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Rūmī's Mystical Epistemology through Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī's Framework

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Abstract

This study employs a hermeneutic and textual analysis approach to examine and categorize the mystical experience—"unveiling" (*kashf*)—illustrated in Rūmī's works using Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī's Sufi framework, distinguishing "revelation" (*vaḥy*) and "inspiration" (*ilhām*), and "imaginal unveiling" (*al-kashf al-khayālī*) and "spiritual unveiling" (*al-kashf al-maʿnawī*). The primary question this study addresses is this: "What forms the foundation of Rūmī's epistemology?" And the guiding questions are as follows. How does Āmulī's classification of unveiling contribute to the distinction between "revelation" and "inspiration" on the one hand and "imaginal unveiling" and "spiritual unveiling" on the other, as illustrated in Rūmī's works? In what ways do Rūmī's teachings align with and diverge from Āmulī's framework of unveilings, and how do they complement each other? Existing studies on Rūmī's epistemology, while abundant, often focus on specific aspects and present the authors' findings but lack a comprehensive classification. Combining the two thinkers' insights, this paper offers contemporary readers and scholars a theoretical lens—a direct access to the relevant texts in Rūmī's works for independent future research—and a poetic, motivational, and transformative voice, encouraging them to embark on their own personal journeys. According to this paper's thesis, Rūmī builds his epistemology on love as the transformative force guiding the seeker, the heart as the locus of divine manifestation and spiritual connection, and the sacred intellect as the faculty linking human understanding to the Universal Intellect and thus the divine Wisdom beyond rationality, while acknowledging rationality's limited but valuable role.

Keywords: epistemology, mystical experience, unveiling (*kashf*), love, heart, intellect

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī Balkhī was born in Balkh, Khurāsān, in 1207 CE. The Mongol invasion in 1219 forced his family into migration, eventually settling in Konya. After his father's death in 1231, Rūmī learned Sufism under the guidance of Burhān al-Dīn Tirmīdhī. His transformative encounter with Shams Tabrīzī in 1244 marked his shift from a respected jurist to a mystic profoundly absorbed in divine love. The sudden departure of Shams around 1247 CE deeply affected Rūmī, prompting him to retreat from public sermons and dedicate himself to the spiritual training of Sufi disciples, ultimately becoming a prolific poet until his death in 1273 CE.

Sayyid Ḥaydar ibn ʿAlī ibn Ḥaydar ʿAlawī Ḥusaynī, titled Bahāʾ al-Dīn and known as Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī (circa 1320–post-1385 CE), was a prominent Iranian Shiʿi mystic, theologian, philosopher, *muḥadis*, and exegete of the 14th century. Born in Amul, he traced his lineage to the fourth Shiʿi Imam, Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (PBUH). His formative education began in Amul and later extended to the intellectual centers of Isfahan, Khorasan, and Gorgan, where he studied both transmitted and rational sciences over two decades, with an inclination toward Shiʿi mysticism. He returned to Amul around 25 years old, where he was appointed vizier (minister) to Fakhr al-Dawla, the ruler of Tabaristan. Despite his privileged position, he grew disillusioned with worldly life, renouncing his wealth and status to pursue spiritual truths. Āmulī spent his later years in Iraq, residing in Najaf, Hilla, and Baghdad. Under the guidance of mystics like ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad al-Qudsī and scholars such as Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn (son of the renowned ʿAllāma Ḥillī), he mastered the esoteric sciences and received teaching authorizations. A prolific writer, his works bridge Shiʿism and Sufism. Notable texts include *Jāmiʿ al-Asrār*, *Tafsīr al-Muḥīṭ al-Aʿẓam,* and *Naṣṣ al-Nuṣūṣ*, a commentary on Ibn ʿArabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. He passed away after 1385 CE, and his tomb is located in Amul.

1.2. Objectives, Contribution, and Thesis

This study examines and categorizes the mystical experience—"unveiling" (*kashf*)—illustrated in Rūmī's works using Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī's Sufi framework in *Jāmiʿ al-Asrār wa Manbaʿ al-Anwār* (Āmulī 2017), distinguishing "revelation" (*vaḥy*) and "inspiration" (*ilhām*), and "imaginal unveiling" (*kashf al-khayālī*) and "spiritual unveiling" (*kashf al-maʿnawī*). The primary and guiding questions this study addresses are the following.

1. What forms the foundation of Rūmī's epistemology? A set of guiding questions, combining systematic analysis and experiential poetics, guides this research's primary question.
    i. How does Āmulī's Sufi classification of unveiling or *kashf* (outlined in section 2.2), contribute to the distinction between "revelation" and "inspiration," on the one hand, and "imaginal unveiling" and "spiritual unveiling," on the other, as illustrated in Rūmī's works?
    ii. How does Rūmī illustrate unveiling types, as classified by Āmulī, in his poetry? (Section 2.3)
    iii. In what ways do Rūmī's teachings align with and diverge from Āmulī's framework of unveilings, and how do they complement each other? (Section 3)
    iv. What role do "love" and "heart" play in Rūmī's mystical epistemology? (Section 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5)
    v. How does Rūmī's "meanings" (*maʿānī*) compare with the Sufi concept of "fixed entities" (*aʿyān al-thābita*)? (Section 2.4)
    vi. Does Rūmī embrace or reject rationality in attaining divine knowledge? (Section 2.5)
    vii. How does Rūmī distinguish "reason" and "sacred intellect," and what roles do they play in his epistemology? (Section 2.5)

Why does this study center on Rūmī and Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī? Rūmī is a cornerstone of Sufism, particularly poetic Sufism, offering profound insights into mystical experiences. However, due to the inherently poetic nature of his teachings—where systematic classification was not his intention—grasping the broader framework of his depiction of mystical experiences proves challenging for readers.

Conversely, in *Jāmiʿ al-Asrār wa Manbaʿ al-Anwār*, Ḥaydar Āmulī systematically categorizes unveiling (*kashf*) and its various forms (Āmulī 2017, 587–614). This classification is a valuable, structured framework for organizing and comprehending Rūmī's dispersed poetic representations of the topic. This attempt, though, raises a critical question: if Rūmī did not aim for systematic classification, why pursue a methodical analysis in this research?

Numerous studies examine specific aspects of Rūmī's epistemology, yet their insights are limited to those particular areas. These works offer the authors' findings from their individual exploration; they do not integrate a systematic classification with experiential poetics, nor do they guide Rūmī readers and scholars in navigating his epistemology *themselves*. Section 2.3 of this research seeks to provide

contemporary Rūmī scholars and readers with a structured classification to independently explore his epistemology. This classification offers readers a clearer understanding of the subject's various dimensions, enabling further investigation into elements of Rūmī's mystical epistemology, and facilitating scholars with the diversity in Rūmī's epistemology first-hand.

According to this paper's thesis, Rūmī builds his epistemology on love (*ʿishq*) as the transformative force guiding the seeker, the heart (*qalb*, *dil*) as the locus of divine manifestation and spiritual connection, and the "sacred intellect"—or as he names it the "intellect of intellect" (*ʿaql-i ʿaql*)—as the faculty linking human understanding to the Universal Intellect and thus the divine Wisdom beyond rationality, while acknowledging rationality's limited but valuable role. Rūmī's epistemology views mystical experiences as pathways to spiritual "transformation" and "knowledge" that transcend empirical, linguistic, subjective, and cultural limits. These experiences transcend the mere transfer of knowledge, as seen in rationalist philosophies, and profoundly transform the seeker's very existence.

1.3. Methodology

This study situates Rūmī's perspective on mystical experience within intracultural—Persian and Islamic, particularly Sufi—and intercultural intellectual traditions. The interpretive methodology of this exploration is dual, comprising both horizontal and vertical interpretations. Horizontal interpretation clarifies specific terms and expressions in Rūmī's poems, highlighting references to the Qurʾan and hadith. Vertical interpretation, on the other hand, drills into the deeper meanings of the texts by connecting terms and references identified in the horizontal phase to the author's entire body of work, as well as the originating and other traditions.

As Lewis (2013, 9-19) notes, Rūmī translators face the dilemma between interpreting and simply transmitting the original text. He advocates for an interpretive approach termed "nativizing a foreign work in English," which proves more effective for translating Persian poetry into English by preserving its aesthetic while ensuring the essence is communicated. This paper adopts this interpretive translation method.

1.4. Literature Review

Literature about Rūmī's works spans many cultures and languages. Let us only list works related to the topic, and start with the Farsi sources. Muraviji Sabzivari (2022) comprehensively analyzes Book One of the *Masnavī*, exploring Rūmī's metaphorical usage of the *ney*, or "reed," in the mystical journey. Rastegar et al. (2023) investigate

mystical experiences in Rūmī's thought within William James's framework. In two volumes, Jalal al-Din Huma'i's famous *The Book of Rūmī* (Huma'i 1990a, 1990b) critically analyzes Rūmī's thoughts through diverse topics, including mystical experiences. In the Turkish language literature, Alpyağıl (2019) investigates the use of multi-layered language during pivotal historical events in the works of Ibn ʿArabī, Derrida, and Rūmī. Coming to the English language literature, in *The Sufi Path of Love* (Chittick 1983) and *The Sufi Doctrine of Rūmī* (Chittick 2005), William Chittick presents Rūmī's teachings on spirituality, including the stages of mystical perfection towards the Divine, the dynamics of spiritual enlightenment, and the criticality of love in spiritual development. Leonard Lewisohn's *The Heritage of Sufism* (1999), concerns classical Persian Sufism from its origins to Rūmī (700-1300). In this book, Esteʿlami (1999, 401-408) examines "knowledge" in Rūmī's *Masnavī*.

2. Discussion

2.1. Mystical Experience: Terminology and Characteristics

Richard H. Jones (2022, 5-6) characterizes "mystical experiences" as short-term episodes in an altered state of consciousness involving direct awareness of reality free from the sense of a discrete self or conceptualized differentiations. He distinguishes "mystical states" as more enduring selfless states, different from fleeting experiences due to their lasting nature. Additionally, Jones broadens the term "mysticism" to include doctrines, codes of conduct, practices, rituals, institutions, and cultural phenomena centered on the inner quest to end the sense of self and the dominance of the conceptualizing mind. Thus, mysticism is not just about having mystical experiences but involves comprehensive *ways of life*. In this paper, the distinction Jones makes between "experiences" and "states" is not maintained, treating all as "experiences."

Mystical experiences originate from various practices such as meditation, asceticism, rituals, spontaneous instances, or the consumption of psychoactive substances, offering profound moments of unity, transcendence, and divine encounters. These experiences are interpreted differently across religious practices.[1] Philosophically, they prompt inquiries into epistemology, questioning the authenticity of the knowledge they impart and the feasibility of communicating their ineffable nature. While some contend these experiences provide direct, non-propositional insight into the divine, bypassing traditional cognitive processes, others question whether they represent a connection to a transcendent reality or merely subjective mental states. Comparative studies highlight universal traits, such as unity and

ineffability, and distinct theological interpretations across religious frameworks. The subjective and interpretive nature of these experiences, coupled with cultural, theoretical, and linguistic influences, introduces challenges and risks dogmatic interpretations that may affirm existing beliefs rather than invite open inquiry.

In Islamic metaphysics, "mystical experience" is mainly associated with *kashf* or "unveiling." In Arabic and Farsi, the *kashf* literally means "removing the veil" or "discovering." As a term in Sufi literature, it refers to a spiritual phenomenon where hidden divine truths are revealed to a Sufi mystic. This process involves the removal of veils obscuring the heart's perception, enabling the mystic to directly perceive the essence of truth beyond the confines of intellectual grasp or sensory experience. As a divine Grace, unveiling allows the seeker to directly comprehend the Divine Presence, gain insights into the spiritual realm, and achieve profound understandings. As a fundamental concept in Sufism, it highlights the path to God as both experiential and mystical, where knowledge is revealed through the heart and soul's purification (Āmulī 2017, 587-614).

2.2. Āmulī's Sufi Classification of Mystical Experiences

In his work *Jāmiʿ al-Asrār wa Manbaʿ al-Anwār*, Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī (2017, 587-614) offers a tremendous and detailed examination of *kashf* or unveiling, classifying it into (I) "revelation" (*vaḥy*) and (II) "inspiration" (*ilhām*).

(I) Revelation represents a unique form of knowledge and divine communication characterized by the transmission of guidance from God. It occurs in a context where the soul, having achieved a state of purity, becomes receptive to knowledge conveyed directly from the Universal Soul, which, in turn, derives its understanding from the Universal Intellect. This process bypasses reflective thought, ensuring a direct and unmediated imparting of knowledge. Revelation is of two kinds: (i) special revelation and (ii) general revelation.

(i) Special revelation is sub-categorized into two: (1) The revelation mediated with an angel—namely, "apparent revelation"—which belongs to messengers. (2) The unmediated revelation—called the "hidden revelation"—is exclusive to prophets. In Islamic theology, special revelation is a channel through which God's words or commands are relayed to humanity. This type of guidance is distinct in its approach, often occurring in a concealed or discreet manner. It is a special conveyance of divine Will or Law, where God's messages and Commands are directly communicated to prophets (unmediated special revelation). This mode of communication is not just about imparting information; it also involves inspiring, dictating, or transmitting

messages in a manner that is often not immediately apparent, maintaining a hidden aspect of divine interaction.

On the other hand, (ii) general revelation is common to all living beings, including animals, minerals, devils, and humans. Quranic examples of general revelation include the following. "And thy Lord revealed unto the bee, 'Take up dwellings among the mountains and the trees and among that which they build" (Qurʾan, 16:68).[2] Additionally, "Then He decreed that they be seven heavens in two days and revealed to each heaven its command" (Qurʾan, 41:12).

(II) Inspiration or *ilhām* signifies a form of divine guidance that is more subtle and internal than revelation. It encompasses the process where God instills ideas or thoughts directly into a person's heart. This divine guidance manifests as inner realizations or intuitions received by individuals from God (Khalatbari 2012, 47-48). Notably, inspiration is not exclusive to prophets; other righteous individuals can also obtain it. Inspiration is knowledge imparted to the individual soul from the Universal Soul in proportion to the individual's aptitude. Known as "divinely inspired knowledge" (*ʿilm-i ladunnī*) or "knowledge of unveiling" (*ʿilm-i kashfī*), it is considered a level below revelation but above dreams.

Inspiration is divided into two categories: (i) special inspiration and (ii) general inspiration. (i) Special inspiration is further sub-categorized into two: (1) mediated inspiration, where the person hears as an external voice. (2) Unmediated inspiration, which is the "induction" (*ilqāʾ*) of inner meanings and realities (*maʿānī*) and truths in saints' hearts. (ii) General inspiration, which emerges from the purification of the heart and the development of commendable morals, combined with inherent aptitude, encompasses personal guidance and artistic or intellectual enlightenment. This inspiration, crucial in daily life, fosters a profound understanding and realization of truths, enabling individuals to acquire insights in various domains, such as poetry, arts, or sciences, facilitated by divine support. This occurrence clarifies some Sufi poet's assertions—e.g., Rūmī, Shabistarī, and Ḥāfiẓ—that their poetry is *inspired*.

How does inspiration compare with special revelation? In Islamic theology, as Khalatbari (2012, 43-48) points out, revelation and inspiration, while emanating from a divine source, exhibit distinct characteristics and serve different purposes. Both are inherently divine, stemming from God, and share the goal of providing guidance. However, significant differences exist between the two. Revelation generally addresses a broader audience, carrying a universal message for the community or humanity. In contrast, inspiration is more personal and subjective. Revelations to prophets are infallible and authoritative, underpinning Islamic law and doctrine. On

the other hand, inspiration lacks this level of authority and is subject to interpretation. The method of transmission also differentiates the two; revelation typically involves direct and clear communication, which may occur through intermediaries like angels. Inspiration, conversely, revolves around internal realizations and intuitions. These concepts, deeply ingrained in Islamic theology, illustrate how the Divine communicates and guides humanity.

Let us return to the unveiling discussion (Āmulī 2017, 603-614). Unveiling, as a phenomenon, can be classified into two distinct categories: (I) imaginal unveiling (*al-kashf al-khayālī*) and (II) spiritual unveiling (*al-kashf al-maʿnawī*).

(I) Imaginal unveiling refers to the perception of realities through the senses in the world of imagination. All unveilings are manifestations of divine Names, with each Name nurturing its manifestation. Imaginal manifestations occur through various means, such as vision, hearing, smelling, or touching. Furthermore, imaginal unveilings can be divided into two sub-categories: (i) those concerning worldly matters, such as receiving information about future events, and (ii) concerning truths about the hereafter and spiritual realities.

How does the imaginal unveiling compare with inspirational unveilings? The fundamental distinction between imaginal and inspirational unveilings lies in their respective natures and origins. The imaginal unveiling is a mystical experience where one perceives images, symbols, or experiences within the imaginal realm, accessed through the imaginal senses. This unveiling is generally achieved through deep concentration or meditation. In contrast, inspiration involves acquiring knowledge bestowed by God. This process entails directly imparting knowledge or insight into an individual's heart, functioning as a divine gift or Grace. Thus, the primary distinction between these two experiences is their focus and method of acquisition. The imaginal unveiling centers on visual, auditory, olfactory, and conceptual experiences derived from spiritual practices, while inspiration hinges on the intuitive reception of divine knowledge.

Let us now return to unveiling types and examine "spiritual unveiling." (II) Spiritual unveiling is superior to imaginal unveilings, as it provides more certainty—generally categorized into two distinct groups: (a) Unveiling of forms and (b) formless unveiling, each with a hierarchical order, implying varying levels of knowledge.

Let us first examine the hierarchy of the spiritual unveiling of forms: (i) Vision (*shuhūd*)—a mystical "contemplation" in the sense of "witnessing"—can be divided into multiple sub-categories, which involve contemplating the "fixed entities"[3] in various contexts, revealing different aspects of spiritual knowledge: contemplating the

fixed entities in the elements and compounds (*ʿanāṣur va murakkabāt*), the heavens, souls, the Pedestal, the Universal Soul, the First Intellect, and ultimately, the Presence of God's Knowledge, illustrating the gradual and dynamic progression of the spiritual journey (Āmulī 2017, 609-610).

Another dimension of spiritual unveiling is (ii) auditory, encompassing several sub-categories: (1) hearing God's Word without any mediation, as exemplified by the experiences of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) during the Night of Ascend and the Prophet Moses (PBUH) hearing from the Tree; (2) hearing God's Word through the mediation of Gabriel, such as this Archangel's recitation of the Qurʾan to the prophet of Islam; (3) hearing the words of the First Intellect and other Intellects; (4) hearing the Universal Soul's word; and finally, (5) hearing angels' voices.

Let us now turn to the second primary type of spiritual unveiling: (b) "Formless unveiling" (Āmulī 2017, 612-614). This unveiling manifests inner meaning (*maʿānī*) in the "reflective faculty" (*al-quwwa al-mufakira*) (a manifestation called "intuition," or *ḥads*,), the "intellective faculty" (*al-quawa al-ʿāqila*),[4] the heart, the spirit, the stage of *sirr* or Mystery, and finally, the *khafīyy* or Hidden stage, where the manifestations are ineffable and take place in the Presence of God's Knowledge. This last stage, together with the final stage of the "visionary" unveiling discussed above—which includes contemplating the fixed entities in the Presence of God's Knowledge—represents the highest form of unveiling accessible to humans.

Having outlined various types of spiritual unveiling from a Sufi perspective, let us turn to Rūmī's interpretation of mystical experiences within Āmulī's framework.

2.3. Mystical Experience in Rūmī's Teachings

This section studies how Rūmī delineates mystical experiences. Rūmī's writings primarily focus on imaginal, inspirational, and spiritual unveilings and, to a lesser degree, revelatory experiences. Let us examine each type. Notably, not all these experiences are necessarily personal to Rūmī; rather, he employs "imaginative poetry" to convey his teachings. However, whether these experiences actually occurred to him is not of primary significance—what truly matters is how they are expressed.

2.3.1. Revelation

As discussed, revelation is of two kinds: the special revelation granted exclusively to prophets and messengers and the general revelation accessible to all beings, including humans, animals, minerals, and even devils. Rūmī's work speaks of both revelations, highlighting their diverse aspects and implications.

Rūmī often alludes to the Quranic verse 16:68 about the revelation to the bee: "Revelation to the honeybee sweetened the world" (T.XXII:5),[5] emphasizing the broader impact and spread of divine communication beyond human beings.

A significant aspect of Rūmī's perspective on revelation is its reception. He (M.I:1467-1468) describes the "ear of the soul" as the site of revelation and the heart as a receptor of hidden revelations (M.IV:2978), underscoring the transcendent nature of some modes of knowledge. He (M.III:704) reinforces this idea in speaking of spiritually elevated individuals who gain proximity to God through revelations of love, underlining love's critical role in spiritual advancement, which is experienced through the heart.

> Thus, the ear of the soul becomes the place of revelation,
> And what is revelation but a truth beyond sensory perception?
> The ear and eye of the soul are unlike these physical senses,
> For the ear of reason and the ear of doubt are impoverished in comparison.
> (Rūmī, M.I.I:1467-1468, own translation)[6]

These verses indicate that divine revelations are transcendental, and remain inaccessible to the sensory, rational, and speculative faculties. Through these various passages, Rūmī acknowledges the universal aspect of revelation and the human capacity to attain this sublime knowledge.

2.3.2. Imaginal and Inspirational Unveilings

Rūmī's poems illustrate three primary "imaginal unveiling" types: visual, auditory, and olfactory. Let us examine poems illustrating each.

Rūmī (D.1414) portrays himself as seeing a tree and fire, paralleling Moses' divine Call, creating a spiritual encounter through "visual" and "auditory" perception. Rūmī sees himself like Moses, wandering in the wilderness for years, emphasizing the long and arduous journey of spiritual seeking. He compares himself to various figures: a ship in a desert, a snake transformed from Moses' staff, and a bird shaped by Jesus from clay, stone, iron, and fire, each representing his deep submission to God's Will. "Lord of lords, the Formless Form-Giver / What shape You draw upon me, You know, I know not" (Rūmī, D.1414:7).[7] This symbolic poem signifies Rūmī's complete surrender to God, embodying the essence of a mystical experience in which the self aligns and transforms according to the divine Will.

Illustrating "auditory imaginal perception," Rūmī (D.1690) metaphorically places his soul's ear at the heart's window, hearing profound spiritual truths without seeing the speaker: "I leaned my soul's ear upon the window of the heart / I heard countless

words, yet saw no lips" (Rūmī, D.1690:3),[8] underscoring the heart's central role in unveilings.

Further illustrating imaginal auditory perception, Rūmī reflects on a spiritual moment at dawn. He prays to be the divine Beloved's servant and hears an affirming "amen" from within his soul: "At dawn, I prayed for my soul to become the dust beneath his feet / I heard a cry of 'Amen' from within my soul, echoing my prayer" (D.1853:3).[9] This poem underscores humility and the soul's role in perceiving and interpreting divine messages.

Rūmī further explores the depths of mystical experiences through the lens of "inspirational unveiling," enriched by an olfactory imaginal dimension. He articulates the emergence of a form within his heart, accompanied by a smell, a non-physical fragrance that Rūmī employs to convey the essence of a sacred presence. This scent adds an imaginal layer to this heart-oriented, inspirational experience, illustrating how spiritual truths can be apprehended through a transcendent sensory perception. "Within our hearts, there is an image—how wondrous, whose likeness is it? / All these sweet fragrances, from whose garden do they come?" (Rūmī, D.467:3).[10]

2.3.3. Spiritual Unveiling

Visionary (*shuhūdī*) spiritual unveiling involves contemplating the fixed entities (realities) across various presences. However, this vision transcends mere form perception. The fixed entities are, on the one hand, the manifestation of divine Names and, on the other hand, the whatness or quiddities of corporeal and imaginal entities. As such, these entities are inherently beyond physical or imaginal, distinguishing this type of vision from the visual perception typical of imaginal unveiling.

Given the prominence of fixed entities in Sufism, a key question emerges: Does Rūmī address fixed entities? Although Rūmī does not explicitly employ this term, he often uses "meanings" (*maʿānī; singular: maʿnā or maʿnī*) as residing within the "world of meanings" (*ʿālam-ī maʿānī*). In both Arabic and Farsi, *maʿnā* or *maʿnī* denotes meaning, essence, reality, purpose, and interior. The inquiry then arises: Does Rūmī equate "meanings" with "fixed entities"? This question will be addressed at the end of this section, as it necessitates analyzing Rūmī's poems and deriving his insights directly.

Rūmī's poetry and teachings reveal a profound understanding of the world of meanings. He describes this world as eternal (M.II.23:16), which contrasts sharply with the transient, illusory nature of the physical world. Elsewhere, Rūmī (D.1590) explores the interplay between form and meaning. He suggests that the physical form is merely an outer layer, and the true nature of things lies in their meanings—a

relationship he illustrates as the "foam on the sea," where the foam designates the form and the sea represents the deeper meanings.[11] This understanding leads him to encourage transitioning from focusing on the physical to engaging with the meanings.

> I have been lost in meanings, and this loss is all the sweeter.
> I do not turn back to form; I have no regard for either world.
> I melt into meanings to take on its color,
> For meaning is like water, and I am like sugar dissolving in it.
> I have grown weary of form and turned toward [divine] Attributes,
> And each Attribute calls to me, saying, "Enter here, for I am the emerald sea."
> Rūmī (D.1590:2-3;10)[12]

Rūmī emphasizes the unity of all things in the world of meanings, where there are no distinctions or individualities (M.I:684-691). He (2006, ch.9) further elucidates that meanings, though lacking physical form, are discernible through their physical manifestations.

Rūmī describes his spiritual journey as originating from the world of meanings (D.1667:10; D.810). He sees his existence as a gradual return to this source. He describes himself as a "particle" from the "mine of reality," gradually returning to this source. "I am like a particle from the mine of reality / Particle by particle, to that mine, I return steadily" (D.1667:10)[13] This metaphor conveys that humans descend from and return to the realm of realities—implying an ongoing spiritual evolution and union process. The underlying assumption in Rūmī's assertion is that in the circle of existence, the human being's reality is created by the emanation of the divine Essence through Names, forming their meanings, and in return, following the transcendence of the human will and qualities, the human being transcends their engendered existence, returning to the world of meanings and uniting with the Divine.

How does one traverse the world of meanings? Rūmī frequently asserts that one journeys to this world through divine love and the instrumental role of the heart:

> Love is an ocean, its waves unseen,
> The water of this sea is fire, its waves are pearls.
> Its pearls are mysteries, and in every direction,
> It opens the path for the seeker towards meaning.
> (Rūmī, D.3126:2-3)[14]

> My heart, like a star, spent a night in contemplation,
> Wandering through the heavens of meaning.
> When it entered the constellation of lovers,
> A celestial moon revealed itself from the skies of the soul.

As that moon ascended, it filled my gaze,
Its heavenly light outgrew the bounds of the earth.
My heart, torn to pieces by love's charge,
Each fragment bearing a sign of Him.
(Rūmī, D.1096:2-5)[15]

Love is the central theme in Rūmī's works, profoundly influencing the inward and psychological states of the seeker—though as an experiential dimension of Sufism, love defies adequate explanation. For Rūmī, the purpose of discussing love is not to define it but to awaken a desire for it within the hearts of his audience. Love is instrumental in reaching divine unity; a tool that needs no argument or justification, as it is its own justification; it is a cure for worldly difficulties and an essential component of the spiritual path (Rūmī 2006, 103–107; D.504:17).

Rūmī conceives love as a cosmic force that drives the natural world towards absolute Beauty and sustains life itself—an ineffable "cosmic feeling," a "vision" of becoming one with the universe's spirit. For Rūmī, love does not just guide the seeker to "contemplate" the intelligible Beauty—which was the case for Plato—but to "partake" in the endless life through transforming into a "living entity"—human *meaning*—in the divine Beloved (ʿAbd al-Hakim 1996, 49-59).

Rūmī consistently emphasizes transcending the reason and material world's confines, symbolized by the "six dimensions." Divine secrets and the treasures of love, Rūmī (T.XX; D.811:8) notes, are ineffable and beyond space. "Reason says, 'The six dimensions are the limit, and beyond them, there is no path' / Love responds, 'There is a path, and I have traveled it many times'" (Rūmī, D.132:2).[16] Rūmī (D.3088:14-15) encourages seekers to go beyond the spatial dimensions by using the heart to rid themselves of worldly distractions and individual existence. These poems underscore love's and the heart's central role in Rūmī's epistemology

For Rūmī, the heart is more than a physical entity; it is the spiritual center of the human being. Through the heart, one encounters divine love and starts the path toward the world of meanings, leading to a transformative quest for knowledge, spiritual awakening, and unity with the Divine.

In sum, juxtaposing the poems analyzed in this section, it becomes clear that Rūmī constructs his mystical epistemology on the foundational roles of love—as a guiding and transformative force—and the heart, which provides the grounds for experiencing this love.

Let us return to examining unveiling types. In addition to unveilings that involve contemplating forms, there is a distinct type of spiritual unveiling where no form is

perceived. This "formless unveiling" reveals spiritual realities and truths of the Unseen—manifesting realities on different levels, culminating in the journeyer connecting to the Presence of God's Knowledge, representing the pinnacle of spiritual unveiling. Rūmī's poetry frequently highlights the ineffable nature of some such experiences.

Rūmī marvels at an ineffable mystical experience. He is astounded by the arrival of something that defies containment and questions how he can express it. He then halts, referring to the experience as a secret, underscoring its ineffability and the sacredness of its mystery.

> Everyone is in wonder, but my wonder is this:
> How can what that cannot be contained, come into the midst?
> I will stop, though its meaning is a secret I won't reveal,
> For what need have we for words when the essence of expression arrives?
> (Rūmī, D.806:12-13)[17]

Explaining another unveiling, Rūmī navigates various themes of spiritual awakening. Initially, he experiences an imaginal unveiling from the Divine, advising him to rise above sorrow, agony, and joy and to disregard fears of malice and envy, underscoring the triviality of earthly concerns. In the final verses, Rūmī refers to the indescribable nature of this experience, which even the Universal Intellect—the faculty epitomizing knowledge—fails to comprehend.

> I said [to God], "I am stuck for a few days in this clay and water,
> Bound by fear and hope, awaiting my call to arrive."
> He replied, "You are not in this clay and water; it is but your shadow here.
> My soul-captivating artistry will carry you beyond this world."
> When my Beloved spoke these words, reason flew from my head.
> The rest of the tale, even the Universal Intellect cannot grasp, what of me?
> (Rūmī, D.1824:12-14)[18]

Further, Rūmī (D.2219) points to the ineffability of an experience using a dialogue with love. Rūmī, amidst frenzy, meets love, which advises him to accept and remain silent about things beyond understanding. Love whispers secrets but asks Rūmī not to utter them verbally: "'I will whisper hidden secrets into your ear,' love said / 'Just nod your head in assent—say nothing except with your head'" (D.2219:5). Rūmī is then baffled perceiving a strange entity:

> A moon, a soul-like entity appeared on the path of the heart,
> How delicate is the journey on this path of the heart—say nothing.
> I said, "O heart, what kind of moon is this?" The heart gestured,

"This is beyond your understanding—move on, say nothing."
I asked, "Is this the face of an angel or a human?"
It replied, "This is neither angel nor human—say nothing."
(Rūmī, D.2219:4-6).[19]

These lines stand among the most enigmatic verses in the *Dīvān*. Rūmī describes an "entity" that is neither human nor angel, subtly suggesting a "personhood" in what he perceives. This entity cannot be labeled as a mere "divine manifestation," as Rūmī acknowledges its *personhood*, yet it does not belong to the known categories of beings. What other kind of personhood could exist? Who or what has Rūmī encountered? The poem remains ambiguous.

The poem navigates the unexplainable aspects of certain spiritual experiences and the limits of verbal expression. It advocates for accepting the unknown and discovering the truth through quiet introspection and inner acceptance.

Rūmī narrates an experience where his soul is revitalized eternally by divine knowledge, depicted as "wine" by God, the "Subsistent Cupbearer." This knowledge elevates his soul to "everlasting life," transcending the tangible and imaginative to, it seems, meanings in God's Knowledge, as it is the *only* realm where the human being becomes eternal. "When the Subsistent Cupbearer offered wine to the soul / It gained eternal life and began to [truly] exist." As Rūmī nears the climax of this experience, he suddenly ceases to elaborate, alluding to divine disapproval: "Say no more of the secret, for the Beloved, in anger / Has begun to look at me with displeasure."[20] This deliberate pause suggests that in such experiences verbal expression must defer to silence, highlighting the ineffability of some truths.

2.4. "Meanings" Equate "Fixed Entities"?

Let us address the question posed earlier: Are the fixed entities (*al-aʿyān al-thābita*) in Sufi metaphysics and meanings (maʿānī; singular: maʿnā or maʿnī) in Rūmī's works the same? Some scholars dismiss this equation, arguing that Rūmī does not use the fixed entities; however, some assert that the two concepts align too much to ignore.

The *al-aʿyān al-thābita* is a term meticulously developed by Ibn ʿArabī and used by Sufis like Ḥaydar Āmulī. In contrast, Rūmī avoids using this term in favor of "meanings." This difference in terminology is not arbitrary; it underscores a deliberate divergence in how eternal realities are conceptualized and communicated. While fixed entities are articulated precisely within a doctrinal framework accessible primarily to the learned of Sufi metaphysics, Rūmī's use of meanings reflects an expansiveness inviting universal engagement through metaphor and imagery.

This divergence in terminology directly informs the accessibility of each concept. The intellectual abstraction of fixed entities renders them challenging to grasp without a foundational knowledge of Sufi metaphysics. Conversely, Rūmī's meanings, conveyed through evocative poetry, offer a universal resonance that transcends metaphysical training. The imagery of meanings as the "sea" beneath the transient "foam" of physical forms invites even the uninitiated to contemplate deeper realities through spiritual insight and love.

Despite these differences, significant alignments exist between Rūmī's meanings and the fixed entities of Sufism, particularly in their ontological and metaphysical implications:

Both concepts affirm an eternal and immutable realm. Fixed entities exist as intelligible quiddities in divine Knowledge, defining the realities of all things. Similarly, Rūmī's meanings embody eternal truths in stark contrast to the transient physical world. In both frameworks, these eternal realities transcend temporality, grounding existence in the divine Knowledge.

Fixed entities embody the divine Names, representing determinations of the undetermined Essence. Rūmī's meanings, likewise, reflect Names. Both terms affirm that Names are the metaphysical scaffolding of existence.

Both frameworks assert the transcendence of these realities. Fixed entities exist solely in the divine Knowledge, surpassing physical and imaginal realms. Similarly, Rūmī's meanings are immaterial and discernible only through spiritual insight, underscoring their transcendence over material and imaginal domains.

Engaging with these realities is central to spiritual unveiling. In Sufi metaphysics, contemplating fixed entities facilitates visionary insight into existence's deeper truths. For Rūmī, the spiritual journey entails dissolving into meanings and accessing divine truths through love. Both facilitate a higher knowledge and existential reality.

Finally, both fixed entities and meanings are the metaphysical origin and ultimate goal of human existence. Fixed entities represent the quiddities from which human realities emanate, guiding the soul's return to divine unity. Rūmī frames this journey as driven by divine love, where human existence originates in meanings and culminates in unity with the Beloved in the world of meanings.

In conclusion, while the terminology and communicative strategies diverge, the shared metaphysical underpinnings highlight a profound alignment between these two constructs. The fixed entities articulate an intricate metaphysical system grounded in divine Knowledge, appealing to those steeped in Sufi doctrine. Rūmī's meanings, however, achieve a universality that resonates across doctrinal boundaries.

This interplay of divergence and convergence underscores the complementary nature of these frameworks, enriching the spiritual discourse by addressing both intellectual and experiential dimensions of reality.

The comparative analysis of fixed entities and meanings reveals a dynamic tension between precision and accessibility, doctrinal rigor, and poetic universality. Together, they offer a holistic perspective on eternal realities, balancing metaphysical abstraction with spiritual immediacy. Such a synthesis reflects the multifaceted nature of the Divine, inviting engagement through intellectual contemplation and heartfelt experience.

2.5. Does Rūmī embrace or reject rationality in attaining divine knowledge? Distinction between "Partial Reason" and "Sacred Intellect" in Rūmī's Epistemology

This section examines Rūmī's view toward reason. Does Rūmī reject or embrace rationality in attaining divine knowledge? Let us examine this key question.

For Rūmī (M.IV.1497-1526),[21] true knowledge goes beyond empirical sciences or worldly knowledge and resides in spiritual awareness. Pursuing purely material or intellectual achievements lacks "intrinsic spiritual value" unless integrated with a higher awareness. Rūmī often criticizes those focusing solely on secular knowledge, such as rational philosophy, without considering a spiritual dimension. While these pursuits may be intellectually stimulating, they do not lead one closer to spiritual enlightenment and may leave one feeling "soulless" and detached from a higher purpose. This highlights that knowledge lacks completeness without spiritual foundations, stressing the importance of harmonizing material understanding with spiritual insight.

Rūmī (M.III:2527-2532) criticizes philosophers, stating that they are confined to reason alone, which he likens to a shell. However, one who attains the real intellect—the core that surpasses reason—achieves purity. In this discussion, Rūmī uses *ʿaql* to refer to "reason" ("intellect") and *ʿaql-i ʿaql* for the "real intellect." The second term literally means "reason of reason" or "intellect of intellect" (which will be examined further). According to Rūmī, reason generates book after book, signified by "books being blackened," not providing pure certainty of the truth, but the real intellect, which transcends books and sheds its light like the moon into the heart and soul, grants certainty.[22]

> The philosopher is bound by reason's hold,
> But the purified heart is the king of real intellect.
> Your real intellect is the core, your reason is just the shell,

The animal's stomach always seeks the shell.
When the shell of reason presents a hundred proofs,
The Universal Intellect takes steps with certainty.
Reason fills the books entirely with black ink,
But the real intellect enlightens the horizons.
It is free from black and white,
The light of its moon shines in the heart and soul.
(Rūmī, M.III:2527-2532)[23]

Let us examine intellect more closely (Muraviji Sabzivari 2022, 21-25). In humans, intellect or reason is generally divided into partial and sacred. "Partial intellect/reason," or *ʿaql-i juzʿī*, is the copy of the Universal Intellect, or *Nous*. The partial reason is divided into untrained and trained. The partial-untrained reason is possessed by uneducated people and used daily. In contrast, partial-trained reason develops through learning and practice, emerging in philosophers, mystics, scientists, merchants, craftsmen, and others. Generally, the term partial reason refers to this trained type. Given its limitations, this reason must be subordinated to the Universal Intellect, which acts as its moderator, guide, and source of knowledge.

The second type is "sacred intellect," or *ʿaql-i qudsī*—often called the "primordial or divine intellect." Unlike partial reason, which primarily focuses on the body, the sacred intellect manages the body and soul. Per Islamic metaphysics, prophets have been sent to awaken this intellect in human beings, striving to subordinate human desires and partial reason to the sacred intellect.

The sacred intellect is the human counterpart of the Universal Intellect and enables humans to receive knowledge from it. By real intellect—or *ʿaql-i ʿaql* (intellect of intellect)—Rūmī refers to the sacred intellect, not the Universal Intellect. In the poem, he (M.III:2528) states, "Your real intellect is the core, your reason is just the shell." He (M.III:2529) then adds, "The Universal Intellect takes steps with certainty," meaning it operates with absolute certainty. This line suggests that the sacred intellect, too, attains certainty when it connects with the universal intellect.[24]

Rūmī further underscores the distinction between partial and sacred intellect (though not using these exact terms). He (M.IV:1960-1968) delineates the intellect into two categories: acquired reason (or intellect)—learned in school from books, teachers, and reflection. And a divine intellect, a divine grace, a spring that emerges from within the soul. Rūmī explains that while acquired reason may make you more privileged than others, it also burdens you with the responsibility to retain it. In contrast, the second intellect provides immediate knowledge that does not become outdated or corrupted. Rūmī compares the acquired reason to streams travelling

through various paths to reach an individual, which can be interrupted before reaching its destination. Conversely, the second intellect springs from within, continuously flowing without interruption. Therefore, Rūmī advises seeking the intellect that originates from within.

> Reason has two kinds, the first is acquired,
> That you learn, like a child in school.
> From books and teachers, from thought and memory,
> From meanings and sciences.
> Your intellect grows beyond others,
> Yet you remain burdened by its retention.
> You become the preserver of a tablet of knowledge through cycles and revolutions,
> Yet a preserved tablet becomes one who transcends this.
> The other intellect is a gift from God,
> Its source lies within the soul.
> When the water of wisdom springs from the heart,
> It does not spoil, nor age, nor turn yellow.
> And if the spring's path is blocked, what sorrow?
> It continuously flows from within, moment by moment.
> The acquired intellect is like streams,
> That flow into a house from the streets.
> If its waterway is blocked, it becomes helpless,
> Seek the spring from within yourself.
> (Rūmī, M.IV:1960-1968)[25]

In conclusion, Rūmī highlights the significance of the sacred intellect. He underscores partial reason's limitations in discerning deeper truths and achieving genuine spiritual insight through the two poems examined. He emphasizes the necessity of transcending the ego and bodily desires, advocating for the cultivation of the sacred intellect—a divine faculty surpassing the confines of partial reason, providing a connection to the Universal Intellect, and, thus, continuous and immediate divine wisdom and certainty. Rūmī's criticism of philosophers relying solely on partial reason underscores his belief that true understanding and enlightenment come from the sacred intellect and the purified heart. By awakening and nurturing this intellect, individuals can attain a higher level of consciousness and spiritual fulfilment, aligning themselves with the Universal Intellect.

Since Rūmī's epistemology relies on the heart and intellect, a crucial question arises: How does Rūmī distinguish the heart and intellect? Rūmī's writings do not clearly distinguish between the heart,[26] spirit,[27] and intellect. Sometimes, he uses

them synonymously; however, as Chittick (1983, 40) points out, "Each of these pertains to man's meaning [, reality,] as opposed to his form. Perhaps," adds Chittick, "the spirit is the broadest in scope, embracing the whole of man's inward reality; the term 'intellect' lays stress upon the spirit's power of discernment; and the word 'heart' emphasizes consciousness and especially God-consciousness."

Given this explanation, it becomes clear that in Rūmī's perspective, although the intellect and heart are used interchangeably, the intellect is more concerned with answering the "what" of spiritual truth, while the heart serves as an instrument for their "manifestation" and "realization." Because Rūmī prioritizes unveilings' transformative aspect rather than their whatness, it is more accurate to say that Rūmī builds his epistemology on the instrumental role of the heart and the transformative power of love.

Rūmī (2006, 59-60) asserts that rational knowledge is fleeting and lacks the enduring impact of mystical experience. The joy from intellectual reasoning is short-lived, unlike the profound and lasting joy from directly experiencing God. For Rūmī, the philosopher's knowledge is inferior because it is secondhand and temporary, while the mystic's knowledge is firsthand, present, immediate, and transformative.

Furthermore, Rūmī (M.V.2772-2750) notes that intellectuals master various disciplines—including astronomy and philosophy—but despite their intellectual endeavors, they remain oblivious to the genuine truth of divine love. Love, *jealous of their divided attention*, conceals itself from them.[28] "Pass by this, heed my advice / View lovers through the lens of love" (Rūmī, M.V.2768).[29] Rūmī encourages us to adopt a perspective of love rather than partial reason when considering those "engulfed by divine love," highlighting that love surpasses mere rational comprehension and imparts a more profound wisdom inaccessible to philosophy, and that true insight and enlightenment stem from the heart, not solely from partial reason.

> Those who split hairs with their wit,
> have grasped the science of the skies to the core,
> Knowledge of the occult and of magic and philosophy,
> Though they fail to recognize the truth.
> They strove as far as they could, surpassing all their peers,
> Love, jealous, drew away from them; thus their sun disappeared.
> Who sees stars by day, when the sun withdraws its face?
> Pass by this, heed my advice: view lovers through the lens of love.
> (Rūmī, M.V:2762-2766)[30]

Another poem (M.II:2931-2954) further clarifies Rūmī's stance towards philosophy. He states that scholars in different disciplines follow different paths in describing the hidden truth, but these groups are neither *absolutely* right nor wrong, highlighting that the right cannot be distinguished without the wrong.

> Just as each person, in their understanding,
> Describes the unseen with attributes.
> A philosopher explains it one way,
> A theologian criticizes his explanation.
> Another mocks them both,
> Yet another feigns understanding.
> Each offers these signs from the path,
> So it seems they are from that realm.
> Know this truth: they are not entirely right,
> Yet this herd is not completely astray.
> For without truth, falsehood cannot appear,
> The fool buys the counterfeit by the scent of gold.
> (Rūmī, M.II:2931-2954)[31]

Thus, Rūmī emphasizes that different paths offer partial truths. Philosophy is no exception then; it, too, offers truth, albeit partially.

Rūmī suggests that the profound and intoxicating experience of divine love and ecstasy he describes could overwhelm philosophical reasoning—a selflessness indicated by the philosopher's philosophy being "drowned." Direct experience of the divine is attained through the selflessness brought by divine love. This heart-centered perspective reflects a recurring theme in Rūmī's work, where he often uses the metaphor of "wine" (*sharāb*, *bādih*) to symbolize divine love and its intoxicating effect, which represents the self-transcendence and selflessness this love causes. Reaching this state is so immense and transformative that Rūmī—often modest and servantly speaking—finds majestic grandeur and has an insatiable yearning for the seas of this wine.

> Close the door, for we are lovers of this tavern,
> Pour that soul's wine, for we are light-hearted.
> Rise, nimble cupbearer, bind your waist,
> By God, we've come from a long, distant journey.
> Unseal the joyful wineskin, for out of envy for your palm,
> From Venus' hand, we've taken not a single cup despite a hundred pleas.
> Close the door and from mercy, open the hidden door,
> Remedy through the heavy jug, we are all intoxicated.

From that jug, give us the Day of Resurrection ablution, cleansing us of temptations,
Since we have been companions from the start.
We were all asleep, you kicked us awake,
We leaped up drunkenly in this uproar.
If giving us wine on an empty stomach is not your rule,
Then give anyway, we are the angel of death of this rule.
Let the philosopher drink this so his philosophy drowns,
He thought that we were in logical error.
We are that whale for whom the sea is but a cup,
We are not men of bread stew, lentils, and food.
Come, silence, let go of benefits and merits,
For from the remnants of your cup, we gain endless benefits.
(Rūmī, D.1631:8-9)[32]

To conclude, Rūmī neither entirely dismisses nor fully embraces reason, instead supporting some aspects while criticizing others. Rūmī champions the development of the sacred intellect, which transcends mere reason and links individuals to divine Wisdom. He esteems divine knowledge, gained through heart purification, which enables the reception of spiritual truths directly from the Universal Intellect. However, Rūmī criticizes the dependence on partial reason, which is preoccupied with worldly sciences and cannot grasp deeper spiritual realities. He believes philosophers focusing solely on rational and worldly sciences fail to understand the profound truths of divine wisdom, love, and ecstasy, missing the ultimate reality beyond rational comprehension. Rūmī regards rational knowledge as fleeting and inferior to the transformative, firsthand experience of divine love, prioritizing mystical experience over intellectual reasoning, which he sees as temporary and less impactful.

Rūmī's emphasis on spirituality's primacy and reason's limitations mirrors the broader Sufi perspective that prioritizes direct divine experience over intellectual reasoning. Rūmī's stance is credible given the personal and introspective pursuit of divine knowledge in Sufism. However, interestingly, unlike some rigid Sufis, Rūmī does not entirely reject reason, but instead uses it instrumentally. This raises an important question: What benefits can reason provide in attaining divine knowledge?

While reason has limitations in accessing divine knowledge, it remains a valuable tool for deeply comprehending and interpreting religious texts and mystical experiences. Reason is crucial for understanding the nature of things, and its integration with mystical knowledge can yield richer insights. It sharpens the human mind, providing a lens for systematically analyzing texts and spiritual experiences. Simultaneously, spirituality fosters a deeper connection with the Divine, enabling

individuals to transcend the rational mind's constraints and experience the Divine directly (Rahbari Ghazani and Topaloğlu 2023, 25). This integration of philosophy and mysticism resonates more with today's world than in Rūmī's times.

3. Evaluation and Conclusion

This paper has explored the multifaceted nature of mystical experiences through their terminologies, characteristics, and implications, interpreting Rūmī's illustrations of these experiences through Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī's Sufi classification.

This paper's thesis asserts that Rūmī's epistemology is grounded in love as the transformative force guiding the seeker, the heart as the center of divine manifestation and spiritual connection, and the sacred intellect as the faculty bridging human understanding with the Universal Intellect and divine Wisdom beyond rationality while recognizing rationality's limited yet beneficial role. Rūmī conceives mystical experiences as avenues for spiritual "transformation" and "knowledge," surpassing empirical, linguistic, subjective, and cultural constraints. These experiences extend beyond the mere transmission of knowledge characteristic of rationalist philosophies, fundamentally transforming the seeker's existence. Additionally, Rūmī's poetic insights and Sufi metaphysical constructs add a dimension that blends artistic, theological, mystical, and philosophical perspectives, distinguishing it from strictly analytic epistemological inquiries.

Rūmī's epistemology of mystical experience types aligns with the discussion in section 2.1. Mystical experiences involve a transcendent interaction with reality that surpasses dualistic perceptions, complementing Rūmī's emphasis on love and the heart, where these elements facilitate a profound, non-dualistic unity with the Divine. Additionally, ineffability—a key characteristic of mystical experiences highlighted by William James—mirrors Rūmī's portrayal of these experiences as profoundly transformative and inexpressible, capable of conveying truths that escape conventional verbal expression. For Rūmī, the ineffability of some unveilings warrants their preservation within the human heart's sanctum. Such sublime experiences merit safeguarding from the uninitiated. Rūmī's constant call for silence is a request for profound, inward divine engagement, where spiritual enigmas are internally discerned rather than outwardly delineated.

Āmulī's unveiling classification explains the acquisition of knowledge that transcends ordinary understanding and aligns closely with Rūmī's descriptions. Rūmī's insights into imaginal and spiritual unveilings reflect Āmulī's distinctions: imaginal unveilings involve perceptions through the imaginal senses, while spiritual

unveilings provide more direct, non-sensory insights into divine truths, some of which are ineffable. Āmulī's Sufi perspective also emphasizes the role of the heart in achieving deeper knowledge and closeness to the Divine, resonating with Rūmī's poetic expressions where the heart is central to the mystical journey.

However, despite the similarities, subtle differences in Rūmī's approach compared to Āmulī's framework offer the potential for a complementary perspective. The two Sufis' terminology differs significantly, as they employ distinct names to describe various types of mystical experiences. This distinction is particularly evident in Rūmī's use of "meanings" and Āmulī's adoption of the "fixed entities," a term introduced by Ibn ʿArabī. Beyond these nominal distinctions, their perspectives together form a holistic view that bridges abstract metaphysical concepts Āmulī uses with practical spiritual insights that Rūmī illustrates.

Importantly, Āmulī provides a more terminological and systematic examination of mystical experiences; however, Rūmī does not aim to provide a structured classification. Instead, he uses literary language and poetic devices—like allegories, metaphors, symbols, and personification—engaging the readers' reason, emotions, and imagination, making technical and abstract concepts simpler, more personal, practical, and experiential. Rūmī seems to be emphasizing mystical experiences' "transformative power," particularly how they shape the seeker's inner life and spiritual journey in a practical manner rather than providing a theoretical examination and classification *clarifying* mystical experiences' nature. Our poet, unlike analytic philosophers, encourages the reader *to experience* unveilings and *see* spiritual transformation *themselves*. Together, the two thinkers' accounts offer a detailed, systematic framework for mystical experiences and vivid, poetic representations that emphasize the transformative power of these experiences, making them accessible to a broader audience. Āmulī provides a roadmap, while Rūmī inspires seekers *to take steps*.

This roadmap and inspiration together offer contemporary readers and scholars not only a theoretical lens to analyze various types of mystical experiences but also a poetic, motivational, and transformative voice, encouraging them to embark on their own personal journeys.

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Notes

[1] Concerning the characteristics of mystical experiences, William James (1993) outlines four criteria: ineffability, noetic quality, transiency, and passivity. He describes ineffability as the profound and often overwhelming nature of mystical experiences, which are beyond the scope of ordinary language. These experiences provide insights or revelations that cannot be accessed through standard perception or reasoning, highlighting their noetic quality. They offer a direct understanding of profound truths or realities, which are typically fleeting and occur without the individual's active pursuit, emphasizing a sense of passivity where the experiencer feels acted upon by a higher power or transcendent reality rather than being the initiator of the experience.

Complementing this framework, W. T. Stace (1960, 85-123) adds a crucial dimension to the understanding of mystical experiences: the unity or oneness, which he categorizes into "extrovert" and "introvert" experiences. The extrovert type pertains to the perception of unity in the external world, a state where all distinctions blur, leading to a sense of oneness with the universe. Conversely, introverted mystical experiences entail an inward journey, profoundly probing the self while disconnecting from the sensory realm. These experiences foster a unity with an ineffable reality. Unlike extroverted experiences, they transcend external diversity, aiming for pure consciousness.

[2] All Quranic translations in this paper are sourced from Nasr et al. (2015). To avoid repetition, only the chapter and verse numbers are cited.

[3] Let us examine immutable entities (Ibn ʿArabī 2006, 524; Chittick 2019, 20-24; Muraviji Sabzivari 2022, 32-38). In Ibn ʿArabī's metaphysics, immutable entities, or *al-aʿyān al-thābita*, are intelligible forms that arise from the undetermined Essence of God becoming determined (entified, becoming thingish). The divine Essence's undetermined aspect is the stage of "Absolute Existence," the "Absolute

Oneness" (*aḥadiyya*), in which there is no differentiation and distinction and which cannot be named and thus limited. It is referred to with the Arabic pronoun *Hū*, or He—which does not accompany any determination.

The Absolute Existence becomes determined through particular divine Names in God's Knowledge (Throne, or *ʿArsh*), a process called the "most holy emanation" (*al-fayż al-aqdas*). This determination forms the second stage in the Essence called the stage of "Unicity" (*wāḥidiyya*) or "Divinity" (*ulūhiyya*) or the "World of Divine Names." The immutable entities are the intelligible forms of divine Names in God's Knowledge; in other words, they are the product of the first determination, the most holy emanation.

Through another determination, "sacred emanation" (*al-fayż al-muqaddas*), the immutable entities are manifested as corporeal existents, forming the cosmos. In other words, the immutable entities represent the "whatness" or "quiddity" of corporeal existents. Thus, the corporal existents are the actualized forms of divine Names.

[4] The intellective faculty is spiritual, often called the "holy light." Intuition is an array of this luminescent faculty.

[5] This paper employs abbreviations for references to Rūmī's works to avoid repetition: "D" refers to the *ghazal*s in the *Dīvān*, "T" represents *Tarjīʿāt* within the *Dīvān*, and "M" denotes the *Masnavī*. All *Dīvān* references are cited from (Rūmī 2020), while all *Masnavī* references are from (Rūmī 2021).

Rūmī (T.XXII:5):

وحی زنبور عسل کرد جهان را شیرین

[6] Rūmī (M.I.I.79:16):

پس محل وحی گردد گوش جان / وحی چه بود گفتنی از حس نهان

گوش جان و چشم جان جز این حس است / گوش عقل و گوش ظن زین مفلس است

All poem translations in this paper are our work, with the term "own translation" excluded to prevent repetitiveness. While maintaining meaning while translating, adjustments are occasionally made to the wording to enhance suitability for the English language.

[7] Rūmī (D.1414:7):

خداوند خداوندان و صورت ساز بی‌صورت / چه صورت می کشی بر من تو دانی من نمی‌دانم

[8] Rūmī (D.1690:3).

من بر دریچه دل بس گوش جان نهادم / چندان سخن شنیدم اما دو لب ندیدم

[9] Rūmī (D.1853:3):

سحرگاهی دعا کردم که جانم خاک پای او / شنیدم نعره آمین ز جان اندر دعای من

[10] Rūmī (D.467:3):

در دل ما صورتیست ای عجب آن نقش کیست / وین همه بوهای خوش از سوی بستان کیست

[11] Rūmī often refers to the world of meanings as the "sea of meanings," implying vastness and depth of this world, stating that hidden truths become evident in this sea (D.2704:11), as the "wines of knowledge," where he portrays the Divine as the "Cupbearer of meanings" (D.234; G.2732:1), dispensing the wine of knowledge. This metaphor underscores this world's illuminating and transformative nature.

[12] Rūmī (D.1590:2-3;10):

در معانی گم شدستم همچنین شیرینتر است / سوی صورت بازنایم در دو عالم ننگرم

در معانی می گدازم تا شوم همرنگ او / زانک معنی همچو آب و من در او چون شکرم

من ز صورت سیر گشتم آمدم سوی صفات / هر صفت گوید درآ این جا که بحر اخضرم

[13] Rūmī (D.1667:10):

من چو از کان معانی یک جوم / همچنین جو جو بدان کان می روم

[14] Rūmī (D.3126:2-3):

عشق دریاییست و موجش ناپدید / آب دریا آتش و موجش گهر
گوهرش اسرار و هر سویی از او / سالکی را سوی معنی راه بر

[15] Rūmī (D.1096:2-5):

دلم چون ستاره شبی در نظاره / به هر برج می‌شد به چرخ معانی
چو در برج عشاق پا درنهاد او / سری کرد ماهی ز افلاک جانی
چو آن مه برآمد به چشمش درآمد / زمین درنگنجد از آن آسمانی
دلم پاره پاره بشد عشق باره / که هر پاره من دهد زو نشانی

[16] Rūmī (D.132:2):

عقل گوید شش جهت حدست و بیرون راه نیست / عشق گوید راه هست و رفته‌ام من بارها

[17] Rūmī (D.806:12-13):

هر کسی در عجبی و عجب من اینست / کو نگنجد به میان چون به میان می‌آید
بس کنم گر چه که رمزست بیانش نکنم / خود بیان را چه کنیم جان بیان می‌آید

[18] Rūmī (D.1824:12-14):

گفتم روزکی دو سه مانده‌ام در آب و گل / بسته خوفم و رجا تا برسد صلای من
گفت در آب و گل نِه‌ای سایه توست این طرف / بَرَد تو را از این جهان صنعت جان ربای من
زینج بگفت دلبرم عقل پرید از سرم / باقی قصه عقل کل بو نَبَرَد چه جای من

[19] Rūmī (D.2219:3-9):

دوش دیوانه شدم عشق مرا دید و بگفت / آمدم نعره مزن جامه مدر هیچ مگو
گفتم ای عشق! من از چیز دگر می‌ترسم / گفت آن چیز دگر نیست دگر هیچ مگو
من به گوش تو سخن‌های نهان خواهم گفت / سر بجنبان که بلی جز که به سر هیچ مگو
قمری جان‌صفتی در ره دل پیدا شد / در ره دل چه لطیف است سفر هیچ مگو
گفتم ای دل چه مه‌ست این دل اشارت می‌کرد / که نه اندازه توست این بگذر هیچ مگو
گفتم این روی فرشته‌ست عجب یا بشر است؟ / گفت این غیر فرشته‌ست و بشر هیچ مگو
گفتم این چیست بگو زیر و زبر خواهم شد / گفت می‌باش چنین زیر و زبر هیچ مگو

[20] Rūmī (D.508:10-11):

ساقی باقی چو به جان باده داد / عمر ابد یافت و بزستن گرفت
بیش مگو راز که دلبر به خشم / جانب من کژ نگرستن گرفت

[21] Rūmī (M.IV:1515-15-17):

Weaving golden-threaded garments,
Finding treasures in the depths of the sea,
Intricacies of geometry,
Or astronomy, medicine, and philosophy,
Belonging to this very world,
They do not lead to seventh heaven.

جامه‌های زرکشی را بافتن / درها از قعر دریا یافتن
خرده‌کاریهای علم هندسه / یا نجوم و علم طب و فلسفه
که تعلق با همین دنیاستش / ره به هفتم آسمان بر نیستش

[22] Rūmī (M.III:2434-2439; 2546-2569) asserts that those who follow their desires cannot differentiate between right and wrong. Only those who behead their *nafs*, ego (lower self), can make this distinction. Most people, however, follow their ego. Rūmī illustrates the deceitfulness of the ego, likening it to a

cunning enemy with multiple tongues that presents false arguments and appears pious while concealing harmful intentions. Our poet cautions against trusting the ego's outward displays of piety, highlighting its hypocritical nature and stressing the need for divine guidance to overcome its treachery.

[23] Rūmī (M.III:2527-2532)

بند معقولات آمد فلسفی / شهسوار عقل عقل آمد صفی
عقل عقلت مغز و عقل تست پوست / معدهٔ حیوان همیشه پوست‌جوست
چونک قشر عقل صد برهان دهد / عقل کل کی گام بی ایقان نهد
عقل دفترها کند یکسر سیاه / عقل عقل آفاق دارد پر ز ماه
از سیاهی و سپیدی فارغست / نور ماهش بر دل و جان بازغس

[24] Why not consider what Rūmī calls the "real intellect" as the Universal Intellect? In Sufism, the Universal Intellect is a "cosmic reality," which is not accessible to everyone, even if they awaken their sacred intellect, but the sacred intellect is available to any who awakens it. Now, when Rūmī says, "Your real intellect is the core, your reason is just the shell," the term "your" is employed to individualize the intellect, a characterization that does not suit the Universal Intellect.

[25] Rūmī (M.IV:1960-1968)

عقلْ دو عقل است اَوَّل مَکْسَبی / که دَر آموزی چو در مَکْتَب صَبی
از کتاب و اوْستاد و فکر و ذِکْر / از مَعانی وَزْ عُلومِ خوب و بِکْر
عقلِ تو اَفْزون شود بر دیگران / لیک تو باشی زِ حِفْظِ آن گِران
لوحِ حافِظ باشی اَنْدَر دَوْر و گشت / لوحِ مَحْفوظ اوست کو زین دَر گُذشت
عقلِ دیگر بَخشِش یَزدان بُوَد / چَشمهٔ آن در میانِ جان بُوَد
چون زِ سینه آبِ دانش جوش کرد / نه شود گنده نه دیرینه نه زَرد
وَزْ رَهِ نَبْعَش بُوَد بَسته چه غَم؟ / کو هَمی‌جوشَد زِ خانه دَم به دَم
عقلِ تَحصیلی مِثالِ جوی‌ها / کان رَوَد در خانه‌یی از کوی‌ها
راه آبَش بَسته شُد شد بی‌نَوا / از دَرونِ خویشتْ جو چَشمه را

[26] As William Chittick (1983, 37) explains:

> The ultimate center of man's consciousness, his inmost reality, his "meaning" as known by God, is called the "heart" (*dil*, *qalb*). As for the lump of flesh within the breast, that is the shadow or outermost skin of the heart. Between this heart and that heart are infinite levels of consciousness and self-realization. As man's inmost reality, the heart is always with God. But only the prophets and saints, who are called the "Possessors of the Heart" have achieved God-consciousness, whereby they are truly and actually aware of God at the center of their being. Most men are veiled by innumerable levels of dross and darkness, so that in practice the center of their consciousness or "heart" is their animal spirit or ego.

The heart can see, hear, and experience other sensations, supported by Quranic references such as 22:46. The bodily senses are copies of the spiritual senses belonging to the heart. Unity between these two sets of senses is achieved when the covers separating the bodily and spiritual senses are removed. Consequently, the soul can contemplate inner meanings and truths within its essence. This explanation illustrates why the heart is central to Rūmī's mystical epistemology.

[27] The Qur'an asserts that the essence of the spirit remains largely beyond human comprehension. The Qur'an informs Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), "They ask thee about the Spirit. Say, 'The Spirit is from the Command of my Lord, and you have not been given knowledge, save a little'" (Qur'an, 17:85). The term "Command" used in this verse contrasts with the created universe. This verse is pivotal in Islamic discussions about the human spirit's nature, suggesting that our knowledge is limited while the spirit's reality is not *entirely* beyond understanding ('Abd al-Hakim 1996, 13-14).

[28] In the *Dīvān* (D.42:11), Rūmī makes the same claim about divine light saying that the philosopher is blind, and the divine light eludes him.

[29] Rūmī (M.V:2768):

زین گذر کن پند من بپذیر هین / عاشقان را تو به چشم عشق بین

[30] Rūmī (M.V.2763-2766):

زیرکان که مویها بشکافتند / علم هیات را به جان دریافتند
علم نارنجات و سحر و فلسفه / گرچه نشناسند حق المعرفه
لیک کوشیدند تا امکان خود / بر گذشتند از همه اقران خود
عشق غیرت کرد و زیشان در کشید / شد چنین خورشید زیشان ناپدید

[31] Rūmī (M.II:2931-2954):

همچنانک هر کسی در معرفت / می‌کند موصوف غیبی را صفت
فلسفی از نوع دیگر کرده شرح / باحثی مر گفت او را کرده جرح
وآن دگر در هر دو طعنه می‌زند / وآن دگر از زرق جانی می‌کند
هر یک از ره این نشانها زان دهند / تا گمان آید که ایشان زان ده‌اند
این حقیقت دان نه حق‌اند این همه / نه به کلی گمرهانند این رمه
زانک بی حق باطلی ناید پدید / قلب را ابله به بوی زر خرید

[32] Rūmī (D.1631:8-9):

در فروبند که ما عاشق این میکده‌ایم / درده آن باده جان را که سبک دل شده‌ایم
برجه ای ساقی چالاک میان را بربند / به خدا کز سفر دور و دراز آمده‌ایم
برگشا مشک طرب را که ز رشک کف تو / از کف زهره به صد لابه قدح نسته‌ایم
در فروبند و ز رحمت در پنهان بگشا / چاره رطل گران کن که همه می زده‌ایم
زان سبو غسل قیامت بده از وسوسه‌ام / به حق آنک ز آغاز حریفان بده‌ایم
ما همه خفته تو بر ما لگدی چند زدی / برجهیدیم خمارانه در این عربده‌ایم
گر علی الریق تو را باده دهی قاعده نیست / هین بده ما ملک الموت چنین قاعده‌ایم
فلسفی زین بخورد فلسفه‌اش غرق شود / که گمان داشت که ما زان علل فاسده‌ایم
آن نهنگیم که دریا بر ما یک قدح است / ما نه مردان ثرید و عدس و مایده‌ایم
هله خاموش کن و فایده و فضل بهل / که ز فضله‌ی قدحت فایدهٔ فایده‌ایم