

***SAMĀ'* OF RUMI: ITS ORTHODOXY AND  
CONTEMPORARY MANIFESTATION**

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**UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA**

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**April 2008**

Praise belongs to Allah, who by His  
Magnificence is veiled from the  
Perception of the eyes, and by His Glory and  
Might is exalted above the  
Attainment of thoughts, Whose Essence, being  
unique, does not resemble the  
essence of created beings and Whose Qualities  
are far removed from the  
qualities of creatures born in time. He is the  
Ancient, Who has never  
Ceased. The Abiding, Who will never pass away.  
High set is He beyond all  
likeness, opposites, and forms.

(Shirazi, 1993)

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## *Samā' Rumi: Ortodoksi dan Manifestasi Kontemporarinya*

### ABSTRAK

Kajian ini adalah satu usaha untuk menyelidiki *Samā'* Rumi, ortodoksi dan manifestasi kontemporarinya. Ia dibahagi kepada enam bab.

Penyelidikan ini berasaskan kepada model analisis semantik Izutsu (1954) dalam mengkaji dan menganalisis makna-makna dasar dan kaitan, tempat sejati dan aplikasi daripada *Samā'* di dalam karya-karya Rumi. Kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa kaedah analisis semantik Izutsu adalah mencukupi untuk mendapatkan makna dasar dan relasional daripada puisi yang terdapat di dalam karya-karya Rumi.

Ia juga mengkaji persoalan mengenai kesesuaian kandungan tarikat Mevlevi dengan ajaran-ajaran Rumi dalam kaitannya dengan *Samā'* dan juga keselarasan *Samā'* Rumi dengan ajaran-ajaran Islam.

Idea Howard dan Jameson (1999) tentang kaedah blok juga digunakan untuk menyusun perbandingan berkenaan dengan *Samā'* tarikat Mevlevi dengan Rumi.

Kajian ini juga mengkaji ortodoksi *Samā'* Rumi melalui prinsip-prinsip Islam tentang musik dan tarian yang terdapat di dalam pentafsiran al-Qur'an, Hadith, pendapat para murid sahabat Nabi (*Tabi'un*) dan pandangan empat imam mazhab iaitu Hanafi, Hanbali, Shafie dan Maliki.

Temuan yang diperolehi dari analisis semantik terhadap data menunjukkan bahawa makna dasar daripada *Samā'* adalah “mendengar” dan makna kaitannya adalah mendengar, menari, musik, gerakan bumi (tarian bumi), musik langit, nyanyian matahari, tarian jiwa dan lain-lain di dalam karya-karya Rumi.

Temuan lain yang diperolehi merangkumi asal-usul, motif, pengaruh dan aturan *Samā'* di dalam ajaran Rumi. Temuan-temuan in juga menunjukkan bahawa banyak unsur dari medan makna yang berbeza yang dihubungkan dengan *Samā'* di dalam karya-

karya Rumi. Unsur-unsur ini dikategorikan ke dalam enam medan makna, iaitu Islam, manusia, alam, kosmologi, falsafah, mistikisme dan kebudayaan Parsi.

Penyelidik cuba menemukan satu jawapan yang tepat dan kukuh terhadap soalan berkenaan dengan kesamaan dan perbezaan *Samā'* Rumi dengan tarikat Mevlevi. Temuan-temuan menunjukkan bahawa tarikat Mevlevi dan Rumi mempunyai kesamaan di dalam beberapa bahagian *Samā'* dan berbeza di dalam bahagian yang lain.

Temuan penyelidikan menunjukkan bahawa *Samā'* Rumi adalah selaras dengan prinsip-prinsip ajaran Islam dan dianggap tidak bercanggah dengan hukum.

***Samā‘ of Rumi: Its Orthodoxy And  
Contemporary Manifestation***

**ABSTRACT**

The present study is an attempt to investigate *Samā‘* of Rumi, its orthodoxy and contemporary manifestation. It is organized in six chapters.

The research draws on Izutsu’s (1964) model of semantic analysis to study and analyze the basic and relational meanings, explanation, real place, and application of *Samā‘* in Rumi’s works. The study has shown that Izutsu’s method of semantic analysis is adequate to arrive at the basic and relational meanings of the words related to *Samā‘* in Rumi works.

It also examines the extent of the faithfulness of the *Samā‘* of the Mevlevi order to the teachings of Rumi, and the compatibility of Rumi’s *Samā‘* with Islamic teachings.

Howard and Jamieson’s (1999) ideas of block method is employed to organize the body of our comparison concerning Mevlevi’s *Samā‘* with Rumi’s.

The study tries to discover the orthodoxy of Rumi’s *Samā‘* through the principles of Islam on music and dance which have been expressed from the interpretations of the *Qur’an*, *Hadith*, the opinions of disciples of the Prophet’s Companions (*Tābi’un*), and the viewpoints of the four major jurisprudent *imāms*: Malik, Shafie, Ibn Hanbal, and Abu Hanifah.

The findings obtained from the semantic analyses of the related data show that the basic meaning of *Samā‘* is “hearing” and the relational meanings are listening,

dancing, music, earth movement (earth dancing), celestial music, singing of the sun, dancing of the soul, etc. in Rumi's works.

The other findings obtained include the origins, motives, effects, and the rules of *Samā'* in Rumi's teachings. The findings also indicate that many elements from different areas of meaning are connected to *Samā'* in Rumi's works. The elements are categorized into seven areas of meaning. They are Islam, man, nature, cosmology, philosophy, mysticism, and Persian culture.

The researcher has tried to find an exact and definite answer to the question of similarities and differences of Rumi's *Samā'* 'with those of the Mevlevis'. The finding shows that there are similarities between the Mevlevis' and Rumi's *Samā'* and there are also significant differences between them.

The findings show that Rumi's *Samā'* is in compatible with the principles of Islamic teachings and is considered lawful.

## TRANSLITERATION

Persian and Arabic	English
ا	a
ب	b
پ	p
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
چ	ch
ح	h
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	s
ط	t
ظ	z
ع	'
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ک	k
گ	g
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
و	w
ه	h
ی	'
ی	y
ت	T



## **Abbreviation**

M: *Mathnawi* of Rumi

D: *Diwān Shams* of Rumi

D, R: *Diwān Shams* of Rumi, *Robā'iyāt* Section

## CHAPTER ONE

### *INTRODUCTION*

*In the name of He who taught the soul  
how to meditate; And illuminated  
the heart with the light of spirit  
(Shabestari Gulshan-i-Raz, opening line)*

#### **1.0 Background to Rumi's Life and the *Samā'***

Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207- 1273) is one of the great spiritual masters and poetical geniuses of mankind. Rumi was born in Wakhsh (Tajikistan) under the administration of Balkh in 30 September 1207 to a family of learned theologians. He migrated to Turkey and settled in Konya because of the danger of the invading Mongols. He was introduced into the mystical path by a wandering dervish, Shams al-Din Tabrizi. His love and his bereavement for the death of Shams found their expression in a surge of music, dance and lyric poems. The general idea underlying Rumi's poetry is the absolute love of God. His doctrine advocates unlimited tolerance, positive reasoning, goodness, charity and awareness through love. Jalal al-Din Rumi died on December 17, 1273.

Unique to Sufism is a type of music called *Samā'*. *Samā'* is a verbal noun signifying "hearing". By extension it often denotes "what is heard" such as music and song. In Sufism, it generally denotes the hearing of music, the concert, and in its particular sense, the Sufi tradition of spiritual concert and dance (*raqs*) in more or less ritualised form. Indeed, it is an ancient form of religious singing. This singing plays a unique and essential role in the devotion of Sufis and their spiritual quest (Nurbakhsh, 1977: 63).

## 1.1 Statement of the problem

The discussion on Rumi's teachings particularly his *Samā'* is hotly debated among scholars in the west and the east. This has led to the formation of many different opinions from complete negation to total admission. Some scholars believe that Rumi's teachings are nothing except *Samā'*. Some others object to it. The different opinions have caused many problems in understanding the real nature of Rumi's thoughts in general and of *Samā'* in particular.

This study tries to clarify the real place of *Samā'* in Rumi's thoughts. That Rumi has performed *Samā'* is clear, but the question is why and how did he take part in *Samā'* ceremony? Finding a solution to the problem will help researchers to understand Rumi's teachings more clearly than before. If we do not understand Rumi's *Samā'* and its orthodoxy in his works, we will not be able to appreciate Rumi's teachings fully. Thus, this study tries to analyze *Samā'* in Rumi's works and explain its position and significance in Rumi's thoughts.

The other problem is the degree of faithfulness of the present day Whirling Dervishes' *Samā'* with Rumi's. The similarities and differences involved in both *Samā'* are taken into consideration in this study.

## 1.2 Research Questions

The following are the questions which this study attempts to answer.

1. What is the explanation, real place, and application of *Samā'* in Rumi's teachings?
2. To what extent is the Melevi order, founded in 1273 by Rumi's followers, faithful to the teachings of Rumi in relation to *Samā'*?
3. To what extent is Rumi's *Samā'* compatible with Islamic teachings?

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

Within the context of the problem stated above, the study has three principal, interrelated objectives:

The first objective of the study is to determine and explain *Samā'* and its real place in Rumi's teachings . The method to be used in this study is similar to that implemented by Toshihiko Izutsu in his book, *God and Man in the Koran* (1964), which is the semantic analysis.

The second objective is to examine the degree of faithfulness of the Mevlevi order to the teachings of Rumi in relation to *Samā'*.

The third objective is to determine the extent to which Rumi's *Samā'* is compatible with the teaching of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*.

To achieve the above objectives, the study intends to undertake a comprehensive research on Rumi's works and related sources.

### **1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

In regard with the previous studies and the discussions with scholars in Malaysia and Iran, it seems that the studies carried out on *Samā'* have not been deep enough to cover all aspects of Rumi's *Samā'*. The study on Rumi extends from Rumi's immediate predecessors of the late thirteenth century up to the present day. There are many commentators of *Mathnawi* in Persian, Turkish, and Arabic who have kept Rumi's poetry alive.

Despite the fact that there are many informative works, completely or partly, dedicated to Rumi's *Samā'*, there is still more room to bring to light some special

aspects of his *Samā'*, application of *Samā'* in his works and orthodoxy of his *Samā'*. Since the realm of *Samā'* is so vast to deal with, this work is narrowed down to Rumi's *Samā'*. It is outside the scope of this work to go into a detailed discussion of different aspects of the study such as the psychology of *Samā'* which requires a separate study and research. It may be difficult to draw a clear-cut distinction between different aspects of *Samā'* as in some cases they overlap.

The scope concerns the writings of Rumi. To get closer to Rumi's thought on *Samā'*, the study will consider all his writings including his poetry and prose in Persian language. Rumi's poetry is divided into two categories. First, the *Mathnawi*, which is the largest mystical exposition in verse, discusses and offers solutions to many complicated problems in metaphysics, religion, ethics, mysticism, etc. 25632 couplets constitute the corpus of the *Mathnawi*. The second type is *Diwān-e Shams (Diwān-e-Kabir)* in lyric (*Ghazal*) style which contains musical poems about love and beauty with more than forty thousand verses, *Diwān-e-Shams* is full of enthusiasm and awe that reflects the inner spiritual world of Rumi.

It is important to consider that the mystical interest in Rumi's poetries is of paramount importance. However, philosophical and mystical interests are regarded as an integral part of the study in question. That is to say, the focus of the study will primarily be on the application of *Samā'* in Rumi's works and the explanation of the words that have been furnished by Rumi to convey his viewpoints, experiences and notions in the realm of *Samā'*. Music and musical instruments have a rich mystical and philosophical background in Rumi's thoughts. Rumi states:

Hence philosophers have said that we received these harmonies from the revolutions of the (celestial) sphere,  
(And that) this (melody) which people sing with pandore and throat is the sound of the revolutions of the sphere (M4: 733-40).

Apart from the *Mathnawi* and *Diwān-e Shams*, Rumi has three major prose works. They are (i) *Fihe mā Fihe*, in Arabic and Persian. It comprises what may be loosely described as the table talk of the saint. The book contains discourse on a wide variety of religious and mystical topics. (ii) *Majālis Sab'ah*, in Persian, involves seven sermons delivered in unspecified dates. (iii) *Maktubāt*: in Persian, contains his letters sent to various people.

As Rumi's *Samā'* has been reflected completely in his poetry, this study intends to focus on it completely. Although two percent of *Fihe ma Fihe* involves *Samā'*, the study tries to take it into consideration. Since *Majālis Sab'ah* and *Maktubāt* do not involve *Samā'*, they are not included in this study.

This study also involves the orthodoxy of Rumi's *Samā'*. By orthodox, it means: conforming to the usual beliefs or established doctrines (Schuster, 1988: 956). Orthodoxy covers *Qur'anic* verses and *Hadith* which concern music and dance to show the faithfulness of Rumi's *Samā'* to Islamic teachings.

Another important dimension of the research is the study of contemporary manifestation of *Samā'* and its comparison with Rumi's. Contemporary manifestation is defined as the performance of *Samā'* in Mevlevi order, held in Konya from 1950 onwards. Although the researcher has observed some performances of *Samā'* of different Sufi orders, such as Ne'matollahi, held in Gonabad in 2002, Oweysi and Khaksari, in Mashhad in 2003, he has not attended *Samā'* of Mevlevi order in Konya, Turkey, in person. However, the researcher has got complete information on Mevlevi's *Samā'* via CD, directed by Semra Sandar, and the informative texts of the order and reliable sources such as Golpinarli (1963),

Tafazoli (1997), Friedlander (2003), and Schimmel (1992, 1975) who have observed and investigated Mevlevi's *Samā'* completely.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The present study expects to contribute towards a better understanding of Rumi's *Samā'* as well as an enhanced awareness of his perennial significance. It also hopes to unveil Rumi's main viewpoints on *Samā'* as well as the similarities and differences between the Mevlevi's and Rumi's *Samā'* in formalities, ceremonies, musical instruments, and symbols used.

This study also hopes to supplement the limited corpus of studies available in English, as most extant and existing studies are in Persian language,

This study hopes to demonstrate a path towards a better understanding of Rumi's viewpoints and his works by introducing a method used by Izutsu for understanding the *Qur'an*.

Finally, the study expects to promote awareness, sustain interest, and enrich the universal and cultural spiritualities of man.

### **1.6 Review of related literature**

The present study spans several broad areas such as the philosophical, theological, mystical, as well as Islamic principles, and Islamic history. Five inter-related areas of relevant literature have been identified. First, is the area of textual studies on the *Samā'*. Secondly, grasping the relation of *Samā'* in Rumi's writings to other areas of meaning semantically. Thirdly, studying metaphysical aspects of Sufism including works on Rumi's writings, and interpretations of spiritual and

traditional symbols. Fourthly, expressing the Mevlevis' *Samā'* and related subjects. Fifthly, explaining the Islamic view of music and dancing.

As mentioned in previous parts, the writings on *Samā'* in Sufism came into existence in the second half of the eleventh century. The past records of the writings refer to the objections of defenders of the *Hadith* and the rules of *Ghinā* (singing) in Islamic jurisprudence. Ibn Abi al-Donya (d. 894) who was the first to speak on *Samā'*, the prohibition of music and singing, collected some *Hadiths* and *Qur'anic* verses in his book *Dhamm al-Malāhi (Blaming of Worldly Amusements)*. Hakim al-Termazi (d. 909) is the first Sufi to speak about *Samā'* under the topic of *Ghinā*.

The first writings on *Samā'*, such as *al-lum'a* and *al-T'arrof* written by Sarraj (d. 972) and Kelabazi (d. 984), were carried out to reconcile the Sufi beliefs in *Samā'* with Islamic theology, so as to avoid the label of heretic. They believed that the ceremony of *Samā'* is orthodox. Abu Taleb Makki (d. 996) is the first scholar who wrote his book *Qoot al-Qoloob, The Food of Hearts*, in defence of *Samā'* in a direct way. He mentioned the *Samā'* gathering of Junaid, Seri Saqati (d. 855) and Zo al-Noon Mesri (d. 850) in his book. Several important writings were produced by Iranian scholars, the majority of which were from Khurasan such as *Kitāb al-Samā'* (*The Book of Samā'*) of Abu Nasr Sarraj Tosi (1508).

Having discussed the first group of writings on *Samā'*, the second group such as *Sharhe al-T'arrof (Explanation of al-T'arrof)* by Mostamli Bukhari and *Resāla* by Qushayri were carried out in twelfth century A.D. Two of the most important writings on Sufism called *Ehyā al-Uloom al-Din (The revival of religious sciences)* and *Keimiyā Sa'ādat (Alchemy of Happiness)* were written by Abu Hamid



Mohammad al-Ghazali (1058-1111), one of the greatest Islamic scholars, within this period.

The third group such as Rozbahan Baqli's (d. 1209) work and Najm al-Din Kobra's (d. 1221) book written at thirteenth century A.D. There are several Sufi writings in poetry, the most famous of which are Rumi's writings.

The differences among these groups are their contents. The first group believed that *Samā'* is not an innovation (*bid'a*). The second group elaborated the explanations of the first writings in detail. Although the writings of the third group are defensive, their self-confidence is more apparent than the first group because they did not consider the followers of traditions anymore, particularly after al-Ghazali's writings. That is why the third group of writings are brief and consisted of dialectical discussions and explanations of the words used in Sufi writings.

Annemarie Schimmel (1992), one of the greatest German scholars, has spent a long time on introducing Rumi's works to the West. She has explained some poems of Rumi in her work called "*I am Wind, You are Fire*". She maintains:

*Samā'* in Mevlevi order is understandable since Rumi's poems have been originated from music and dance and interwoven with music. Rumi invites everybody to dance and whirl around Sun of Love (P: 28).

However, despite her astonishing mastery of Persian, Arabic and Turkish languages, and her vast knowledge of Middle Eastern literature, especially mystical literature, Schimmel has only concentrated on Rumi's symbolism, and has not paid enough attention to the poetic devices of the *Diwān* and to such crucial characteristics as the intertwining genres of epic and *ghazal*, which correspond brilliantly to Rumi's complex worldviews and his particular mysticism. The reason

why many Rumi scholars and researchers prefer studying and commenting on the *Mathnawi* is that it is less complex, at least, as far as moral and theological matters are concerned. Jalal al-Din Homaei (1982) has best reflected Rumi's thought in *Molawi Nāma (Book on Rumi)*.

Although Homaei discussed Rumi's view points on many subjects including *Samā'* in *Molawi Nāma* briefly, it provides a useful source to be considered as an effective method on the study of *Mathnawi*. Homaei claimed that Rumi performed *Samā'* in the state of ecstasy.

Ecstasy is a high spiritual state and a kind of union, the fruition that is not available easily. When the Sufis follow the long-path back to their Beloved, they pass through numerous "states" of the soul (hope and fear, joy and sorrow, expansion and contraction, intoxication and sobriety). They acquire the "stations" that are the soul's virtues, characters trails, and perfection. These stations and states have been described in detail in many Sufi works. Attar (d. 1221), one of the greatest Persian poets, has mentioned the states as seven in the long poem, *Manteq- al-tayr (Language of the birds)*. Other Sufis have numbered the stages of journey as ten, forty, one hundred, or even one thousand. A Sufi attains ecstasy after passing the various stages and steps. There is a remarkable quote in *Molawi Nāma* by Homaei (1982) which says::

In Mevlevi order the stages and steps begin with religious servitude culminate to attraction, love, emotion, enthusiasm, ecstasy and then *Samā'*. By passing so many mortifications and laborious acts, Sufi falls into ecstasy. In this situation Sufi is called *pokhteh* meaning "experienced" in Persian (p: 593).

He adds that *Samā'* is the result of ecstasy which is not volitional.

The essential principal of *Samā'* in Rumi's view is performing dance unconsciously. It begins when ecstasy captures Sufi's soul suddenly. This unconsciousness is different from those of wine and opium, etc. It is the result of Divine Love (ibid: 595).

Ali Akbar Mosalaei (1996) has written *Naqd-e-Mathnawi (A Critical Study of Mathnawi)* in Persian. Although this book challenges Rumi's view points and his *Samā'*, it is considered as a main source to reveal the opponents of *Samā'* ideologically. The author has composed some poems as an objection to Rumi's viewpoints in the first eighteen verses of *Mathnawi (Ney Nāma)*, Mosalaei says:

Do not listen to the reed because it is just a music which  
Robs your faith at night  
A monastery, *khānqah*, is nothing except a fire-temple  
Its spiritual guide, *Morshid*, or instructor is an idol  
In the idol-temple, pagoda, (P: 320).

The author explains Islamic prohibition of dance and music in five schools of Islam (Shafei, Hanafi, Maleki Hanbali and Shiite). He has supported his discussion through *Qur'anic* verses and prophetic sayings (*Hadith*). *Naqd-e-Mathnawi* is a reliable source to clarify some relations between *Qur'an* and Rumi's point of view on *Samā'*.

*Samā'-e-Ārefān (Sufis' Samā', 1997)*, by Husain Haydarkhani, in Persian, explains some famous Sufis' views on *Samā'* such as Hujwiri, Qushairi, Sollami, etc. Haydarkhani has divided *Samā'* into three types:

a. *Samā'* of the lower soul, b. *Samā'* of the heart and c. *Samā'* of the spirit. In the third case Sufi performs dance unconsciously. This type of *Samā'* has been performed by real Sufis called *Samā'* of lovers (P: 207).

He divides Sufis into two subdivisions: a. *Sahw*, meaning consciousness and b. *Sukr*, meaning drunkenness. *Samā'* of lovers is performed by the Sufis of the second group. The author has included Rumi in the third group. No evidence has been presented as a support to the case.

*Mabāni-e- Erfān va Ahwāl-e-Ārefān (Basis of Gnosticism and Sufis States)*

(1997), has been written by Asqar Halabi. The author has explained Rumi's *Samā'* in chapter ten of his book which says:

Plato and Aristotle believed that musical effects are vestiges of celestial movements man has heard before coming to this world. Rumi might have studied Plato and Aristotle's works as has been reflected in his poetry (P: 179):

(For) the shrill noise of the clarion and the menace of the drum somewhat resemble that universal trumpet.

Hence philosophers say that we have received these harmonies from the movements of the sphere,

(and that) this (melody) which people sing with pandore and throat is the sound of the revolutions of the sphere (M 2:732-734).

Moreover, Halabi adds:

Man is free from impurity through *Samā'*. Performing dance is a sign of thankfulness that leads man to perfection. (P: 247)

Halabi's book, as a valuable source, can be used to understand Sufi psychology. The book provides us with an understanding of the changes of Sufi's soul through dance.

*Pelle Pelle tā Molāqāt-e- khodā, (Attaining to God Step by Step)* (2002), has been written by Abd al-Hosein Zareen kub, one of the greatest Persian critics of *Mathnawi*, in Persian. He has explained Rumi's *Samā'* in the chapter titled "dance in bazaar":

Rumi was so sensitive to music that he could not resist being indifferent even to the noise of mill (P: 169).

In addition, he continues to explain:

One day, as Rumi was passing by the goldbeater's shop, he heard the sound of hammers pounding the rough sheets of gold into beautiful objects. With each step he repeated the name of God (Allah), and, with the sound of the hammers all he heard was "Allah Allah". Hearing this sound in every thing, even the wind created by his movement, he began to whirl in ecstasy in the middle of the street. (P: 170).

According to what mentioned above it can be concluded that Rumi's dance is an unconscious and non-volitional act and a type of mortification of soul. Zareen Kub states that Rumi's dance is a type of meditation. Rumi's followers consider dance as a saint's prayer and believe that there is no difference between real *Samā'* and praying. They believe these as the two aspects of reaching to God (P: 174).

Badi al-Zaman Fruzanfar (1933), the greatest commentator of Rumi's *Mathnawī* and the best editor of *Diwān-e-Sham*, has made a critical research on Rumi's life which can be regarded as the best book on Rumi's biography. Unfortunately he passed away before completing his interpretation of the *Mathnawī*. Just one out of six of the *Mathnawī* has been interpreted by him. Shahidi, an experienced in Persian literature, continued Fruzanfar's work. Although he is qualified enough in Islamic history and Persian literature, he lacks knowledge on Sufism, mysticism and philosophy. Fruzanfar's work is a great help in acquiring Rumi's views on *Samā'* as he argues:

Sufi's dance is the result of ecstasy. Dance and ecstasy are interacted. Dance is rhythmical movements of body. When Sufi reaches spiritual mode he performs such a dance. His ecstasy is inenarrable and cannot be explained by words. The high ecstasy belongs to one who whirls around soul of the soul which refers to perfect *wali* (Perfect man) in mysticism. This is a special type of ecstasy we can not perceive (p: 107).

*Samā' dar Tasawuf (Samā' in Islamic Mysticism)* has been compiled by Esmail Hakemi (1981). He has applied many utterances of well-known Sufis on *Samā'* and has devoted one complete chapter to it in Rumi's time. He also has set forth the issue of permissibility and non-permissibility of *Samā'* in Islam.

*Falsafe ye Irfān (The Philosophy of Mysticism)*, has been written by Sayyed Yahya Yasrebi (1888). He has devoted much time on the explanation and interpretation of chapter nine of Avicenna's *Al-Eshārāt va Tanbihāt (Indications and*

*Awareness*). The book is useful source in understanding of Sufis' stages. Yasrebi quotes Avicenna as saying:

Sufi suffers hardships and mortification in order to get to his goals. His main goals are: a. giving up everything except for The Truth (Supreme Truth) b. making concupiscent Soul as obedient of peaceful soul and c. preparing Sufi's Heart for awareness. The supporters of the goals mentioned are: a. pray along with meditation b. the tones, tunes and melodies. And c. being advised by pure teller (P: 290).

In regard with the tones, tunes and melodies, he discusses:

Sufi's mind is tender in nature. This is the reason why he is so impressed by pleasant music and songs. While hearing music, Sufi starts dancing since music influences the souls causing the body to move (p: 293).

Najib Mayel Herawi (1994) has compiled twenty-six booklets, written by great Persian Sufis, called *Samā' Nāmeḥāye Farsi (Persian Booklets of Samā' )* in one volume. He categorizes *Samā'* into three types in the introduction of his book: a. beginners' *Samā' (Mobtadi)* b. intermediate *Samā' (Ādati*, performing *Samā'* habitually) c. advanced or experienced *Samā' (Pokhte)*. The third type refers to *Mastān-e-Yazdān* meaning "drunken of God" in Persian culture. Herawi continues to add:

I know two eminent features called Rumi and Abu Saeid Abu al-Khair who have preformed the advanced *Samā'* all over the realm of Islamic mysticism. *Samā'* of Rumi and Abu Saeid have many similarities. *Samā'* is a spiritual purification and fundamentals of *Tariqat* (path). This type of *Samā'* is a gift from heaven (P: 17-18).

The author has included Sepahsalar's booklet in Rumi's *Samā'*. Mention should be made of the booklets that all the authors are mostly from Khurasan, which is the original land of *Samā'*. Some of the booklets are: *Samā' and its types* by Mostamli Bukhari, *Ecstasy and Samā'* by Abu Hamed al-Ghazali, *Samā': Ecstasy and Dance* by Sanaei Ghaznawi, *What is Samā' ?* by Ahmad Jam, *Ecstasy and Movement in Samā'* by Abbadi Marevzi.

As discussed before, one of the main scopes of the research concerns the contemporary manifestation of *Samā'*. Therefore it seems logical to present some reliable sources which have been investigated by other researchers:

*Rumi and the Whirling Dervishes* has been written by Shams Friedlander (2003) on Mevlevis' *Samā'*, their music and musical instruments in English. The author has been doing documentary photography of the whirling dervishes since his first trip to Konya in 1973. The book features haunting and evocative pictures of the order's dancers. It is a fruitful and an informative source to discover whirling Dervishes' *Samā'*, its components and their symbols.

*Samā'-e-Darvishān dar Torbate Molānā (Dervishes' Samā' at the Tomb of Rumi)* by A-Tafazoli in 1997. Having joined the Mevlevis' *Samā'* ceremony in Rumi's *Aurs*, he reflected his observations in his book. A very important point related to the case is Rumi's *Aurs*. It is a ceremony held by Mevlevis as a memorial at the anniversary of Rumi's death. The work provides us with a good knowledge about the Mevlevis *Samā'* along with a short explanation on a few symbols of their musical instruments. He neither discussed nor compared Rumi's *Samā'* with Mevlevis' *Samā'*.

*Mevlānā dan sonra Mevlevilik, The Mevlevis After Mevlānā*, about the Mevlevi tradition was written by the great Turkish Mevlevi Sheikh and scholar, Abd al-Baqi Golpinarli (1963). It has been translated from Turkish into Persian as "*Molaviya b'ad az Molānā*" by Tofiq Sobhani. To understand the function and practice of Mevlevi's *Samā'*, this study will be using the detailed and informative study of Golpinarli as a focal text. The book provides great details about the ritual of *Samā'*.

## 1.6 Methodology of the Study

This study intends to inquire into Rumi's *Samā'* through his works and his biography. The analysis of Rumi's *Samā'*, as expressed in his works, will be subjected to intra-textual as well as inter-textual interpretation and explanation.

Needless to say that there is a close connection between language and thought. The necessity to convey senses, tenors and concepts has made man establish language and improve it through ages. After the establishment and application of language, man's mind was influenced by the dominating power of language. This is the reason why man uses language in his thinking and solitude. Language as the main instrument of communication is mostly used by man to convey his thoughts.

It is a universal fact that language changes constantly. Man gets his thoughts from nature, universe, religion, customs, traditions, and knowledge of his epoch. Any changes in the elements mentioned will influence man's mind causing language change. That is why man cannot understand old texts easily. For example, we use the word "*Sohbat Kardan*" for talking, conversation and discourse in Persian today, but at the time of al-Ghazali (1111) it was used as a word for "coming together". Man is bound to the time, place, knowledge, and nature of his epoch. These are the restrictions to which speech is limited. Therefore, it is impossible to understand texts of each period without understanding those limitations i.e. we cannot understand a text of thirteenth century by modern language. We have to go back to the time of the text to understand the structures of languages, people's nature, social classes, economic system, culture, and particularly sciences and knowledge of that specific period.



It is possible for man to get to the area of meaning of an old text, but it is impossible to understand it as its author did. Written texts do not usually transfer all the factors mentioned.

Based on what has been discussed, this study intends to understand Rumi's works by applying the method used by Toshihiko Izutsu in his book titled *God and Man in the Koran* to understand the denotations and connotations of words in context, and the relations between words, as well. This study tries primarily to apply a conceptual and semantic analysis of the text to search for different meanings of the words of *Samā'* in Rumi's works. Since the corpus of the study is mostly based on poetry, applying Izutsu's method is a great help to explore the deep underlying layers of the meanings of the words. Izutsu was able to penetrate into different linguistic and cultural worlds as far apart as Japan and Islam. His stunningly diligent works on *Qur'anic* semantics and conceptual structure are peerless and still being taught in many Islamic countries as textbook. This holds true for his works on the East and the West as well as for works devoted to different schools of thought within a particular tradition, Western, Islamic or otherwise. Izutsu's works do not lack in concentration and depth, and display a remarkable degree of precision and inclusiveness. The presence of such an outlook explains, to a large extent, the profoundness of Izutsu's studies. At the outset, Izutsu gives us his idea of the science of linguistics or semantics through which he wishes to understand the *Qur'an*. Compared with past researchers, Izutsu was more successful to delve into profound study. The researcher believes that Izutsu's method is sufficient enough to satisfy the needs of the study.

To Izutsu what is called semantics today seems ambiguous. It is extremely difficult, if not absolutely impossible, for an outsider to get a general idea of what it

is like. This is largely due to the fact that ‘semantics’ is a science which concerns with phenomenon of meaning in the widest sense of the word. In fact, ‘meaning’ in this sense involves important problems which are closely related to such field as linguistics, sociology, analytic philosophy and so on (Izutsu, 1964: 10).

The question of meaning has always been central to semantic studies. Context has always borne the implication that meaning resides in the text and is waiting there to be discovered and extracted by the reader. Words possess a dual characteristic, basic and relational, when viewed within a context.

Semantics, in this research, is dealt with through an analytical study of the key-terms applied by Rumi in *Samā’*. It conceptualizes and interprets the world that surrounds them. Semantics, thus understood, is a kind of the world-view of people, a study of the nature and structure of the world-view of a nation at this or that significant period of its history. Semantics is conducted by means of a methodological analysis of the major cultural concepts (ibid: 11).

Concepts do not stand alone and in isolation but are organized into a system or systems. Thus, we should study two sides of word meanings, ‘basic’ and ‘relational’, as one of the major methodological concepts of semantics (ibid: 12).

To support the idea discussed, this study intends to survey the key-terms applied in Rumi’s writings with relation to *Samā’*. A close study on Rumi’s works indicates that the words bear two meanings: closed meaning and Far-fetched one. meaning is quite obvious, while, The closed meaning is that each individual word, taken separately, even out of its context, involves its own basic meaning. The word *Charkhidan* ‘whirling’, for example, basically means the same thing whether it is

found in Rumi's writings or outside of them. In fact, there is a very general and non-specified meaning of 'whirling' wherever it is found, whether it happens to be used as a key-term in a given system of concepts or more generally outside of that particular system. In other words, the constant semantic element, which is attached to the word, is considered as its 'basic meaning' (ibid: 19).

In regard with far-fetched meaning, the word *Charkhidan*, for example, possesses its specific concept and its particular area of meaning in the context of Rumi's writings. This originates from the fact that the word in this context stands in very close relation to the concept of *Samā'*, or rather various concepts having direct references to *Samā'*. This means that the simple word *Charkhidan* with its simple meaning "to whirl" once introduced into a particular system and given a certain definite position, presents a new meaning due to its relation to other areas of meaning in the same system and context. The new elements usually tend to affect and change the original meaning of the word. Thus, the word *Charkhidan*, when used in the context of Rumi's works and its conceptual system, is put into a close connection with such important words as God (*Khodā*), Islam, heaven (*asmān*), prayer (*namāz*), Sufi (*Darvish*), *Samā* (*raqs va ahāng*), music (*āhang*), dance (*raqs*), etc. Hence the word *Charkhidan* in the context of Rumi's works will have to be understood in terms of all these related terms, giving it a very special semantic colouring that is complex with a particular meaning structure. Thus, this is part of the meaning of the word *Charkhidan* which is extremely important and covers an essential part of its meaning which is far more important than its 'basic' meaning (ibid: 19).

Thus, while the 'basic' meaning of the word is something inherent in the word, the 'relational' meaning is something that comes to be attached and added to

the basic meaning through the use of the word in a particular field, in relation to all other important words in that system (ibid: 20).

It often happens that the modifying power of the whole system works upon the word so strongly that the word ends by almost losing its original conceptual meaning followed by the production of a word with a new meaning (ibid: 20).

It must be kept in mind that the 'basic' meaning which a word carries in any texts or even in an ordinary speech is not changed in whatever system the word may be put. In fact, all words are more or less clearly tinged with some special colouring coming from the particular structure of the cultural milieu in which they actually exist (ibid: 22).

Semantic analysis of the 'relational' side of a word meaning requires a careful investigation into the general cultural situation of the age and the people. After all, 'relational' meaning of a word is nothing other than a real manifestation of the spirit of the culture, and a most faithful reflection of the general tendency, which people use as part of their vocabulary (ibid: 27).

The analysis of the basic and relational elements of a key-term should be conducted in such a way that the combination of the two aspects of the word-meaning bring to light one particular aspect, one significant facet of the culture experienced consciously by those belonging to that culture. When we reach the final stage, all the analyses done must help us reconstruct the structure of the real facet of the culture of that time (ibid: 27).

It should be mentioned that the difference between 'vocabulary' and 'semantic field' is a relative one. Essentially there can be no difference between them

at all. ‘Vocabulary’ is not a mere sum of the total words, that is, it is not a mere random collection of a great number of words lumped together without order and principle. Indeed, each one of them stands by itself without any essential connection with others. On the contrary, the words are connected with each other in multiple relationships and thus form a number of largely overlapping areas. These areas are constituted by the various relations of the words among themselves. It remains to say a word that a text is any discourse fixed in writing. It is viewed as a projection of the human world. This means that the text is not merely a copy or duplication of the word, but an author’s creation and intentional act, conveying a particular discourse (ibid: 27).

Moreover, the text entails a specific context which is determined by its “historical tradition”, “culture” or “world-view”, situated in a particular time and space. This context or milieu constitutes the historicity of the text. As the author’s act is his construction of the human reality situated in a particular context, his text should therefore be understood through its historicity. In fact, the context of the author is different from the context of the readers, particularly after eight centuries (ibid: 34).

Awareness of this difference invariably influences and colours the understanding of the interpreter. Consequently there has to occur a “fusion of horizons” for an interpretation to take place. This is a process whereby the horizons of the text are merged with the horizons of the reader. This is an essential factor to a theory and method of interpretation (ibid: 37). The study of the context of Rumi’s writings to discover Rumi’s horizon will be investigated by this study. It includes literature, philosophy, mysticism, folklore, religions, family system, etc.

Mention should be made that the method of this study differs from Izutsu's in finding the basic meaning. Unlike Izutsu, the researcher has partly based his studies on dictionary meanings. What is to be noted is that the words employed by the *Qur'an* had not been established in their new concept, since the meaning the words offered were different from that used in the pre-Islamic period. As such, dictionary meaning can not be considered as the basis of Izutsu's studies. However the texts this study is working on is based on the time in which there were reliable dictionaries to reflect almost all the areas of the meanings of the words. As was mentioned above the researcher has explored the basic and relational meaning of *Samā'* by Izutsu's method.

The last important point to be noted is that all the texts share the static part of meaning to some extent, but differ in their interpretations and are open to further interpretations. Therefore the study is not limited to semantic analysis of language. The function of the text should also be viewed as a dominating factor to get to the underlying meanings of the words.

The following are the applications of Izutsu's of semantic analysis method in this study:

- a. To explore the basic meaning of *Samā'*, the dictionary meaning as the underlying layer of meaning, in Persian and Arabic is investigated.
- b. The elements involved in correlation with *Samā'* in Rumi's works are explored and identified. When the elements are clarified, their connections with *Samā'* will be revealed.
- c. By categorizing the elements the areas of meaning related closely to *Samā'* are determined in Rumi's works.

d. The relationship between the different areas of meaning, and Rumi's viewpoint on the meaning of *Samā'*, is explained as the last step of this study.

However, a single method does not seem to be satisfactory enough to cover all the needs of the study. Therefore, a comparative method is provided to highlight points of sameness, similarity, and difference between Mevlevi's *Samā'* and Rumi's. Among the three methods of comparison (point-by-point, block, and combination), on which scholars agree upon, the block method, adapted from material written by Rebecca Moore Howard and Sandra Jamieson (1995), to organize the body of our comparison concerning Mevlevi's *Samā'* with Rumi's. In this method everything is told about one subject and then about the second. That is, it discusses all the important features of one item, turning to the second item and then discusses all of its important features. It explains how they compare or contrast with those of the first item. In addition, it describes one item and then the second and then compares them.

The third part of the study is devoted to the question of the orthodoxy of Rumi's *Samā'*. The research intends to do a comprehensive study of the orthodoxy of Rumi's *Samā'* through the interpretations of the *Qur'an*, *Hadith*, and the opinions of disciples of the Prophet's Companions (*Tābi'un*) on music and dance. Moreover, the viewpoints of the four jurispudent *imāms* and other accomplished scholars of Islam will be taken into deep consideration. One of the significant attributes of Islamic methodology is the pious predecessors' views of the Islamic society. However, their views should be measured by the criterion of Allah's Book and the authentically related prophetic traditions.

## 1.8 Organisation of the Thesis

This study comprises a total of six chapters, divided as follows:

**Chapter One** constitutes a background to Rumi's life and *Samā'*, statement of the problem, objectives, scope and limitations, significance, review of related literature, methodology, and organisation of the study.

**Chapter Two** constitutes the main body of the analysis. This chapter will examine Rumi's view on the etymology, definition and concept of *Samā'*, the principles that shaped Rumi's thoughts, application of *Samā'* in Rumi's works, the origins of *Samā'*, the introduction of Shams al-Din Tabrizi into Rumi's life, the rules, the motives, the kinds, the effects, and the ceremony of *Samā'*.

**Chapter Three** presents and discusses the relation of *Samā'* to the human being, the area of natural elements, and the Persian culture.

**Chapter Four** is devoted to the investigation and explanation of three related subjects. Firstly, the historical background of Mevlevi order, secondly the explanation of their *Samā'*, and thirdly, the clarification of the differences between their *Samā'* and Rumi's along with a short biography of the founder of the Mevlevi order.

**Chapter Five** presents and discusses the different views of the Islamic schools of law -Shāfe'i, Hanafī, Hanbali, Māleki and Shiite- on *Samā'* and the relations between Rumi's view on *Samā'* and that of the *Qur'an*.

**Chapter Six** the concluding chapter, summarises the study and presents principal findings and implications, as well as suggestions for future research.



## CHAPTER TWO

### *EXPLANATION and APPLICATION of SAMĀ'*

#### *in RUMI'S WORKS*

*What is Samā'? A message from the fairy,  
hidden in your heart;  
with their letter comes serenity to the estranged  
heart.  
The tree of wisdom comes to bloom with this  
breeze;  
the inner pores of existence open to this tune.*

*(Rumi, Diwān: 1734)*

This chapter describes the explanation and application of *Samā'* in Rumi's works in twelfth parts. The first part involves the etymology of *Samā'*. The second, contains the definition of *Samā'*. The concept of *Samā'* in Rumi's works is discussed in the third part. The fourth includes: definition of the words employed for dancing, chanting, music, and singer and musician by Rumi. The fifth part discusses the origins of *Samā'*. The introduction of Shams al-Din Tabrizi who persuades Rumi to *Samā'* constitutes the sixth part. The seventh part discusses Rumi and the rules of *Samā'*. The eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth parts of the chapter deal with Rumi and the motives, types, effects, the ceremony of *Samā'*, and conclusion respectively.

### **2.0 Introduction**

From the dawn of existence, human beings have longed to reach an understanding of being. This primordial yearning was cultivated by the earliest Sufi mystics at the advent of Islam, seventh century. For three after, great Sufis have conveyed their insights in numerous magnificent forms in order to nourish the hearts