

Vol. IV, No. I (Spring 2019) | Page: 28 – 34  
p-ISSN: 2663-3299 | e-ISSN: 2663-3841  
L-ISSN: 2663-3299  
DOI: 10.31703/glr.2019(IV-I).04  
URL: [http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/glr.2019\(IV-I\).04](http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/glr.2019(IV-I).04)

## Doctrine of Fana and Baqa of Sufism in Shafak's *The Forty Rules of Love*: A Content Analysis

### Abstract:

*The study aims to find aspects of the Doctrine of Fana and Baqa from Sufism in different characters of Shafak's novel 'The Forty Rules of Love'. For this purpose qualitative mode of inquiry is adopted. The technique of content analysis is used for data analysis underpinned with Junayd's theoretical framework of Sufism. The study finds that Shafak portrayed Fana as foundation and Baqa as a goal in Sufism through love as an inspirational tool, and concludes that Shafak has focused on Universal Love and spirituality but parallel to the emotions, experiences of Fana are revealed through the portrayal of characters.*

### Key Words:

Sufism, Fana & Baqa, Rumi, Novel

### Introduction

Fana and Baqa is a major Sufi doctrine and lies in the core of other theories of Sufism, such as Love, Unity and Ecstasy. There are different states (*hal*) and stations (*maqamat*) in the path of Sufism, a Sufi (seeker) must go through different practices and hardships to attain higher states in order to get closer to the divine love. Fana (self-annihilation) is a way of spiritual training; this advances the seeker from lower states and stations to higher degrees. Andrew Wilcox (2011) defines Fana as :

Fana is to die in God. It is to forsake the created world in contemplation of the unimaginable oneness of God. It is the passing away of the self and is thus the essential prerequisite to the survival (baqa) of the selfless divine qualities placed in man by God (p. 95).

It is believed that nafs (false sense of self) is an obstacle in unity or nearness to God. It suppresses the good qualities of man, which God has placed in him at the time of creation. To find the purer self, one must go through annihilation (fana). Some Sufi's place it among higher states, whereas, others lower. An 11<sup>th</sup> century CE Sufi master Abu Sa'id abu Abil

Khayr developed a list of progression of 40 stations and subsistence as stations 21 and 22. Encyclopedia Britannica has defined fana in much easier language:

Fana, ("to pass away", or "to cease to exist")... When the Sufi succeeds in purifying himself entirely of the earthly world and loses himself in the love of God, it is said that he has "annihilated" his individual will and "passed away" from his own existence to live only in God and with God [Baqa] (Fana,1998).

Sufism insists on Fana to purify love, aiming Baqa as the final goal. Sufism (tasawwuf) is defined by Encyclopaedia Britannica as: *Mystical Islamic belief and practice in which Muslims seek to find the truth of divine love and knowledge through direct personal experience with God. It consists of a variety of mystical paths that are designed to ascertain the nature of humanity and of God and to facilitate the experience of the presence of divine love and wisdom in the world. (Sufism 2017).*

A Sufi (seeker) on the path of Sufism goes through the strict practice of Fana (self-annihilation), where he sacrifices his every wish and will, annihilates his ego to find Baqa (subsistence in God). This paper shall study how Shafak has dealt with aspects of Sufism through different characters of her novel *Forty Rules of Love*. The novel narrates Rumi as a leading character, and Khan(2017) finds that Fana is the central feature and practice of Mathnawi (collection of Rumi's poetry). The objective of this study is to explore and analyze the characters and events of the novel "The Forty Rules of Love", that depicts the theme of Fana and Baqa within Junayd Bagdadi's concept of Sufism. Schimmel (1975) describes the importance of Junayd and his teachings as follows:

The undisputed master of the Sūfis of Baghdad was Abu'l-Qasim al-Junayd, who is considered the pivot in the history of early Sufism. The representatives of divergent mystical schools and modes of thought could refer to him as their master (p.57).

### Literature Review

Kausar (2017) in an attempt to explore the doctrine of Fana and Baqa in Mathnawi, notices that this concept is perceived differently from Sufi masters with distinct ideologies. It was this annihilation which led Mansoor al-Hallaj to 'I am the Truth' (Ana'l-Haqq) and Abu Yazid Bistami to 'Glory be to me' (Subhani) instead of 'Glory be to God' (Subhan-Allah). Bistami's stance was "any sense of

\*PhD Scholar, Department of English, Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University, Quetta, Balochistan, Pakistan.

†Assistant Professor, Department of English, Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University, Quetta, Balochistan, Pakistan.

Email: [fozia.wu@gmail.com](mailto:fozia.wu@gmail.com)

separation from God (even linguistically indicated duality and ran the risk of polytheism (shirk), further cementing the need for Fana” (p. 21). Although he had a reason it was not acceptable by common masses as well as religious scholars as his words were way beyond rationality. With such notions, Bistami initiated schism in Sufism on the grounds of different concepts in Fana.

We come across two different Sufi thoughts from Sufi literature. Where the school of Baghdad emphasis spiritual sobriety (Sawh), the other, the School of Khorasan promotes spiritual Intoxication (Sukr). The earlier one promotes reason whereas, the later puts all stress on love and sees reasoning as a hindrance in the way of true love. Wilcox (2011) in an attempt to define the dual nature of the doctrine fana in mysticism notices that the intoxicants believed that at peak of fana when the seeker experiences complete self-annihilation, all his speech and action are a mere reflection of divinity, he is no more himself. That is why his speech or actions sometimes are similar to drunkards, in fact, he is perceived as a drunk by mystical Union. On the other hand, sobriety followers perceive it as a compulsion to behave within the sharia (Islamic Law), because a Sufi master is seen as a role model by masses, therefore he must be very careful about his actions and speech otherwise the master has not reached the zenith of the mystical path.

Bausani in his research confirms that Rumi was not a pantheist and that he has always maintained a line of separation between God the Creator and his creatures, even in man's purest state, where there is no existence of the false ego, at times of ecstasy Rumi opposes the idea of absorption in God. Since Shams of Tabriz is known to be a critique of Ibn'Arabi, it is possible that Rumi must have the same views under Shams's influence. If they criticized the theories of Khorasan it implies that Rumi was closer to the thought of the school of Baghdad. Where Abu al-Qasim al-Junayd, a prominent figure of sober school, elaborates this concept of Fana in-depth and in a more generally accepted manner. Where Intoxicants believes in incarnation of the essence of God in the human (hulul) after Fana, Junayd defines limits of Unity as, “There is no merging of essences (ittehad) and no incarnation of God in man (hulul), the process is, therefore, an experiential witnessing not an ontological becoming” (p. 28). Thus, Junayd defines three stages of where first is to abandon any desire of worldly possessions. Second, destroying the desire of status and approval by people or society finally comes complete indifference to this created world.

In Sufism, concepts of Love, Unity, and Ecstasy are largely emphasized, indeed, Fana lies at the roots of each of this concept. All of these are intertwined together. Finding Rumi's inclination towards Junayd's ideology it is wiser to read Shafak's novel (where Rumi is the protagonist) for the doctrine of Fana and Baqa from Junayd's defined stages.

Interested much in mysticism, emphasized the theme of Shafak's novels include human emotions, cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism. Shafak explains her role as a writer; as being more interested in picturing the common things human beings possess as fellows, such as living on the same planet and experiencing the same sorrows and joys instead of focusing and culminating the differences of culture, religion and ethnicities (Wikipedia). Shafak says in an interview “I am an egoistic who has deep, deep interest in religious philosophy and history” (Meridian, 2003). It was either her this interest in religion and religious figures of Turkey or the latest discourse of Rumi phenomena in the Western world which took her to fictionalize Rumi in the novel, however, she did it in the best possible way.

Furlanetto (2013) keenly studies this Rumi phenomenon between orientalism and cosmopolitanism with reference to Forty Rules of Love. She explores the process of how Rumi from his orient context is decontextualized in order to domesticate him for a Western readership. Rumi phenomena were taken up by storms in the early nineties after Bark's (1995) translations, *The essential Rumi*, Rumi's poetry has gone through transformations while traveling from East to West, his Muslim scholarly identity and references to Islamic religion were withdrawn, eyeing on his message of love, unity and spirituality. There is no novelty in Rumi's fame in America since American poets were often found inspired by Persian poets, Farzan (1976) argues that Whiteman's verse “Of every hue and caste am I, of every rank and religion” in “Song of Myself” is an apparent inspiration from Rumi's poem i.e.

I am neither a Moslem nor a Hindu

I am not Christian, Zoroastrian, not a Jew

I am neither of the West nor of the East

Furlanetto (2013) blames that Shafak participates in the creation of what El-Zein (2000) calls “an undoubtedly different Rumi.....created for the American market”(p.79). Sufism is the theme dear to Elif and she started reading it in her early 20's. She used it well in her novel to abridge the distance between East and West, by narrating parallel stories of Rumi and an American housewife Ella, both when come across to their spiritual companions find their own true self.

Furlanetto (2013) says, “Shafak's processes of domestication, appropriation, and Americanisation of the Rumi narrative are similar to those employed by Barks”(p.204). Shafak prefers satisfying aesthetics and interests of American readers instead of portraying a clear picture of Sufism. Showing healing effect of Rumi's poetry on Ella, (who is disturbed due to social pressures and gender roles) matches the discourse of recent American Rumi Phenomena as El-Zein (2000) finds, “Nowadays Americans are invited to read Rumi to free themselves from “fear, anger, and depression” (p.205). Elif uses another character Kerra (Rumi's wife), Christian women to show the possible peaceful existence of Muslims and Christians. Kerra, in the novel *The Forty Rules of Love*, softly speaks as a mouthpiece of the writer she says at a point that ordinary Muslims and Christians share more in common with

each other as compared to their own scholars. Furlanetto refers to Said's comments that the novel *The Forty Rules of Love* seems to be a conscious attempt to dispel the threats of Islam.

### Theoretical Framework

Fana and baqa is a major doctrine of Sufism and defined differently from different Sufi masters as in subjective disciples there always existed differences of opinion. In this research Junayd's concept of fana and baqa defined by Khan (2017) is used to analyze data (novel), he defines three stages of fana,

- Renunciation of desire for material possessions
- The desire for worldly status and approval of others forsaken.
- Shuns (avoid) the created world entirely.

He explains baqa as the union with God akin to the rebirth of man's original soul (i.e. the condition of the soul at the time of creation, where a man was conscious to God alone without any awareness of self).

### Method of Data Analysis

The technique used for analyzing data is content analysis, defined as a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Berelson, 1952; Krippendorff, 1980; Weber, 1990). Stemler (2001) says, what makes the technique particularly rich and meaningful is its reliance on coding and categorizing of data" (p. 3). Where Weber (1990) defines the category as "A category is a group of words with similar meaning or connotation" (p.37).

In this qualitative research, the researcher has categorized the data using the inductive approach of content analysis. The lines, conversations and characters are studied in-depth to analyze the Doctrine of Fana and Baqa depicted through them.

### Work Selected

The novel *Forty Rules of Love* (2010) by a Turkish writer "Elif Shafak" is selected for this research. Shafak narrates two stories going side by side; there is a novel within a novel. Shafak writes a parallel story of 21<sup>st</sup>-century characters named Ella, a married woman, and Aziz Z. Zahara, who is a claimed Sufi and is the author of the sub narrative named "Sweet Blasphemy". Rumi and Shams's story from the 13<sup>th</sup> century is told in this sub-narrative.

### Procedure

In this qualitative research data is analyzed through the content analysis method. The selected data is divided into categories i.e. characters and events to appeal to the reader. A thorough study of data was made to categorize data and analyze it accordingly, within the boundaries of the selected framework.

### Data Analysis

#### Analysis of Shams Character

Renunciation of desire for material possessions Shams is the character who is a complete depiction of the Doctrine Fana and Baqa, he has already surpassed the stages of Fana, now his actions and conversations reflect Baqa. This character is analyzed in two steps, firstly, what makes a reader feel that he has completed stages of Fana, secondly, what is he as a human while in the state of Baqa.

Home and family are a person's basic needs, but Shams has abandoned both his parents and home in his early adulthood. He recalls his lifestyle, "I have been a wandering dervish ever since, not sleeping in the same place more than once, not eating out of the same bowl twice in a row, every day seeing different faces around me" (p.39). He was a strange child, he claimed to have visions and his needs were little since that time, "Every so often I lost my appetite for food and went without eating for days on end" (p.38). He quitted his only inherited possession, his home, and never felt the urge to go back. He interprets dreams to earn food and gladly says, "Having roots nowhere, I have everywhere to go" (p.39). It is the first stage of Fana defined by Junayd, which Shams went through in his early days. Later, in the story he never mentions any of his friends, family or any other connections, his only possession and asset is a heart full of Divine Love.

#### The Desire for Worldly Status Forsaken

Neither he has anything, nor he desires for any worldly status. This is what makes him so outspoken and dangerous for corrupt and unjust individuals of society. He can't stand injustice and denounces it instantly where needed. When warned by the Judge, "your tongue is too sharp", Shams retorts, "when something needs to be said, I'll say it even if the whole world grabs me by the neck and tells me to keep quiet" (p.49). Where everyone around is eager to please the Judge, even Master Baba Zaman is careful and remains

very polite to this man of influence just for the well-being of his lodge, its only Shams who dares to confront him. When a person owns an asset he remains threatened by thieves, when he wants to acquire a position he tries to please the authority, it makes a person coward and flatterer to some extent. Since Shams is devoid of both need and status, he is brave and straight forward. Even death is not enough to scare him, as he says, "For I didn't see it as an end" (p.40). He looks at everything from a different perspective, as he knows secrets of Love and Union, he says to Baba Zaman, "There is no one who has lived after seeing Him, just like there is no one who has died after seeing Him" (p.58). As those who find Him, live in another world of ecstasy, completely indifferent to any desire of this world.

### **Approval of others Forsaken**

It was the brave Shams who dared to stand up and rescue Dessert Rose when she is surrounded by a mob, the crowd is enraged to find this Harlot in the mosque while Rumi is delivering a sermon. Shams questions them, "you want to punish a person for going into a mosque? Is that a crime?" (p.124). He dares to question their own faithfulness to God; "if you were good believers you claim to be, you would not have noticed this woman" (p.125), with this he shoos the crowd and helps the woman go her way. Where the majority was concerned to maintain the approved norms of society to earn acceptance for themselves, Shams acted opposite as he was indifferent to acceptance or rejection alike.

It is not only worldly status Shams takes forsaken, but approval of other people as well. At departure from Baghdad, he shaves his head and face along with eyebrows, which implies that he neither cares for his looks nor about anyone's thoughts for him. At his arrival at Sufi lodge, Baba Zaman observes: "I realized that there was a man who did not pay much attention to the judgments of society" (p.47). Further, Baba Zaman explains: "values cherished by most human beings, such as security, comfort and happiness, had hardly any meanings in his eyes" (p.66). When Master warns that Judge may have developed a dislike for him, he does not bother and say, "that is quite all right" (p.52). Baba Zaman confirms many aspects of Fana in Shams's character. With this fearless attitude, he roams in the notorious streets of Konya and asks the patron to leave Dessert Rose if she wants to abandon this place. He has no fear of his reputation while wandering in those streets. Shams has a reason for his every weird action, the reader comes across to his logic in a conversation, where he explains to the Novice the extent of dedication needed on the path of spirituality, Shams encourages him to dispose of whatever he holds most dear in life, either it be wealth and fame or comfort and pleasure.

### **Analysis of Desert Rose Character**

This state of Fana (passing away), either deliberate or accidental, moves a person from one state to another. So is the case with a minor character named "Desert Rose" the Harlot, She belongs to a condemned class of society, has already been through insults in her life, abused both physically and mentally. She loses her parents in her childhood, in need of shelter she travels to her relative aunt in another town, unfortunately, is kidnaped by robbers during travel, losing all her connection to a decent society. She experiences Fana, interestingly, starting from stage three ending up at the first stage.

### **Shuns the Created World Entirely**

Her misfortune brings her to a brothel, unable to quit this profession, she somehow manages to attend Rumi's Friday sermon one day. But the situation gets worse when she is recognized by Baybars the guard, he forces her out of the mosque with the help of another man, that is a saddening situation when she receives degrading remarks. She wants to quit brothel and dedicate her life to God, wants to spend the rest of her life worshiping God, but is unable to run away from a brothel as she is scared of being punished by her patron. But the day she is tortured wildly by a customer, Baybars, situation changes. He beats her to the extent that she feels no existence anymore, as if she is dead, in an unconscious state of mind she envisions herself stepping out of the brothel.

When she is destroyed to the extent of death, she comes out of her scares. When one has no threat of losing anything, one becomes fearless, similarly, her destruction made her courageous. She realizes that if she can resist this brutality, she can survive anything, this thought encourages her to dare hardships. Exactly what Shams said earlier, "For a new self to be born, hardship is necessary" (p.86). She imagines herself "walking out of the brothel and into a new life" (p.219). Desert Rose found a way to God only after she went through Fana, where she thought herself dead, where this created world was finished for her completely, that is, stage three defined by Junayd. Only after that, she makes a successful escape.

### **The Desire for Worldly Status and Approval of others Forsaken**

When she is thrown out of the mosque for being a harlot. It depresses her and she herself says, "A harlot has no place in a mosque or a church or in any of His houses" (p.134). It's the helper Shams again who appears out of nowhere, and encourages her, "Just get out of the brothel" (p.136). She badly wants to quit her profession but knows that she won't be accepted by society anywhere other than a brothel, she won't be able to find any shelter. Shams encourages her, "concentrate on the first step, the rest will follow" (p.136).

The code of conduct imposed by society is perhaps to make individuals behave properly, but these were working as a hindrance for the prostitute to come out of her filthy life. She had to avoid thinking about people and their rejection of her. She made a successful escape soon after she decided not to take thinking of people very seriously.

### Renunciation of Desire for Material Possessions

Dessert Rose hates her and this profession, but this is her only way to earn a livelihood. Quest for God drives her crazy she leaves all her possessions behind (clothes and jewelry), abandons her residence (brothel) and steps out of it. Having nowhere to go she seeks Shams for help.

### Analysis of Rumi Character

The second main character is Rumi; his full name is Maulana Jalal ad-Din. Shafak has picked this real character of Islamic mystic history for her fiction, and narrated his journey from a religious scholar to a mystic poet, going through stages of Fana, finally reaching Baqa (first, he seeks union with his spiritual master, Shams, later on, union with God). To appreciate his sacrifices, it's important to know his status first. Master Seyyid Burhaneddin writing a letter to Baba Zaman introduces Rumi as a person who "has excelled at law, philosophy, theology, astronomy, history, chemistry and algebra. Already he is said to have ten thousand disciples" (p.68). He goes on to tell Rumi's scholar genius that once a student of mine now is my teacher, as there came a point where I had nothing to teach him but realized that he has a lot to teach me.

### Renunciation of Desire for Material Possessions

This path of love was not easy, Rumi had to demolish each affiliation, sacrifice his dignity and status, this was hard but Rumi did it all with the guidance of Shams. This man, Rumi, was the guide of thousands of people, never knew how desperately he himself needed guidance, but when he was granted the guide he never hesitated to follow him at any point.

Rumi says, "Shams wanted me to consider how far I was willing to go to efface my personality in order to be absorbed in God" (p.166). He willingly destructed his personality and constructed it all anew, as per instruction, unlearned everything he knew.

As a family man, his worldly possessions included, his family. As a preacher, his disciples. He started spending most of the time with Shams, neglecting disciple, Rumi wasn't afraid of losing them. His family, especially the younger son, criticizes him. Yet, Rumi is determined to give away everything for love.

### The Desire for Worldly Status and Approval of others Forsaken

"My only concern is the shell you have been living in as a famous preacher, you have been surrounded fawning admirers. But how well do you know common people?" (p.207). Shams broke the circle of his admirers (worldly possessions for a preacher) and ruined his reputation (destroyed his worldly status and turned approval of others into disapproval). Freeing self from possessions and status doesn't mean to degrade, rather, they are practiced to make the seeker oblivion of all the things other than God.

With this intention, Shams asks Rumi to visit Tavern and bring some wine for him, and insists him to spend some time there with people around, because he wanted Rumi to face criticism, and get rid of the need of others approval. As this is a test one must pass through. Rumi is willing to do anything in love, he does not care for his repute and respect which makes him a successful seeker on the path of spirituality. At his visit to the tavern, all the drunkards welcome him with astonishment, soon Rumi's visit becomes the talk of the town, it deteriorates his reputation but Rumi is willing to bear all hardships compulsory for his spiritual growth. This reminds to Shams of another person, the Novice in Baghdad, who was reluctant to do anything which could harm his reputation, although he claimed to be so much interested to walk on the path of spirituality. Here the reader finds the difference between the one who is willing to forsake others' approval, and one who is obsessed with the thought of others' approval, earlier one achieves nearness to God, whereas, later remains near to the created world.

### Analysis of Events

#### The Desire for Worldly Status and Approval of others Forsaken

Dessert harlot leaves brothel and comes to Rumi's house in search of Shams for help. There she meets Kerra, Kerra (Rumi's wife) pities her, for she finds her innocent and says that innocence of her eyes reminds me of Mother Marry. Yet, when Shams asks Kerra to bring the girl in, she hesitates, "but what will our neighbors say if they learn we have a girl of ill-repute under our roof?" (p.266). Anyhow, Kerra sneaks her in the house praying that none of the neighbors watch her bringing that ill-repute girl inside her house as Kerra is worried about her own reputation. This situation leads the reader to question, isn't it necessary sometimes to take 'approval of others forsake'? Nor for oneself only but for humanity as well. People often mimic the ways imposed on them by society

throughout their lives without questioning their worth, only because they are so obsessed with approval by society and by people around them. This situation is pitiful/miserable and the novelist reveals the dilemma of Kerra to put light upon a very common feature of men. Where everyone is more concerned to maintain his or her image, rather than, simply doing what is correct. People condemn the sinner but when he or she wills to quit the sin, nobody helps in the journey, people act as audiences only whose sole purpose is to clap or shame on others. Shams makes Rumi shelter this woman under his roof. This aspect is raised very well in the novel, Shafak has done a great job of portraying various aspects of Sufism in this novel.

When Dessert Rose faces destruction, she finds a way to God, but beggar remains in despair anger. It comes from the heart, not from blessings or deprivation. Not every privileged is ready to give up everything for spiritual training/experiences, neither every rejected finds his true soul---Baqa. There are many miserable characters, only Dessert Rose among them feels the urge to abandon worldly desires for Union with God (Baqa). And, there are few privileged characters, where only Rumi renounces his worldly possessions for Union with God (Baqa). The difference lies within not in circumstances. This novel is not only interesting, but it also has history and lessons as well.

### **Findings and Conclusion**

The study was initiated with the aim to find the doctrine of Fana and Baqa depicted through characters and events of novel *The Forty Rules of Love*, it is seen that character of Shams (a wandering Dervish) has achieved Baqa since the beginning of novel, offering a helping hand to others in their quest for God. Since he started his spiritual journey in boyhood, he is devoid of worldly desires by now. This character is a perfect example of the selected doctrine. Dessert Rose (a harlot), motivated by Shams, in her desire to find God experiences stages of Fana in reverse order (from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> stage). After a horrible experience of extreme physical torture by a customer named Baybars, Rose loses her dread of being punished by her patron, finally steps out of the brothel. Covering a variety of aspects of Sufism, the novel is seen to reflect Fana most evidently through the important character of Rumi, who is lead on the spiritual path by Shams. Constantly instructed, Rumi surpasses every stage of Fana and achieves Baqa by the end of the novel. While focusing these three characters and events the study meets its objective of an analysis of the selected theme.

## References

- Bausani, A. (1967). Theism and pantheism in Rumi. *Iranian Studies*, 1(1), 8-24.
- Berelson, B. (1952). *Content Analysis in Communication Research*. Glencoe, Ill: Free Press.
- Chancy, M. J. (2003). Migrations: A Meridian Interview with Elif Shafak. *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism*, 4(1), 55-85.
- El-Zein, A. (2000). Spiritual consumption in the United States: The Rumi phenomenon. *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 11(1), 71-85.
- Fana (1998). In *Encyclopædia Britannica, inc*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/fana-Sufism>
- Farzan, M. (1976). Whitman and Sufism: Towards "A Persian Lesson". *American Literature*, 47(4), 572-582.
- Furlanetto, E. (2013). THE 'RUMI PHENOMENON' BETWEEN ORIENTALISM AND COSMOPOLITANISM The Case of Elif Shafak's The Forty Rules of Love. *European Journal of English Studies*, 17(2), 201-213.
- Khan, A. K. (2017). *On becoming naught: reading the doctrine of fana and baqa in the Mathnawi of Jalal al-Din Rumi* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Glasgow).
- Krippendorff, K. (1980). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Schimmel, A. (1975). *Mystical dimensions of Islam*. Univ of North Carolina Press.
- Shafak, E. (2011). *The forty rules of love*. Penguin.
- Stemler, Steve (2001). An overview of content analysis. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation* 7(17).
- Sufism (2017). In *Encyclopædia Britannica, inc*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Sufism>
- Weber, R. P. (1990). *Basic Content Analysis*, 2nd ed. Newbury Park, CA.
- Wilcox, A. (2011). The dual mystical concepts of Fana' and Baqa' in Early Sūfism. *British Journal of Middle Eastern studies*, 38(01), 95-118.