



Mevlana Studies in Azerbaijan: A Historical and Scientific Review

Azerbaycan'da Mevlâna Araştırmaları: Tarihi ve Bilimsel Bir İnceleme

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Abstract

Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi (Molānā Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī), as the founder of a widely spread school of thought in the Islamic world, has influenced numerous cultures. Through his teachings, he advocated for the spiritual development, Divine love, and mystical enlightenment of humanity. His legacy holds significant importance not only as a poet and philosopher but also as a guide, mentor, and spiritual leader in the history of mankind.

In Azerbaijan, Mevlana studies are focused on the examination of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi's philosophy, literary heritage, Sufi thought, and mystical worldview. Mevlana promoted the spiritual development and Divine love of humanity, and his legacy holds a significant place in the history of mankind, not only as a poet and philosopher but also as a spiritual guide.

Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi's philosophy has had a profound influence on literature and the arts, also playing a significant role in the development of Azerbaijani literature. His impact began to be felt strongly from the 14th to the 16th centuries and continued into the 19th and 20th centuries in Azerbaijani literature. Mevlana studies also examine the place and influence of this philosophical heritage within Azerbaijani culture.

The article thoroughly examines the history and development of Mevlevi Studies in Azerbaijan. It also investigates the scientific research conducted in this field, the influence of Mevlevi thought on Azerbaijani culture and literature, ongoing discussions within academic circles, and efforts to preserve the Mevlevi heritage.

Keywords: Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, Mevlana Studies, Sufi Philosophy, Sufism, Mevlevi Order

Özet

Mevlâna Celâleddîn Rûmî (Molānā Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī), İslam dünyasında geniş ölçüde yayılmış bir düşünce ekolünün kurucusu olarak birçok kültürü etkilemiştir. Onun öğretileri, insanlığın manevi olgunlaşması, İlahi aşk ve tasavvufi aydınlanma fikrini savunmuştur. Mevlâna'nın mirası, yalnızca bir şair ve filozof olarak değil, aynı zamanda insanlık tarihinde bir mürşid, manevi rehber ve önder olarak büyük önem taşımaktadır.

Azerbaycan'da Mevlâna çalışmaları, Mevlâna Celâleddîn Rûmî'nin felsefesinin, edebi mirasının, tasavvufi düşüncesinin ve mistik dünya görüşünün incelenmesine odaklanmaktadır. Mevlâna, insanın ruhsal

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gelişimini ve İlahi aşkı yücelterek, yalnızca bir şair ve düşünür değil, aynı zamanda ruhani bir rehber olarak insanlık tarihinde derin izler bırakmıştır.

Mevlâna Celâleddîn Rûmî'nin felsefesi, edebiyat ve sanat üzerinde derin etkiler bırakmış, aynı zamanda Azerbaycan edebiyatının gelişiminde önemli rol oynamıştır. Onun etkisi, özellikle 14. yüzyıldan 16. yüzyıla kadar olan dönemde yoğun şekilde hissedilmiş, 19. ve 20. yüzyıllarda da etkisini sürdürmüştür. Mevlânâ çalışmaları, bu felsefî mirasın Azerbaycan kültüründeki yeri ve etkisini de araştırmaktadır.

Bu makalede Azerbaycan'da Mevlânâ araştırmalarının tarihi ve gelişimi ayrıntılı olarak ele alınmaktadır. Alanda yapılan bilimsel çalışmalar, Mevlevî düşüncesinin Azerbaycan kültürü ve edebiyatına etkisi, akademik çevrelerde yürütülen tartışmalar ve Mevlevî mirasının korunması yönündeki çabalar da incelenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mevlâna Celâleddîn Rûmî, Mevlâna Araştırmaları, Tasavvuf Felsefesi, Tasavvuf, Mevlevilik.

Introduction

Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi (Molânâ Jalâl ad-Dîn Muḥammad Rûmî), as the founder of a school of thought that is widespread in the Islamic world and has influenced numerous cultures, promoted the spiritual development, Divine love, and mystical enlightenment of humanity through his teachings. His legacy holds a significant place in the history of mankind, not only as a poet and philosopher but also as a spiritual guide and leader. “*Mevlana, as a scholar, poet, and thinker, has become one of the irreplaceable figures of Turkish culture with his ideas and works*” (Yurdal, 2025).

Mevlana studies focus on deeply understanding his profound philosophical heritage and teachings, as well as analyzing the content and philosophical foundations of his works. The development of Mevlana studies in Azerbaijan also encompasses the exploration of the influence of his philosophical teachings and literary heritage on the country's literature and culture. It is important to emphasize that Mevlana studies is a philosophical and spiritual doctrine with rich and profound traditions within the Islamic world. This doctrine is not merely a religious theory, but also a life philosophy aimed at the spiritual development of the individual. Mevlevi philosophy, widely spread in the East and influencing various cultures, encompasses a wealth of wisdom, profound thoughts, and philosophical reflections concerning the inner world of the individual. The influence of this doctrine has deeply permeated Azerbaijani culture, to the extent that it has not only remained a spiritual movement within these lands, but has also become one of the fundamental factors shaping the society's mode of thought, literature, and art.

Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi wrote all his works in Persian. His major works, such as *Mathnavi*, *Divan-i Kabir*, *Maktubat*, *Fihi ma-fih* and *Maqa'is-i Saba*, continue to be read in the original Persian language in Persian-speaking regions. In addition, translations of his works have spread widely, especially in Turkey, Azerbaijan, the United States of America and South Asia. However, among these works, the one that attracts the most attention and has had the longest-lasting impact is undoubtedly the *Mathnavi*. As the pinnacle of Mevlana Jalal al-Din's intellectual thought, the *Mathnavi* not only influenced his own era but also created a broad sphere of influence in later periods, becoming one of the most important Sufi teachings. It is worth noting that Rumi's understanding of poetry differs significantly from traditional approaches. He did not evaluate poetry solely based on craftsmanship and linguistic proficiency, but rather regarded it as a spiritual and philosophical experience. Starting from the 19th century, the *Mathnavi* was translated into European languages and various commentaries were written on it” (Məhəmmədi, 2010). In this context, the *Mathnavi* serves as a work that not only highlights Rumi's influence as a poet but also his profound impact as a spiritual guide and instructor. “*From the 15th and 16th centuries onwards, numerous commentaries were written on Rumi's works, particularly his Mathnavi. Selections of the Mathnavi have been translated into*



various languages, both in full and in excerpts, and hundreds of artists influenced by Rumi's teachings have emerged" (Rüstəmov, 2002).

It is noteworthy that the study of Rumi's heritage has received considerable attention in Turkey. Among the researchers in this field, names such as F. Köprülü, A. Karahan, A. Kabaklı, H. Aktaş, N. Araz, B. Çelebi Celaeddin, B.H. Tahir, Can Şefik, A. Gölpınarlı, and many others can be mentioned" (Aktaş, Araz, Büyükkörükçü, Can, Çelebi). Among these authors, A. Gölpınarlı has authored significant monographs based on primary sources, offering an in-depth exploration of Rumi's life and worldview. Through these works, he has left a profound imprint on global Rumi studies. His research has clearly revealed Rumi's philosophical and mystical universe, while also making substantial contributions to the advancement of scholarly knowledge in this field (Gölpınarlı). The dissertations written at universities across Turkey regarding Mevlana and his works reflect the increasing interest in this field and the advancement of scholarly research. These dissertations analyze Mevlana's life, thought, philosophy, and mystical ideas from various perspectives, making significant contributions to the development of Mevlevi Studies both in Turkey and globally. These studies are also significant as a source that opens new avenues for future researchers and deepens their investigations.

The Life and Works of Jalal al-Din Rumi

Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi was born in 1207 in the city of Balkh, in the Khorasan province of present-day Iran. At the age of four, Rumi began his education under the guidance of his father, Baha' al-Din Walad, who taught him subjects including philosophy, philology, and religion. From a young age, he demonstrated exceptional intellectual abilities and grew into a distinguished scholar. In 1214, Rumi and his family migrated from Iran to Anatolia (Paydaş, 2007).

This migration took place particularly during the period when the Mongol invasion began. Mevlana spent the entirety of his life in the city of Konya, the capital of the Seljuk Empire at the time, where he engaged in significant intellectual and religious activities. The Seljuk Sultan of Anatolia, Alaeddin Keykubad, commissioned the construction of a madrasa in Konya for Mevlana and his father's educational and teaching purposes. Due to the region in which he lived and the education he received, Mevlana's name became more widely recognized when the suffix "Rum-i" (meaning "one who resides in the land of Rum") was added, as he carried out his work in the land of Anatolia, known as the "land of Rum". After the death of his father in 1231, Jalal al-Din Rumi began giving lectures. His teachings were not solely focused on religious education but also covered topics related to Sufi philosophy and worldviews. His students, out of love and respect, began to refer to him with the title "Mevlana". The mystic poet and philosopher, Jalal al-Din Rumi, known for his profound philosophical thoughts, scholarly reflections, and influential poetry, created works of great significance in the history of literature. His most famous work, the *Masnavi*, consists of six volumes and offers deep wisdom on both Sufism and the spiritual development of the human being. Other important works of his include *Divan-i Kabir*, *Mektubat*, *Majalis-i Saba*, and *Fihi Ma Fih*. All of these works are primarily written in Persian and constitute a vast treasure for understanding Mevlana's language, rich philosophical thinking, and deep mystical insights. Some sources mention that Rumi also employed Arabic in his poetry and letters. However, his primary language of writing remained Persian (Özok, 2025).

His most renowned and significant work, the *Masnavi*, is regarded as one of the greatest poems written in Persian and is considered one of the pinnacles of world literature. The *Masnavi* explores profound philosophical ideas about the inner world of the human being, spiritual development, and the connection with God, making it both a religious and philosophical masterpiece of great importance. Other works by Mevlana also reflect his rich Sufi philosophy and thoughts on the spiritual progress of humanity.

Additionally, translations of his works have spread widely, particularly in regions such as Turkey, Azerbaijan, the United States, and South Asia. Mevlana's worldview and teachings on the spiritual

development of the human soul have been embraced and beloved not only within the Islamic world but also by people worldwide.

Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi passed away on December 17, 1273, at the age of 66. Even after his death, Mevlana left a profound legacy with his works and philosophy, influencing both the Eastern and Western worlds as a source of inspiration. His thoughts and teachings continue to guide individuals towards spiritual quests and inner peace to this day.

The Works of Jalal al-Din Rumi and Their Impact:

The works of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi reflect the profound influence of Sufism and mysticism within Islam, encompassing a rich blend of literary, philosophical, and spiritual depth. His writings emphasize the inner world of the human being, spiritual quests, and the process of spiritual development. A central theme in Rumi's philosophy is the pursuit of a higher, more perfect ideal, transcending the ordinary confines of daily life (Shamizi, 2025). This idealism not only depicts the struggle of an individual striving to understand the true meaning of life, but also illuminates the spiritual journey undertaken to connect with God and find the purpose of creation.

As a proponent of profound philosophical thoughts, this great thinker created works in Persian such as *Masnavi*, *Fih Ma Fih*, *Divan-i Kabir*, and *Majalis-i Saba* to express his emerging ideas and spiritual emotions. Each of his works serves as a crucial source reflecting the intellectual and spiritual life of his time. Among these works, however, the one that has drawn the most attention and continued to have a lasting impact is undoubtedly the *Masnavi*. As the pinnacle of Jalal al-Din Rumi's thought, the *Masnavi* not only influenced his own era but also created a broad sphere of influence in later times, becoming one of the most significant teachings of Sufism. This work brings together Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi's multifaceted thoughts and his philosophical concepts deeply explored concerning Divine love and the spiritual perfection of the human being. It has been appreciated and valued by a wide audience both in the East and the West. The *Masnavi* is a work that embodies Mevlana's profound spiritual teachings and philosophical reflections, written in the *aruz* meter (failatun failatun failun). This poetic form not only structures his poetic language but also served to express the rhythm of Mevlana's thoughts and emotions. However, Rumi did not compose the *Masnavi* merely as a poetic work or for the purpose of writing poetry; rather, he wrote it to express the Divine truths inspired in his heart, the spiritual experiences of the human being, and the quest for spirituality. For him, poetry was a tool for fulfilling a purpose; it was not just an aesthetic form, but a language and means of conveying Divine love, the inner world of humanity, and spiritual development.

Mevlana's understanding of poetry differs significantly from traditional approaches. He did not measure poetry solely by craftsmanship and linguistic skill, but regarded it as a kind of spiritual and philosophical experience. Each verse of the *Masnavi* aims to uncover a layer of meaning and shed light on the inner life of the human being. For Mevlana, poetry was more than presenting beauty and rhythm to external eyes; it was a means to help each individual embark on a journey within their own soul, clarify their spiritual development, and connect with Divine meaning.

This work is not limited to poetic expressions; it is also filled with profound philosophical and theological thoughts. Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi used this aspect of poetry to more clearly express his Divine love, the human soul's quest for purity, and the depths of the connection with God. Through poetry, he highlighted the importance of the freedom of the human soul, which is "under the influence of Satan", the power of love, and the necessity of each person's return to their true nature. Mevlana constructed the *Masnavi* as a school, a manual of teachings, and wrote each of its verses with the purpose of presenting these teachings to a broader audience.

This approach has transformed the *Masnavi* into not just a poetic work, but also a guide that illuminates the spiritual journey of the human being, a tool for spiritual enlightenment. The poetry of Mevlana aims to shed



light on the inner world of the human being and to clarify it, with each verse presenting a new lesson or a proposal for deeper contemplation as a result of the poet's own search. In Rumi's poetry, every word aims to reveal a truth and help the individual understand their connection with God on a deeper level. The *Masnavi* is one of the most-commented works in Sufi literature. Particularly from the 15th century onwards, commentaries on the *Masnavi* have increased, and dozens of commentaries have been written on this work. These commentaries have primarily been written in Persian and Turkish. However, some *Masnavi* commentaries from the India and Pakistan regions were written in Urdu. Starting from the 19th century, the *Masnavi* was also translated into European languages and commentaries were written on it as well (Məmmədəliyeva, 2017).

Mevlana used his poetry not only as a poet but also as a spiritual guide, an instructor, aiming to lead people on the path of spiritual development. Each verse of the *Masnavi* aims to bring the individual closer to God, to learn from Him, and to serve Him. The meanings in the poetry are not merely composed of words and sentences; they represent the profound experience of a spiritual journey. With this work, Mevlana offered not only a poetic beauty but also reached out to the hearts and souls of his readers.

All of these aspects transform the *Masnavi* into not just a literary work, but also an embodiment of a profound Sufi philosophy and the teachings of Divine love. Mevlana did not view his poetry merely as an art form; he regarded each of its verses as a means to awaken the Divine love within the human being, to illuminate the spiritual journey, and to guide the individual toward discovering their true identity. In this sense, the *Masnavi* is a work of art and thought that demonstrates the immense influence of Mevlana not only as a poet but also as a spiritual guide and instructor.

Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, with his rich heritage and profound thoughts, has exerted a significant influence not only in the Islamic world but across all global cultures. Mawlanism, stemming from the Sufi tradition of Islam, has spread widely as a school of thought focused on the spiritual development of the individual and the union with God. This philosophy promotes love, humanism, compassion, and inner peace, encouraging individuals to take steps toward spiritual perfection. Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi and his followers emphasized the possibility of approaching God by exploring the inner depths of the human soul. "Starting from the 15th and 16th centuries, numerous commentaries have been written on Mevlana's works, especially on his *Masnavi*. Selections of the *Masnavi* have been translated into various languages multiple times, and hundreds of artists have emerged, inspired by the influence of Mevlana" (Rüstəmovə, 2006).

In Turkey, significant attention has been given to the study of Mevlana's heritage. Among these researchers are prominent figures such as F. Koprulu, A. Karahan, A. Kabaklı, A. Hasan, A. Naziha, B. Chalabi Jaleddin, B. H. Tahir, C. Shefik, A. Golpınarlı, and many others. Among these authors, A. Golpınarlı has written significant monographs based on primary sources, deeply analyzing Mevlana's life and philosophy, leaving a profound mark on the field of Mawlavī studies worldwide. His research has clearly revealed the philosophical and mystical world of Mevlana and has made important contributions to the development of scientific knowledge in this field (Rüstəmovə, 2006). Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi continues to maintain his significance as a subject that is enriched by new research every passing day. Today, Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi has become one of the most researched figures, with numerous conferences and symposiums being organized about him. The dissertations written at universities across Turkey on Mevlana and his works reflect the growing interest in this field and the deepening of academic research. These dissertations examine Mevlana's life, thought process, philosophy, and mystical ideas from various perspectives, making significant contributions to the development of Mawlavī studies both in Turkey and worldwide. These studies also serve as important resources for future researchers, opening new pathways and deepening their investigations.

Development and Evolution of Mawlavī Studies in Azerbaijan

Mevlana studies is a field deeply rooted in Azerbaijani culture, with a rich history of development over the centuries. The primary aim of this field is to study in a broad and comprehensive manner the legacy of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, exploring his philosophy, literary heritage, Sufi thought, and mystical worldview in depth. In Azerbaijan, the influence of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi's thoughts and ideas extends beyond religious and philosophical considerations; it is also evident in literature, poetry, art, and music. Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi (Molānā Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī) and his works have played a significant role in the development of Azerbaijani literature. Rumi's creative legacy holds particular significance in terms of the interaction and influence it has had on Azerbaijani literature. The Rumi influence, which held an important place in the literature of Turkic peoples during the 14th to 16th centuries, also played a role in the development of 19th-century literary and social thought. This influence became increasingly prominent in the works of Azerbaijan's prominent literary figures, such as A. Bakikhanov, G. Zakir, M.F. Akhundov, S.E. Shirvani and other significant personalities, strengthening over time and acquiring a new and richer quality. Rumi's philosophy and literary heritage manifested both directly and indirectly in the works of these great thinkers, deeply impacting Azerbaijani literature and making a substantial contribution to its development.

In the works of Jalal al-Din Rumi, Sufi philosophy, particularly the expression “anal-haqq” (I am the Truth), has amplified the influence of mystical and Hurufi thought in Azerbaijani poetry. Rumi's works played a pivotal role in the integration of these philosophical elements into Azerbaijani poetry. The expression “anal-haqq”, originating from Hallaj Mansur, carries profound meanings related to the unity of being and non-being. This expression finds a second life in the poetry of Imadeddin Nesimi. In Mevlana's works, the philosophy of “anal-haqq” is closely linked to the concepts of absolute existence and non-existence. He emphasizes the idea that God created existence out of nothing and presents the unity of particles and their interconnections through poetic elements. Traces of these philosophical ideas can be found in Rumi's works such as *Mathnavi* and *Divan-ı Kabir*. Imadeddin Nesimi, a prominent representative of Hurufi poetry, embodies a distinctive period in our native poetry. In his works, the influence of Rumi and Hallaj Mansur's thoughts is clearly evident. The concept of “anal-haqq” in Nesimi's poetry symbolizes the beginning of a new era in his poetic language. In Turkish Sufi poetry, the concept of “anal-haqq” holds particular significance, especially in Nesimi's work, where this expression carries not only philosophical depth but also artistic richness. By placing this expression at the core of his poetry, Nesimi skillfully presents its mystical and spiritual meaning (Nesimi). In the works of Jalal al-Din Rumi, Sufi symbols such as “anal-haqq” appear frequently. In fact, many of the symbols and philosophical concepts in Rumi's poetry also find their counterparts in Nesimi's poetry. This indicates that both poets share the same mystical and Sufi worldview.

In Azerbaijani literary criticism, the approach to the works of Jalal al-Din Rumi has been evaluated from various perspectives over an extended period. However, the article titled “On the subject of Mollāyi Rumi and his classification,” written by M.F. Akhundzade in 1876, marked an important milestone in the reevaluation of Rumi's works from a new perspective and in assessing their influence on Azerbaijani literature and the history of thought.

In his article, M.F. Akhundzade evaluated Rumi's poetry and teachings from a new perspective, examining the influence of his artistic language and philosophical thoughts on Azerbaijani literature and the broader Islamic world. Not only did he present Rumi as a prominent representative of Eastern literature and Sufi philosophy, but he also highlighted the deep meanings, humanism, and the richness of Rumi's worldview in his poetry and teachings. This approach led to a new phase in Azerbaijani literary criticism, fostering a more serious consideration of Rumi's works as a philosophical and literary value.

M.F. Akhundzade's article also serves as a reflection of the intellectual and literary innovations of his time. In it, he analyzes the concepts of humanity and God in the poet's works, the complex and multifaceted aspects of Sufi philosophy, as well as the deep spiritual messages embedded in his poetry. Akhundzade



demonstrates that these works are not only connected to the literature of their time but also hold significance across time and space.

This article not only allowed for a reassessment of the literary criticism regarding the works of Jalal al-Din Rumi in Azerbaijan but also provided an opportunity to evaluate them from philosophical and religious perspectives. As a result, this work enabled the understanding of Rumi not only as a poet but also as a figure whose philosophical and religious teachings, as a whole, should be appreciated, while offering a deeper understanding of their impact on Azerbaijani culture and literature.

Thus, the article written by Axundzadə initiated a new phase in the approach to the works of Jalal al-Din Rumi, expanding the relationship with his works beyond a mere literary assessment and creating an opportunity to explore the deep meaning, significance, and impact of the poet's philosophical and religious teachings.

In the early 20th century, the works of Jalal ad-Din Rumi began to be studied in depth from the perspective of literary scholar F. Köçerli. Köçerli analyzed Rumi's literary and philosophical thought within a broad context, emphasizing that his works were not limited to the Eastern world but also influenced Western literature and philosophical traditions. Köcherli's research illuminated the significance of Rumi's works both in the fields of literature and philosophy, showcasing how his ideas had parallel developments with Western philosophers and left a profound impact on various intellectual realms. This approach allowed for the evaluation of Rumi's teachings and works from a universal perspective rather than being confined to a single cultural framework. The scholarly attention Rumi received during the Soviet era deepened further, with new research methods applied to the exploration of his works and philosophical ideas, shedding light on their cultural and philosophical value. During this period, prominent literary scholars, including F. Gasıınzada and H. Araslı, put forward significant ideas regarding the position of Jalal al-Din Rumi in classical Eastern literature and philosophical thought, as well as his role in Azerbaijani literature. F. Gasıınzada emphasized that in addition to being a great poet, Rumi was also a profound thinker, and that his works and ideas served as a cultural bridge. He highlighted that Rumi's philosophical system was an influential factor in the formation of Azerbaijani literature. H. Araslı, on the other hand, focused on the universal nature of Rumi's ideas and analyzed the innovations he contributed to world culture and philosophy.

In the past two decades, interest in the works of Jalal al-Din Rumi has significantly increased. During this period, the philosophical and poetic significance of Rumi's thought and poetry in a modern context has been researched and analyzed in a broader scope. Rumi's works have come to be studied not only as a religious and philosophical treasure but also as a rich source for psychological, sociological, and cultural analysis. Contemporary research on Rumi's *Masnavi* and other works has revealed that his works create a profound spiritual legacy that reflects the philosophical and poetic richness, as well as the search for a comprehensive understanding of human nature and spiritual purity.

Contemporary researchers have delved deeper into the influence of Jalal al-Din Rumi's ideas on the inner world, spiritual and psychological development of individuals in the modern world. They have demonstrated that his works are applied across various academic fields, particularly psychology, literary studies, philosophy, and social sciences. These analyses further confirm how Rumi's works serve as a spiritual guide on the path to inner peace and union with the Creator, addressing the pressing needs of the modern era. Thus, the creative legacy of Jalal al-Din Rumi remains not only relevant to his own time but also continues to serve as a rich and inspirational heritage for future generations.

The scientific works of I. Ibrahimova's "*The Masnavi-ye Manavi of Jalal al-Din Rumi as One of the Main Sources of Islamic Mysticism*" and S. Asgari's "*Humor in Jalal al-Din Rumi's Masnavi*", are significant indicators of the growing interest in Rumi's legacy in recent years (Ibrahimova, 2005; Asgari, 2014). These studies not only reveal the depths of Rumi's works but also introduce new approaches to analyzing them

from different perspectives. Ibrahimova's work investigates the place and significance of "*Masnavi-ye Manavi*" within the framework of Islamic mysticism, shedding light on the influence of this work both historically and in the contemporary era. By interpreting the spiritual and ethical foundations of mysticism, she analyzes Rumi's thought system in the context of both Islamic culture and the broader philosophical tradition of the world.

S. Asgari's research on the theme of humor in the *Masnavi* offers a new and interesting approach to Rumi's works. Asgari examines how the elements of humor present in the poetry and thought of the *Masnavi* are integrated with the didactic aspects of Rumi's teachings and evaluates their significance. In Rumi's works, humor does not merely serve the purpose of entertainment or jokes; rather, it emerges as a tool to help better understand a person's inner journey, spiritual purification, and the search for truth. This analysis demonstrates that the profound meanings in Rumi's works are not only linked to serious philosophical thoughts but are also connected to the elevation of the human soul through humor and irony.

These studies have provided a deeper analysis of the various aspects of Jalal al-Din Rumi's legacy and have opened new avenues for further research into his works. In the contemporary world, Rumi's writings are regarded not only as a religious and philosophical treasure but also as a rich source for psychological and social science analyses, further emphasizing their global influence.

The in-depth exploration of the poetic connections between Jalal ad-Din Rumi and G. Zakir draws attention as an important subject in both Eastern and Western literature. As is well known, the six fables written by G. Zakir – *The Lion, the Wolf, and the Jackal*, *The Camel and the Donkey*, *The Fox and the Wolf*, *On the Treacherous Companions*, *The Fox and the Lion*, and *On the Loyal Friends* – are primarily derived from the rich heritage of Azerbaijani folk literature, mythical tales, and classical literature. These fables also present lessons that reflect various aspects of life, moral principles, and themes of friendship and betrayal. The six fables created by G. Zakir are written drawing upon traditions and folk culture. Zakir's fables provide lessons and wisdom regarding certain life situations, helping readers internalize moral values and shape a correct mindset about life. However, an even more interesting point is that three of these fables – *The Lion, the Wolf, and the Jackal*, *On the Treacherous Companions*, and *The Fox and the Lion* – also appear in the famous *Masnavi* by Jalal ad-Din Rumi (Teymurxanlı, 2016). This shows that G. Zakir's works are inspired not only by local traditions but also by the depths of world Eastern philosophy and literature. Additionally, the similarities between the fables in *Masnavi* and the stories created by G. Zakir reveal that both thinkers aimed to explain universal truths about the human inner world, each within the same cultural context, albeit in different periods. For example, the meaning present in the fable "*The Lion, Wolf, and Jackal*" explores not only the issues of individual strength and weakness but also the social relationships within a society, including themes of friendship and betrayal. This fable completely aligns with the moral lessons found in *Masnavi*. Both Rumi and G. Zakir juxtapose positive and negative characters to explain the various manifestations of life, guiding the reader's attention to these relationships in order to foster the individual's spiritual progress. These parallels demonstrate how both poets approach the same themes with similar philosophical and ethical considerations. C. Rumi and G. Zakir deeply analyze human nature, moral values, and the relationships between different members of society through the use of fables. Both authors, by means of allegory, address the subtle aspects of human behavior, presenting an artistic embodiment of morality and life. These parallels also reveal how both poets treat themes such as morality, friendship, betrayal, and spiritual purification in a similar manner, further strengthening the influence of their art and philosophies.

During the period of independence, alongside the diversity of themes and issues in poetry and the increase in creative freedom, there was also a heightened appreciation of Jalal al-Din Rumi's legacy, and the process of poets drawing from this legacy was accelerated. This era not only provided artists with greater freedom and opportunities for expression, but also established a new perspective on Rumi's works and his Sufi philosophy.



The folk poet Zalimkhan Yagub, draws inspiration from the depths of Sufi philosophy and its teachings in his poetry, not only enriching his verses but also continuing and preserving the tradition of cultural heritage and literary legacy in Azerbaijani literature. In the poet's works, the depiction of Turkish-Islamic ethics and the artistic expression of Sufi thought infuse Azerbaijani poetry with a new spiritual depth and ideological richness.

In Zalimkhan Yagub's poem "Mövlənə türbəsinə" (*In the Tomb of Mevlana*), the complex philosophical contradictions between love and reason in Mevlana's thought are analyzed with subtlety. The main narrative of the poem illustrates how Turkish-Islamic ethics have evolved into the highest moral values over time. This work transforms the idea of Jalal al-Din Rumi that "the human being moves from the particle to the whole, and from the whole to God" into a vital principle within the poet's poetic world, further promoting his philosophy. By rediscovering Rumi's thoughts in his own poetry, Zalimkhan Yagub presents Jalal al-Din Rumi's legacy and Sufi philosophy through poetic language, thereby profoundly influencing Azerbaijani poetry.

In Zalimkhan Yagub's series of poems titled "İstanbulda quşlar qondu çiyimə" (*Birds Landed on My Shoulder in Istanbul*), his references to the works of Jalal al-Din Rumi, in various ways, complete the eight-century-long interaction between Rumi and Azerbaijani literature (Teymurxanlı, 2016). These references complete the centuries-long continuous connection between Jalal al-Din Rumi and Azerbaijani poetry, while also symbolizing the shift of poetry towards deeper philosophical and spiritual layers in the post-independence era. In Zalimkhan Yagub's poems, the influence of Rumi does not merely repeat his philosophical principles but also transforms them into poetry in a unique way, presenting a new aesthetic understanding. This connection further demonstrates that Zalimkhan Yagub reflects the legacy of Jalal al-Din Rumi not only through his individual poetic experience but also through poetic expressions based on the moral and spiritual values that form the foundation of Turkish-Islamic culture.

Mevlanaism is deeply intertwined with Zalimkhan Yagub's soul and manifests profoundly in his creativity. A trace of Mevlana's Sufism exists in the poet's inner world, breathing life into his poetry. I wish to reveal one of his secrets: Zalimkhan Yagub writes poetry inspired by Mevlana. One of the poet's latest books is titled *Gel*.

Oxuyub ozan ollam,

Bextini yazan ollam,

Gec gelsen xezan ollam,

Rengim saralmamış gel.

"I read and became a poet,
I became the one who writes fate,
If you come late, I may turn into autumn,
Come before my color fades".

In these lines of the poet, traces of Mevlana's Sufi philosophy are evident. By using the word "come", the poet emphasizes the transient nature of time, life, and love, while also highlighting how a person changes over time and finds their path. In his poems, Zalimkhan Yagub also presents the deep philosophical thoughts of Mevlana: "Mevlana says that a person goes through three stages in life: rawness, maturation, and burning". The poet uses these words to fully express the meaning of life and the stages a person goes through in this world. He adds: "*Blessed is the one who knows how to burn...*" This clearly reflects Zalimkhan Yagub's worldview and his approach to understanding life. His works are truly rich in deep thoughts about the meaning of life and mystical principles.

It should be noted that, during the period of independence, the study of Mevlana studies deepened and expanded in Azerbaijan. This era is marked by significant attention given to the analysis of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi's legacy in both the scientific and cultural fields. The influence of Mevlana's thought on Azerbaijani literature and culture began to be more clearly felt, and various scientific studies and literary works on his philosophy, poetry, and Sufi theories emerged. The study of the poet's legacy became an important step in demonstrating how deeply his ideas and works have influenced Azerbaijani society. This development also created an opportunity for local and international researchers to explore the connections and influence of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi on Azerbaijani culture. As a result, significant achievements have been made in the field of Mevlana studies during the period of independence, which has allowed for the continued promotion of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi's legacy in Azerbaijani literature in a manner that aligns with modern-day requirements. Among such works, we can mention Yusif Rustamov's work titled "*Mövlana Cəlaləddin Ruminin sufilik fəlsəfəsi*" (*The Sufi Philosophy of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi*) (Rüstəmov, 2002). Y. Rüstəmov's work, titled "*The Sufi Philosophy of Jalal al-Din Rumi*", written in 2002, is an important scholarly work that deeply examines the theoretical and practical foundations of Sufism and spiritual orders. (Rüstəmov, 2002.). This work is focused on the in-depth study of Sufi philosophy, particularly the thoughts of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi. In this work, Y. Rustamov examines the ideas, life, and philosophical system of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi within a broader context, also linking them to the rich traditions of the Turkic world and Sufi philosophy. The work primarily presents a comprehensive overview of the emergence and development of Sufism and various spiritual orders. Sufism is a teaching that combines both religious and philosophical elements, seeking the unity of the individual with Allah and the pursuit of spiritual perfection. Y. Rustamov carefully explains the historical roots, fundamental principles, and the evolution of this teaching in different periods, clearly demonstrating the place and significance of the concept of Sufism within the Islamic world.

The work also extensively explores the life of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi and his intellectual world. Rumi's life is presented not only through his personal experiences but also by considering the social, political, and religious context of his time. Y. Rustamov analyzes Rumi's major works, particularly significant writings like "Divan-i Kabir" and "Fihi Ma Fih," to explain the development of his philosophical and religious worldview. Rustamov emphasizes that Rumi's intellectual approach is primarily oriented towards the spiritual and psychological development of the individual, and this development is realized through the application of the principles of Sufi teachings.

Another significant aspect of the work is the exploration of the followers of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi's ideas and how his legacy has been preserved. Rumi's teachings spread widely after his death and were embraced by various schools and orders of Sufism. Y. Rustamov compares and analyzes the thoughts of these followers, highlighting the richness and multifaceted nature of Rumi's teachings.

Another important aspect of the work is that Y. Rustamov provides a detailed explanation of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi's philosophical and religious teachings by breaking them down into more specific topics. Among these topics, particular attention is given to the concepts of God and Islam, the purpose of human creation and the idea of existence, divine love and its impact on the human inner world, the notions of knowledge and philosophy, as well as the purification of intellect and soul, envy, and asceticism, which are significant moral issues. Y. Rustamov does not only present these topics within a theoretical framework, but also links them to practical life, explaining how Mevlana's teachings are applied in daily life.

One of the particularly notable issues in the work is the distinction between the concepts of form and meaning. Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi distinguishes between the outward and inward aspects of life, calling on individuals to seek inner spiritual purity and unity with God. This concept forms the foundation of Sufi philosophy, and Y. Rustamov emphasizes the significance of this topic. The proportional relationship established between light and darkness is also one of the central themes in Mevlana's worldview. For him, light symbolizes spiritual clarity, while darkness refers to the trap of the self (nafs) and worldly desires.



In addition, the work extensively explores the concepts of asceticism, faith, and scholarship. Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi interprets asceticism not merely as renunciation of the world, but also as a turn toward the spiritual realm. Faith, in this context, is closely related to complete submission and trust in God, requiring the individual to act in accordance with divine will in every aspect of their behavior. Scholarship, on the other hand, is not solely about rhetoric or knowledge but is more closely tied to understanding one's spirituality and the divine truths.

It should be noted that this work covers both the theoretical and practical aspects of the philosophical teachings of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, revealing the depth and richness of his legacy. In his work, Y. Rustamov not only discusses Rumi's teachings but also draws attention to the relevance of these teachings in the contemporary world, exploring how they influence human inner development, spiritual perfection, and moral behavior in a modern context.

Y. Rustamov's aforementioned work is a valuable resource for researchers interested in the analysis of Mevlana's teachings and Sufi philosophy in general. By presenting Mevlana's rich teachings comprehensively and scientifically, and by emphasizing the application areas and significance of these teachings in contemporary times, Rustamov has brought a new perspective to the subject.

Later, A. Rustamova's 2005-published work '*Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi*' is important scientific research that explores Mevlana's creativity in greater depth and from various theoretical perspectives. One of the key points of this work is the central role of the theory of 'emanation' in Mevlana's creativity. Emanation is a philosophical approach used in Mevlana's thought to explain the manifestation and embodiment of existence, particularly the creation of God. A. Rüstəmov elaborates on how this theory developed within the thought of Mevlana, explaining in detail how the divine light (nur) manifests upon beings. The author also examines the position of this concept within Sufi philosophy and broader Islamic thought, illustrating how the theory of emanation reflects Mevlana's expression of Divine Love and his understanding of existence.

In the work, Mevlana's thoughts on the visible and invisible realms are also analyzed in depth. Mevlana, transcending the outward aspects of the world, focuses on the realities encountered by the human soul in its inner world and its journey towards eternity. A. Rustamova explains how these thoughts are reflected in Mevlana's poetry and teachings. The idea that the visible world is merely a "shadow" and that the true reality is concealed in the invisible realm is extensively explained by A. Rustamova. Mevlana argues that in order for a person to comprehend the truth and attain unity with God, they must understand this invisible realm and merge with it.

Mevlana's poetic structure and artistic features are also of particular importance in the work. A. Rustamova analyzes the structure and rhythm of the poet's verses, showing how Mevlana's poetry consists of numerous recurring elements and symbols. The metaphors, symbolism, and imagery he uses play a crucial role in conveying Mevlana's spiritual and philosophical messages. A. Rustamova emphasizes that Mevlana's poetry is not just an art form, but also a guiding tool that encourages spiritual development. He points out that each verse of the poet's work reflects the individual's connection with Allah and their quest for spiritual enlightenment.

Another important section of the work is the stylistic features of the *Masnavi*. A. Rustamova thoroughly analyzes the style of Mevlana's most famous work, *Masnavi*, examining how its artistic characteristics reflect the poet's philosophical thoughts. The elevated poetic language of the *Masnavi* and the spiritual teachings within it reveal that the work is not only a literary masterpiece but also a religious and philosophical text. A. Rustamova extensively explains the complexity of Mevlana's style in the *Masnavi*, highlighting both its depth in content and form.

Thus, A. Rustamova's work *Mevlana Jalal ad-Din Rumi* evaluates Mevlana's poetry and philosophy not only from a literary perspective but also within a philosophical and religious analytical framework. By examining Mevlana's thoughts and art from several different angles, A. Rustamov further clarifies the richness of the poet and his works. This work serves as a valuable resource for anyone interested in Mevlana Jalal ad-Din Rumi, contributing to a deeper understanding of his poetry and philosophical teachings.

Furthermore, in Azerbaijani literature, there are significant works dedicated to the promotion of Mevlana Jalal Ad-Din Rumi's legacy in line with the demands of contemporary times. These works help deepen the understanding of Rumi's mystical worldview, Sufi philosophy, and his concept of the "perfect human". For example, in M. Shekikhanova's work titled "*The Concept of the Perfect Human in Sufi Philosophy*", the philosophical principles explaining the life and spiritual development of the "perfect human," as defined by Mevlana as an embodiment of the ideal person, are extensively analyzed (Şəkixanova, 2007).

D. Gurar's "*A Look at Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi's Quest for Love*" delves into Rumi's concept of love, examining it as a spiritual and emotional foundation for humanity's journey toward God. Rumi views love not just as an emotion but as a key element in one's divine connection and spiritual ascent (Gürər, D).

F. Hacıyeva's "*The Summit of Hz. Mevlana*" thoroughly investigates Rumi's wisdom, considering him as a pinnacle of both worldly and spiritual knowledge. This work offers a deep exploration of how Rumi's intellectual and mystical teachings converge, highlighting his unique role as a guide in both the material and spiritual realms.

F. Aghayeva's "*Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi and Shams Tabrizi*" meticulously presents the profound and intimate relationship between Mevlana and Shams Tabrizi. The work effectively showcases how this bond served as a transformative turning point in Rumi's life and philosophy, influencing his spiritual development and intellectual growth. Ağayeva highlights the profound impact of Shams on Rumi, not only as a mentor but as a source of divine inspiration that shaped the course of Rumi's mysticism and poetic expression (Ağayeva, 2009).

N. Topçu's "*Mevlana and Sufism*" thoroughly investigates Mevlana's Sufi philosophy, delving into his life and the nature of his worldview. This work provides a deep analysis of how Rumi's spiritual teachings and philosophy were shaped by his understanding of Sufism, and it explores the key components of his mystic beliefs (Topçu, 2015).

Furthermore, M. Mohammadi's "*Shams and Mevlana*" explores the spiritual journeys of Mevlana and Shams Tabrizi, offering a comprehensive analysis of their mutual influence. The work demonstrates how the dynamic relationship between the two played a crucial role in the development of Rumi's ideas and his philosophical evolution. M. Mohammadi highlights how Shams's presence and teachings significantly contributed to the transformation of Rumi's spiritual path and intellectual thought (Məhəmmədi, 2010).

Q.T. Mammadaliyeva's "*Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi's Masnavi and Its Commentaries*" offers a profound analysis of Rumi's most famous work, *Masnavi*, alongside various interpretations and commentaries on the text. This study explores the multiple dimensions of *Masnavi*, providing insights into the philosophical, mystical, and literary layers of the work. By examining different scholarly perspectives and interpretations, the author uncovers the rich spiritual and intellectual depth of *Masnavi*, shedding light on its significance within Sufi thought and Rumi's overall philosophical worldview (Məmmədaliyeva, 2017).

S. Shikhiyeva's "*Ana'l-Haqq: Interpretations of Mevlana and Nasimi*" examines how two great thinkers, Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi and the poet Nasimi, interpreted the concept of "*Ana'l-Haqq*" ("I am the Truth"). The work analyzes their differing views on this profound mystical declaration, exploring the philosophical and theological implications of this concept within their respective poetic and spiritual frameworks. While both Rumi and Nasimi embraced Sufi mysticism, their interpretations of "*Ana'l-Haqq*" reflect their unique



spiritual journeys and intellectual approaches, shedding light on the diverse ways in which this concept has been understood in Islamic thought and poetry (Şıxıyeva, 2010).

These works not only provide the opportunity to deeply explore the philosophical heritage of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi but also demonstrate how his legacy has been adapted to the modern era and its significant role in enriching Azerbaijani literature. Such research also contributes to the continuous preservation and further development of the Sufi and mystical traditions in our culture. Rumi's works, by transforming his profound wisdom into a more contemporary and universal language, spiritually enrich people both locally and globally.

It should be noted that in recent years, the study of Mevlana's legacy has been actively promoted in Azerbaijan. The dissertations written on Mevlana's legacy occupy an important place in the academic environment and are scientific works aimed at a thorough examination of this topic. These studies explore Mevlana's life, works, and philosophical thoughts from various perspectives. The dissertations typically cover topics such as his literary heritage, philosophical views, Sufi teachings, and intercultural influence. Furthermore, these studies also consider the impact of his cultural legacy on Azerbaijani literature and the broader Eastern culture. For example, V. Teymurkhani's dissertation titled "Cəlaləddin Rumi və Azərbaycan ədəbiyyatı" (*Jalal al-Din Rumi and Azerbaijani Literature*) analyzes the influence of Rumi's works on Azerbaijani literature, thus making a significant contribution to contemporary research in this field (Teymurxanlı, 2016). Kh. Aliyeva's work "Mövlana Cəlaləddin Rumi yaradıcılığında tərbiyə problemləri" (*Educational Issues in the Works of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi*) emphasizes Mevlana's educational and ethical views, linking them to Sufi teachings (Əliyeva). S. Asgar's study titled "Cəlaləddin Ruminin "Məsnəvi" ində yumor" (*Humor in Jalal al-Din Rumi's Mathnavi*) analyzes the humorous elements in Mevlana's famous *Mathnavi* and examines their philosophical and cultural significance (Əsgəri, 2014). At the same time, I. İbrahimova's dissertation titled "Mövlana Cəlaləddin Ruminin "Məsnəvi-ye mənəvi" əsəri İslam təsəvvüfünün əsas qaynaqlarından biri kimi" (*The Mathnavi -ye Manavi of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi as One of the Fundamental Sources of Islamic Sufism*) considers Mevlana's *Mathnavi* as one of the fundamental sources of Islamic Sufism and mystical thought (İbrahimova). These studies contribute to a deeper understanding of the richness of Mevlana's legacy and its significance across various cultures.

It should be noted that all of these scholarly works not only make a significant contribution to the development of Mevlana studies in Azerbaijan and the deepening of research in this field, but also create a foundation for the future exploration of Mevlana's legacy by a wider audience. These dissertations shed light on various aspects of Mevlana studies, filling gaps in the field and contributing to a deeper understanding of Mevlana's cultural and philosophical heritage.

Conclusion

Mevlana studies in Azerbaijan represent a rich and multidimensional field rooted in deep historical, cultural, and philosophical traditions. These studies not only honor the legacy of Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi as a poet and philosopher but also explore the profound spiritual dimensions of his teachings, which continue to resonate with the human inner world. Rumi's worldview – centered on the values of divine love, human compassion, self-knowledge, and spiritual purification – has played a transformative role in shaping ethical and intellectual discourse throughout the Islamic world, including in Azerbaijan.

The influence of Mevlana's thought in Azerbaijan is not merely a passive reception but an active cultural and literary engagement. His philosophy has permeated various layers of Azerbaijani literature, particularly poetry, where metaphysical themes of divine union, the quest for inner truth, and the dissolution of the ego have been recurring motifs. From classical poets such as Imadeddin Nasimi, who combined Sufi metaphysics with bold expressions of divine unity, to later literary figures, the impact of Rumi's teachings has remained a source of inspiration and spiritual reflection. Nasimi, in particular, stands out as a poet whose

mystical worldview often echoes Rumi's ideas, particularly in his explorations of divine love, the unity of being (wahdat al-wujud), and the sanctity of the inner journey.

In contemporary times, this intellectual and poetic engagement continues to evolve. Modern Azerbaijani poets, including figures such as Zalimkhan Yaqub, have embraced Mevlana's legacy, reinterpreting his spiritual messages for the modern reader. These poets bridge traditional Sufi concepts with present-day existential concerns, thereby ensuring the relevance and continuity of Rumi's ideas in new literary contexts. Their work illustrates how Mevlana's philosophy continues to inspire not only individual spiritual growth but also national cultural identity.

Moreover, academic research in Azerbaijan has increasingly turned its attention to systematic studies of Mevlana's writings and their reception across different historical periods. Conferences, publications, and interdisciplinary studies have enriched the field, making it more accessible to younger generations of scholars and students. This scholarly activity is essential in preserving the dynamic essence of Rumi's teachings, allowing them to be interpreted anew in light of changing intellectual, social, and spiritual contexts.

In conclusion, Mevlana studies in Azerbaijan are not confined to the past but remain a living, evolving discipline. By bridging historical reverence with modern relevance, Azerbaijani scholars, poets, and thinkers continue to ensure that Mevlana's universal message of love, unity, and transcendence is both preserved and revitalized for future generations.

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