

An Analytical Study of the Names and Honorific Titles of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the Poetry of Ustad Khalilullah Khalili

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Abstract

In contemporary Afghan poetry, the invocation of divine figures, particularly Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (PBUH), reflects both deep spiritual devotion and the preservation of cultural-religious identity. Ustad Khalilullah Khalili, one of Afghanistan's most celebrated poets, frequently incorporates the images and names of prophets in his works, with the Prophet of Islam occupying a central and honored position. This study employs an analytical-descriptive method, examining Khalili's Divan alongside relevant literary and scholarly sources, to investigate how the Prophet is represented and under which names, titles, and attributes. The analysis reveals that Khalili portrays the Prophet as a multifaceted figure spiritual guide, moral exemplar, source of divine light, and symbol of compassion and justice. His poetry utilizes various literary devices, including metaphors, similes, Qur'anic allusions, imagery, and intertextual references, to emphasize the Prophet's ethical, spiritual, and social significance. Furthermore, recurring themes such as devotional love (Ishq-e-Nabawi), prophetic miracles, mercy, and guidance reinforce the Prophet's enduring relevance in contemporary Afghan literary culture. The study concludes that Khalili's work not only reflects his personal devotion and mastery of classical Persian poetic tradition but also bridges classical literary heritage with modern Afghan sensibilities. Prophetic imagery in his poetry thus serves as a living source of aesthetic inspiration, moral reflection, and spiritual guidance.

Key Word: Prophet, Allusion, Khalili, Prophetic Image, Contemporary Poetry

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INTRODUCTION

The representation of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Persian poetry has long been a central theme, reflecting both the spiritual devotion of poets and the aesthetic richness of their works. In classical and contemporary literature, prophetic stories and Qur'anic narratives have served as enduring sources of inspiration, allowing poets to integrate religious, moral, and cultural dimensions into their compositions (Roumiani & Bakhshizadeh, 2016). Among contemporary Afghan poets, Ustad Khalilullah Khalili (1907–1987) occupies a prominent place due to his mastery of Persian poetic forms and his profound engagement with spiritual themes. Khalili's poetry frequently invokes the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), employing a variety of names, epithets, and allusions that highlight different aspects of his character, including leadership, compassion, divine mission, and moral guidance (Shayekhi et al., 2019). His works, which include odes, ghazals, quatrains, and masnavis, demonstrate a careful blending of classical literary techniques with modern sensibilities, creating a rich tapestry of spiritual and cultural expression (Mahmoodi & Damyar, 2019). Examining the image of the Prophet in Khalili's poetry provides insight not only into his personal devotion and artistic creativity but also into broader trends in contemporary Afghan literature, where the prophetic figure continues to inspire aesthetic, moral, and religious reflection (Beigdeli & Sadeqi, 2007).

Among Afghan contemporary poets, Khalili's works are known as some of the most reputable and aesthetically exquisite poems, distinguished by eloquence, strong expression, and the integration of neo-classical elements into modern poetry. Moreover, the reflection of divine prophets in his work is a topic of considerable value, deserving

scholarly exploration and analysis. The present study attempts to accurately examine the image of the last divine messenger from Khalili's perspective and to provide readers with a deeper understanding of the content of his poetry and the representation of Muhammad Mustafa (PBUH) within it.

Afghanistan has produced numerous prominent and skillful poets, among whom Khalilullah Khalili is regarded as one of the most distinguished. His poetry aligns with literary and cultural standards of excellence. The primary objective of this research is to examine and identify the image of the Holy Prophet in his poems, particularly considering the poet's innovative tendencies and the intertextual references embedded in his works. The allusions and narrative elements related to the prophets serve as a source of poetic creativity, and this article attempts to clarify these elements for readers of poetry and literature.

A review of previous literature reveals that extensive studies have been conducted in Persian on the stories of prophets. However, each study has approached the topic from a different perspective, making it necessary to clarify the methodology and position of the present research.

Among the important comparative works are: *The Stories of the Prophets in the Collected Works of Shams* by Pournamdarian; a Master's thesis titled *Allusions and Expressions in the Divan of Amir Khusrow Dehlavi* by Heidari (2018); *The Image of the Prophet in the Masnavi* by Javad Jafarian and Parviz Heidari (2010); *The Influence of Qur'anic Narratives of Moses in the Ghazals of Bedil* by Shoa'i (2020); *The Image of Prophets and Qur'anic Stories in Persian Literature* by Anzabi-Nejad (1976); *Stories of the Prophets in the Persian Poetry of Fuzuli* by Tabibian (1995); *The Image of the Prophet in Mirsād al-'ibād* by Hossein Yazdani and Mahdi Mohammadi (2014); *The Image of Prophets in the Poetry of Sa'ib Tabrizi* by Sharifpour and Jafarzadeh (2008); *Aesthetic Reflections of Prophetic Images in the Odes of Khaghani* by Mohseni (2011); *A Comparative Study of the Image of Prophets in the Ghazals of Amir Khusrow and Bedil* by Ahmad Rahim Khanli et al. (2025).

Additionally: *An Analysis of Deviation in the Poetry of Khalili* by Alireza Mahmoodi and Rashid Damyar (2019); *A Critical Comparison of the Odes of Bahar and Khalili* by Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai; Master's dissertations such as *Nasima Ahmadi's Layered Style in the Ghazals of Khalili* (2017); *Imagery in Khalili's Poetry* by Mokhtar Hossein Sultan (2006); and a scholarly article *In Memory of Khalili* by Mashāyekh Fariduni in *Khayyam Cultural Magazine* (1987).

A review of these works indicates that no comprehensive study has yet been conducted specifically on the image of the prophets in Khalili's poetry, particularly the image of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). A review of previous literature reveals that extensive studies have been conducted in Persian on the stories of prophets. However, each study has approached the topic from a different perspective, making it necessary to clarify the methodology and position of the present research.

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Khalilullah Khalili was the son of Mohammad Hussein Khan Mustawfi al-Mamalik. His mother was the daughter of Abdul Qadir Khan Safi, a well-known nobleman from Kohistan. He was born in Kabul in Shawwal 1325 AH (1907 CE). He lost his mother at the age of seven and his father at the age of twelve.

He continued his studies intermittently and eventually became a university professor. During the reign of Amir Habibullah Kalakani, he briefly served as Mustawfi and Governor of Mazar-i-Sharif. Later, he held positions such as Deputy of Kabul University, Chief Editor of the High Council of Ministers, President of Publications, and Press Advisor to King Mohammad Zahir Shah with the rank of minister (Khalili, 2007).

His published and unpublished works number sixty-three, including major titles such as *The Works of Herat*, *Fayz-e Quds*, *From Balkh to Konya*, *The Tomb of Babur*, *Yamgan*, *Nurhan*, *The Persian Reading Book*, *The Life and Works of Hakim Sanai*, *The Paradise that Burned*, *Panjshir and the Hero Massoud*, *The Message of Sultan Mahmud*, *The Union of Hearts*, *Nay-Nama*, *Nahid*, *The Heroic Girls of Kabul*, etc.

His Divan includes odes, ghazals, quatrains, rhymed couplets, stanzas, musamats, and masnavis. He passed away on May 4, 1987, in Islamabad. According to his will, he was buried in the cemetery of Afghan migrants, and later his body was transferred to the courtyard of Kabul University.

In contemporary Afghan poetry, the image of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) appears through narrative, religious, historical, and visual dimensions (Beigdeli & Sadeqi, 2007). Among the prominent poets who address this subject is Ustad Khalili, whose love for the Persian language inspired him to create both beautiful and widely admired poetry (Mahmoodi & Damyar, 2019). Throughout his poems, he refers to the names and epithets of the Prophet, granting his poetry spiritual vitality.

A deep and reflective reading of classical and contemporary Persian poetry shows that hardly any book, treatise, or poetic collection exists in which, after praising the Divine Essence, the exalted rank of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is not celebrated (Roumiani & Bakhshizadeh, 2016). The Prophet, in addition to being the leader of all prophets, is the Seal of Prophethood (Shayekhi et al., 2019). His name appears in the scriptures of previous prophets: in the Scrolls of Abraham as "Māhī", in the Torah of Moses as "Mod Mod", in the Psalms of David as "Fārqlīt", in the Gospel of Jesus as "Tāb Tāb", and in the Qur'an as Muhammad, Ahmad, Abdullah, Ṭāhā, Nūn, Muzzammil, and Muddaththir (Derafshani,

2009).

Poets, in describing the prophets of God, have always infused their verses with a religious spirit. Khalili — in his odes, ghazals, quatrains, and other poetic forms written in praise of the Prophet, especially Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) — extensively depicts and glorifies him.

Allusion (talmih) is a rhetorical device that refers to a story, verse, or event (Shamisa, 2007). From a rhetorical perspective, allusions to Quranic stories enrich poetic beauty (Fesharaki, 2008). Quranic narratives play an important role in the depth and aesthetic appeal of poetry.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts an analytical–descriptive approach to examine the image of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the poetry of Ustad Khalilullah Khalili. The analytical–descriptive method enables a detailed exploration of both the thematic and stylistic features of Khalili’s works, focusing specifically on references to the Prophet and associated religious motifs. Primary data for this study consist of Khalili’s Divan, including his odes, ghazals, quatrains, masnavis, and other poetic forms, which are systematically reviewed to identify names, titles, epithets, and allusions related to the Prophet. Secondary sources, such as scholarly articles, theses, and books on Persian literature and prophetic imagery, provide contextual understanding and support the analysis. The researcher first examines the content and linguistic patterns in Khalili’s poetry to uncover the ways in which the Prophet is portrayed. Subsequently, the study discusses the findings, highlighting recurring themes, symbolic representations, and the aesthetic and spiritual significance of the prophetic image in contemporary Afghan literature.

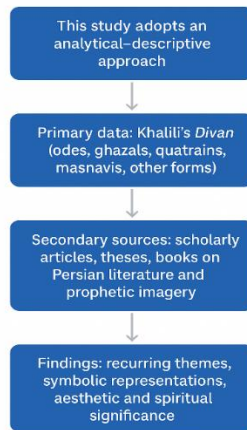


Figure 1: Research Methodology and Thematic Analysis Framework

This figure outlines the study's analytical-descriptive methodology. It shows the use of Khalili's Divan as primary data and scholarly works as secondary sources, leading to findings on recurring themes, symbolic representations, and the aesthetic-spiritual significance of prophetic imagery in the poetry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Muhammad (PBUH)

A chapter of the Qur’an bears the name Muhammad (PBUH), and in verse 2 of this Surah, it is stated:

“And those who believe and perform righteous deeds and believe in what has been revealed to Muhammad...” (Qur’an, Juz’ 26, Surah 45, Ayah 2).

Classical and modern poets have all remembered the Prophet. For example, Sayf Farghānī says:

شرح سخن محمدی کن
 تا چند کنی بیان معقول
 “Expound the words of Muhammad!
 Why speak only of rational discourse?”

(Farghani, as cited in Shayekhi et al., 2019)

Khalili, drawing on Qur'anic themes and deep attachment to the Prophet, writes:

این وطن گم کردگان در خانه خویش آمدند
شو تو ناموس محمد را نگهبان امین
(Khalili, 2006)

While imprisoned in the royal fortress, he supplicates:

یارب! به خوابگاه محمد که تا ابد
چرخ است از طواف درش مفتخر همی
یارب! به حق دوحه نخل محمدی
قندیل‌های عرش، شبیر و شیر همی
(Khalili, 2006)

(Khalili, 2006)

Observing widespread irreverence toward the Prophet in the land, he cries:

به سلطان سریر توس گو تا کی در این کشور
گریبان محمد را به دست ملحدان بینی
(Khalili, 2006)

(Khalili, 2006)

He describes the Prophet as the beauty that illuminates the world:

کدام شمع؟ جمال محمد مختار
که از تجلی وی نور می‌برد آفاق
(Khalili, 2006)

(Khalili, 2006)

And he praises his mission:

ضیای مشعل دین محمد مرسل
نهال مثمر باغ سلاله حیدر
(Khalili, 2006)

(Khalili, 2006)

Elsewhere, he calls Muslims to unity and resistance:

تو چون فرزند اسلامی، شعارت نیست جز توحید
ز محراب محمد پرچم کفار را بشکن
(Khalili, 2006)

(Khalili, 2006)

He calls the celebration of the Prophet's birth the light of life:

عید میلاد محمد نوربخش زندگی است
حرمت این عید را آزاد مردان کرده‌اند
(Khalili, 2006)

(Khalili, 2006)

His verses continue:

به ارض مقدس، به بیت‌الحرام
به مهد محمد علیه‌السلام
کای محمد! ما تو را آورده‌ایم
اختیار خود به تو بسپرده‌ایم
(Khalili, 2006).

(Khalili, 2006).

(Khalili, 2006).

Ahmad

Another Qur'anic name of the Prophet is Ahmad:

“And (I am) giving glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad.” (Qur'an 61:6)

Rumi writes:

گر نبودی کوشش احمد، تو هم
می‌پرستیدی چو اجدادت صنم
(Mawlavi, 2008)

(Mawlavi, 2008)

Khalili writes:

ندا کنند که احمد تنی است رفته به خاک
صدا زنند که زینب زنی است خفته به شام
(Khalili, 2006)

(Khalili, 2006)

He emphasizes the purity of Islamic faith:

در سایه دین پاک احمد
در پرتو آفتاب ایمان
(Khalili, 2006)

(Khalili, 2006)

And he asks rhetorically:

کیست ناکرده سر تعظیم خم در آن حرم؟
یا نسوده در حریم احمدی روی نیاز؟
(Khalili, 2006)

(Khalili, 2006)

Concerning Rumi, he writes:

خواند در گوشش اذان احمدی
شیخ غزنه با نوای سرمدی
(Khalili, 2006).

Mustafa (The Chosen One)

Khalili's devotion to Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (PBUH) surpasses his references to all other prophets. As noted in *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, praising the virtues of the Prophet is a means of expressing his superiority and exalted rank (Salami, 2007).

Nizami also says:

سایه نداری که تو نور مہی
رو که تو خود سایه نورالہی
Similarly, Khalili emphasizes the Prophet's miraculous nature — including his lack of a physical shadow:
گفت در اثنای نعت مصطفا
«ذات پاکش بود از سایه جدا»
(Khalili, 2006)

He continues:

در نسب با مصطفی پیوندها کرده درست
آن کہ بر خاک در وی جیبہ ساید آسمان
تبریک عید مولد فرزند مصطفی
تا صبح حشر بس بودم افتخار آن
ارمغان آوردهام بر خاک راه مصطفی
ارمغان من چه باشد؟ اشک خون افشان من
(Khalili, 2006)

He describes enemies of faith:

دشمن بی‌خدا تو را جلوه دهد ہزار رنگ
تا بہ سپاہ مصطفی روی بہ جنگ آوری
(Khalili, 2006)

Further:

دودمان مصطفی را وارثی والاگیر
خاندان اہتدا را رہبری عالی‌جناب
بہ ہر میدان نشان رایت خیرشکن داری
بہ سنگرہای دہشت‌زا دو چشم مصطفا با توسل
از بہار گل زمین خوابگاہ مصطفی
از دیار آفتاب آفتابان آمدی
عاشقان مصطفی امشب بہ یاد مولدش
خاک را از اشک خود آیینہ‌بندان کردہ‌اند
(Khalili, 2006)

He continues:

از فراز سنگرہا چشم مصطفا با ماست
در طلوع ہر صبحی طرفہ مژدہ‌ہا با ماست
ایہالاز ہر! شکوہ مصطفی را یاد آر
آفتاب آفتابان خدا را یاد آر
با جماعت دست توفیق خداست
این سخن بی‌شک حدیث مصطفاست
شاخہ بوستان مصطفوی
گلین نوبہار مرتضوی

Regarding the Qur'an gifted to Babrak Karmal by al-Azhar University, he writes:

این اہانت بر قوانین خداست
خندہ بر ناموس دین مصطفاست
(Khalili, 2006)

He describes sacred traces:

دید آنجا نقش پای مصطفی
خاک را ہش چشم ما را توتیا
(Khalili, 2006)

And:

مادر اطفال زار بی‌پدر
ہست تأیید وی از جای دگر
دیدہ‌اش آیینہ لطف خداست

دست وی از آستین مصطفاست
(Khalili, 2006).

Rasulullah (The Messenger of God)

The Prophet, as the culmination of prophetic wisdom, possesses all spiritualperfections (Jafarian & Heidari, 2010).

Mawlavi writes:

یا رسول الله ستون صبر
استن حنانه کردی عاقبت

Khalili reminds humanity to follow the Prophet's path step by step:

یا نمودن طی به ایمان راه را
همقدم بودن رسول الله را

(Khalili, 2006)

In prison, he supplicates:

یارب! به ناله‌ای که شب رحلت رسول
گشت از فضای سینه عثمان بدر همی

(Khalili, 2006)

In an elegy:

خرد به سال وفاتش به آه و زاری گفت
«شفیع دوست محمد بود رسول الله»

(Khalili, 2006)

Another verse says:

آفتاب فضلا، نخبه احفاد رسول
نخل شاداب وطن، دوحه زهرای بتول

(Khalili, 2006)

And:

پاسبان از هیبت نام رسول
ماتدن آن چامه کرد از من قبول

(Khalili, 2006).

Rahmat al-lil-'Alamin (Mercy to the Worlds)

Based on Qur'an 21:107, "And We have not sent you except as a mercy to all the worlds."

Khalili writes:

عرض ما آشفته حالان کیست تا گوید به شرح

بر در امیدبخش رحمت للعالمین

بنگردد بازیچه شوم گروه بی خدا

خرقه پاک پیمبر رحمت للعالمین

(Khalili, 2006)

Khair al-Mursalin (Best of the Messengers)

Attār writes:

آن محمد ختم و خیر المرسلین

آن محمد نور رب العالمین

Likewise, Khalili says:

غیرت انصار باشد این چنین

سنت والای خیر المرسلین

(Khalili, 2006)

The Blessed Cloak (Kherqa-e Mubarak)

He mourns the desecration of the Prophet's relic in Kandahar:

بنگردد بازیچه شوم گروه بی خدا

خرقه پاک پیمبر رحمت للعالمین

خرقه پیغمبر آخر زمان

اینک افتاده به دست ملحدان

سپاه کفر را بنگر که زیر پای ناپاکش

خجسته خرقه پیغمبر آخر زمان بینی

(Khalili, 2006)

Sultan

At the Prophet's holy shrine, he writes:

اینک از مژگان به خون غلتد که بوسد خاک فیض
در حریم آستان حضرت سلطان من
(Khalili, 2006)

Commander of the Sanctuary (Sardar-e Haram)

یاد آن ایام فرخنده که سردار حرم
زنده می‌کرد از کرم هر ذره ارکان من
(Khalili, 2006)

The Orphan

In a quatrain titled The Call of the Leader of Islam:

یتیمی، دردمندی، بینوایی
برآورد از دل صحرا صدایی
منه زنهار از کف شمع امید
اگر خواهی رسی روزی به جایی
(Khalili, 2006)

The Prophet (Nabi)

انبیا رهبران حق بودند
بهر تأمین صلح جنگیدند
(Khalili, 2006)

The Birth of Muhammad

عاشقان مصطفی امشب به یاد مولدش
خاک را از اشک خود آینه‌بندان کرده‌اند
عید میلاد محمد نوربخش زندگی است
حرمت این عید را آزاد مردان کرده‌اند
(Khalili, 2006)

The Sun of the Suns of God

از بهار گل زمین خوابگاه مصطفی
از دیار آفتاب آفتابان آمدی
ایها لاله‌ها! شکوه مصطفی را یاد آر
آفتاب آفتابان خدا را یاد آر
(Khalili, 2006)

Light of God, Dawn of Grace, Source of Illumination

Standing at the Prophet's blessed resting place, he writes:

ای نور خدا، صبح کرم، مطلع انوار
در کشور ما خیمه فرو هشته شب تار

Khair al-Bashar (Best of Humankind)

در حدیث حضرت خیرالبشر
کودکانش را کند روشن نظر
(Khalili, 2006)

The Radiant Sun (Khorshid-e Anvar)

واعظی وصف پیمبر می‌نمود
وصف آن خورشید انور می‌نمود
(Khalili, 2006).

Table 1: Frequency of Key Prophetic Epithets in the Divan of Ustad Khalili

Prophetic Epithet	Frequency	Poetic Function
Muhammad	42	Direct praise, historical reference
Ahmad	27	Spiritual elevation, moral purity
Mustafa	19	Symbol of chosenness and divine selection
Rahmat al-lil-'Alamin	11	Emphasis on mercy and universal compassion
Habibullah	8	Expression of divine-prophetic intimacy

The data in Table 1 illustrate the centrality of prophetic epithets in Khalili’s depiction of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The name Muhammad appears most frequently (42 times), indicating the poet’s emphasis on direct praise and historical reverence. Ahmad and Mustafa follow, highlighting Khalili’s focus on spiritual purity and divine selection. Less frequent yet thematically significant are Rahmat al-lil-‘Alamin and Habibullah, which underscore the Prophet’s compassion and intimate connection with God. Overall, the distribution of these epithets shows how Khalili intertwines devotion, theology, and literary tradition to construct a multidimensional prophetic image.

Table 2: Major Themes Related to the Prophet (PBUH) in Khalili’s Poetry

Theme	Description	Example Motifs
Spiritual Guidance	Prophet as moral leader and source of enlightenment	Light, path, lamp
Compassion and Mercy	Emphasis on universal love and forgiveness	Rain, fragrance, healing
Social Justice and Reform	Prophet as defender of the oppressed	Sword of truth, justice, awakening
Devotional Love (Ishq-e-Nabawi)	Emotional connection between poet and Prophet	Heart, longing, tears
Prophetic Miracles (Mu’jizat)	Symbolic depiction of divine support	Moon-splitting, divine light

Table 2 highlights the major thematic dimensions through which Khalili constructs the image of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Spiritual guidance emerges as a foundational theme, where the Prophet is portrayed as a radiant source of moral enlightenment, reflected through motifs of light and the straight path. Themes of compassion and mercy reinforce the Prophet’s universal benevolence, symbolized by rain and healing imagery. Khalili also emphasizes social justice, depicting the Prophet as a reformer who champions truth and defends the oppressed. Devotional love and prophetic miracles further enrich the poetic narrative, blending emotion, reverence, and divine symbolism into a unified portrait.

Table 3: Poetic Devices Used to Depict the Prophet (PBUH)

Poetic Device	Frequency	Purpose in Depiction
Metaphor	High	Elevating spiritual and moral attributes
Simile	Medium	Clarifying beauty, mercy, and guidance
Allusion (Qur’anic)	Very High	Establishing sacred authority and authenticity
Imagery	High	Creating vivid emotional and spiritual impact
Intertextuality	Medium	Linking classical Islamic tradition with modern context

Table 3 demonstrates that Khalili’s portrayal of the Prophet (PBUH) relies heavily on a rich set of poetic devices that enhance both spiritual depth and literary beauty. The very high use of Qur’anic allusions shows the poet’s commitment to grounding his imagery in sacred tradition, reinforcing authenticity and reverence. Frequent metaphors and imagery further elevate the Prophet’s moral and spiritual qualities, creating a vivid emotional experience for the reader. Meanwhile, similes help clarify attributes such as beauty and mercy, making them more relatable. The use of intertextuality bridges classical Islamic sources with contemporary Afghan poetic expression, enriching the narrative’s cultural resonance.

The findings of this study demonstrate that Ustad Khalilullah Khalili employs a rich array of prophetic names, titles, and allusions to construct a multifaceted image of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). His poetry draws heavily from Qur’anic narratives, classical literary traditions, and Sufi symbolism, allowing him to portray the Prophet as a spiritual guide, moral exemplar, and source of illumination. This aligns with earlier research showing that prophetic stories serve as essential literary devices for deepening the emotional and symbolic dimensions of Persian poetry (Roumiani & Bakhshizadeh, 2016). Khalili’s use of epithets such as *Muhammad*, *Ahmad*, *Mustafa*, *Rasulullah*, and *Rahmat al-lil-‘Alamin*

reflects not only his personal devotion but also his mastery of intertextual references rooted in classical heritage (Shayekhi et al., 2019).

Moreover, the consistency with which Khalili invokes the Prophet's attributes—compassion, leadership, sacrifice, and divine mission—demonstrates the continued relevance of religious imagery in modern Afghan literature, supporting the views of scholars who emphasize the enduring spiritual power of prophetic themes (Beigdeli & Sadeqi, 2007). His poems reveal that the Prophet is not merely a historical figure but a living source of meaning, invoked in times of social struggle, personal suffering, and collective identity formation. Thus, Khalili's poetic vision bridges classical tradition and contemporary experience, reaffirming the central role of prophetic imagery in shaping literary expression.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Prophetic stories are among the most powerful sources of poetic inspiration in both classical and contemporary Persian literature. These narratives, rooted in divine revelation and the sacred scriptures, have long been used by poets to enrich the expressive and aesthetic dimensions of their works.

Khalilullah Khalili — one of Afghanistan's most renowned contemporary poets — makes broad and meaningful use of prophetic themes in his poetry. Through these themes, he seeks not only to reflect religious history but also to deepen the spiritual and moral dimensions of his poetic message. Among all prophets, the figure of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) occupies the most prominent and honored place in Khalili's works.

A careful reading of Khalili's Divan shows that the Prophet appears under numerous names and titles such as:

Muhammad, Ahmad, Mustafa, Rasulullah, Rahmat al-lil-'Alamin, Khair al-Mursalain, Sultan, Sardar-e Haram, Khair al-Bashar, and others.

Each of these names highlights a specific dimension of the Prophet's character — including compassion, leadership, spiritual authority, purity, sacrifice, and divine mission.

Khalili's frequent allusions to the Prophet reflect: his deep personal devotion, his familiarity with Qur'anic narratives, his mastery of classical poetic tradition, and his effort to invoke spiritual awakening and moral reflection in the reader.

Thus, the poetic image of the Prophet in Khalili's works is not merely symbolic or historical. Rather, it is a living, dynamic, guiding, and transformative presence that reaffirms the spiritual foundations of contemporary Afghan literature.

This study concludes that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the central and most frequently invoked sacred figure in Khalili's poetry and that his many names and attributes serve as a rich source of artistic inspiration for the poet.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that scholars and students of Persian and Afghan literature pay closer attention to the use of prophetic imagery in contemporary poetry, particularly in the works of Ustad Khalilullah Khalili. Literary institutions and cultural organizations should encourage the inclusion of such poetry in curricula and research to deepen understanding of spiritual, moral, and ethical dimensions in Afghan literary heritage. Further, translators and editors can work to make Khalili's prophetic-themed works more accessible to global audiences, highlighting their aesthetic richness and intertextual connections with classical Persian and Islamic literary traditions.

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