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ORIGINAL STUDY

Homonyms' Lexical and Mystical Layers in the Poetic Heritage of Jalal Al-Din Rumi

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the study of homonyms in the poetic heritage of Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi from both lexical-semantic and Sufi perspectives. The main purpose of the research is not only to determine the linguistic structure of homonyms but also to reveal their esoteric and mystical layers of meaning in the light of Sufi philosophy. In his works, Rumi skillfully employed polysemous words to create poetic-aesthetic beauty while simultaneously expressing profound meanings that illuminate the spiritual world of humankind.

In the course of the study, homonyms were classified according to syllabic structure, and the functions of monosyllabic, disyllabic, and trisyllabic forms in the poetic text were explained. Words such as باد، داد، باز، نی، مهر، قلب، روان، مشتری (*bād*, *dād*, *bāz*, *ney*, *mehr*, *ghælb*, *rævān*, and *moshtærī*) were analyzed comparatively in terms of their lexical meanings in Persian and their symbolic and mystical connotations in Rumi's poetry. Thus, both the external and inner semantic layers carried by these words were revealed.

The article demonstrates that the multiplicity of lexical meanings of homonyms is correlated with verses from the Qur'an and the classical Sufi tradition, and their role as symbolic keys in poetic texts is explained on a scholarly basis. For Rumi, homonyms are not merely accidental wordplay but rather instruments for expressing the essential ideas of Sufism–divine love, spiritual perfection, and the purification of the soul. This feature enhances their value both linguistically and philosophically-spiritually.

The study shows that in Rumi's poetics, homonyms create semantic multi-layeredness, directing the reader from the apparent to the hidden, from the visible to the invisible. They function not only as artistic-aesthetic devices but also as symbolic codes that lead the individual toward spiritual reflection. Thus, the research reveals that the study of homonyms in Rumi's creative work carries significant scholarly value at the intersection of linguistics, literary studies, and Sufi philosophy.

Keywords: Rumi, Homonym, Lexical-semantic analysis, Poetics, Sufi symbolism, Mysticism

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Introduction

Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207–1273) is recognized as one of the most prominent figures of Eastern literature, distinguished not only by his Sufi philosophy and profound spiritual concepts but also by his masterful employment of the subtle poetic potential of language. His works *Mathnavi-ye Ma'navi* and *Divan-e Shams-e Tabrizi* are considered unparalleled poetic and philosophical sources within Persian, Turkish, and, more broadly, world literature. From an academic perspective, these texts are significant both as representations of mystical thought and for their rich phonetic, morphological, syntactic, and semantic layers.

One of the major domains within linguistic inquiry is the study of homonyms, namely lexical items that share identical phonetic and orthographic forms but diverge in meaning. In classical Persian literature, the poetic function of homonyms occupies a position of particular significance. Within the literary works of Rumi, homonyms do not merely operate as grammatical or semantic forms, nor solely as stylistic devices; rather, they also engender layers of mystical signification. In this way, they establish a bridge between aesthetic meaning and divine meaning.

The present article aims to analyze the phonetic and lexico-semantic properties of homonyms in Rumi's poetic works and to elucidate their dual poetic and mystical functions. Special attention is devoted to homonyms that occur in parallel within a single couplet or across distinct couplets, while their intertextual resonance with Qur'anic verses and Sufi thought is also examined. Undertaken at the intersection of linguistics, literary studies, and philosophy, this approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of Rumi's poetic genius.

Rumi is recognized not only as a central figure of Turkish and Persian literary traditions but also as one of the foremost contributors to world literature. His corpus is distinguished simultaneously by its poetic richness and by its profound philosophical and mystical depth. Through his verse, the poet articulates the human journey toward spiritual perfection, the essence of divine love, and the process of attaining union with the Absolute. Living in the mid-thirteenth century, this eminent Sufi thinker, through his unparalleled creative achievement, profoundly shaped the spiritual culture of his contemporaries and continues to exert influence on subsequent generations.

Main part

The most productive and functional unit of language is the word. The word also constitutes the central unit of linguistic elements. "No matter how abstract a concept may be, the word is capable of denoting and defining it with terminological precision… the existence of a word requires three essential conditions: (1) a broadly meaningful object, or denotatum (referent); (2) the symbol of this object in cognition, or signified (meaning); and (3) an acoustic image" (Jafarov, 2023, p. 106). "The speech sounds peculiar to every language also converge within the word, while the largest linguistic units of a language-word combinations and sentences–are likewise formed from words. Within the word, phonemes and morphemes enter into logical relations with one another; the interconnection of speech and thought with language and reality is clearly reflected, and the specific features of their mutual relations are revealed. Finally, the word is the principal means of disclosing the distinctive characteristics of different languages and language families" (Qurbanov, 2011, p. 216).

When determining the essence of words as lexical units, various semasiological relations emerge, such as polysemy, homonymy, synonymy, and antonymy. Words that share the

same phonetic form but denote unrelated concepts whose semantic connections have long been lost are called homonyms. “Homonyms – in English, homonyms; in French, homonymes; in Russian, омонимы – are designated as lexical units of language” (Encyclopedia of Linguistics, 2008, p. 34; Crystal, 2003, p. 220). In Persian, these lexical units are referred to as لمات هماَوا /kælæmat-e hæmavâ/ – words with the same pronunciation.

At first glance, homonyms resemble polysemous lexemes. The distinction lies in the fact that homonyms are independently meaningful units, whereas polysemous lexemes comprise different meaning variants of a single word. In polysemy, all meanings of a lexeme converge around a central sense, expressing its various nuances. In homonyms, however, two or more meanings may coexist, sometimes semantically related–for example, ماه /māh/ – moon (satellite), month (calendar)–and sometimes entirely unrelated–for instance, قلب /ghælb/ – heart; قلب /ghælb/ – fake, scrap.

In Eastern literature, words with identical pronunciation and orthography but different lexical meanings, as employed in poetic examples, constitute one of the lexical and stylistic categories carrying pun or paronomastic function. These homonyms (paronomasias) with the same phonetic form yet distinct meanings provided poets with extensive opportunities to create double entendres, construct layered meanings, and impart both aesthetic and semantic depth to the text.

Research on English, Persian, Russian, Azerbaijani, Turkish, and Tajik languages indicate that homonyms occupy a specific position within the lexicon of these languages. Homonyms, homographs, homophones, and homoforms are each regarded as distinct linguistic phenomena and are separately explained in terminological dictionaries and encyclopedias. Nevertheless, studies conducted in Azerbaijani and Persian (Məmmədova, 2007, p. 254) have often overlooked their differences, frequently treating them collectively under the general heading of “homonyms.”

The definition, classification, and semantic status of homonyms have been subjects of debate among linguists for many years (Afandiyeva, 1980, p. 54). While some scholars consider homonyms a natural and legitimate semantic category of language, others describe them as “pathological” phenomena. For example, L. A. Bulakhovski referred to homonyms as “sick words” (Bulakhovski, 1952, p. 46), and A. A. Reformatski as “defective words” (Reformatski, 1960, p. 60). Contrary to this view, T. Afandiyeva, a prominent researcher of Azerbaijani stylistics, states: “Homonymy is a historical category, formed through the natural development of language over centuries, and occupies a stable position within the lexicon. It is not accidental that numerous proverbs are constructed precisely on the basis of homonyms. For instance, many proverbs and folk sayings, such as “you drank the grape juice and spilled the grape juice’ – a proverb meaning that by indulging in wine, one loses one’s dignity or self-restraint.” (Afandiyeva, 1980; 2016, p. 55; 2007, p. 41), exemplify this phenomenon.

As in other world languages, homonyms are also widespread in Persian and play an important role in enriching the lexicon and the lexical stock of the language. Their true semantic significance, however, emerges primarily in poetic texts, within microtexts, and in context. Professor N. Z. Hatemi, in the abstract of his doctoral dissertation entitled *The Lexicon of Persian and Its Enrichment Processes*, notes that “in Old Persian, there were pronunciation differences between ‘ya-ye ma‘ruf’ and ‘ya-ye mahchul,’ as well as between ‘vav-e ma‘ruf’ and ‘vav-e mahchul.’ However, since the Arabic script lacked specific diacritical marks to indicate these differences, over time these distinctions disappeared, resulting in the formation of a new group of homonyms” (Hatəmi, 1968, p. 30).

Scholars who have investigated the phonetic-graphic development of Persian, including M. T. Bahar, P. N. Khanlari, M. Bagheri, and others, have also confirmed that although

these sounds were originally distinct, they later converged in pronunciation, giving rise to the formation of a number of homonyms.

This phenomenon is also clearly illustrated in the following couplet by Rumi:

ار ا ان را قیاس از خود مگیر،
ره ماند در نبشتن شیر و شیر . (Masnavi, p. 16, c. 8)

/kār-e pākān-rā qiyās æz xod mægir,
gærche mānad dar nebeshtan **shir** o **shir**/

Do not compare the work of the pure people with your own,
*For though **"lion"** and **"milk"** are written the same…*

In the couplet, the two occurrences of the word **shir** (شیر) represent distinct meanings: one, /shīr/ – *milk*; the other, /shīr/ – *lion*. Although they share the same spelling, they differ in pronunciation. This phenomenon is rooted in the historical phonetic system of Persian, in which several variants of the grapheme **yā** existed with different pronunciations, traditionally referred to as *yā-ye ma'lūm* and *yā-ye majhūl*. Mawlānā alludes to precisely this historical-phonetic feature. In contemporary Persian, however, both forms are written identically and pronounced the same, with **shīr** denoting both *milk* and *lion*. Consequently, in modern Persian these units are considered lexical homonyms.

N. Z. Hatami, in his studies on these linguistic units, consistently classifies homophones, homoforms, and homographs under the general category of homonyms. Discussing loan-words from other languages–particularly Arabic–into Persian, he writes:

"… in the words **asīr** (اسیر, prisoner; captive), **asīr** (اثیر, ether; chosen), **asīr** (عسیر, difficult; hard), and **asīr** (عصیر, juice; extract), each /s/ phoneme has a distinct articulation in Arabic, but in Persian they are pronounced identically, thereby forming homonyms" (Hatəmi, 1968, p.32).

The first part of Hatami's statement is accurate; the second, however, is problematic. The inaccuracy lies in the fact that although these words are phonetically identical in Persian, they are written with different graphic forms. Homonyms, by definition, must coincide both in orthography and pronunciation while differing semantically. Therefore, the cited examples are not homonyms but homophones.

Later, when discussing *vāv-e ma'dūle* (واو معدوله, "loaded vāv"), Hatami considers words such as **kh^{v}ār** (خوار, lowly, despicable), **khār** (خار, thorn, granite), **kh^{v}ord** (خورد, ate), and **khord** (خُرد, small) to be homonyms. Yet, this group of words, too, should not be regarded as homonyms; rather, they are homophones and must be analyzed as such.

In this article, we aim to investigate those homonyms in Rumi's poetic works which are both linguistically and semantically challenging, exploring their functions not only from a linguistic perspective but also within the framework of Sufi hermeneutics.

Homonyms in Rumi's poetic works

The first research in this field is an eight-page article written in Tajik by M. Ahmadova, entitled *"The Use of Homonymous Words in Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī's Mathnawī-yi Ma'nawī."* As the title suggests, M. Ahmadova discusses a group of homonyms in Rūmī's *Mathnawī-yi Ma'nawī*. A close reading of the article also reveals that the author does not distinguish graphically between homophones and homonyms (Ahmadova, 2009, p. 78). This is quite natural, since the Tajik language, belonging to the Iranian branch of the Indo-European family, replaced the Arabic script with the Cyrillic alphabet after the 1940s; as a result, in this language, lexical units such as homographs, homophones, and homoforms have often become homonymized (Ahmadova, 2010, p. 16).

Scope of the present study

In the present research, we draw upon both Rūmī's *Mathnawī-yi Maʿnawī* (hereafter *Mathnawī*) and his *Dīvān-i Kabīr*, also known as *Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīzī* (hereafter *Dīvān-i Shams*). Unlike M. Ahmadova, however, our analysis does not address homophones, homographs, or homoforms, but focuses exclusively on genuine homonyms–that is, lexical units identical in both spelling and pronunciation but different in meaning.

The study of homonymous words in their linguistic distribution and functional position allows us to reveal important stylistic features of literary texts. It becomes clear that both the *Mathnawī* and the *Dīvān-i Shams* are exceptionally rich in their use of homonyms. This richness demonstrates not only the semantic depth but also the extraordinary poetic imagination with which Rūmī employs these linguistic devices.

In his poetry–universally recognized as a jewel of world literature–Rūmī makes extensive use of homonyms. At times he employs several homonyms within a single ghazal, setting them in contrast with one another and thereby creating artistic wordplay (*jināS*). Through such techniques, he constructs poetic images that simultaneously delight in sound and enrich semantic complexity.

Moreover, the homonyms employed in Rūmī's poetic passages may belong morphologically to the same part of speech (lexico-semantic homonyms) or to different parts of speech (morphological homonyms).

a) Lexico-Semantic Homonyms

In Persian, homonyms of this type share the same pronunciation while conveying different meanings, and they belong to the same part of speech. Examples include:

- مهر **/mehr/** – I *Sun* (noun); II *affection, love* (noun)
- تار **/tār/** – I *net* (noun); II *darkness* (noun); III *musical instrument tār* (noun); IV *strand of hair* (noun)
- صبا **/sabā/** – I *childhood, youth* (noun); II *morning breeze, zephyr* (noun)
- نبات **/nabat/** – I *plant* (noun); II *nabat*, crystalized sugar (noun)

b) Morphological Homonyms:

Examples:

Unlike lexico-semantic homonyms, this type of homonym emerges as a result of certain grammatical forms, whereby words become phonetically identical but belong to different parts of speech. Examples include:

- باد **/bād/** – I *wind* (noun); II *"be!"* (verb, imperative form)
- باز **/bāz/** – I *falcon* (noun); II *open* (adjective); III *again* (adverb)
- روان **/rævān/** – I *soul, spirit* (noun); II *going, moving* (participle/adjectival form)

Classification of homonyms according to syllabic structure

In Rūmī's works, when the homonyms are classified according to their syllabic structure, it becomes evident that they consist predominantly of monosyllabic and disyllabic lexemes, and only rarely of trisyllabic ones.

- **Monosyllabic (CVC structure):**
  باد /bād/ – I *wind* (noun); II *be!* (noun)
  باز /bāz/ – I *falcon* (noun); II *open*; III *again* (adverb)
  داد /dād/ – I *justice, right* (noun); II *cry* (noun); III *gave* (verb)
  نی /ney/ – I *reed* (noun); II *flute* (noun)

Table 1. Phonological-syllabic structure of homonyms in Rumi's works.

Syllable Count	Structural Formula	Homonyms	Meanings
Monosyllabic	CVC	باد /bād/	I *wind* (noun); II *be!* (noun)
	CVC	باز /bāz/	I *falcon* (noun); II *open*; III *again* (adverb)
	CVC	داد /dād/	I *justice, right* (noun); II *cry* (noun); III *gave* (verb)
	CVC	نی /ney/	I *reed* (noun); II *flute* (noun)
	CVC	تن /tan/	I *body*; II *person, human*
Monosyllabic	CVCC	مهر /mehr/	I *Sun*; II *love, affection*
	CVCC	قلب /ghalb/	I *heart*; II *false, fake*
Disyllabic	CV-CV	صبا /sæ-bā/	I *childhood, youth*; II *morning breeze, zephyr*
	CV-CV	شانه /shā-ne/	I *comb*; II *shoulder*
Disyllabic	CV-CVC	نبات /næ-bāt/	I *tree, plant*; II *nabat (type of sweet)*
	CV-CVC	روان /ræ-vān/	I *soul*; II *moving, going*
	CV-CVC	غریب /ghæ-rib/	I *stranger*; II *strange, astonishing*
Trisyllabic	CV-CV-CV	نتیجه /næ-ti-je/	I *result, outcome*; II *offspring*
Trisyllabic	CVC-CV-CV	مشتری /mosh-tæ-ri/	I *Jupiter (planet)*; II *buyer, client*

- **Monosyllabic (CVCC structure):**
  مهر /mehr/ – I *Sun* (noun); II *love, affection* (noun)
  قلب /ghælb/ – I *heart* (noun); II *false, fake* (adjective)
- **Disyllabic (CV–CV structure):**
  صبا /sæ-bā/ – I *youth* (noun); II *morning breeze, zephyr* (noun)
  شانه /shā-ne/ – I *comb* (noun); II *shoulder* (noun)
- **Disyllabic (CV–CVC structure):**
  نبات /næ-bāt/ – I *plant* (noun); II *crystal sugar, nabat* (noun)
  روان /ræ-vān/ – I *soul* (noun); II *moving, going* (participle)
  غریب /ghæ-rib/ – I *stranger* (noun); II *strange, astonishing* (adjective)
- **Trisyllabic (CV–CV–CV structure):**
  نتیجه /næ-ti-je/ – I *result, outcome* (adjective); II *offspring* (child of a descendant)
- **Trisyllabic (CVC–CV–CV structure):**
  مشتری /mosh-tæ-ri/ – I *Jupiter* (planet) (noun); II *customer, client* (noun)
- **Trisyllabic (CV–CV–CV structure):**
  ینتیجه /næ-ti-je/ – I *Jupiter* (planet); II *grandchild* (noun)

Thus, in Rumi's poetic heritage, homonyms create a rich layer both semantically, morphologically, and phonetically, contributing to the multilayered nature of poetic narration. Table 1 systematizes the phonological-syllabic structure of the main homonyms employed in Rumi's works. As the classification shows, in the poet's language, homonyms predominantly appear as monosyllabic (CVC and CVCC structures), and less frequently in disyllabic and trisyllabic forms. These homonyms are notable not only for their phonetic properties but also for their multilayered semantic potential. By exploiting this linguistic richness, Rumi successfully conveys both poetic beauty and profound Sufi meaning.

The examples presented in the table clearly reflect the main homonyms used in Rumi's works in terms of both phonetic structure and semantic complexity. Each selected homonym group was also cross-checked with the most authoritative lexicographic sources of the Persian language. These include A. Dehxodā's 14-volume لغاتنامه (*Loghatnāmeh*), Mohammad Mo'in's 6-volume فرهن فارسی(*Farhang-e Fārsi*), and the 8-volume فرهن بزرگ سخن (*Farhang-e Bozorg-e Sokhan*) edited by Hasan Anvari. Considering that checking each

homonym across all these dictionaries would excessively increase the length of the article, we limit our illustration to the entry باد /bād/; readers seeking more detailed information may refer to the aforementioned dictionariep.

باد /bād/ – I *wind* – air current moving in various directions *(Loghatnāmeh*, vol. III, p. 3389)
باد /bād/ – I *wind* – rapidly moving air flow *(Farhang-e Fārsi, vol.* I, p. 435)
باد /bād/ – I *wind* – in geology, natural and fast horizontal movement of air *(Farhang-e Bozorg-e Sokhan, vol. II, p. 712)*
باد /bād/ – II *be!* – abbreviated form of بودن (*būdan*), expressing prayer or *wish (Loghatnāmeh*, vol. III, p. 3400)
باد /bād/ – II *be!* – third-person singular form of بودن (*būdan*), expressing prayer or *wish (Farhang-e Fārsi, vol. I, p. 436)*
باد /bād/ – II *be!* – used to express prayer, wish, or *desire* (*Farhang-e Bozorg-e Sokhan*, vol. II, p. 719)

Thus, the semantic richness of the lexical entries is demonstrated across all three lexicographic sources. A notable advantage of these explanatory dictionaries is that the meanings are illustrated through examples from both poetry and prose.

This feature is significant for examining the use and value of words in Rumi's poetic heritage. In the *Mathnavi-ye Ma'navi*, the deployment of lexical-semantic units–such as synonyms, antonyms, homophones, and homonyms–adds an additional layer to the work's poetic significance. These units not only expand the expressive capacity of the language but also serve to convey ideas more effectively. In Rumi's poetry, homonyms fulfill two principal functions**:**

1. **Aesthetic function** – to astonish the reader with the beauty and polysemy of words, enhancing the harmony, rhythm, and expressive power of the poetic text.
2. **Mystical function** – to convey Sufi truths through the multiple meanings hidden within the same sound and word form, illustrating the passage from the outward to the inward, from the material to the spiritual.

Rumi, through his unparalleled works, has contributed immense treasures to the treasury of Sufism. Among these, both of his poetic works are significant, particularly the six-part *Mathnavi-ye Ma'navi*, composed during the period of Husām al-Dīn Chalabī. The great poet of the East, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, described it as the "Qurʾān in the Persian language."

هست قرآن در زبان هلوی،
مثنوی معنـــوی مــولوی. (Jāmī)

/hæst Qor'an dær zæbān-e pæhlævi,
Mæthnævi-ye mæ'nævi-ye Moulævi/

The Qur'an exists in the Pahlavi language,
Rumi's Masnavi-ye Ma'navi.

Commentaries and interpretations of Rumi's works, particularly the *Mathnavi-ye Ma'navi*, from the perspective of Sufism and mystical thought, have been continuously produced from the 14th century to the present day by scholars worldwide, both from the East and the West. Considering the impossibility of discussing each of these contributions in detail here, we will mention only a few notable figures.

Mark Nicholson, at the beginning of the 19th century, was recognized as one of the early commentators and researchers of the *Mathnavi-ye Ma'navi*. His grandson, Reynold Nicholson (1868–1945), made invaluable contributions to the field of Oriental studies. "The most accurate edition and translation of Rumi's *Mathnavi-ye Ma'navi* is associated

with his name. Regarding its commentary, European orientalists consider this work as the highest homage to Rumi's spiritual world" (Məmmədova, 2005, p. 33).

R. Nicholson's publications, including *Mathnavi-ye Ma'navi*, *Commentary of Mawlana's Mathnavi* (1940), and *Rumi, Poet and Mystic* (1950), remain highly influential. Another notable scholar is the German researcher Anna Marie Schimmel, whose works on Rumi include *Rumi Story on Prayer* and *The Triumphal Sun* (1980, p. 123), as well as *Man Budam o Atash*, repeatedly published.

Among scholars with a distinctive approach to Rumi studies, Abdülbâkî Golpınarlı stands out with works such as *Mevlana Celaleddin: Hayatı, Felsefesi, Eserlerinden Seçmeler* (1959), *Mevlana Şems Tebrizi ile Altmış İki Yaşında Buluştu* (1959), and *100 Soruda Tasavvuf* (1969), notable for their originality. Iranian scholars have also shown deep engagement with Rumi, his works, and their Sufi interpretations. One of the most precise commentaries is Badiuzzaman Foruzanfar's three-volume *Sharh-e Mathnavi-ye Sharif* (1997). Other significant contributions include Abdolhossein Zarrinkub's *Bahr dar Kuze* (1959), his three-volume *Sharh-e Mathnavi-ye Sharif* (1997), the two-volume *Serr-i Ney* (1998), and *Pelle-pelle ta Molaqat-e Khoda* (2013), all of which are indispensable for the field.

In Iran, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Central Asia, and Europe, a vast number of scholars and researchers have studied Rumi's works, life, and creative output, and this scholarly effort continues successfully today. In our study, these sources will be used as appropriate throughout the analysis.

1. باد **/bād/ – I *wind*;** باد **/bād/ – II *may it be / let it be***

ای بِاد سلام ما را بدو بر،
اندر دل ما از اوست غوغا. (Divan-e Shams, p.121, c.5)

/ey **bād**, sælām-e mā-rā bedu bær,
*k*ændær del- e ma æzust ghouqa /

O ***wind***, convey our greetings to him,
For in our heart there is tumult because of him.

Here, the *ẓāhir* (literal) meaning of باد /bād/ is the natural airflow. The poet presents the wind as a messenger, wishing it to carry greetings to the beloved. In the *bāṭin* (esoteric) interpretation, however, باد /bād/ is understood as the divine breath, spiritual inspiration. Rumi, referring to the "Rahmān breath," depicts the wind as a bearer of divine messagep. The expression *govgha* in our heart symbolizes, in Sufism, the lover's inner spiritual longing and the struggle between the *nafs* (ego) and the *rūḥ* (spirit). This is interpreted as the internal agitation of a human being in pursuit of *waḥdat* – unity with God.

Thus, in the couplet, باد /bād/ is employed both as real wind and as divine breath, creating layered meanings through Rumi's mastery of language and mystical depth.

This approach is also explained in Rumi's *Fihi mā fihi*, where concepts such as breath, inspiration, greetings, and the heart's inner struggle are elaborated in a Sufi interpretive framework (Tarhan, 2017).

یاری ه دلم خستی، در بر رخ ما بستی،
غم خوارهٔ یاران شد، تا بِاد نین بِادا. (Divan-e Shams, p.101, c.3)

/yari ke delæm khæsti, dær bær rokh-e ma bæsti,
qæmkhāre-ye yārān shod, ta **bād** chonin **bādā** /

The beloved whom my heart loves, closed our faces in embrace,
*The sorrowful of friends became compassionate**; let it be, so be it .***

In the long ghazal of Rumi from which we cited the example, the refrain /ta bād chonin bādā/ – *"let it be, so be it"* – is used 22 times in the work. This refrain, appearing at the end of the couplets, is not accidental; it creates a rhythmic, dhikr-like poetic cadence while simultaneously symbolizing complete surrender to the divine will.

In the first hemistich, /yari ke delæm khæsti/ – *"the friend who wounded my heart"* – in the *zāhir* (literal) sense refers to a friend or beloved who hurts the lover's heart and causes sorrow. In the *bāṭin* (mystical) interpretation, however, the "friend" symbolizes the Haqq (God) or the spiritual guide (*murshid*). The wounding of the heart signifies the detachment of the *nafs* (ego), preparing it for divine love. This wounding carries no negative connotation; rather, it is a merciful blow that awakens the heart under the influence of divine manifestation. To wound the heart is the educational effect of Haqq or the *murshid*, testing the disciple's *nafs* and purifying it. The expression *"closed the door to me like a beloved"* – in the literal sense refers to the beloved's displeasure or distance. In the mystical sense, however, it represents the closure of worldly, external attractions and the invitation for the soul to purify itself.

In the second hemistich, /gæmkhare-ye yārān shod/ – *"he befriended others"* – literally may imply showing favor to rivals. Mystically, it signifies that God's mercy is not limited to a single individual but encompasses all creatures. This calls the disciple to accept divine justice and to abandon envy.

Finally, the refrain /ta bād, chonin bādā/ – *"let it be, so be it"* – in the literal sense conveys agreement and acceptance of fate. In the Sufi interpretation, it expresses *riḍā* – the attitude of accepting every circumstance and decree from God with contentment, without objection, and with complete spiritual submission.

2.داد /dād/ – I *justice, aid*; II *cry, outcry*; III *gave* (dād-an – transitive verb, 3rd person singular)

Below, in the couplets selected from the poet's works, identical phonetic forms are employed with multiple layers of meaning. In some couplets, Rumi presents these meanings in parallel, encompassing legal, emotional, and action-oriented functions:

بر شما رد او سلام و داد خواست،
وز شما اره و ره ارشاد خوا ست . (Mathnavi, p. 72, c. 4)

/bær shomā kerd ū salām o **dād** xᵛāst,
væz shomā chāre vo rah-e ershād xᵛāst/

*He sent greetings to you and asked for **help**,*
And from you sought a remedy and the path of guidance.

The meaning of this couplet is clear: here, Mowlānā emphasizes that a person should both send greetings to the other party and, through the expression /dād xast/ – *"seeking justice, help,"* request material and spiritual assistance. The following phrase, /chāre vo ræh-e ershād xast/ – *"seeking a way of salvation or guidance,"* conveys the desire for deliverance. From a mystical perspective, these words merge ordinary forms of communication – a greeting – with spiritual supplication, that is, a request for guidance. In Sufism, a greeting is not merely a word; it also transmits a spiritual prayer, light, and illumination to the recipient. The subsequent request for help reflects the individual's recognition of their own helplessness and their turning to God or a spiritual guide on the path of Truth. Here, /chāre/ – *"solution, deliverance"* indicates not only the resolution of material problems but also spiritual salvation, while /ræhi-ershād/ denotes the divine path shown by the guide. Thus, in this couplet, the external greeting unites with the internal prayer and plea for guidance.

مرب استانید و س آواز داد،
آن سلام و آن امانت باز داد . (Mathnavi, p. 73, c. 2)

/markab astānid o pas āvāz **dād**,
ān salām o ān amānat bāz **dād**/

*He held his horse, then **shouted**,*
*He **returned** that greeting, that trust.*

The couplet we used as an example comes from the "First Book" of the *Mathnavi*, in the section titled "The Vizier Sees the Parrots of India in the Wilderness and Delivers the Parrot's Message to Them." Here, the merchant conveys the greetings of the parrot to the other parrot.

From a Sufi perspective, the merchant symbolizes the spiritual traveler, the parrot represents the soul, and the parrots in India signify sources of divine wisdom. The parrot's greeting is not merely bird language; it embodies the soul's secret prayer and covenant directed toward Allah. By delivering this greeting to a distant land, the merchant fulfills the responsibility of safeguarding and returning the divine trust entrusted to him. Thus, although the scene is outwardly a travel episode, inwardly it symbolizes the soul's return to its divine origin and fidelity to the covenant.

Delivering the trust recalls the verse from the *Qur'an*: "We offered the trust to the heavens, the earth, and the mountains, but they declined to bear it and feared it; but man undertook it. Indeed, he was unjust and ignorant" (Al-Ahzab 33:72). On this spiritual path, the seeker restrains the ego (holding the horse), conveys the truth (raising the voice), and presents the light received to God in its pure form.

In the following ghazal from *Divan-e Shams*, Mowlānā artistically employs the omonym داد (*dād*) in all its semantic layers as a pun, enriching the poem with fluidity and harmony:

مبر وظیفهٔ رحمت ه در فنا افـــتم،
.فغان بر آورم آن جا ه: داد داد مرا . (Divan-e Shams, p.101, c.3)

/mæbor væzife-ye ræhmæt ke dær fæna oftæm,
fæghan bær aværæm an ca ke: **dad dad** mæra/

Do not withhold the grace of mercy from me, lest I fall into nothingness,
*There let me cry out that You **help me, show assistance**.*

In Rumi's poetry, lexical-semantic homonyms, like other linguistic units, serve both as indicators of the richness of the poet's language and as expressions of his central mystical, Sufi-oriented idea. Using this technique, the Sufi poet compels the reader to contemplate both the apparent (zāhir) and inner (bāṭin) meaning. The repetition of the same word within a single couplet or across different contexts creates intellectual and emotional impact on the reader.

When analyzed from a Sufi perspective, this couplet emphasizes two main points: the need for divine mercy and the call for help in annihilation (fanā).

/ mæbær væzif-e-ye / – the expression *"mercy does not withhold duty"* conveys that the seeker (ruḥi traveler) recognizes God's mercy as inherent to His essence, an unceasing grace. In Sufism, the path to perfection is not achieved solely through outward worship but by complete orientation toward divine mercy. Here, /væzif-e/ – the word *"duty"* symbolizes the absolute grace of God directed toward His servant. In other words, at this stage, the seeker lives and breathes not by his own deeds, but entirely through God's bounty.

/ ke dær fanā oftæm / – *"when I fall into annihilation"* refers to the Sufi concept of fanā, the total dissolution of the ego and self. Although this stage represents the peak of the path

to perfection, it is also the most subtle trial. Having passed beyond his own existence, the seeker can remain standing only by God's support.

In the second hemistich, / fæghān bær æværæm ænchæ ke: dād dād mæ-ra / – *"there I cry: grant me help, reach my need"* expresses istiğāṣah (a spiritual plea to God) and a call for divine assistance. The more intense the cry, the swifter the manifestation of divine mercy. Mawlānā presents this couplet also as a prayer: if the seeker does not petition God's mercy beforehand, he may be lost in the state of annihilation. According to the poet, even at the highest spiritual level, the true seeker does not rely on his own power but desires only God's grace. This is the poetic reflection of the Qur'anic verse: "My mercy encompasses all things" (*Al-Qur'an*, Al-A'rāf 7:156).

3. نی **/ney/ – I *reed;*** نی **/ney/ – II flute**

تا ره با نِی بود همراز نیست،
همنشین آن لب و همراز نیست. (Mathnavi, p. 99, c. 5)

/ta gereh ba **ney** bovæd hæmraz nist,
hæmneshin-e an læb o hæmraz nist/

*A knotted **ney** cannot be a confidant of the secret,*
It cannot be aware of the heart's secret on the lips.

Here, Rumi uses the *ney* (reed flute) as a symbol representing the human heart and soul. The knots within the *ney* – that is, its joints – signify the internal bindings within a person: the obstacles of the ego, desires, and attachments to the material world. A *ney* without knots is essential for revealing its hidden secret. In the second hemistich, the *ney*'s lips correspond to the lips of the player; if the player is unaware of the secret themselves, they cannot perceive the *ney*'s sound either. If knots exist on the reed or within the human heart, both the *ney* and the person, though outwardly engaged with divine words, cannot truly share in the inner divine secrets. Rumi thus expresses both a psychological and a mystical truth.

From a Sufi perspective, in order to reach the divine secret and spiritual truth, the human heart must be cleansed of knots – the ego, self-centeredness, worldly attachments, and pride.

Therefore, the couplet symbolically and spiritually interprets the path of the human being toward inner perfection.

بشنو از نِی ون حایت مینِد ،
از جدایی ها شایت می ند . (Mathnavi, p. 5, c. 1)

/beshnou æz **ney** chon hekayæt mikonæd,
æz codayi-ha shekayæt mikonæd /

*Listen to the **ney** how it tells its tale,*
It complains of separations.

In Rumi's world-famous *Mathnavi*, the first word /beshnou/ – "listen" – is not used by chance. The poet addresses humanity, urging not merely to hear with the ears, but to listen with the heart and feel. In the mystical tradition, hearing and listening open the door to comprehending the words of God. As Abdolhossein Zarrinkub notes, "At the very beginning of the work, Rumi invites the reader to silence, to listen to the voice of inner stillness, and to pay attention" (Zarrinkub, 1378, Introduction).

The *ney* here is not merely a musical instrument; it symbolizes the human being, the human soul. Just as the *ney* is hollowed out, the human heart is enlivened by the breath of God when emptied of worldly, transient desires. According to Zarrinkub, the *ney* is a symbol of the perfected human; its sound originates from the divine breath, yet simultaneously it is the lament and wail of /faraq/ – separation.

In the first hemistich, Rumi uses the lexeme “storytelling,” while in the second he uses “complaint.” This punning is deliberate: the *ney* both narrates and laments. Each story is inherently a complaint; the human experience in the world, the soul confined in a transient body, is essentially a cry.

The plural form /jodâyihâ/ – “separations” – is also noteworthy. The soul laments not only a single separation but multiple ones. According to the poet, human suffering arises from distance from the Divine. Although the *ney*’s sound is melodious and pleasing to the ear, in the mystical interpretation it is perceived as a bitter wail, a lament. This duality of pleasure and lament is a central philosophy of Sufi music.

As Zarrinkub emphasizes in *Neynâme*, “…the entire *Mathnavi* can be interpreted starting from these first couplets. The six books of the work, from various perspectives, explain and interpret the sound of the *ney*, that is, the soul’s wail” (Zarrinkub, 1998, vol. 1, pp. 458–460).

Fakhraddin Salim, in his book *‘Mysticism and Sufism in the National Memory System’*, echoes this thought: “Listen to the *ney*, for it tells a story, It complains of separations” – after the first two lines of the *Mathnavi-ye Manavi*, everything changes. The world turns upside down, revealing the vast inner realm of humanity. Rumi likens the *ney* to the created human being, and the breath blown into it to the divine spirit that God breathed into Adam (and thus all humanity), as also mentioned in the *Qur’an*. The word “likens” here is significant: Rumi does not exaggerate or metaphorize; he states the truth, conveying reality. Only the lover (the *āshiq*) can believe in the truth of his stories. The mystics understand which *ney* and which divine breath he refers to. The lament of the *ney* is the “complaint of separations.” Which separation is this? As mentioned, the *ney* is made from a reed – a plant that has its place. When uprooted, dried, hollowed, and blown into, it inevitably laments (Salim, 2010, p. 46).

4. قلب **/ghælb/ – I *heart, soul;*** قلب **/ghælb/ – *fake, false***

حق آتشی افروخته، تا هره نا حق سوخته،
آتش بسوزد قلب را، بر قلب آن عالم زنـد. (Divan-e Shams , p. 382, c.5)

/hæqq atæshi æfrukhte, ta hærche nahæqq sukhte,
atæsh besuzæd **ghælb-ra**, bær **ghælb-e** an alæm zænæd/

The fire of truth is kindled, so that all that is false may burn;
*Let the fire burn the **false**, strike upon the **heart** of that scholar.*

In this couplet taken from *Divan-e Shams*, Rumi skillfully employs the homonym قلب /ghælb/ in one hemistich to convey a dual meaning of the heart: both as *heart* and as ghælb (false, artificial), thus highlighting the twofold nature of the human heart:

1. The pure heart, a carrier of divine light.
2. The false heart, veiled by selfish desires and worldly attachmentp.

The divine fire burns away all that is false. By “false,” it refers to selfish desires, misguided beliefs, or anything that clouds the heart. The fire does not destroy the heart; rather, it purifies it. In Sufi teaching, this fire symbolizes divine light: it annihilates falsehood while preserving the pure. In meaning, this corresponds to the Qur’anic principle: “God establishes the truth and destroys falsehood” (*Qur’an*, Shura: 24).

In the second hemistich carries a dual meaning as well:

1. The divine fire first burns within the human heart, eliminating all falsehood and selfish inclination.

2. Then, this purified heart becomes a vessel for divine truth, radiating its influence to the hearts of the entire cosmos. This illustrates the Sufi principle of the dissemination of spiritual grace (*feyz*).

From this analysis, it is clear that Rumi's advice in these couplets is: do not hide your heart; open it and bring all your wounds before the presence of the Divine. Only the fire of divine love can purify and separate the heart from falsehood. Although divine love may appear severe, it is in truth the sole path to human perfection, nurturing and refining the soul (Foruzanfar, 1333, pp.276–277).

In another example from the *Mathnavi*, the poet discusses the concept of the *broken heart*.

دل شسته هین رایی؟ بر شن ،
قلب ها و قلــب ها و قلــب ها . (Mathnavi, p. 139, c.11)

/del shekæste hin cherayi? bær shekæn,
ghælbha vo **ghælbha** vo **ghælbha/**

O broken heart, why do you remain? Break,
***Hearts** and **hearts** and **hearts**.*

In Sufi tradition, reference is made to a hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him): "God is in the broken heart." From this perspective, the broken heart becomes more receptive to divine manifestation. Rumi emphasizes this concept, urging that the broken heart should not remain silent, for its voice rises to the Divine presence in the form of prayer, lamentation, and remembrance (*dhikr*). He warns the disciple to destroy the selfish forces that shatter the heart, because only then will the soul be prepared for divine love.

Scholars who have studied and interpreted Rumi's works in mystical contexts, such as R. A. Nicholson (1926), Annemarie Schimmel (1978), Shafi'i-Kadkani (1991), William C. Chittick (1983), and N. Purjavadi (2004), have elaborated extensively on this theme.

In particular, Chittick, in *The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, presents the notion of "The broken heart" as a necessary state for divine manifestation, providing a detailed explanation from both Qur'anic and Sufi perspectives in the second chapter of his work (Chittick, 1983, pp. 112–115). Nasrullah Purjavadi also comments: "Rumi sees the broken heart not merely as an expression of personal suffering but as a universal condition on humanity's path to God. In his view, 'The broken heart is not a sign of weakness but of openness, a state in which man becomes receptive to the infinite light of God'" (N. Purjavadi, 2004, p. 189).

In the couplet under discussion, the word /ghælbha/ – "hearts" – is repeated three times as an epiphora. This repetition emphasizes both the multiplicity of meanings carried by the heart and the diversity of its levelp. Human beings do not possess just one heart: one houses worldly desires, another contains the profound depths illuminated by divine light, and a third unites with the Divine. Through this epiphora, Rumi conveys the layered nature of the heart and the necessity for the disciple to purify each level from the self (*nafs*).

In conclusion, this couplet encapsulates a central idea in Sufism: true love cannot exist without the breaking and purification of the heart. The successive breaking of the heart is not spiritual collapse; rather, it is the divine light opening the proper path. In Rumi's expression, "breaking the hearts" signifies shattering the ego, humbling the pride, and removing the veils of self within.

In the following couplet, Rumi demonstrates his unique artistic and Sufi style by differentiating between the homonymous forms /ghælb/ (heart) and /qælp/ (false heart) graphically, using /mæhæk/ to guide the reader to the intended meaning in a mystical and poetic manner:

ون شود جانش محّ نقدها،
ـــــس ببیند قلب را و قلب را . (Mathnavi, p. 140, c. 5)

/con shævæd canæsh mæhæk næghdha,
pæs bebinæd **ghælb-ra** vo **ghælb-**ra /

If the soul were like a coin examiner,
*Then one could distinguish the true **heart** and **false**.*

Rumi, who is familiar with divine secrets, implies that when the human soul is purified and reaches deep insight and contemplation, it can distinguish between the true and the false in both the material and spiritual realms. Naturally, a person who seeks this must constantly struggle with the *nafs* (ego), purify the soul through *dhikr* (remembrance), knowledge (*ma'rifah*), and the path of *seyr-o-suluk* (spiritual journey). When the soul becomes purified like a *mæhæk* (a clear, flawless gem), it begins to discern good from evil and truth from falsehood. This indicates the attainment of *basirat*–the inner vision and insight.

In conclusion, according to Rumi, one must purify oneself, making the soul a tool for testing and refinement–a *mahak*. Once this is achieved, no false-hearted, worthless, or hypocritical element can remain hidden. He emphasizes that to distinguish truth from falsehood, one must look inward, not outward. (This topic has been extensively discussed in sources on Sufism (Al-Qushayri, 1966, pp. 95–106).

5. صبا **/sæba/ –** ***I childhood and youth***; صبا **/sæba/ –** ***II saba, breeze, gentle wind***

نن آید عشق را از نور عقل،
بد بود یری در ایّام صـــبا. (Divan-e Shams, p. 140, c. 5)

/næng ayæd eshq-rā æz nur-e 'aghl,
bæd bovæd piri dær æyyām-e **sæba**/

From the light of reason, the delight of love does not arise,
*In **youth**, the time of old age is not pleasant.*

The above translation expresses the apparent meaning of the verse. From a Sufi perspective, however, this verse carries a deeper significance. According to Rumi, /eshgh/ – *love*, especially divine love, does not submit to rational calculations of the mind. Here, the poet emphasizes the conflict between love and intellect. /nur-e æghl/ – the *light of intellect* may appear valuable in ordinary perception, but for the seeker of love, this light can sometimes be a limiting illumination; for love signifies boundlessness, passion, and defiance of measurement. Reason and caution, on the other hand, cool the natural heat of love. For this reason, love often considers the intellect alien, and sometimes even a source of /næng/ – *shame and embarrassment*.

In the second line, /æyyām-e sæba/ – *the days of youth* carries a symbolic meaning. Mystically, youth is not only the strength of the body but also the freshness of the soul, its vitality, and openness to divine movement. At this stage, conditions resembling old age, such as the heart tiring prematurely and drifting away from divine love, are considered spiritual regression. For Rumi, the greatest loss is the spiritual aging of a person during their youth. Here, /sæba/ refers both to *youth* and the *divine breeze of glad tidingp*. Failing to seize this opportunity means missing the most precious time of divine love.

According to the poet, losing the vivid love of youth and spiritually aging is one of the greatest moral lossep. From a Sufi perspective, this statement invites one to preserve the excitement of divine love (Schimmel, 1978, p.114).

دور بادا عاقلان از عاشقان،
دور بادا بوی لخن از صبا. (Divan-e Shams, p. 140, c. 2)

/dur bādā ‘āqelān æz ‘āsheqān,
dur bādā bu-ye qolxan æz **sæba**/

Let the wise stay away from the lovers!
*Let the stench stay away from the **gentle breeze**!*

This verse is Rumi's brief yet profound Sufi metaphor regarding the relationship between *love* and *intellect*. In the first line, he separates the *wise* from the *lover*. Here, the intellect represents logic limited by rational calculation, measurement, and consideration of profit and los. In Sufi tradition, this stage of intellect is considered inferior to *love*, as it binds a person to worldly standards rather than drawing them closer to the divine secret. The *lover*, on the other hand, transcends these boundaries and surrenders to *God* without requiring confirmation from reason. Hence, Rumi says: – /dur bada aghelan æz asheghan/ – *let the wise remain distant from the lovers*, – emphasizing that the two paths and two convictions should not mix.

The second line explains this difference through a poetic comparison: just as the foul smell of a cesspool is far removed from the delightful breeze of *sæba*, so too is the purity of divine *love* distant from the worldly coldness of rationality. From a Sufi perspective, *love* is the breath of divine manifestation and spiritual vitality; attachment to reason often becomes a burden that stifles this breath. According to Rumi, just as foul odor does not suit the purity of divine *love*, a soul living only by calculation cannot belong on the path of *Haqq*.

6. روان **/rævān / – I *soul;*** روان **/ rævān / – II *moving***

امروز دیدم یار را، آن رونـــق هـــر ار را،
می شد روان بر آسمان، همون روان مصطفی. (Divan-e Shams, p. 37, c. 1)

/emruz didæm yar-ra, an rounægh-e hær kar-ra,
mishod **rævān** bær aseman, hæmchun **rævān-e** Mostæfa/

Today I saw my friend who brings beauty to every task,
*He **moved** like the **spirit** of Mustafa (peace be upon him) in the sky.*

Rumi, with great skill, employs the */rævān/* homonym as a repetition device, giving a single verse both fluency and, recalling the *meracnamæ* motifs, profound meaning within the microtext. As shown in the formula above, the lexeme */rævān/* has two distinct meanings: linguistically, it is a homonym; poetically, it is a pun. The first meaning is flowing, in motion; the second carries a deeper symbolic sense – the *soul*, the spirit, the vital breath originating from the divine and flowing toward it. When Rumi uses this word, he often intends both the material flow and the spiritual journey of the soul simultaneously.

The continuous motion of the soul is a fundamental condition in the Sufi path. According to the Sufi perspective, inactivity signifies a sluggish, dead soul. If the soul remains in motion, the fervor of divine *love* does not extinguish. Therefore, Rumi presents */rævān/* – flowing, moving – both as the passage of time and life, and as the heart's uninterrupted orientation toward *God*. In the poet's view, this flow, this movement, must be like water: continually purifying and life-giving.

At times, */rævān/* also signifies the heart's flow, the movement of *love* in a certain direction. When the heart flows toward divine *love*, all obstacles disappear. In this sense, */rævān/* for the Sufi is not merely passive motion but a conscious, ecstatic, and devoted journey toward the Divine Source. Here, the poet combines the miraculous effect of divine vision with the *merac* motif. To see the future is not merely a physical sight; it is the

heart filling with divine light, perceiving the source of beauty in all existence. This vision lightens the *lover's* soul and elevates it toward the heaven.

In accordance with Rumi's tradition, the poet compares this state to */rævān-e mostæfa/* – the soul of Mustafa. This refers to the Prophet's ascension journey, the rise from the material world to divine truth. This metaphor demonstrates the sacredness of the state experienced by the *lover* and the spiritual elevation of the soul. Thus, the verse beautifully synthesizes both the personal experience of *love* and the highest spiritual events of the realm of soul.

7. غریب /ghærib/ – I stranger; غریب /ghærib/ – II unfamiliar, foreign

حسن غریب تو مرا ، رد غریب دو جهان،
فردی تو ون نند از همان فرد مرا ؟ (Divan-e Shams, p. 85, c. 6)

/hosn-e **ghærib-**e to mæ-ra, kærd **ghærib-e** do cæhan,
færdi-ye to chon nækonæd, æz hæmæqan færd mæ-ra?/

*Your **strange** beauty has made me a **stranger** in both worlds.*
With all your uniqueness, why do you not distinguish me from all beings?

In this verse, Rumi employs the lexeme */ghærib/ – qærib* – in two distinct senses, creating a poetic pun. In the first line, */hosn-e ghærib-e to/* refers to *your extraordinary beauty*, while in the second line, */kærd ghærib-e do cæhan/* – "made me a stranger in two worlds" – uses the homonym in the sense of *strange, alien*. This dual usage enriches the poetic meaning and reinforces the classical Sufi parallel between the *zahiri* (external) and *batini* (internal) dimensionp.

The verse depicts the *lover's* spiritual isolation and chosen state in the presence of divine beauty. Here, */hosn-e ghærib/* does not merely indicate physical beauty; it represents the manifestation of the rare and unparalleled *beauty* of the Divine (*Haqq*). This beauty so profoundly affects the *lover* that he loses his former standing among ordinary people.

The strangeness of "two worlds" (*ghærib-e do cæhan*) in the Sufi perspective signifies isolation in both the material (*zahiri*) and spiritual (*batini*) realms: the *lover* becomes distant from worldly people but remains spiritually apart, as he has not yet fully united with *Haqq*.

The meaning of individuality is highlighted in the second line's question, */færdi-ye to chon nækonæd, æz hæmæqan færd mæ-ra?/* – which expresses Rumi's aspiration for being chosen. Here, the word *færd* refers both to a unique, irreplaceable being and alludes to "*Al-Fard*," one of God's beautiful names, meaning singular and unparalleled. The poet essentially asks: if the Divine Beauty does not make me chosen, how can I distinguish myself from others? This emphasizes how divine *love* guides the *lover* toward individuality and perfection.

8. نتیجه /nætije/ – I *result, conclusion*; نتیجه /nætije/ – II *grandchild (nævænin övladı)*

وین ریهٔ ما و خندهٔ ما ،
از بهر نتیجه شد مرتب. (Divan-e Shams, p.191, c. 2)

/vin gerye-ye ma vo khænde-ye ma,
æz bæhr-e **nætije** shod morættæb/

Our weeping and our laughter,
*Are due to the reason of achieving a pleasant **result**.*

Here, Rumi combines a person's outward states – both *laughter* and *tears* – to show that the opposing emotions in the spiritual life of the divine traveler are directed toward a single goal. From a Sufi perspective, both joy and sorrow are manifestations of divine *love*; each serves the purification of the heart. In the poet's depiction, human life is not

a conflict of contradictions but a whole woven with order like a silk cloth. *Tears* soften the heart, *laughter* illuminates it; both are directed toward the same spiritual outcome – human perfection and closeness to the *Haqq*.

The lexeme */morœttœb/* primarily conveys the meaning of orderly, sequential, arranged, or organized. In Rumi's poetic context, however, this word expresses that God arranges every state with wisdom, and no event is accidental. Thus, a person's outward and inward states – joy and sorrow – are part of the divine plan, and all are arranged sequentially on the path leading to perfection.

ر نبودی او نتیجهٔ مرتدان،
ی نین فتی برای خاندان. (Mathnavi, p. 244, c.10)

/gær næbudi u **nætije-**ye mortædan,
key chenin qofti bæra-ye khanedan?/

*If you had not been the **result** of the apostates,*
When would you have spoken thus for the family?

In this verse, the expression */nætice-ye mortædan/* literally refers to the progeny of *apostatep*. Rumi here indicates that a person's words and actions stem from their root, spiritual lineage, and inheritance. In the words of someone who has spiritually strayed from the path of truth and whose faith is broken, corruption is also reflected. According to Sufi understanding, language and behavior arise from the state of the heart: when the heart drifts away from the divine *light*, the tongue turns to vain words.

This idea aligns with the principle in the *Qur'an*: "In their hearts is a disease, and Allah has increased their disease; and for their lying there is painful punishment" (*Quran-i Karim*, Baqara: 10). Accordingly, for Rumi, a person's inability to speak well of the *Ahl al-Bayt* is connected to the severing of the root of faith. The *nætice* of such people, their descendants, is ultimately like the progeny of those who have strayed from the path of faith – the *mortædan*.

Thus, the word *nætice* in Rumi's poetry carries a dual meaning: both the *final outcome* (the culmination of mystical experience and perfection) and *offspring* or *progeny*, encompassing both outward and inward layers of meaning.

9. مشتری **/moshtærī/ – *I Yupiter (planet) ;*** مشتری **moshtærī/ – *II costumer***

ای رش ماه و مشتری، با ما و نهان ـون ری،
خوش خوش شانم می بری، آخر نوبی تا جـا ؟ (Divan-e Shams, p.17, c. 7)

/ey ræshk-e mah o **moshtærī**, ba ma vo ponhan chon pæri,
xosh-xosh kæshanæm mibæri, axær næquyi ta koca?/

*O beauty envied by **Jupiter** and the Moon, sometimes with us like a fairy, sometimes hidden,*
You draw me beautifully, yet do not tell me to which place you take me.

The verse we are about to comment on is a remarkable example of Rumi poetically depicting the extraordinary allure of love and the supernatural power of divine beauty. Here, the Moon and *Müshtœri* (Jupiter) serve as cosmic measure. In classical Eastern poetry, the *Moon* symbolizes light, delicacy, and perfection, while Moshtærī (Jupiter) represents grandeur, sovereignty, and a superior position in the celestial sphere. With the expression */ræshk-e mah o moshtærī/*, Rumi compares the beloved's beauty to the two most magnificent entities in the heavens, emphasizing that her allure transcends material dimension. The *peri* metaphor conveys an immaterial, unattainable, and mysterious image of the beloved.

From a Sufi perspective, */ba ma vo ponhan chon pœri/* – sometimes with us, sometimes hidden like a *peri* – expresses the paradox of the Divine manifesting outwardly while

remaining concealed inwardly. Divine beauty sometimes becomes apparent, sometimes veiled, thus testing the lover. This resonates with the verse in the *Qur'an*, Surah *Hædid* 3: "He is the First and the Last, the Apparent and the Hidden" (*Quran-i Karim*, Hædid: 3).

The second line of the verse conveys the idea – "You draw me beautifully along, yet do not tell me where" – which reflects the principles of uncertainty and surrender in the Sufi path. The lover joyfully accepts being guided, though unaware of the journey's duration or destination. Here, the crucial point is not where the path leads but *who* is guiding. This illustrates the disciple's complete submission to the *murshid* (or divine will).

A. Schimmel, in her article *Rumi and the Symbols Used by Him* and in the book *The Triumphal Sun*, highlights the exceptional role of cosmic symbols, particularly the *Moon*, Sun, and *Müshtæri*, in Rumi's symbolic system. Her research shows that celestial bodies in Rumi's poetry are not merely artistic devices but profound symbolic means to convey the cosmic dimension of divine love (Schimmel, 1980, p. 123).

ای جان، و رو نمودی ، جان و دلم ربودی،
ون مشتری تو بودی، قیمت رفت الا. (Divan-e Shams, p.144, c.4)

/ey can, cho ru næmudi, can o delæm robudi,
chon **moshtærī** to budi, qeymæt gereft kala/

O my soul, as soon as you showed your face, you took my heart and spirit.
*Your value increased because you became the **client** of my soul.*

Rumi's verse is constructed upon the classical system of metaphors in Sufi poetry. Here, the concepts of *can* and *ghælb* serve as symbols referring both to the human spiritual essence and to the Divine Being. By addressing *ey can*, the poet speaks to the divine beloved – Haqq, God, or the Divine Manifestation.

The expression of "showing the face" in Sufi teaching signifies the lifting of the veil, allowing the truth to enter the heart like light. This moment brings sudden spiritual transformation and ecstasy in the *salik*'s existence. The "stealing" of the *can* and *ghælb* is not merely romantic; in Sufi terminology, it poetically expresses *istighraq* – the state of being annihilated in divine love.

Here, the concept of *müshteri* (customer) creates a spiritual valuation metaphor. Haqq or the *murshid* acts as if the buyer of the human *can*, conferring upon it an immeasurable value. The phrase "qiymæti qalxdı" (its price rose) emphasizes that, compared to the physical body, the value of the soul in the market of divine love rises beyond measure. This notion resonates with the *Qur'an*: "Allah has purchased from the believers their *can* and their wealth in exchange for Paradise" (*Quran-i Karim*, Tovba: 111). Rumi thus highlights the perfection and elevation the human soul attains by turning toward Haqq:

و شد او مشتری عشق جنی،
مینه بندانش مشتری شـد . (Divan-e Shams, p.340, c.6)

/cho shod u **moshtærī-**ye eshgh-e cenni,
kæmine bændæqanesh **moshtærī** shod/

*When he became the **client** of mad and passionate love,*
*Even the smallest servants became his **clients**.*

Here, the term */moshtærī/* – *mushteri* – is employed with a multi-layered semantic load and serves as a typical example of an *homonym* in classical poetry.

1. **Literal meaning:** *müshteri*, buyer – being the *müshteri* of love signifies the *salik* entering the divine love market, selling the *ghælb* to spiritual love, and renouncing the *næfs*. This indicates the turning toward the path of divine love.

2. **Astronomical meaning:** Jupiter (*Müshtœri*) planet. In classical Islamic cosmology, Jupiter symbolizes felicity, wisdom, and abundance. To be the Jupiter of love signifies ascending to the cosmic peak of love and becoming a source of light.

The second line, "*Even the smallest servants became his **clients**,*" relates in Sufism to the concept of the *perfect human*. The perfect human becomes the center of divine light, attracting and drawing all hearts around them.

Thus, in this verse, Rumi skillfully uses the *mushteri* lexeme in both commercial and astronomical senses, combining within a single word the Sufi concepts of the spiritual market and cosmic light. This poetic technique provides both aesthetic subtlety and a deep mystical layer of meaning.

Conclusion

- In the poetic heritage of Jalal al-Din Rumi, the use of *homonyms* functions not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a multifaceted aesthetic feature distinguished by its mystical and philosophical layer. Through this device, the poet unveils the semantic potential of language while artistically expressing the symbolic teachings of Sufism in both the *batini* (inner) and figurative dimensions of wordplay.
- Methodologically, the study is based on a comparative-analytical approach. First, specific *homonym* examples were selected from Rumi's *Divan-e Shams* and *Mathnavi*; their lexical and semantic explanations were provided, followed by an examination of their connection to Sufi sources. This stage incorporated both classical exegesis and Sufi references as well as modern linguistic and literary scholarship.
- The methodological foundation of the research involved classifying *homonyms* according to syllable structure and studying their semantic-mystical functions. The analysis showed that in Rumi's poetics, monosyllabic (*bad*, *dad*, *baz*, *ney*, *ghælb*, *mohr*), disyllabic (*sœba*, *ghœrib*, *rœvān*, *nœbat*), and trisyllabic (*nœtije*, *moshtœrī*) *homonyms* not only enhance poetic rhythm and phonetic harmony but also serve to unfold multilayered mystical meanings.
- These words sometimes act as artistic bridges symbolizing the human inner world and sometimes the cosmic order. For example, the lexeme *dad* simultaneously conveys both justice and cry, linking divine justice with human lament; *moshtœrī*, with its dual meaning of *buyer* and the planet Jupiter, creates a symbolic connection between human love and the infinity of the cosmos.
- In Rumi's poetics, *homonyms* are not merely poetic-aesthetic devices; they also serve as keys to mystical cognition. Their structural and semantic analysis demonstrates that Rumi guides the reader from surface to depth, from meaning to meaning, and from state to state, thereby constructing a spiritual bridge between humans and the universe.
- A comparative analysis of the Qur'anic verses, classical Sufi sources, and Rumi's heritage shows that in the poet's artistic corpus, not only *homonyms* but each lexeme and expression carries specific semantic and spiritual concepts and functions as a vehicle for mystical insight and a central expression of philosophical-religious thought.
- The results confirm the necessity of studying Rumi's heritage not only from linguistic and literary perspectives but also on a philosophical-Sufi plane. Furthermore, such a parallel approach can provide a significant basis for future studies to comparatively investigate polysemy–*homonyms*, *omographs*, and *homophones*–in Persian, Turkish, and Azerbaijani poetic environment.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Data availability

No datasets were generated or analyzed during the current study.

Author contribution

The author was responsible for the conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data analysis, and writing of the original draft. The author also reviewed and edited the manuscript and approved the final version for publication.

AI usage statement

The author declares that no generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used in the conception, writing, analysis, interpretation, or preparation of this manuscript.

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