

## **RUMI CONCEPT OF LOVE: THE PATH TO INTERFAITH HARMONY AND PEACE**

**Sehat Ihsan Shadiqin**

*Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh*

Email: sehatihsan@ar-raniry.ac.id

**M. Agus Wahyudi**

*Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta*

Email: agus.wahyudi@staff.uinsaid.ac.id

**Alfiatunnur**

*Coventry University, United Kingdom*

Email: abdurrahma@uni.coventry.ac.uk

**Shabrun Jamil**

*Al-Azhar University, Egypt*

Email: lautkuda185@gmail.com

### **ABSTRACT**

*Building mutual understanding among people of different religions is crucial in anticipating issues arising from individual religious identities. The concept of love, as viewed by Jalaluddin Rumi, can serve as a medium for nurturing interfaith peace. Rumi believed that love is at the core of human existence and emphasized its power in achieving tranquility. Through Rumi's teachings, we gain an understanding of the significance of compassionate love in fostering mutual understanding and respect among different faiths. This article delves into Rumi's life and works, highlighting his contributions to Sufism and his unique perspective on love. Furthermore, it delves deeper into Rumi's concept of love. The aim of this paper is to contribute to the field of interfaith studies by exploring the potential of Rumi's concept of love to promote mutual understanding and respect among religions through poetry and Rumi's teachings. The research employs a qualitative method, specifically a literature review, drawing data from various references, books, and articles related to Rumi's works and thoughts, particularly those discussing the concept of love. The findings reveal that Rumi's concept of love can serve as a medium for addressing religious conflicts and building a more peaceful world. By embracing Rumi's teachings on love, we learn to see beyond our differences and connect with each other at a deeper level.*

**Keywords:** *Rumi; Love; Interfaith Harmony; Peace*

## INTRODUCTION

In the present time where globalization has brought various cultures and religions closer, the need for mutual understanding, respect, and harmony among different religions is very important. This article will explore the teachings of Jalaluddin Rumi, a poet, Islamic jurist, and Persian theologian of the 13th century, whose profound insight on love offers a way to harmony and peace among religions (Maola, 2018; Saddam & Abbas, 2020). Rumi, born in 1207 in Balkh (which is now part of Afghanistan), was a central figure in the world of Sufism, a spiritual branch of Islam that emphasizes personal experience and love as the path to spiritual enlightenment. His poetry and prose, written in Persian and widely translated, have been embraced by people from various religions and cultures, making him one of the most famous poets in the world. His works, which are full of themes of love, tolerance, and unity, transcend the boundaries of religion, culture, and nation, making him very relevant in the diverse and interconnected world of today (Chittick, 1993; Gamard, 2018).

The core of Rumi's teachings is the concept of love. For Rumi, love is not just an emotion, but the essence of human existence. He believes that love is the Divine force that permeates the universe, connecting all beings in a deep bond of shared being (Golkarian, 2018; Kahteran, 2009). Rumi's concept of love in Sufism is more popularly known as *mahabbah*, which is the way to spiritual growth and enlightenment. Through *mahabbah* we can transcend our ego, connect with God (Octaviani, 2021). Rumi's concept of love has many aspects, including love for God, love for oneself, and love for others. Each dimension of love, according to him, is interrelated and important for spiritual growth. Rumi's teachings on love are not just philosophical reflections but practical guides in living life. He emphasizes the importance of expressing love in our daily lives, in our interactions with others, and in our relationship with God. His poetry and prose are full of metaphors and allegories of life that illustrate the transformative power of love. Love in Rumi's view serves as a reminder that love is not just a feeling but a way of living in the world about ethics and morality (Abid, 2021; Iriyanto, 2024).

Previous research has documented several studies on this great figure through their works in various contexts, such as their concept of love (Chittick, 1993) or their analysis of their works (Este'lami, 2012), and the correlation of Rumi's ideas with contemporary life (Khan & Rashid, 2023). Sufism is not limited to discussing spiritual dimensions but also extends to social and moral dimensions (Prayogi et al., 2022). Rumi's Sufi teachings expressed through his poetry reflect his closeness to the people around him. Despite being a Sufi, he

always engaged with society, listened to their issues, and provided advice (Gray, 2019; Klicheva, 2022). Love, as the essence of life, is a universal philosophy that connects all humankind (Shafak, 2007). In addition to the concept of love (*mahabbah*), Rumi also contemplates death. According to Rumi, death is a reality that humans need not fear because it is a reunion with God, signifying happiness and unwavering faith (Majeed Abdurrahman & Diyar Tayeb, 2023).

Unlike some previous works, this article will explore the role of love in fostering mutual understanding and respect among different religions. It can be assumed that with its emphasis on love and universal unity, love provides valuable insights for interfaith dialogue. Love can transcend religious differences and highlight the spiritual heritage of humankind, offering a strong framework for harmony and peace among religions. By examining Rumi's perspective on love, we create space to learn to see beyond religious disparities and recognize shared spiritual values that unite us. We can explore how love can function as a bridge between different faiths, nurturing mutual respect and understanding. This acknowledgment can help us address religious conflicts and build a more peaceful and harmonious world.

This article falls within the realm of qualitative research; thus, data analysis refers to raw data in the form of historical documents, transcripts, field notes, and images that are arranged in such a way and ready for analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018). All of these data go through a thorough re-reading process so that they can be categorized into themes and descriptions. The analysis process has at least three main characteristics, namely: interest in the past, empirical (based on primary and secondary data), and leading to synthesis (Baker et al., 2018). This study is also directed to explore Rumi's concept of love with harmony and interfaith peace in the present.

## **RUMI: LIFE, WORKS, AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO SUFISM**

Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī, commonly known as Rumi, is estimated to have been born on September 30, 1207, in the ancient city of Balkh, which is now located in northern Afghanistan (Rumi, 2000b). His father, Bahā' al-Dīn Walad, was a highly respected Islamic jurist and theologian who played a significant role in shaping Rumi's early education and spiritual outlook. The period of Rumi's birth was marked by political turmoil, with the threat of Mongol invasions forcing Rumi's family, like many others, to leave their hometown (Arasteh, 1974; Nasr, 1993). This departure marked the beginning of a long and difficult journey that took them through Baghdad, Mecca, and Damascus, introducing Rumi to a variety of cultures, languages, and religious traditions. Eventually, the family settled in Konya, which is now part of

modern-day Turkey (Zarrabi-Zadeh & Asbury, 2016).

Konya was a major center of learning and culture at the time, providing a conducive environment for Rumi's intellectual and spiritual growth. Here, Rumi was introduced to the works of some of the greatest thinkers of the Islamic world, further enriching his understanding and perspective. This journey, filled with diverse cultural and linguistic experiences, greatly influenced Rumi's later works. Themes of love, tolerance, and unity that pervade his poetry can be traced back to these early experiences. His exposure to different cultures and languages not only broadened his worldview but also enriched his poetic expression, allowing him to speak to a diverse audience and touch the hearts of people from various cultures and religions (Gamard, 2010).

At a relatively young age, Rumi had already studied various Islamic sciences such as *nahwu* (grammar), the art of poetry, the Qur'an, Hadith, Ushul Fiqh (principles of Islamic jurisprudence), Tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis), history, philosophy, theology, logic, mathematics, and astronomy. After his father's death, at the age of 24, Rumi succeeded his father's position as a spiritual leader and Islamic jurist in the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum. At that time, he was widely admired by Islamic legal scholars for his expertise in law, yet he continued to lead a spiritual life as a Sufi (Jihad, 2015).

Rumi's literary contribution is vast and diverse, reflecting his deep understanding of human nature and his ability to express complex spiritual concepts in a way that is accessible to people from various cultures and religions. His works were primarily written in Persian, his native language, but he also occasionally used Turkish, Arabic, and Greek in his verses, reflecting the multicultural environment in which he lived and worked (Elmarsafy, 2013). His most important work is the *Masnawi* (Mathnawi), a six-volume poem composed in Konya, considered one of the greatest works of Persian poetry (Este'lami, 2012).

The *Masnawi* is often referred to as the "Quran in Persian" because of its profound spiritual insights and exploration of various themes such as theology, cosmology, and human behavior (Rumi, 2013). It is a rich tapestry of stories and fables intertwined with spiritual teachings and philosophical reflections. Another significant work is the *Diwan-e Shams-e Tabriz*, or "The Collected Poems of Shams," a collection of odes dedicated to Shams Tabrizi, Rumi's spiritual mentor. These poems, partly written in Shams' voice, reflect Rumi's deep love and admiration for his mentor and his longing for spiritual unity. They are characterized by intense emotions and the exploration of themes of love, loss, and longing. Other works by Rumi include *Diwan-i Shamsi Tabriz*

(Poems of Praise to Shamsi Tabriz), *Mathnawî-i Manawî* (Rhymed Prose about Meanings), *Rubâ'iyat* (Collection of Four-Line Poems), *Fîhi ma Fîhi* (In It What Is in It), *Makâtib* (Collection of Rumi's Letters to His Friends), and *Majâlis-i Sabah* (Arasteh, 1974).

In addition to his poetry, Rumi also produced various prose works, including *Fîhi ma Fîhi*, or "Discourses," a collection of his lectures and sermons. These lectures provide valuable insights into Rumi's thoughts and teachings on various topics, from spirituality and ethics to social issues and everyday life. He also composed sermons for specific occasions, collected in *Majlis as-Sab'a*, and wrote many letters, known as *Maktubat*, offering a more personal glimpse into his life and thoughts. Rumi's works have had a significant influence on literature, philosophy, and spirituality, not only in the Islamic world but also in the West. His poetry and prose continue to inspire and resonate with people from various cultures and backgrounds, making him one of the most widely read and beloved poets in the world.

Rumi became a central figure in the Sufi tradition. His teachings had a significant impact on Sufism, shaping its development and contributing to its spread across different cultures and regions. Rumi's teachings on love are not merely philosophical reflections but practical guides for living life. He believed that love is the essence of human existence and the key to spiritual growth and enlightenment. For Rumi, love is not just an emotion but a divine force that permeates the universe, connecting all beings in a profound bond of shared existence (Kartanegara, 2016). This love, he argued, is the primary path to spiritual growth and enlightenment. Through love, we can transcend our egos, connect with God, and realize our true nature. Rumi emphasized the importance of expressing love in our daily lives, in our interactions with others, and in our relationship with God. He taught that love should be the guiding principle in our actions and interactions, shaping our attitudes and behaviors towards others. He also encouraged his followers to cultivate love in their hearts and express it in their actions, thereby transforming their lives and the lives of those around them.

Rumi's poetry and prose are filled with vivid metaphors and allegories that illustrate the transformative power of love. His works serve as mirrors reflecting various aspects of love and its impact on our lives. They depict love as a journey, a transformative process that leads to spiritual growth and enlightenment (Zarrabi-Zadeh, 2014). Through his works, Rumi invites us to embark on this journey of love, guiding us along the way with his profound insights and wisdom. Rumi's contribution to Sufism goes beyond his teachings on love. He also made significant contributions to the development of Sufi

music and dance, particularly the practice of Sama, or whirling dervishes. This practice, involving spinning in precise rhythms, is seen as a form of meditation and a path to spiritual enlightenment. Rumi's poetry, often recited during these ceremonies, adds depth and meaning to the practice, making it a powerful spiritual experience.

Rumi's influence transcends national borders and ethnic divisions. His poetry resonates among people of various religions and cultures, making him one of the most famous poets in the world. His work, filled with themes of love, tolerance, and unity, transcends religious, cultural, and national boundaries, making it highly relevant in today's diverse and interconnected world. Rumi's teachings, with their emphasis on love and universal unity, provide valuable insights for interfaith dialogue (Zarrabi-Zadeh, 2024). His concept of love transcends religious differences and highlights the shared spiritual heritage of humanity. Rumi's life and works have left an indelible mark on the world, making him one of the most beloved and widely read poets in history. His teachings on love offer a path to harmony and peace among religions. His influence continues to inspire and resonate with people of various cultures and backgrounds around the world.

Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī passed away on 5 *Jumadil Akhir* 672 H, corresponding to December 16, 1273 AD, surrounded by his spiritual disciples, including close family members, at the end of his life. Sadr al-Din Qunawi, another great Sufi figure in Konya at the time, offered the death prayer before the remains of Persia's greatest Sufi poet were laid to rest in Konya. Among Sufis, his tomb is one of several important shrines visited, akin to a second Kaaba, and has become a spiritual center in Turkey (Nasr, 1993).

### **JALALUDDIN RUMI'S CONCEPT OF LOVE: A NOVEL MAPPING**

Jalaluddin Rumi posits that love is the quintessence of all existence, with everything emanating from God, the wellspring of love. The term "The Beloved" within his oeuvre signifies God and reveals his yearning for "The Beloved" in his poetry. "The Beloved" manifests within every individual and entity, celebrating the diversity and splendor of creation. Rumi appraises love as a transformative force capable of altering the human soul and elevating it to heightened levels of consciousness and awareness (Hajriansyah, 2016). He differentiates among various forms of love—physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual—acknowledging their value and significance, yet also their limitations and imperfections. For Rumi, the supreme form of love is that directed towards The Beloved, transcending all other forms and leading to genuine happiness and the fulfillment of the human soul. True love, according

to him, is pure, unconditional, and selfless, independent of any external factors or expectations (Golkhosravi, 2004; Mushtafa, 2007).

Rumi delves into the challenges and impediments encountered on the path of love, such as ego, the world, and the self. To surmount these barriers, a lover must surrender to the will of The Beloved, heeding the inner voice's guidance (J. Rumi, 2000a). The lover must persistently seek the fellowship of other devotees of The Beloved, who can inspire and support them on this journey. Herein lies the importance of the support and role of a spiritual guide, or "friend," who can assist seekers in discovering and connecting with The Beloved.

In depicting Love, Rumi consistently employs a plethora of metaphors and symbols, such as wine, moths, reeds, flutes, and whirling dances (Ambrosio, 2020; Selkani, 2018). These images are crafted to convey the intensity, joy, pain, and ecstasy of love, as well as to articulate the paradoxes and contradictions of love, including its sweetness and bitterness, allure and rejection, union and separation, and life and death. Love is a complex and enigmatic phenomenon that eludes full comprehension by the rational mind and can only be experienced by the heart. It is universal and timeless, thus resonating with individuals from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds (Wilcox, 2018).

His poetry serves as a wellspring of inspiration and wisdom for those seeking to comprehend and feel the true essence and purpose of love. He seemingly invites his readers to join him in his quest for The Beloved, and to unearth the secrets and treasures of love within their own souls. Rumi situates love in various guises: Divine love, self-love, and love for others. Among these manifestations, love remains interconnected.

Rumi's conception of love towards God is profound and transformative. He believes that our souls are inherently drawn to God, akin to a lover to their beloved. This love is not about seeking approval or fearing judgment but about a profound and intimate connection with the Divine (Kahteran, 2009; Mutlag, 2022; Rumi, 2000a). To truly experience this divine love, one must relinquish fear and self-imposed barriers, surrendering wholly to this divine love, allowing it to dominate and guide one's actions. This surrender is not indicative of weakness but rather a testament to the potency of divine love.

Conversely, the relationship with God is not unidirectional but reciprocal. As one yearns for the Divine, so too does the Divine yearn for them. This mutual longing fuels the spiritual journey (Iqbal, 2010). Rumi's teachings urge us to perceive divinity not as a distant and impersonal entity but as a loving presence intimately involved in our lives. He instructs that the divine is not

merely the object of our love but also the source of all love. By connecting with this divine love, we can experience a sense of wholeness and satisfaction that surpasses our ordinary experiences. Rumi's concept of love towards God offers a transformative perspective on spirituality, inviting us to view love not merely as an emotion but as a divine force that can guide us.

Rumi's teachings on love also encourage the recognition and embrace of the love that resides within us. Each person possesses a love that has been present from the outset, forming the core of our existence. If one fails to find this love, they will never find any other love. In this context, Rumi underscores the importance of self-love and self-acceptance (Bilen, 2018; McGrady & Moss, 2018). He asserts that what one seeks is, in essence, seeking them. This suggests that one's longing for love and fulfillment will be reciprocated by the love within them. Thus, the love within us beckons us, inviting us to recognize and accept it. Therefore, self-love extends beyond mere self-acceptance; it encourages the cultivation of a deep and intimate relationship with oneself, to truly know and understand oneself. This is the key to personal growth and spiritual enlightenment.

Rumi also contends that love for others is more than mere words; it is a spiritual bond and shared experience that draws one person to another. This perspective transcends the conventional understanding of love as an emotion or feeling, instead elevating love to a spiritual plane, positioning it as a fundamental connection that binds us to one another. Therefore, one must risk everything for love, as that is the hallmark of true humanity. The transformative power of love is not just about acceptance but also about giving. It's about opening our hearts to others, sharing joys and sorrows, and always being there for one another when needed.

The grandeur of love can only be achieved with wholehearted commitment and sincerity. This necessitates our full commitment, as love cannot be approached casually. Only through sincere and selfless love can one truly connect with others and attain spiritual grandeur. This state of grandeur, according to Rumi, is not about power or status but about spiritual fulfillment and enlightenment. It's about experiencing divinity in human relationships. This view offers a transformative perspective on human relationships (Mutlag, 2022). Thus, love is not merely an emotion but a spiritual journey, where by living it, humans can experience a deeper connection with others, fostering mutual understanding and respect, and contributing to a more peaceful and harmonious world.

In many of his verses, Rumi places love as the greatest force in the universe and even the key to spiritual enlightenment. Love is not just a feeling but a way

of life, a consciousness where humans are fully open to all of life, including its joys and sorrows. His poetry and prose are filled with vivid metaphors and allegories that illustrate the transformative power of love. Through his works, Rumi always invites and guides humanity to a path full of profound insights and wisdom. His teachings on love continue to inspire and guide people around the world, making him one of the most influential figures in the history of Sufism.

### **LOVE AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN RELIGIONS**

The perspective of love, as elucidated above, indirectly offers a transformative outlook in interfaith dialogue. Love, viewed as a Divine force, possesses the power to transcend the boundaries of religion, culture, and nation-states. This perspective positions love as a universal language capable of bridging the gaps between religions. It suggests that the diversity of beliefs and religious practices can be connected through the common thread of love. Thus, love serves as a bridge between adherents of one faith to those of another, encompassing love for God, self-love, and love for others as interconnected (Jannah, 2020). This interconnectedness of love fosters a sense of unity and mutual respect among people of different faiths. It also reflects the fundamental unity of all existence and reinforces the notion that although individuals may follow different religions, they are part of the same Divine reality.

Rumi's teachings encourage individuals to recognize and embrace the love within themselves. He believes that this inner love has been with humanity since time immemorial, forming the core of existence, and underscores the importance of self-love and self-acceptance (Chuliyeva, 2018). This indicates that by recognizing and accepting inner love, one will feel a sense of wholeness and satisfaction. Here, Rumi teaches that if one does not find love within, they will never find it outside. This challenges the common notion of seeking love and fulfillment externally by asserting that love and satisfaction cannot be found in the outside world but within one's own heart. The search for love within is not a one-way process. Rumi teaches that what we seek is also seeking us. An individual's longing for love and fulfillment is reciprocated by the love within them. Thus, the love within also calls out, inviting recognition and acceptance. This teaching offers a profound perspective on the nature of desire and fulfillment, stating that they are not separate but two aspects of the same process.

In this regard, Rumi's teachings on love provide a robust framework for interfaith dialogue. He contends that love, as a Divine force, can foster mutual understanding and respect between different religions. By adopting

Rumi's teachings on love, we can cultivate a sense of unity and mutual respect among people of different faiths, thereby contributing to a more peaceful and harmonious world. Rumi once said:

*In the house of lovers,  
the music never stops,  
the walls are made of songs,  
and the floor dances (Schimmel, 2008)*

Here, he is depicting his concept of love. This quote paints a picture of a world filled with love, where every aspect of life is a celebration of this divine emotion. It suggests that in the world of love, there is a constant celebration of life, a continuous flow of joy and harmony. The portrayal of love as an eternal celebration underscores the joyful and uplifting nature of love. In another of his poems, it is expressed:

*Since I heard the world,  
I have given my life,  
my heart, and my eyes to this path.  
At first, I believed that love and the beloved were different.  
Now, I understand they are the same.  
I see both in unity (Frager, 2014).*

He emphasizes the transformative power of love. This quote depicts love as a bold and fearless force, capable of breaking through fears and barriers. It indicates that love is not a passive emotion but an active force that challenges us, pushing us out of our comfort zones and leading us towards spiritual growth and enlightenment. Here, Rumi illustrates how love can be a bridge between religions. By emphasizing the universal nature of love, a sense of mutual understanding and appreciation can grow among people of different faiths (Este'lami, 2003). They highlight the shared experience of love, and show that although individuals may differ in beliefs and religious practices, they are all connected through the same emotion. Thus, Rumi offers a strong framework for interfaith dialogue. His teachings emphasize the universal nature of love and its potential to foster mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths (Masroori, 2010).

*Who am I?  
What do You love and what do You hate?  
When You hide, I am an infidel;  
when You appear, I am a believer (Reynold, 2002).*

In addressing questions about evil, sorrow, and sin, Rumi states in the *Mathnawi*, “If you do not know the devil (evil), then look within yourself” (Rumi, 2013). Considering that Rumi was also a scholar, this shows how he treated it in a practical and comprehensible form. Evil is not something that opposes the “existence” of God, and when humans realize that everything truly has no relation to God, they understand that in reality, everything returns to humanity.

### **LOVE AND THE IMPETUS FOR INTERFAITH HARMONY**

As previously elucidated, Rumi’s concept of love transcends the confines of religion, culture, and nationality, rendering it a universal language that touches the hearts of all, regardless of their beliefs or backgrounds. He posits that love is the essence of human existence, a fundamental force that unites us all. This love, according to Rumi, has the power to connect humans, overcome differences, and illuminate the path toward spiritual awakening. It is through this universal language of love that we can bridge the gaps between different religions and cultures, fostering mutual understanding and respect.

Rumi’s teachings underscore the importance of love in building bridges between religions. He instructs that love is the common thread flowing through all religious traditions, a core value that unites us all. By focusing on these shared values, we can look beyond our differences and recognize the common humanity that binds us together. This perspective cultivates mutual understanding and respect, which are essential elements for interfaith harmony (Bond, 2020). Rumi also teaches that love is the bridge between us and everything else. This profound doctrine encompasses love for God, self-love, and love for others. Each of these dimensions of love, he believes, is interconnected and plays a vital role in our spiritual growth and development.

Love for God, according to Rumi, is about recognizing and acknowledging God’s presence in all of creation. It is about seeing the divine within ourselves and others, and treating everyone with the dignity and respect inherent in this recognition (Arikhah, 2022). Self-love, in Rumi’s view, is about self-acceptance and self-esteem. It is about recognizing our own worth and treating ourselves with kindness and compassion. This self-love, according to Rumi, is the foundation upon which all other forms of love are built. Love for others, in Rumi’s teachings, is about empathy and compassion. It is about recognizing the divine in others and treating them with the same kindness and respect we desire for ourselves. This love for others, according to Rumi, is a reflection of our love for God and ourselves (Saddam & Abbas, 2020).

Rumi encourages us to recognize and embrace the love that exists within us. He believes that this inner love has been with us from the beginning, forming the core of our existence. If we do not find this love within ourselves, we will never find it outside. This teaching highlights the importance of self-love and self-acceptance, as well as their role in our relationships with others and with God. Rumi teaches that what we seek is also seeking us. This indicates that our longing for love and fulfillment is reciprocated by the love within us. As if the love within us is calling out to us, inviting us to recognize and accept it. This teaching offers a profound perspective on the nature of desire and fulfillment, stating that they are not separate but two aspects of the same process.

Thus, Rumi's concept of love provides a robust framework for interfaith dialogue. His teachings emphasize the universal nature of love and its potential to foster mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths. By embracing Rumi's teachings on love, we can contribute to a more peaceful and harmonious world, where people of different religions coexist in mutual respect and understanding (Gondos, 2021). His teachings serve as a reminder that although we may differ, we are all connected through the common thread of love. It is this love that can bridge the gaps between religions, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation, and paving the way for religious harmony (Sahri, 2021).

With such a perspective, Rumi's teachings on love have inspired numerous interfaith initiatives worldwide. These initiatives aim to cultivate mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths, thus contributing to a more peaceful and harmonious world. They utilize Rumi's wisdom to bridge the gaps between different religious traditions and promote a culture of peace and mutual understanding. One such initiative is the "Rumi Forum for Interfaith Dialogue and Peace," an organization based in Washington DC. This organization is dedicated to promoting interfaith dialogue and peace through Rumi's teachings. The forum organizes various events, including seminars, conferences, and cultural exchange programs, to foster mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths. These events provide a platform for individuals from various religious backgrounds to come together, share perspectives, and learn from one another. By facilitating these dialogues, the Rumi Forum aims to break down barriers, eliminate misunderstandings, and foster a sense of unity and respect among people of different beliefs.

Another initiative inspired by Rumi's teachings is the "Interfaith Youth Core," a nonprofit organization based in Chicago. Recognizing the crucial role of youth in shaping the future, this organization uses Rumi's poetry and teachings to engage young people in interfaith dialogue and service. Through

its programs, the organization aims to build a movement of young people capable of promoting interfaith cooperation in their communities. These programs provide young people with the tools and resources they need to lead interfaith initiatives in their own communities, nurturing a new generation of leaders committed to advancing peace and mutual understanding. In addition to these initiatives, Rumi's teachings have also inspired countless individuals worldwide to engage in their personal interfaith efforts. From organizing local interfaith dialogues to volunteering for interfaith service projects, these individuals use Rumi's teachings as a guide to promote peace and understanding in their own communities.

Rumi's concept of love offers a strong framework for interfaith dialogue. His teachings emphasize the universal nature of love and its potential to foster mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths. By adopting Rumi's teachings on love, we can contribute to a more peaceful and harmonious world, where people of different religions live side by side in mutual respect and understanding (Körs et al., 2020; Maola, 2018). His teachings remind us that despite our differences, we are all connected through the common thread of love. It is this love that can bridge the gaps between religions, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation, and opening the way for religious harmony. Through these initiatives and the countless individual efforts inspired by Rumi's teachings, we can witness the transformative power of love in action, uniting people of different faiths and contributing to a more peaceful and harmonious world.

## CONCLUSION

The foregoing discussion has delved into Jalaluddin Rumi's teachings on love and its potential as a pathway to interfaith harmony and peace. Rumi's concept of love, transcending the boundaries of religion, culture, and nationality, establishes it as a universal language that resonates with all hearts, irrespective of belief or background. His teachings underscore the significance of love in fostering mutual understanding and respect across diverse religions. Rumi advocates viewing love not merely as an emotion but as a Divine force that can guide actions, transform, and lead humanity towards spiritual enlightenment. Rumi has inspired many religious adherents to cultivate mutual understanding and respect among people of different faiths. This is a testament to the transformative power of love. Love can serve as a bridge between religions, nurturing mutual comprehension and respect, and paving the way for interfaith harmony. He emphasizes the universal nature of love, wherein despite human differences, we are indeed all connected through

the common thread of love. It is this love that can bridge the gaps between religions, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation, and opening the way for religious harmony.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abid, M. N. (2021). Pendidikan Cinta Ala Jalaludin Rumi. *Al-Amin Journal: Educational and Social Studies*, 6(01), 98–118.
- Ambrosio, A. F. (2020). Rumi and the Whirling Dervishes. *Rumi and the Whirling Dervishes*. <https://doi.org/10.2307/J.CTVXRPZPC>
- Arasteh, A. R. (1974). *Rumi The Persian, The Sufi*. Routledge.
- Arikhah, A. (2022). The Sufi Poems of Love: Al Busiri's Burdah through The Lens of Rumi. *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism*, 11(2), 223–240. <https://doi.org/10.21580/TOS.V11I2.18252>
- Baker, J. P., Goodboy, A. K., Bowman, N. D., & Wright, A. A. (2018). Does teaching with PowerPoint increase students' learning? A meta-analysis. *Computers and Education*, 126(376–387).
- Bilen, O. (2018). Beauty Torn by a Prick of Thorn: Rumi's Philosophy of Human Love. *Humanities Bulletin*, 1(2), 110–119. <https://journals.lapub.co.uk/index.php/HB/article/view/264>
- Bond, B. E. (2020). Performing pain: Sindhi Sufi music, affect, and Hindu-Muslim relations in western India. *Culture, Theory and Critique*, 61(2–3), 112–132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14735784.2020.1848602>
- Chittick, W. C. (1993). The Spiritual Path of Love in Ibn al-'Arabi and Rumi. *Mystics Quarterly*, 19(1), 4–16.
- Chuliyeva, V. E. (2018). The Intellectual and Collaborate Issues in the Philosophical Proposals of Jaloliddin. *International Scientific Journal Theoretical & Applied Science*, 65(09), 173–175. <https://doi.org/10.15863/TAS>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design Choosing Among Five Approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.
- Elmarsafy, Z. M. (2013). *User-friendly Islams: Translating Rumi in France and the United States*. University of Michigan Press.
- Este'lami, M. (2003). Rumi and the Universality of his Message. *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 14(4), 429–524. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0959641032000127588>

- Este‘lami, M. (2012). Understanding Rumi’s Mathnawi. *Mawlana Rumi Review*, 3(1), 7–19. <https://doi.org/10.1163/25898566-00301002>
- Frager, R. (2014). *Heart, Self & Soul: The Sufi Psychology of Growth, Balance, and Harmony*. Zaman.
- Gamard, I. (2010). The Popularity of Mawlānā Rūmī and the Mawlawī Tradition. *Mawlana Rumi Review*, 1(1), 109–121. <https://doi.org/10.1163/25898566-00101012>
- Gamard, I. (2018). The Popularity of Mawlānā Rūmī and the Mawlawī Tradition. *Mawlana Rumi Review*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.1163/25898566-00101012>
- Golkarian, G. (2018). Divine Love in Rumi Lore and Mysticism. *Scientific Journal “National Academy of Managerial Staff of Culture and Arts Herald,”* 10(1).
- Golkhosravi, M. (2004). “Panentheistic” View of Divine Love in Man and Nature: A Comparative Study in Whitman’s Leaves of Grass and Maulana Jalal al-Din Rumi’s Mathnavi. *Bells: Barcelona English Language and Literature Studies*. <https://raco.cat/index.php/Bells/article/view/82933>
- Gondos, A. (2021). Seekers of Love: The Phenomenology of Emotion in Jewish, Christian, and Sufi Mystical Sources. In *Esoteric Transfers and Constructions* (pp. 21–41). Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-61788-2\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-61788-2_2)
- Gray, B. (2019). Rumi, Sufi Spirituality and the teacher-disciple relationship in elif Shafak’s: The forty rules of love. *Approaching Esotericism and Mysticism: Cultural Influences Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, 29, 47–67. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783839443965-004>
- Hajriansyah, H. (2016). Pengalaman Beragama Sufi Jalaluddin Rumi Dalam Perspektif Psikologi. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Ushuluddin*, 14(1), 49. <https://doi.org/10.18592/jiu.v14i1.684>
- Iqbal, M. A. (2010). *Rumi Sang Sufi Humanis*. Lukita.
- Iriyanto, H. (2024). Pemikiran Pendidikan Cinta Perspektif Jalaluddin Rumi. *INTERDISIPLIN: Journal of Qualitative and Quantitative Research*, 1(1), 10–20. <https://doi.org/10.61166/interdisiplin.v1i1.2> Vol.
- Jannah, M. (2020). Teologi Sufi Kajian Atas Mistisisme Cinta Jalaluddin Rumi. *Jurnal Al-Aqidah*, 12(2), 37–52. <https://doi.org/10.15548/ja.v12i2.2271>
- Jihad, A. Z. (2015). Kisah Cinta Platonik Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī. *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam*, 1(2), 196. <https://doi.org/10.15642/teo->

sofi.2011.1.2.196-212

- Kahteran, N. (2009). Rumi's Philosophy of Love in the Era of U-turned Islam. *Kyoto Bulletin of Islamic Area Studies*, 2(2), 51–62.
- Kartanegara, M. (2016). *Rumi on the Living Earth: A Sufi Perspective BT - Islamic Perspectives on Science and Technology* (M. H. Kamali, O. Bakar, D. A.-F. Batchelor, & R. Hashim, Eds.; pp. 75–83). Springer Singapore.
- Khan, A., & Rashid, Z. (2023). *Rumi and Tagore on Being-With-Nature*. 87–102. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-40040-7\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-40040-7_7)
- Klicheva, G. (2022). *Sufi and philosophical heritage of Jalaluddin Rumi Sufi and Philosophical Heritage of Jalaluddin Rumi*. December 2021. <https://doi.org/10.21744/ijhla.v5n1.1799>
- Körs, A., Weisse, W., & Willaime, J.-P. (2020). Introduction: Religious Diversity and Interreligious Dialogue. *Religious Diversity and Interreligious Dialogue*, 1–17. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-31856-7\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-31856-7_1)
- Majeed Abdurrahman, A., & Diyar Tayeb, G. (2023). A Spiritual Study on the Concept of Life and Death in the Poetry of Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi. *Humanities Journal of University of Zakho*, 11(4), 917–922. <https://doi.org/10.26436/hjuoz.2023.11.4.1161>
- Maola, M. (2018). Dialogue of Heart: Interreligious Dialogue through Rumi's Poetry. *Ulumuna*, 22(2). <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v22i2.312>
- Masroori, C. (2010). An Islamic Language of Toleration: Rumi's Criticism of Religious Persecution. *Political Research Quarterly*, 63(2), 243–256. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912908330348>
- McGrady, A., & Moss, D. (2018). Religion, Spiritual Practices, and Well-Being. *Integrative Pathways*, 59–80. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-89313-6\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-89313-6_4)
- Mushtafa, A. A. (2007). *Pendar Mahabbatullah; Sepuluh Jurus Sakti Menggapai Cinta Allah*. Grafindo.
- Mutlag, A. H. (2022). Sufism and The Philosophy of Love in Rumi's Doctrie. *Resmilitaris*, 12(1), 54–59. <https://resmilitaris.net/menu-script/index.php/resmilitaris/article/view/25>
- Nasr, S. H. (1993). *Spiritualitas dan Seni Islam*, (Sutejo, Ed.). Mizan.
- Octaviani, A. (2021). From Cafe to the Mosque: the Construction of Dakwah Digital Communication of Shift Community. *Dimas: Jurnal Pemikiran Agama Untuk Pemberdayaan*, 21(2), 275–296. <https://doi.org/10.21580/DMS.2021.212.9429>

- Prayogi, A., Subhi, M. R., & Shilla, R. A. (2022). The Teachings of Jihad in The Involvement of Samaniyah Tarekate in The War of Menteng 1819: A Historical Analysis. *International Journal Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 24(1), 77–91. <https://doi.org/10.21580/ihya.24.1.11096>
- Rumi, J. (2000a). *In the Arms of the Beloved* (J. Star, Ed.). Terompah.
- Rumi, J. (2000b). *Yang Mengenal Dirinya yang Mengenal Tuhannya: Aforisme-Aforisme Sufistik* (A. Kholid, Ed.). Pustaka Hidayah.
- Rumi, J. (2013). *Masnawi: Senandung Cinta Abadi Jalaluddin Rumi* (Abdul Hadi, Ed.). Rausyan Fikr Institute.
- Saddam, W. A., & Abbas, Z. I. (2020). Love that Binds: An Ecospiritual Reading of Rumi's Poetry. *Al-Adab Journal*, 132(132), 105–112. <https://doi.org/10.31973/AJ.V1I132.608>
- Sahri, S. (2021). The Concept of Mysticism in Islam and Christianity. *Al-Albab*, 10(1), 55–76. <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v10i1.1804>
- Schimmel, A. (2008). *Akulah Angin Engkaulah Api: Hidup dan Karya Jalaluddin Rumi*. Mizan.
- Selkani, I. (2018). The Whirling Dervishes: An Old Heritage Recognized at Last. *Annals of Social Sciences; Management Studies*, 1(4). <https://doi.org/10.19080/ASM.2018.01.555567>
- Shafak, E. (2007). *Black Milk: On the Conflicting Demands of Writing, Creativity and Motherhood*. Penguin.
- Wilcox, L. (2018). *Psikologi Kepribadian, Menyelami Misteri Kepribadian Manusia*. IRCiSoD.
- Zarrabi-Zadeh, S. (2014). Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī's Mysticism of Love-based Annihilation. *Mawlana Rumi Review*, 5(1), 26–72. <https://doi.org/10.1163/25898566-00501004>
- Zarrabi-Zadeh, S. (2024). Preface to the Special Issue “Sufism in the Modern World.” *Religions*, 15(5), 554. <https://doi.org/10.3390/REL15050554>
- Zarrabi-Zadeh, S., & Asbury, M. E. (2016). The Philosophy of Ecstasy: Rumi and the Sufi Tradition. *Mawlana Rumi Review*, 7(1), 198–208. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1163/25898566-00701011>