience in Nizami's works [13].

Nowadays, the world of art, mysticism and Persian literature remembers Nizami by his five monumental works known as five jewels (Panj Ganj). One of these works is Eskandar-Nameh that consists of two separate parts: (Sharfaname and Iqbalname, or kheraname eskandari as it is alternatively called) the first part is Sharafnameh and the second part is Iqbalnameh or Khrdnameh Eskandari. Nizami spent his last days composing Eskandarnameh which is his bulkiest work [14]. Of all Nizami's works, Eskandar-Nameh lays on extensive thinking grounds due to its complex subjects. Although composed in his old age, the poem contains the most beautiful samples of artistry and eloquence including mysteries, events, and meaningful and wise proverbs [15]. Sharaf-Nameh, the first part of Eskandarname, is also called 'The Mirror of Alexander' and Nizami Ganjehi himself called this mysterious Masnavi 'Sharfnameh of Monarchs':

A wine of Khosravi that is in his chalice,
Khosravan honor is his sobriquet [14].

The main purpose of Nizami, in composing this insightful Masnavi, is to describe and account for the legendary history of Macedonian Alexander, and to versify the geographical history of the world with its diverse cultures in 3 B. C, to create an anti-epic work of art, and further to introduce Alexander as the liberator of the human kind from the yoke of cruel world tyrants and authoritarian rulers [14]. In following his goals, Nizami recounted the mysteries and singularities of the world according to what he had heard and read in every part of his book, Sharafnameh, which had been written in this book in prose [13].

In 'Sharafnameh', Nizami takes Alexander as the conqueror of the world, and ties him to the world prosperities. But, in Iqbal-nameh, Alexander goes to plains and mountains, has prophetic characteristics, discusses philosophy and wisdom, and takes a journey to both sides of the planet from Spain Peninsula. The poet writes with the intention of proving the roundness of the Earth, expressing Greek philosophy, Sufism and Islam and named these two books together 'Iqbal-e-Eskandari'.

From 6th century Islamic Iran cultural point of view, Sharafnameh can be regarded as a multi-faceted work of art

which investigates the philosophy of government's emergence and recounts. It adopts a new and unconventional approach in narrating clash of cultures and historical and mythological events which were particularly encounters between Greek and Iranian legendary civilizations. It also attends to the ruling of women in Azerbaijan and presence of sages in Fars pool, shows an enigmatic representation of Indian mystic culture and Chinese philosophy, and discusses Chinese and Roman art in a separate chapter from that of Greek reign and Iran science and politics [15]. On the whole, Sharafnameh contains 63 sections (poems) the 44th part of which is 'Roman and Chinese painters' debate'.

Regarding the art of debate, Nizami has always been considered as the most famous poet and raconteur of the sixth century. The Roman and Chinese painters'debate is brought in Nizami's Eskandarnameh with a mystical approach, similar to its appearance in Molavi's Masnavi-e-Manavi which opens with: Chinese stated the greater painters they are / Roman said, our dignity is higher [16].

Nizami is of such high status in lyricism that no one has been able to reach him. It is evident that he selected Masnavi as his framework for debates to enable him to place his masterpieces on the top of the literary world [17]. Therefore, as Nizami mentions in the beginning of his work, this literary piece clarifies the meaning and the point that he sees life meaning only in hard work. Accordingly, keeping in mind that Sharfnameh was written in his last years, it is important to know that although enjoying life and being thankful to God were Nizami's path, worldly thoughts were his concern in this work.

3.2. Kamal al-Din Behzad

Kamal al-Din Beihzad Herati, is one of the most famous Iranian painters in the late ninth and early tenth century AH (around 870 AH and almost more than two and a half centuries after Nizami). He had such a fundamental and lasting impact on Iran's painting that became known as the second Mani (the great Iranian painter). It can be said that at that time, Behzad was the one who perfected grand traditions of Persian fine arts and his name still shine at the apex of Iranian and Islamic painting [4, 18]. His influence on Iranian painting and drawing is enormous today as he made this art local and consistently paid special and essential attention to humans in all his works [17].

His way of using different colors and bright images indicate Behzad's deep sensitivity to colors. It can be deduced from the images that Behzad had an inclination toward so-called cold colors (varieties of green and blue), but always used warm colors (dark orange in particular) next to them to create balance. The balance between every component of each image with its collection is astonishing. Blooming branches, tile designs, ornamented carpets in image backgrounds is an indicator of ornamental taste and infinite subtlety of Behzad. His realism is what distinguishes his works from those of his precedents. This realism is particularly apparent in non-court images which merely reflect common life and ordinary people. Moreover, unlike in

works of his precedent painters, people faces are not monotonous and lifeless, and each face represents a character which indicates life and movement and even resting people possess natural forms and states.
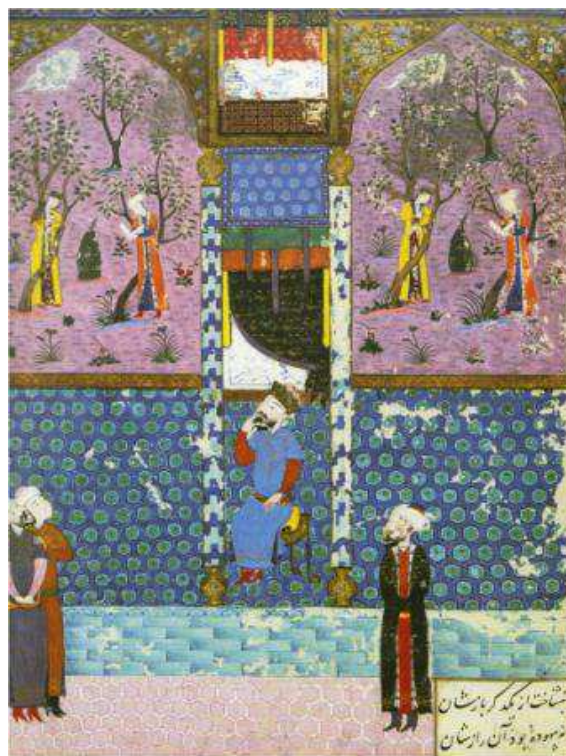
Figure 1. Chinese and Roman painters' debate of Nizami's Eskandarnameh, painted by Behzad (Adopted from Barry, 2004). Library of the Topkapi sarayi Museum, Istanbul. H.753/K.470, fo 304.

The most significant mutation of his artistic work is his acute attention to the characters in his paintings. Behzad is the first Iranian miniaturist who turned into portraiture in his painting. In his works, he did not leave any space for calligrapher and thus created images free from writing. Although miniature went through a transition in Safavid era, his influence could be seen in painters' works even after half a century.

Even though Behzad's paintings have been investigated by many researchers at different times, his painting of Chinese and Roman painters' debate is of such an importance in Persian literature whose analysis will never be finished. According to the inscription on the picture [19], the image (Figure 1) was portrayed based on a versified story of Nizami's Sharafnameh.

4. Interpretation and Discussion

As mentioned earlier, Timurid and Safavid are the two most prominent periods in Iran painting history whose paintings offered numerous features and elements to discover and investigate for critics. The story of 'Chinese and Roman Painters' debate' was for the first time versified by Al-Ghazali (505-450 AD) in his book Ihya'ul ulumuddin (The Revival of Religious Sciences) [20].

In this collection, Al-Ghazali analogizes Gnostics efforts to self-purify to that of Chinese who, by polishing their vaults, reflected Roman' inscriptions on their slick [21]. After that, Nizami (608-537 AD), composed this story as a Masnavi. Like al-Ghazali, He attributed portraitism to Romans and mirror work to Chinese. In this Masnavi, the important point is that Nizami has just focused on the plot without coming into any conclusion [15]. Besides these two poets, Anvari (580 AD), the famous sixth century poet and writer, narrates the mentioned story with minor differences between two Chinese masters [20].

In this regard, the most famous narration is attributed to Molavi (436-355 AD), who, in his purpose, expressed that color is like a veil or covering whereas colorlessness is like the rising Moon [22]. He considered colorlessness as the origin of all colors and unlike other poets, attributed mirrors to the Romans and portraiture to the Chinese [16]. Morteza Daee Hassani (436-355 AD), is another writer who in his book "Tabsart Alvam Fi Marefat Maghamat Alnam'' clearly narrated the story. Like Molavi, he also attributed mirrors to the Romans and portraiture to the Chinese. With minor differences, all of these narrations follow the same goal which is finding the right path, discovery, and intuition [23].

The current image (Figure 1), as for the inscription on the picture, has been portrayed based on a versified story of Sharafnameh in Nizami's Eskandarnameh. Thus, the current study aims at investigating the connection between Nizami's poetry and Behzad's painting through verbal and visual approaches. The relationship between these two works was analyzed following Gerard Genette's intertextual studies. Based on his theories and studies, intertextuality is one of the five elements of transtextuality which is created when two texts are connected through co-presence relation. In other words, presence of common elements in two or several texts moves the study into the field of intertextuality [24].

This type of study brings about the possibility of understanding the image through the words in the text. It is worth mentioning that, in another study, Kangarani (2009) defines Genette's pre-textuality as any relationship that leads to a non-interpretive connection between one text with its preceding texts which are called hypertext and hypotext respectively [25]. This study first concentrates on reading the original text, then reading the image (new text) that inspired the painter, and finally investigating the relationship between words and image to discover the reason which links them together.

4.1. Verbal Approach

Verbal system by which the painting was inspired, is a verse of Nizami's poem that leads to the connection between the painting and poetry within the text. This verse is located on the lower right part of the picture in a frame, demonstrative of the time the king sits between two canvases to judge and, to his astonishment, finds the two paintings similar. Although there is no mentioning of the king in the painting, but the type of clothing existing in the middle of the painting, with a crown on his head sitting on a throne indicates that he is of a status such as King. The king, wearing an azure robe representative of his spiritual elevation, has been distinctively spotted in the midst of the picture. Sapphire, the substance of divine justice, symbolizes faithfulness, prosperity and peacefulness. The underneath of the curtain behind the king has slightly slipped off in the upper frame, and at the back of which is a white sheet with the paintings of animals and plants [26]. The depicted ambience with tile-works and coloring is representative of a special place such as court rooms. The geometric design of the tile-works is a complementary to the soft and free forms of human organs, and vegetative elements, trees and flowers, bring together the opposing forces between geometric and soft shapes. Of other factors indicating that the painting is a court, is the presence of people in the lower parts of the painting, on both king's sides, who, standing with their hands crossed, affirm the king's behavior and look. Even though none of the mentioned elements exists in this verse, the painter depicted them to aid the audience mind by using color and form [27]. The function of Iranian Miniature, akin to the entire traditional and sacred arts, is to depict, via symbolism, a sketch of that pleasant garden in a world without which all these reflections would mean nothing but deception [26, 25]. The important point is that, by choosing a single verse out of forty-three, the painter challenges the viewer's mind and takes it to the depth of story.

Recognized them not from each other;
Carried not his foot within the screen of their mystery

As the verse allocates to itself only a small part of the image, the image can only be read through intertextual relations i.e. it can be understood through literary narration. Since all readers are not familiar with the text, the whole story of concern is provided here assisting to a more lucid analysis.

(The disputation of the men of rúm and of chín, in the presence of sikandar and of the khákán of chín, on the art of delineating) [14].

A day more joyous than the fresh spring, A day,—most choice of time,

The Khákán of Chín was the king's guest; Two suns, fellow-sitting with each another.

Of Rúm, and of Irán, and of Chín, and of Zang, They drew close the two ranks.

With wine, the assembly and the face adorned; From the face of the world (Sikandar's guests) dust (vexation) risen (and departed).

In that joyousness, with delight and wine, The wave (of speech) of the jewel-seller (the sage) reached the lip (of utterance).

Speech of the work of those work-knowing (traders), passed, Namely: "Of the world, who are most talented?

"Of every country of the age, what is the (rare) land-produce? "Of trades in every country, what (commodity) is the most choice?"

One said: m "Enchantment and sorcery "Spring from Hindústán, if thou wilt look."

Another said: "To men of ill-fortune (sorcerers),

"Sorceries hard to be borne arrive from Babylon."

A third spoke, saying: "At the time of meeting (of men of the world), there come

"Song from Khurásán, and music (of silk stringed instruments) from 'Irák."

To the extent of his ability, each one (of that assembly, all fellow-countrymen) displayed An example (a proof) from the picture of his own compass (special skill).

At length, on that it was agreed That they should make a dome like the arch of the eyebrow:

Between the two eye-brows (the arches) of the lofty dome The pourtrayer should lower a veil:

In this corner, the Rúmí should practise his handicraft; In that corner, the Chíní paint his picture.

They should not view each other's decoration (the painting of the picture), Until the time of claim should come to an end.

When they should be disengaged from that work, The veil should be cast down (removed) from the midst.

They (the spectators) will consider which of the two forms (pictures) Is the most beautiful, when it becomes finished.

In secret, the workers sate In that two-fold arch like the double arch (of the eyebrows).

In a little while, they finished the work; They cast up the veil from those two forms.

Of the two arzhangs (the two bepainted wall-surfaces), the form was one; Both as to drawing and as to colour, no difference.

At that work (of exact) similarity, the beholder remained astonished; Was altogether dejected at the wonder.

Saying: "How have these two form-fashioners (the painters) made "The painting of the two arzhangs (the two bepainted wall-surfaces) in one way?"

When the king sate between the two forms, He carefully looked at this and at that:

Recognized them not from each other; Carried not his foot within the screen of their mystery:

By looking, much he sought the mystery of that (exact similarity); To him, the state of the case went not truly.

Yes; between them was a difference; For this took (reflection), and that showed (the cause of reflection).

When the sage (Balínás) beheld those two idol-houses (the painted walls), To the sage that (similarity of) painting appeared strange.

He summoned truthfulness, and so hastened (in thought) That he found out the end of the thread (the concealed state) of that picture.

He ordered, so that the people of Rúm hastened; (And) placed again a veil between the two pictures.

When that veil intervened between the two walls, One was desponding (obscure), and the other was gleaming.

The delineations of the Rúmí departed not from water (lustre) and colour; Blight (obscurity) fell upon the mirror (the polished wall-surface) of the Chíní.

When the wall of the men of Chín became void of decoration, At that matter the monarch was astonied.

He again drew away the veil from between; Verily, the first appearance appeared.

He knew that that enkindled arch Had by polishing acquired the delineation of the picture.

The men of Chín polished their wall-surface, so that it reflected the picture drawn by the men of Rúm on the other wall.

At that time when they prepared the work, They cast up the veil in the middle.

The Rúmí was firm as to painting; The Chíní made (decorated the wall of) the house by polishing.

Every picture of which that side (the wall-surface of the Rúmí) became the accepter, This side (the wall-surface of the Chíní) became the accepter by polishing.

In that contest of skill, on that the decision passed That to both was aid from the vision (of the understanding).

No one knows how to draw a picture like the Rúmí; Who is bold of hand against the polishing of the men of Chín?

(adopted from Sikandar Nama e Bara, Henry Wilberforce-Clarke, 1881) [3].

4.2. Visual Approach

The most important feature of this image is its division into several distinct parts which evokes an interior and architectural space. This division is deemed important as, besides the division of spaces, it creates a connection between parts and elements leading to a deeper impact on the audience. This image is divided into upper and lower parts in the middle with each part having several distinct subparts. The upper part, the lower part, and the relationship between them will be discussed respectively.

The upper part begins with a vertical wide strip which stretches to the king is divided into right and left parts with various shapes and colors. This strip can be said to function as a veil consisting of some multi-layered curtains which should be pulled away. In the lower part, the black curtain is pulled backed with a light coming from its behind where the king's head is i.e. the king is blocking the veil (you are your own veil Hafez, move away from the middle) [28].

Two small paintings at the top and bottom of the strip with a clear background show two gazelles one of which is running to the left arch and the other to the right arch. These two animals are located in the place where the upper and lower light have come out from behind the curtain and the direction of their movement reveals the similarity of the two paintings. Two arches with the same design are painted on both sides of the strip so that it seems as a symmetrical drawing of a single picture. The two arches are covered with a pink background, presence of two men dressed in yellow and orange, and elements of nature such as trees, birds and clouds. The scarves on top of the vaults indicate that these two paintings are separate and demonstrative of specific themes. The elements have been thoughtfully put together and the pictures are consisted of concentric circles with cedar at the center.

In each arch, two birds can be seen that one of them is flying downward and the other upward. The movement of each bird is shown with rotational movement. If the direction of birds' movement were drawn with a swirl, the downward

flying bird would ends at the foot of the man holding a book and the foot of the woman dressed in yellow reaches the upward flying bird. In theosophy, yellow is the symbol of wisdom and, as was mentioned before, the upward and downward arches are pointing to the ascending and descending bows.

Figure 2. Upper part of the painting.

Another point observable here, which is in line with the poem, is that one of the arches is a mirror image but we see the two pictures next to each other. In fact, both images [19] are one and have the same origin as the final verse clarifies this point (Figure 2).

At the top of the main painting, dynamic elements such as animal, human, cloud, and bird exist compared to fixed elements such as big scarves, and shapes at the center of the paintings, that indicates dynamism of this section. The lower part consists of three elements of human, background, and the frame that contains the text. In this section, a man with a crown is sitting on a throne in the middle of the picture with his finger on his mouth and is looking up. Behind him and lower in the image, a person wearing a long robe is standing with crossed hands and is following the same look. On the lower left, two men with the same clothing as the man on the right are standing next to each other while one of them has clenched his hands and the other has his hands on his shoulder and looking up.

Figure 3. Lower part of the painting.

Unlike the upper part of the image [19] which is formed out of vertical frameworks, the lower part is drawn by horizontal frameworks. The static geometric shapes of this section (except humans) have created a contradiction with the curved lines and dynamic elements of the upper part. One of the most significant features of this part is stasis. Although, in this part, humans are seen as dynamic elements, no action is performed as if dynamism has been captured by people's facial expressions from the ambience which has been fixed at one moment (Figure 3).

What appears to connect the upper and lower parts is a strip that begins in the middle of the main image and extends to the middle of the lower part and ends with the king in the center. Centralizing the King is what attract the viewers' attention at first glance and then the mood and direction of his look is what that direct viewers' look. The look of people in the lower part also completes the king's look by bringing back the attention once again to the top of the image, and thus creates a tie between these two parts. Overall, the image can be analogized to a human-like face in which the arches are the eyes and the king is the astonished mouth.

Among other factors that tie the two parts together is the proper use of colors, which are very important elements of analysis, in the whole ambience of the painting. Behzad was a master of using colors to express his intention. Having knowledge of colors, he deployed color values efficiently and used them so good in his paintings that despite contradictions in them, the image would turn out orderly as a whole. He selected pink, which is a special and childish color, and used curved lines, which express flexibility of human emotions and sentiments, to elaborate on the main theme that is self-growth, and purgation and purification of heart. He depicts purity of the heart by making the two paintings similar.

In addition to particular division of the space and suitable use of colors, the placement of people in the painting is also clever. If we draw the diameters of the main frame, on the left, the person wearing orange in the little upper image is in line with the King and the person on the right lower part of the image. On the right, the person wearing yellow is also in line with the king and the two people on the right lower part. King is located a little lower than the confluence of the two lines (diameters). This apropos arrangement with specific division of space reaffirms the king's mood and the verse in the painting which is the purpose of both Nizmai and Behzad.

4.3. Inter-semiotic Approach (Image and Word)

This painting like most Persian paintings has two types' semiotic systems: visual and verbal. Although the emphasis, in this painting, is on the image and there is a limited amount of the text on it, even this small amount puts it in the realm of intertextual works.

Thematic connection is the most important tie between image and words in this painting, in other words, there is an exquisite internal relationship between the poem and the

image. What unifies visual elements with words more than anything and makes them into a coherent text is a common theme which, as was mentioned before, is theosophy in this case that culminates with special elements and ambience of the painting, and clarifies the meaning of the story. It can even be said that multiplicity of levels in painting is indicator of different stages of life that have matched up. This is the passage of spirit from Hejaz to truth, from outward to inward, from a world level to a higher level, and from the current state to a higher state. This insight in the field of art, enables what Henry Corbin calls 'the mirror phenomenon' [29, 30].

The existing verse at the lowest part of the painting is located in a frame on the right and constitutes a small portion of the whole painting. This verse describes the moment when the curtain is pushed back and the king finds out, to his astonishment, that the two paintings are identical. The king with his cobalt-blue cloak which represents his senility and spiritual perfection is depicted distinctively from others in the middle of the painting. Although no elements of the painting are present in the verse, it perfectly reflects the confusion state of the king.

Recognized them not from each other;
Carried not his foot within the screen of their mystery:

The function of the original Persian painting, like all sacred and traditional arts, is to represent through symbolism a glimpse of the pleasant garden in the world without which these reflections will not be more than a mere deception [18, 31]. The second line stanza again directs looks upward to emphasize and concentrate on how the two paintings are identical.

5. Conclusion

In short, it can be said that the Herat School great artist, Behzad, deliberately choses Nizami's poem from which he selects a single verse and paints it. This verse is the only verbal element of the painting. Using an inter-semiotic approach and based on intertextual studies, the investigation of the association between the poem and the painting led to the discovery of the latent meaning of the text. This theme and meaning i.e. theosophy which is what turns the text into a unified and coherent whole. Form, color and ruling elements in the picture are all in the service of this theme. Although the poet has narrated the story without any judgment, the painter, using various elements and particular mixture, has performed signs which exist in the words and has created a deep tie between Nizami's words and his painting. Thus, understanding aesthetics and right perception of Iranian painting identity has gone along with the study of their contemporary Islamic painting history and literary works. In other words, what identifies and distinguishes Iranian painting is the manifestation of the Persian spiritual and gnostic tendencies which emerges through depiction of Persian gnostic literature and is in debt of all its prior cultural texts.

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