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Self-awareness Through Spiritualism: A Critical Study of Shafak's *The Forty Rules of Love*



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Abstract: *The present study aims to explore the influence of spiritualism in Elif Shafak's The Forty Rules of Love. The novel illustrates how spiritualism alters a person's thoughts, perceptions, and vision, with the individual remaining under the sway of their thoughts. They interpret messages conveyed by the mind and act accordingly. A person upholds the standards of right and wrong and often pretends to be morally correct. However, spiritualism allows an individual to think on a higher and purer level and helps maintain the correctness of decisions and laws. From Rumi's perspective on spiritualism, the study notably aids in understanding how certain characters change their perceptions and enhance their quality of life through self-awareness. The study identifies various forms, elements, and types of spiritual self-awareness in the selected text. It is significant because it paves the way for further research by scholars, readers, and academics interested in exploring the Eastern tradition of spiritualism or mysticism.*

Keywords: Self-awareness, Spiritualism, Rumi, Elif Shafak, *The Forty Rules of Love*

Introduction

The Eastern mysticism and spiritualism traditions have been highly valued in academic and critical circles. Maulana Jalal-ud-Din Rumi, aka Maulana Rome is one of the few theorists of Eastern spiritual theorists and philosophers. The present study intends to discuss Rumi's concept of self-awareness in Elif Shafak's novel. She is an acclaimed author and one of Turkey's most popular female essayists. Her books have been translated into more than twenty dialects. *The Forty Rules of Love* is an engaging semi-fiction novel by Elif Shafak. It is a Novel that tells the story of two parallel stories that have reflected each other for seven centuries, in a completely different culture. This novel, *The Forty Rules of Love*, is a profound book where the forty principles of Sufism of Shams of Tabriz are

expounded. This book features how Shams changed the existence of Rumi from a scholar to a Sufi through adoration.

Fiction is one of the most remarkable forms of literature. In fiction, reality and creative imagination blend seamlessly. Islamic fiction is a genre that centres on Islamic principles, ideas, stories, and teachings as its core. It not only portrays Islamic ideals but also reflects contemporary lifestyles and issues. Historically, Islam has been misrepresented in Western literature, with Orientalist theories depicting Arab culture as exotic, backwards, uncivilized, and sometimes dangerous. Nevertheless, the contributions of Muslims to English literature have helped to distort this false image. Stories about Islam convey its teachings and illustrate the daily lives of Muslims and the struggles of

converts seeking a new way of life. Literature within fiction often mirrors the individual, their life, and their cultural heritage. There has recently been a rise in Islamic English fiction, mainly because fiction and non-fiction literature have grown significantly, particularly as English functions as an international language. Moreover, Muslim countries have faced numerous ethnic issues and challenges over the past two decades. War, civil unrest, and the ever-changing political situation have become difficult. These social, political, economic, and ethnic crises are often depicted through fiction about life in Asia and Africa. This is partly the reason why Turkish Islamic literature has garnered many international awards.

Islamic fiction is deeply rooted in religion and is not secular or alienated from it. It emphasizes the highest values of Islamic life and beliefs. Fiction offers an objective perspective and serves as an effective solution for contemporary issues. The development of Islamic fiction is a significant aspect of modern English literature. This study explores the impact of spiritual self-awareness in Elif Shafak's, *The Forty Rules of Love*. Spiritual self-awareness involves individuals viewing themselves as isolated beings and integral parts of a larger interconnected system. They recognize that everything originates from the same source and is interconnected. Additionally, spiritual self-awareness can be described as an expansion of conscious mindfulness.

Sufism is the broadest expression of the inner aspects of Islam. It teaches man to recognize his true Self and pave the way to reach God. Islamic revelations also command us to enhance our spiritual life by transforming our being through spiritual practices. Furthermore, this path will finally lead to the vision of God. Man is said to be a theomorphic being, meaning he is made in the image of God. Intelligence is of central importance because it provides for human self-preservation. In Islam, it is to admit that there is no god but God, *La 'ilaha 'illaa Allah*. Through shahadah, man acknowledges the actual reality and absolute Self. Thus, he prepares the way to salvation. There is also the element of will, because through it man chooses to act according

to the will of the Absolute. Through speech, one can recognize one's Self and the Absolute when one converses with Him in common sense in prayer, or through the practice of prayer or dhikr in Sufism.

The novel *The Forty Rules of Love* depicts how spiritualism changes a person's thoughts, perception, and vision because one remains under the influence of one's thoughts. He perceives the message conveyed by the mind and acts accordingly. Man maintains the standards of wrong and right and always pretends to be right. However, spiritualism enables a man to think on a higher and purer level, to maintain the accuracy of general decisions and the laws of the state, Sharia, or culture. Using the themes of spiritual self-awareness by Moulana Jalal ud din Rumi, the novel's study will help to understand how some characters change their perception and increase the quality of life with self-awareness. Maulana Jalaluddin, who still strongly influences Persian and Turkish culture and is a source of spiritual knowledge for seekers worldwide, was a thirteenth-century Persian artist, an Islamic dervish and a Sufi spiritualist. He is considered one of the best spiritual masters and a poetical intellect. His teachings are relevant to the present-day situation of a man suffering from insoluble problems due to ignorance. Perhaps Rumi's message can become a light that illuminates the shadows that prevent people today from seeing their true selves or knowing who they really are.

Literature Review

Elif Shafak was born on 25 October 1971 in Strasbourg. Her parents parted their ways and she was young. She spent her childhood till adulthood with her mother and grandmother. She has a Degree in Political Science. She has published nineteen books, twelve of which are novels. She is a best-selling author and her books are translated into almost 50-55 languages worldwide. 'The Royal Society of Literature consider her a Vice President. Elif Shafak supports feminism and also writes about it in her novels. In an interview, she said that in Turkey, men like to write and expect their women to follow all their commands and she wants to

change this by writing about it. Elif Shafak was an Introvert in her childhood and she believes writing gives her peace of mind and she can write whatever she wants to; she used to write in a diary when she did not even think she would become such a big and famous writer.

Her literary contributions include *The Architect's Apprentice*, *Three Daughters of Eve*, *The Island of Missing Trees*, *Honor*, *Black Milk: On Writing*, *Motherhood and the Harem Within*, *The Gaze*, *Forty Rules of Love*, *10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* (it was her first English written novel), *The Bastard of Istanbul* (it was her second English written novel) and others. Elif Shafak's works revolve around the subjects of Sufism and spirituality. In an interview, she says that she does not belong to the spiritual family but something pulled her to write Sufi content. She wrote many novels which promote Sufism. Her writings define spirituality as directly connecting with psychological and mental health. In her novel *Forty Rules of Love*, she uses such phrases to define spirituality and Sufism, *Baqā*, which means 'a higher state of life with God' and for Sufism, she uses the phrase 'Faqr', which means 'a Sufi practising spiritual poverty' (Sherwani, 2020).

In this era, everyone is so concerned about their religion and writes according to their living, surroundings and taking care of their pros. *The Forty Rules of Love* also belongs to two Sufi's Sham's of Tabraiz and Rumi's story, which Ella reads. In *Sweet Blasphemy*, Shafak tells a story of two men's spiritual journey; Rumi and Sham of Tabraiz live together for forty days to explore spiritualism. 'A life without love is of no account. Don't ask yourself what kind of love you should seek, spiritual or material, divine or mundane, Eastern or Western' (Shafak, 2010). *The Forty Rules of Love* became her most famous novel. This novel has been translated into almost thirty-seven languages. Millions of people have read this novel. But, on the other side, this novel gets much criticism also, those who do not know about spirituality (mostly non-Muslims) perceive this relationship as a bisexual one, which is entirely wrong criticism because bisexuality is a whole different concept. It has

nothing to do with spirituality.

Elif Shafak's *The Forty Rules of Love*

Elif Shafak admitted that her *Forty Rules of Love* has nothing to do with social degradation. It was a spiritual journey that belongs to the past. Elif Shafak's *The Bastard of Istanbul* revolves around a woman who is nineteen years old, unmarried and wants to do an abortion but does not and raises her daughter, Asya Kazanci'. The man of this family dies at the age of 41, only women's lives are in the house, her Auntie Banu, her mother Zeliha and Auntie Cevriye, but Turkey's past appears after Asya's cousin's arrival. She quoted, "If you are as fragile as a tea glass, either find a way never to encounter burning water or hope to marry an ideal husband or get yourself laid and broken as soon as possible" (Shafak, 2007).

The Forty Rules of Love is a novel that tells the story of two parallel stories that have reflected each other for seven centuries, in a completely different culture. This novel, *The Forty Rules of Love*, is a profound book where the forty principles of Sufism of Shams of Tabriz are expounded. This book features how Shams changed the existence of Rumi from a scholar to a Sufi through adoration. Hoaxes is a wandering dervish. He cannot remain at a spot for long, so he continues meandering from one spot to another. In this novel, two stories from two distinct centuries are shown side by side. One is fiction from the advanced period, while the last one, from the old times, is about Sufism. The previous is the account of Ella Rubinstein, a forty-year-old housewife who is miserable. She needs enthusiasm in her life. She lives in Northampton. She has a spouse named David, who hoodwinks her in their conjugal relationship and has extra conjugal issues. Ella knows it all, yet she stays quiet and unconcerned. She has three youngsters—her girl Jeannette and twins Orli and Avi. Ella was without adoration in her own life and fell in love with Aziz and his story. She started to feel for Aziz Zahara as she looked for his recommendation at different spots in her day-to-day existence and settled every one of the issues. So the facts confirm that confidence and love transformed people into saints since they

eliminated all the dread and nervousness from their souls.

Ella is a sort of scholarly individual who loves to read. She found a new line of work as a reader at a literary organization. Her first task was to compose a report on a book, *Sweet Blasphemy* by Aziz Zahara. The novel has not been published yet and Ella is approached to compose a report on this. First, she faltered later. David energized her, so she engaged and recorded as a hard copy report on the book. Meanwhile, his daughter, still a high school student, had an affair with Scott and wanted to marry him. Ella asked Scott to break up with Janet. Ella's reaction disappointed the whole family, but she told her daughter she was unhappy with her marriage. There was a lack of love in his life. Writing a report on sacred blasphemy, he exchanged emails with the book's author, Aziz Zahara. The two fell in love with each other. She later became a completely different individual who discovered true love and passion. Both Aziz and Ella belonged to different continents. The likeness between the two stories is that by the relationship of Rumi with Shams, Rumi deserted all his solaces for ecstasy. In contrast, the relationship with Aziz Ella got out of her marriage for otherworldliness and heavenly love. Both leave their beginning and end without guaranteeing a brilliant future.

One day David read the messages of Ella. He disclosed that he deeply understands her undertaking with Aziz; likewise, he is sorry for his issues when Ella gets some information about his issues. However, Ella revealed to him that she adored Aziz. Aziz came to meet Ella, they both met, hung out and Ella went with Aziz and left her family. Aziz was experiencing an illness and specialists had revealed to him that he had just sixteen months left in this world. Still, Ella decided to go with him even though he revealed that he could not guarantee her a brilliant future. What he could give her was just a present for a second. Toward the end, Aziz kicked the bucket in a medical clinic and Ella did not return to her family again. She masterminded the burial service of Aziz and chose to carry on with life like him.

Then again, Rumi was a minister with a large fan

base and respect in the public arena. Be that as it may, when he met Shams, he left everybody, including various students, his significant other Kerra and his two children, Aladdin and Sultan Walad. Rumi and Shams had an extraordinary holding. Shams showed him his forty principles and a ton of things. Shams tested Rumi a few times and he effectively eliminated each one. He sent him to a house of ill repute but Rumi penances his inner Self for him. One day, he left Rumi alone. In isolation, Rumi turned into an artist. After right around eight months, his child Walad brought him back. Shams got married with Kimya, one of Rumi's most skilled students. Rumi's younger son, Aladdin, wanted to marry Kimya but Kimya wanted to marry Shams because she was in love with him. Shams, being a dervish, felt he had made his most awful misstep by marrying a young lady, as he was not used to family obligations. He did not consider his better half. Aladdin realized that somebody was arranging the murder of Shams, so he helped them. The homicide was fruitful, yet Rumi never pardoned his child.

Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi was a thirteenth-century Persian artist, an Islamic dervish and a Sufi spiritualist. He is considered one of the best spiritual masters and a poetical intellect. He was born in 1207 AD. He came from a family of theologians. He utilized day-to-day existence's conditions to portray the spiritual world. Rumi's sonnets have gained gigantic prominence, particularly among the Persian speakers of Afghanistan, Iran and Tajikistan. Various poems composed by the incredible poet (Rumi) have been translated into various languages (Biography of Mevlana Jalaluddin Mohammad Balkhi Rumi, 2016). The Masnavi is made out of parables set within stories, interpreted by interesting accounts or delicate jokes, intended to bring in his crowd. Notwithstanding, Rumi puts these emotional vignettes to great reason, draws religious conclusions from them, points them with ethics that clarify his spiritual mystical concepts, and inculcates in his readers a more profound understanding and higher ambition.

In the prologue to the Masnavi, Rumi writes, 'This is the Book of the Masnavi, which is the

roots of the roots of the roots of the way in respect of unveiling the mysteries of attainment and of certainty; and which is the greatest science of God and the clearest way of God and the most manifest evidence of God. Like other incredible spiritualists of the Muslim world, Rumi thinks about humans as the appearance of heavenly names and characteristics, the caliph of God on earth, and the best creatures. Consequently, he follows the well-known hadith "The one who knows himself knows his God" recognizes that every individual is obliged to know himself appropriately and that "everyone who knows himself knows his God" (*Al-Maqasid al-Hasanah*, Hadith 1149).

Appropriately, he trusted in two sorts of Self: Genuine and unique, and the other is portrayal and pseudo. One is tiny and feeble, and another is incredible: He accepts that people's shallow and ordinary selves are an apparatus and a middle person to get to the reality of Self. This is why the central point of Rumi's main accounts is escaping the false Self and acquiring the reality of one's Self. This subject can be found in the tales of *The Old Musician* and "Parrot and Merchant, etc. Since Rumi's missing is human Self and truth, he takes a light close by and attempts to discover one among different people and cries, "I am dead tired of demon and breast and I wish a human being" (Rumi, 1984, Q 441 / B 14). He continually attempts to delete the figment of a shadow-like human self and consistently summons us to get from this bogus Self and perceive and arrive at the genuine Self. He says, "We have come to know (that) we are not this body: beyond the body we are living through God." Oh, blest is he that has recognized his (real) essence and built (for himself) a palace in everlasting security." (D 5 / b 3341-3340). Thusly, he cautions the man against dismissing his actual Self and calls them self-information and mindfulness, which lead to joy and well-being. (Annisa, 2018)

Because our true identity is rooted in God, how can we know who we truly are if the Divine is at the core of our being? It's love, according to Rumi. Ultimately, to love God is to love your true Self, because only humans have all Divine attributes and qualities. However, how do we

feel this love? One can realise this identity and this love only through the observance of Divine commandments, remembrance of God (dhikr), and the company of the saints, according to Rumi. This religious philosophy of love requires purification, stripping from the layers of the lower Self of the beloved to the point that the separate will and personality of the person is destroyed and only the beloved remains. In Sufism, this process is called "*fana*". Pure Self remains after the hints of the selfish Self (nafs) are destroyed. The Sufis advised pilgrims to "die before you die" because of this (Masnavi 6: 723).

Rumi and Spiritualism

Rumi's concept of spiritual self-awareness can be studied under the following main points. These themes explain how to ignore the carnal Self, leading to spiritual awakening and ultimately reaching one's true Self, God. This is spiritual self-awareness. When the scale of human thinking differs, many problems can be overcome at a higher level. A man's life can be elevated because when he confronts his true Self, he does not waste himself in wrongdoings. He will manage his path in harmony with the true potential of his true Self: a spiritually elevated life that will ultimately benefit humanity at large.

1. Union with God

From a spiritual traveller's perspective, the realisation of man's primal state, that of Universal Man in its fullness, is termed "union with God" (al-wisal bil-haqq) from the "operational" parts of the path. Sufis have defined the route to union in several ways, and it is lengthy and arduous. Only two primary stages on the path should be considered for the time being, and these are steps that apply the Shahddah to the spiritual journey. As a response to the Shahddah's "no": "No deity but God," there is no reality but the reality. Fana, "annihilation of self," originates from this: to remove the illusion that man's self-existence exists, it must be destroyed. There is just one reality: God's reality, which is called baqa, or "subsistence in God." Man's true Self is God, as only God is genuine. People can only arrive at

reality by letting go of their false Self and settling into their true Self.

The Shahddah's link to the states of fana and baqa is summarised by Rumi as follows: Do not attempt to live until you are in His face (essence): "Everything is perishing except His face." The phrase "all is perishing" does not apply when someone has died in front of my [God's] face (to him). It is impossible for him to have gone away [with relation to his actual Self] since "but" has made him transcendent, and "no" has not made him pass away. (3052-54 in I) What's left when the "I" of a man is denied (and obliterated)? Consider the case of the lone zero-denier. Make sure to open your eyes and take a look around. What's left after 'no,' "why?" (1996 and 1997)

Rumi often discusses the Prophet's tradition of "dying before ye die," such as in the following example: What do you want to know? If you're sincere, choose death and remove the curtain of your own existence—you'll see it. Not a physical death, but a death that involves (spiritual) change instead (VI, 73839 as cited in Chittick, 2005).

A person's time and energy should not be wasted on petty pursuits, but rather on the path itself, since "save death, no other talent avails with God" (VI, 3838). "To be near (to God) is not to go up or down: to be near unto God is to escape from the prison of life," says the poet Rumi (III, 4514). In order to return to their origins, the seekers of God. Wish that friendships, passions, love, doubt, and faith were eliminated. Walls and dualism may be found in all of these things, since they are all barriers (Chittick, 2005). These personal characteristics must be conquered since they are rooted in the ego. The heart cannot see Thee when bound or conditioned to feel joy or sadness. In order to survive, he must rely on two borrowed (temporary and unreal) things: melancholy and laughter. In addition to grief and pleasure, the lush garden of love has a plethora of other fruits. When it comes to love, there are no seasons: it is always green and new, regardless of the weather (I, 1791-94).

2. Love

In reality, 'Love is an attribute of God' (V,

2185), which burns 'the qualities of self, hair by hair' is the mechanism by which man dies to himself (III, 1922). The ego is exceeded when love, which, as mentioned previously, entails the realization of knowledge and man's attachment to God, is genuinely realized. In order to define the state of union, the only thing possible is to remove all of the constraints that restrict its existence. In the state of union, only positive reality, i.e., God, remains, whereas such limitations have only a sort of "negative reality (Chittick, 2005).

Often, scholars of religion have concluded that "union with God", or "deliverance" in eastern doctrines, is a full extinction, such that the person is "a drop of water in the sea" and therefore loses everything that he ever was, according to oriental teachings. As seen by several of Rumi's formulations, this is true. When a person loses all he once had, he is left with emptiness and deprivation in its place. According to all traditional doctrines, union is a state of complete abundance. The objective must be framed in negative terms only because the world is nothing compared to God, but this is the only way to make sense of it. Moreover, God, not the world, is the only reality (Chittick, 2005).

3. The nafs

When it comes to Rumi, he often returns to the idea that the ego, or what he calls the "carnal self," is a kind of curtain that keeps us from seeing our actual nature. Polytheism, or the belief in more than one deity, is considered a grave sin in Islam. "There is no god," the negative part of the Shahddah (naji), denotes the nonexistence of all things other than God. Consequently, Sufism asserts that to think that anything exists apart from God is to associate that phenomenon with God, which is the whole force and meaning of the Shahada. Those "monotheists" (muwahhid) understand that everything depends on God and is the source of all reality. In contrast, the "associator" or polytheist (mushrik) suffers from an optical illusion from his particular self-assignment of reality. He cannot help but behave as though things are autonomous realities, apart from God, as long as he has not escaped the confines of his ego (Chittick, 2005).

For those who have fallen into polytheism or association, the only cure is death to Self, which is achieved by the effacement of the Self by the power of love. As we have previously established, this love is the vision of gnosis and the understanding that God alone is real (Chittick, 2005). Sufism holds that one of the fundamental implications of the idea of "hell" is that just as man must be separated from God in this world, so too must he be separated from God in the next. Man is distant from God as long as he clings to the transient—the ego and the world (Chittick, 2005).

He was in perfect harmony with the principle of all existence before he fell—"God fashioned Adam in His image"—and before his fall he was a perfect reflection of that principle. Nevertheless, he fell, lost communication with God, and the balance of the cosmos became confusing for him. Regaining his natural condition, man formed a new balance and observed things not as they are, but through the lens of his particular Self. Even if one takes the Prophet's words, "Die before ye die," literally, the dying process suggests that man's original balance with the cosmos has been restored, or at least rediscovered. It is only when one recognizes in and through God that "man is the measure of all things," since there is no other ultimate standard, that a person "goes to hell" after death because he has built an artificial equilibrium within himself and set himself up as the standard of measuring. The Prophet stated, "Man is sleeping and when he dies he wakes," which means that when he dies, he sees reality as it is and not as he believes it is. As long as he does not adhere to the balance of the cosmos, "God's Order" seems to him to be a chaotic state. His reference point and yardstick are still his egocentric desires. Rumi remarks, "Oh, there are many a raw (incomplete) one". "This carnal self nafs) is Hell," says Jesus in the Gospel of John, referring to the individual Self (1,1375). A man must die to himself in order to extinguish the flames of hell (Chittick, 2005).

4. Knowledge and method

The most paramount creation within human existence is his heart. To physiologists or anatomists, it might be a compartmental

structure to regulate blood circulation and thus continue the machine of life. Still, for Rumi, this four-chambered organ (heart) relates it with the highest possible dimension, i.e. Spiritual dimension (Chittick, 2005).

A very famous saying related from Allah: "Neither My earth nor My heavens contain Me, but I am contained in the heart of My faithful servant." is more often than not, referred to by Rumi with following remarks:- To get well-versed with the uniqueness of the human heart, means to decipher the definition of God. Moreover, when one tries to understand God, one knows he is none other than Him. This fact can only be understood by getting disinfected from the germs of relativity because God is an absolute entity that is valuable, without any volume, and beyond the concept of infinity. In order to know God, one must become God and stop being anything that separates Him from God. In other words, God is above and beyond whatever science is or would be known to the creations. To an ordinary mind, it might seem blasphemy to say to become God by subtracting the material state of being human; however, in Sufism, it implies more than what may seem ordinary. More precisely, one might suggest that knowledge of God cannot align well unless one separates one's current cellular, atomic, and temporal state of existence and relates to God through the dimensionless realm of time and space (Chittick, 2005).

As mentioned in Rumi's Mathnawi, "the (right) thought is that which opens a way: the (right) way is that on which a (spiritual) king advances", the realization of absoluteness of the Absolute power (God) is the only truth that overwhelms and supersedes the rest of the things. More of its emphasis on disregarding materialism, Sufism dilates more upon maintaining the truth as an unadulterated form without any self-oriented agenda (Chittick, 2005).

Sufism was taken as anti-science by learned scholars in the time of Rumi. The primary fear was losing the value of their scientific knowledge, whereas, as per Rumi, science is only a diaphragm that needs soul (through knowing Absolute Truth, i.e. God). In other

words, the origin of all types of knowledge is from the Divine dimension, where no sound waves or human-generated digitally-processed waves have ever been explored due to its infinite nature, and so is the existence of God, i.e. without any boundary. He surrounds everything, yet He is surrounded or limited by nothing (Chittick, 2005).

The realization of truth is more associated with one of the powers of the human heart, i.e. concentration of energy to call upon or remember God and not allow oneself to scatter. Instead, to be closer to the Absolute Reality (God), one should deliberate about His Power and Existence and achieve it through focus and concentration. The biggest obstacle is the scattering phenomenon, as humans are regular prey to our desires and wishes, which are primarily trivial and worthless. The ticket to reach God is multi-pronged, relies on unfathomable faith in the existence of God and, above all, patience for the arrival of goodness and eternal bliss (Chittick, 2005).

The invocation towards the creator implies a call beseeching closeness with God, and it works with the miracle of this four-chambered flesh, aka heart. The essence of repeatedly remembering God with any name, or maybe a secret, most powerful name, is the installation of the firm belief that He is the only truth. He drives the man to the right. It is immaterial whether the material creations favour something to happen; if God wills, it happens with an utter disregard for science or anything else. Alternatively, repetition is just a catalyst to obtain optimum focus to ride on 'that Ultra-dimensional Ray', leading to connecting with the Supreme Divine. For this reason, Sufism advocates calling upon God with the most powerful name. Summing up, the power of the human heart is limited to an unlimited time and space whereby one can touch upon the belief that the Absolute Truth (God) is everywhere and nowhere is empty of Him (Chittick, 2005).

Self-awareness can be extensively characterized as the degree to which individuals are deliberately mindful of their inward states and their associations with others (see, for instance, Trapnell and Campbell, 1999; Trudeau and

Reich, 1995). Reflection and introspection are the only means of gaining consciousness. There are distinct degrees of self-awareness, even if objective self-knowledge is impossible (this argument has raged since the dawn of the idea). It is available on the spectrum.

We can spend our days just thinking and feeling and doing whatever we want, without giving our minds any extra thought. However, we can also focus on the inner Self, an ability called "self-assessment." For example, we may examine whether we think, feel, and behave according to our own standards and values by participating in self-assessment. Our concept of accuracy is termed a comparison. Use these patterns to judge the truth and purity of your thoughts and actions daily" (Dowell and Wickland, 1972).

While practising restraint, we examine and determine if we are making the proper judgments to achieve our goals. Our self-awareness and the likelihood of success help us reorient ourselves and our ideals to make an informed decision about evaluating the outcome. When we acknowledge a high probability of success, we rush to attribute that success or failure to our efforts. However, if we know that our chances of success are limited, we will generally believe that other factors influence the outcome more than our efforts (Silvia and Duval, 2001). Obviously, external events play a part in our progress toward realignment with our goals, but we still have a role to play in our successes and failures.

As if that were not enough, we also have some control over our beliefs, so much so that we may change them if necessary (Dana, Lalwani, and Duval, 1997). As a result of our failure to meet expectations when focusing on the standards rather than our presentation, the rules will be faulty and modified to accommodate our performance. This is a foregone conclusion if we are focused on the standards rather than ourselves (Dana et al., 1997).

There are several situations when the requirements are unreasonably strict, even though it seems that merely shifting the blame and allowing oneself to be free of a legitimate mistake is all that is required. When comparing

themselves to their internal standards, many advisors' workplaces overflow with people who have set themselves up to fail in every way possible. Observation of the research on self-awareness shows that it substantially impacts how we perceive our thoughts, emotions, and behaviours.

When people think about otherworldliness, they often focus on everything outside their bodies and minds. They believe that otherworldliness begins externally, by contemplating the universe and reflecting on the deeper meaning of life. Some associate being otherworldly with wearing sacred robes and lighting fragrant incense. They attempt to clear their minds and purify their bodies to achieve a "fresh start" to reach their spiritual awareness.

To be spiritually aware and alert, you must be self-aware.

Aware about what's holding you back, so you can pray for strength.

Aware of your wellbeing, so you can pray for healing.

Aware of your desires, so you can pray for light on your path.

Aware of your mistakes, so you can pray for forgiveness.

Self-awareness becomes the foundation.
(Kulkarni, 2020)

A spiritual self-awareness regularly implies that individuals begin considering themselves not exactly as an individual, yet more as being essential for a more extensive framework. They perceive that everything springs from a similar source and offers an association. Spiritual self-awareness can likewise be portrayed as an expansion of cognizant mindfulness.

‘You should analyze your own pattern of thoughts, sentiments and encounters for a genuine comprehension of spiritual awareness. The theory of self-awareness depends on the possibility that you are not your contemplations, but rather the entity noticing your thoughts; you are the thinker, discrete and aside from your considerations’ (Duval and Wicklund, 1972). The present researcher deems to apply this

concept of spiritual self-awareness presented by Moulana Rumi to the novel of Elif Shafak, *The Forty Rules of Love*. The method employed for this research is data analysis. The novel was published in 2009 and gained an exclusive reputation.

This study aims to investigate Shafak's *The Forty Rules of Love* to explore self-awareness on the way to spiritualism, particularly using the notion of Self-awareness theorized by Maulana Jalal-ud-Din Rumi. The main objective is to find self-awareness in Shafak's *The Forty Rules of Love* in connection with spiritualism.

Research Framework and Methodology

This study includes the spiritual thematic principles of Moulana Rumi's concept of spiritual self-awareness, given in his book *Masnavi* Manvi and illustrated by William C Chittick in his book *The Sufi Doctrine of Rumi*. The work of Dr. Chittick presents the subject from a completely traditional perspective, untainted by the modern errors that plague many other works on the subject in Western languages today. Indeed, Rumi did not write a metaphysical treatise like Ibn Arab and Sadr al-Din Qunyawi. However, although Jalaluddin was a famous metaphysician, he dealt with almost all epistemological and metaphysical questions, often using allegories, anecdotes or other literary devices and poetic signs. To understand the principles of his metaphysical ideas, one must study *Mathnavi* and *Divan* and *Fihri ma fihri* for verses directly related to metaphysics.

The last and most famous work of Rumi is the *Masnavi*, or *Rhymed Couplets*. It comprises six long poetry books (each with thousands of lines of text), set in a teaching style designed to provide important spiritual lessons. *Sufi doctrine of Rumi* attempts to present Rumi's universal message in the context of Islamic spirituality, using Rumi's own words and images to illustrate the features and characteristics of his approach. In this monograph, William Chittick, dealing with Rumi, has succeeded in accomplishing such a task, at least as far as it is concerned.

Analysis and Discussion

The data analysis of the novel exhibits spiritual self-awareness, which is divided into various forms. Spiritual self-awareness may be studied in *The Forty Rules of Love* under the following divisions:

I. Universality of Spiritualism

Spiritualism is not confined to any gender, time, or age. Every human needs to know their true Self, such as who he is, why they are here, and where they are moving. To have the everyday needs of every human being, it is evident that the one who created us is one, and He created us on a specific pattern. The writer also confesses that although the story in the novel (*Sweet Blasphemy*) took place in the 13th century, it is still a topic of age and interest for every soul. Because every soul wants to know their true Self. Moreover, when a man does not find his true Self, he remains restless. For example, the role of Ella in modern times and the role of Shams and Rumi centuries ago. Therefore, regardless of age, gender, religion, or culture, learning about oneself in every age remains necessary. And we can see a significant difference in the lives of those who have self-awareness and those who do not. Most of the time, they act crazy like Baybarz character, or they cannot enjoy their life with confidence and dignity, as in Ella's case.

II. Self-Awareness through Love

The mind gives us reasons to stop taking risks, but love does not care about profit. Love does not care about dangers. Moreover, when a person takes risks, secrets begin to unfold. So, by working against the will of the Self, one will prepare a mirror of the heart and clean it of dirt, reflecting the image of God. Love, one of the basic elements of achieving self-awareness, will profoundly affect human beings. As one of the principles of Shams: "How we see God is a direct reflection of how we see ourselves. If God brings to mind mostly fear and blame, it means too much fear and blame welled inside us. So are we if we see God as full of love and compassion" (Shafak, 2010).

Love and affection in Ella's character drew her attention, forcing her to think about herself. She analyzed her life, which was still and stagnant.

With love, she began to see things differently. She found the purpose of her life. And removed much confusion from her life. This was the case with the character of Sulaiman the drunkard. People like Beybars, who claim to be pious but are hypocrites, commit wrongdoing themselves as well as make life hell for others. He beat Suleman so badly for no reason, but Shams treated him with love. And it was this love that Suleman the drunkard thought he still had with God. He began to feel the love of God. In love, one has to sacrifice one's ego. Love embraces the rough and the smooth together. In the life of Shams, we can see the result of supreme love. He does not make any distinction between human beings based on appearance. He fell in love with those whom others rejected.

III. Effects of Good or Wrongdoings on The Spiritual Life

The author is of the view that wrongdoings do affect one's spiritual life. Whatever a person does, good or bad, affects their soul; the good deeds will strengthen the soul. The result will be a delighted and calm soul. A man with such a soul creates ease in society. Bad things create restlessness in the soul; it becomes weakened. Moreover, man becomes the victim of fear. Moreover, he becomes a threat to himself and the people around him. For example, the character of Jackal's head. He was a murderer. First, he was not aware of his crimes. Killing someone was very easy and normal for him. Thus, the polluted layers of vices envelop the pure soul that it becomes difficult for him to distinguish between right and wrong, or even if he is conscious of his wrongdoing, his carnal Self becomes so strong that it leads him to the wrong path and continues.

Furthermore, one becomes disappointed with the mercy of Allah. Baybars was unaware of his true Self and was a threat to society. However, a Sufi remains harmless to society. The characters of Baybars and people like Baybars are always ready to criticize others. They waste no opportunity to pass judgment on the lives of others. However, unaware of themselves, they commit crimes.

IV. Spiritualism Is A Vision

Man is subject to his thinking, and thoughts become action. Moreover, when we are clear in our thoughts and establish a definite vision, keeping the consequences and hurdles in mind, we pursue that vision. This was the case with Shams of Tabriz, and Sufism is based upon this vision. Vision regarding the heart to make it free from the harmful effects of spiritual diseases, and our intention led us to attain harmony, avoiding worldly chaos.

People who do not focus on their inner Self and remain busy in their worldly affairs will have their pattern of thoughts accordingly. So is the case with the innkeeper, as he comes into contact with the people of different areas, concluding that the suffering is the same around the globe. He advised Shams Tabriz not to be disgraced by travelling from place to place. The situation is the same everywhere. However, Shams wanted something else. He was in search of God. Moreover, he knew that God was inside us; we had to find it in our hearts by knowing ourselves. He travelled to see the manifestation of God. What life teaches cannot be learned through books. So, he generated the rules by analyzing life and studying the Quran in depth. From the conversation between Shams and the judge, we can analyze that. If one finds God, it is not about wandering from place to place. Instead, it is necessary to abandon worldly appearance and display and focus on inward beauty that is pure heart, free from lust.

The judge represents an ordinary man in it, mocking the dervish. He said it is unnecessary to be a Sufi to find God. You do not have to go to great lengths to find God. Then Shams wonderfully explained to the judge how a person immersed in worldly pleasures and glory find God. Moreover, the fact is that all our attention is on our appearance. We love the comforts of life. Moreover, we are lost in it. Moreover, we do not strive to find God. We often overlook this aspect of life. So, is the state of mind, regarding the spiritualism that does not bother, their outward appearance. They do not even care about what people think because there is no standard regarding people's judgment; often, people like things just for their benefit, or their judgment will be based on things that can be

dangerous to humanity. Therefore, a spiritual person will not be bothered at all. He will serve humanity without the fear of being judged by people. He would do things for Allah's pleasure. As the shams had become a Sufi, for him, it did not matter what he wore.

V. Spiritualism is a Part of Islam

Good or bad deeds have effects, like a chain. Evil prevails when there is a lack of faith. Moreover, it engulfs and destroys the whole society. Similarly, if faith shines in the hearts, it will enlighten the city. Here comes the discussion on Sharia, between Shams and the judge. Shams states that Sharia shows the path in the dark, like a candle, but a man with superficial knowledge of Sharia and the Quran may forget his direction and destination. Here, he quoted the example of a man in the time of Moses. His appropriate words in prayer Angered Moses, but God told him that the man was His friend, Moses considered it blasphemy. So, God does not take us at our word. He looks deep into our hearts. He knows our intention. Moreover, He loves the purity of heart.

Conclusion

Thus, the study has given detailed answers to the queries hypothesized before. It has become a successful attempt and provides proper ground for future researchers researching Rumi's spiritual awareness. It facilitates them in tracing spiritual self-awareness in other literary works. The study exposes various forms, elements, and types of spiritual self-awareness, which helps future researchers to perceive spiritual self-awareness from different angles. The research also provides a profound insight into *The Forty Rules of Love* and helps readers read it in a broader perspective. After reading this study, the reader may apply other theories to the novel. There are still some grounds on which the novel can be further researched. The psychoanalytical theory can also be applied to the novel.

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