



LOVE AND FREEDOM IN THE THOUGHT OF JALALUDDIN RUMI: A CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY

Abstract: This article examines the concepts of love and freedom in the thought of Jalaluddin Rumi and analyzes their relevance to contemporary philosophical and humanitarian issues. The study employs qualitative library research by analyzing Rumi's primary works, including Mathnawi, Fihi Ma Fihi, and Diwan-e Shams, supported by relevant secondary literature. A philosophical hermeneutic approach is used to interpret Rumi's symbolic language and metaphors in order to uncover their underlying philosophical and spiritual meanings. The findings show that Rumi understands love (mahabbah) as an ontological principle that connects human beings with God, others, and the universe, and functions as the foundation of ethical life. Freedom (hurriyyah), in Rumi's perspective, is not external or absolute autonomy, but inner freedom achieved through liberation from ego, desires, and worldly attachments. The integration of love and inner freedom forms a coherent spiritual framework that offers a critical perspective on modern understandings of freedom that tend to be individualistic and value-neutral. This study concludes that Rumi's thought provides a relevant philosophical contribution to contemporary discussions on ethics, spirituality, and the search for meaning, while remaining grounded in the Islamic intellectual tradition.

Keywords: Jalaluddin Rumi; love; freedom; philosophical hermeneutics; contemporary Islamic philosophy.

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Abstrak. Artikel ini mengkaji konsep cinta dan kebebasan dalam pemikiran Jalaluddin Rumi serta menganalisis relevansinya terhadap isu-isu filosofis dan kemanusiaan kontemporer. Studi ini menggunakan penelitian perpustakaan kualitatif dengan menganalisis karya-karya utama Rumi, termasuk Mathnawi, Fihi Ma Fihi, dan Diwan-e Shams, didukung oleh literatur sekunder yang relevan. Pendekatan hermeneutik filosofis digunakan untuk menafsirkan bahasa simbolis dan metafora Rumi guna mengungkap makna filosofis dan spiritual yang mendasarinya. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Rumi memahami cinta (mahabbah) sebagai prinsip ontologis yang menghubungkan manusia dengan Tuhan, sesama, dan alam semesta, serta berfungsi sebagai landasan kehidupan etis. Kebebasan (hurriyyah), menurut perspektif Rumi, bukanlah kebebasan eksternal atau otonomi mutlak, melainkan kebebasan batin yang dicapai melalui pembebasan dari ego, keinginan, dan ikatan duniawi. Integrasi antara cinta dan kebebasan batin membentuk kerangka spiritual yang koheren, yang menawarkan perspektif kritis terhadap pemahaman modern tentang kebebasan yang cenderung individualistik dan netral nilai. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa pemikiran Rumi memberikan kontribusi filosofis yang relevan bagi diskusi kontemporer tentang etika, spiritualitas, dan pencarian makna, sambil tetap berakar pada tradisi intelektual Islam.

Kata kunci: Jalaluddin Rumi; cinta; kebebasan; hermeneutika filosofis; filsafat Islam kontemporer.



INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of spiritual and existential crisis has become one of the greatest challenges in modern human life. The acceleration of technology, materialistic lifestyles, and increasing social demands have made humans more digitally connected, yet more emotionally isolated. Contemporary research shows that modern individuals experience increased stress, anxiety, and feelings of emptiness due to the loss of meaning in life and the drying up of the spiritual dimension in everyday life (Rahmani & Ebrahimi, 2021). This condition has given rise to the need for a spiritual approach that can provide depth of meaning, inner peace, and a more humane direction in life. In this situation, the Sufi thought of Jalaluddin Rumi has regained its relevance because it emphasizes the search for meaning through love and inner freedom. (Rahmani & Ebrahimi, 2021, p. 214)

In addition to spiritual crises, contemporary societies also face problems such as increasing social conflict, polarization of identities, and declining empathy in the public sphere. Social media accelerates the spread of hate speech, resistance to differences, and moral fragmentation (Al-Ma'arri & Yusoff, 2020). In this context, the concept of universal love taught by Rumi serves as a critique and solution to the degradation of human relationships. Love, in Rumi's perspective, is not only a personal emotion, but a cosmic energy that connects humans with God and all of creation. This provides an ethical foundation for the creation of a tolerant, inclusive, and compassionate society. (Al-Ma'arri & Yusoff, 2020, p. 58)

On the other hand, the interpretation of freedom in modern society has also undergone a narrowing of meaning. Many people understand freedom as merely the ability to act without limits, without considering moral and spiritual values. Recent research shows that freedom without control of values leads to increased selfishness, narcissism, and existential emptiness (Khodadadi & Karimi, 2022). Rumi's view of inner freedom, which



emphasizes liberation from lust, ego, and worldly attachments, provides a philosophical correction to the modern concept of freedom, which is often liberalistic and individualistic. Thus, Rumi's thinking offers an alternative interpretation of freedom that is more balanced between the personal, social, and spiritual dimensions. (Khodadadi & Karimi, 2022, p. 341)

Jalaluddin Rumi was a 13th-century Sufi mystic and poet whose ideas remain relevant across the ages. His concepts of love and freedom are not only spiritually valuable, but also philosophical and ethical, enabling them to respond to contemporary humanitarian crises. Rumi understood love not merely as an individual emotion, but as a cosmic energy that unites humans with God and all of creation. As for freedom, according to Rumi, it is not absolute freedom as in modern liberal discourse, but transcendental freedom that is realized when humans are able to free themselves from ego and worldly attachments (Kartanegara, 2002, p. 54).

This study aims to analyze in depth the concepts of love and freedom in the thoughts of Jalaluddin Rumi and examine their relevance to contemporary humanitarian issues. By examining Rumi's thought, this study hopes to show that Sufi values are not only related to spirituality, but also have philosophical meanings that can be used to interpret modern issues such as ethics, individual freedom, social harmony, and character building. The focus of this study is on two main concepts: love (mahabbah) and freedom (hurriyyah).

The research method used is library research by examining Rumi's major works such as Mathnawi, Divan-e-Shams, and Fihi Ma Fihi. These texts reflect Rumi's metaphysical ideas and spiritual experiences. In addition, this study uses secondary literature in the form of relevant books and journals to understand the context of Rumi's thinking in relation to modern issues (Bagir, 2005, p. 67).



A philosophical hermeneutic approach is used to interpret Rumi's symbols, metaphors, and poetic expressions in order to reveal the philosophical and spiritual meanings contained within them. Hermeneutics allows for a deep and historical reading of Rumi's texts, enabling conclusions to be drawn about the contribution of his thinking to the dynamics of contemporary philosophy. This method is relevant for examining how Sufism can provide alternatives for the search for meaning in life, spiritual healing, and the formation of social ethics amid the crisis of modernity (Abdullah, 2002, p. 91).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Basic Concepts of Jalaluddin Rumi's Thought

Jalaluddin Rumi's thought occupies an important position in Islamic intellectual heritage because it combines metaphysical, ethical, and spiritual dimensions into a single, coherent body of thought. Rumi viewed reality as something that could not only be approached through rationality alone, but also through deep inner experience. At the core of his thinking was the idea of tawhid, the belief that all beings are manifestations of divine reality. Therefore, according to Rumi, the ideal human being is one who is able to see God in all aspects of life. This thinking is based on a spiritual interpretation of the Qur'an, hadith, and Sufi traditions inherited from earlier Sufis, such as Al-Ghazali and Ibn Arabi, but Rumi places a distinctive emphasis on the dimension of love as the core of existence.

Rumi's works, in the form of poetry and prose, contain rich symbolism and metaphors. These symbols are not merely literary ornaments, but epistemological tools that help convey metaphysical truths that cannot be captured by literal language. This is in line with the views of contemporary scholars who assess that Rumi's thinking utilizes



aesthetic language as a medium for conveying mystical experiences that are transrational in nature. In the context of modern science, Rumi's thinking is also considered relevant because it teaches a balance between the rational and intuitive dimensions, which is an important need in a society experiencing identity fragmentation and a crisis of meaning in life. Recent research in Indonesia shows that Rumi's ideas can serve as a foundation for social ethics and modern human spirituality, especially in dealing with the phenomena of dehumanization and extreme individualism that are developing in digital culture (Hakim, 2020, p. 97).

The relevance of Rumi's thinking does not stop at the level of personal spirituality. Several academic studies mention that Rumi's teachings on universal love, respect for differences, and the unity of humanity have contributed significantly to the development of an inclusive society. This is in line with the development of global ethical discourse that emphasizes the importance of empathy and wisdom in facing contemporary social challenges. Therefore, Rumi's basic thoughts form the epistemological and philosophical foundation for research on love and freedom in the modern context (Fahri, 2021, p. 54).

B. The Concept of Hermeneutics as a Method of Analysis

Hermeneutics is a discipline that studies the process of understanding and interpreting texts, symbols, and cultural realities. In the tradition of modern philosophy, hermeneutics developed through figures such as Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer. Each figure contributed to the understanding of how humans interpret the world and how meaning is created through the interaction between the reader and the text. In the context of this study, hermeneutics is used as a method to uncover the deepest meanings contained in Rumi's works. These works



cannot be understood through superficial reading alone because the style of language used is rich in symbols and metaphors that require a process of deep interpretation.

Hermeneutics allows this study to delve into complex layers of meaning. The interpretation process not only considers the structure of the language, but also Rumi's life context, the intellectual traditions that influenced his thinking, and the modern socio-cultural conditions that form the horizon of today's readers. This dialogue between historical and contemporary contexts is a key feature of philosophical hermeneutics. Thus, hermeneutics not only interprets texts, but also brings together the horizons of meaning between the author and the reader.

In Islamic studies in Indonesia, hermeneutics has developed as a productive approach to understanding Sufi teachings. Many studies show that Sufi texts require a hermeneutical approach because of their non-literal and multidimensional nature. Hermeneutics also allows researchers to find new relevance in classical teachings in answering contemporary problems. This approach provides space for creative and reflective readings of Rumi's thoughts, which are full of spiritual symbols, so that they can be comprehensively understood by modern society (Amin, 2022, p. 41). In addition, hermeneutics broadens the understanding of the dynamics of meaning contained in Sufi literary texts, so that the results of the analysis are not rigid but continue to evolve according to the needs of the times (Suharto, 2021, p. 88).

C. The Concept of Love and Freedom in a General Perspective

Love is a concept that has been widely discussed in the traditions of philosophy, psychology, and Sufism. In philosophical thought, love is understood as a force that drives humans to build meaningful relationships with one another. Love plays an important role in the



formation of morality and social solidarity. In psychology, love is understood as a deep emotional need that affects mental health, well-being, and personality development. Meanwhile, in Sufism, love has a much higher position because it is seen as the core of all dimensions of human spirituality. Love is interpreted as divine energy that connects humans with God. Love is not only an emotion, but an ontological force that moves all creation towards perfection.

Research in Indonesia shows that the concept of love has significant implications for the development of ethics and spiritual education. Love is seen as a fundamental principle that shapes harmonious relationships in society and forms the foundation for the development of character and moral integrity. Thus, love is not only understood as a personal experience, but as a spiritual and social force that shapes human life as a whole (Wahyudi, 2020, p. 73). In the context of modern life, which is characterized by competition, individualism, and social disintegration, the concept of love becomes a critical value that can restore humans to their most authentic selves.

Freedom in philosophical tradition is generally understood as the ability to act according to one's will without external coercion. Freedom is considered a key characteristic of human existence. However, various spiritual thinkers offer different interpretations of freedom. From a spiritual perspective, freedom is found when humans are able to free themselves from the domination of the ego, worldly desires, and the shackles of lust that control them. Therefore, spiritual freedom is not merely the ability to choose, but an inner state in which humans are no longer controlled by destructive impulses. In the modern context, a number of studies confirm that spiritual freedom can serve as a critique of individualistic lifestyles that often cause disorientation and a crisis of



meaning (Sari, 2021, p. 129). This view provides a basis for understanding that true freedom has ethical and spiritual dimensions that complement each other.

D. Love in the Thought of Jalaluddin Rumi

Jalaluddin Rumi understood love as the essence of all life. According to him, love is the cosmic energy that moves the entire universe, from spinning planets to the beating human heart. In Mathnawi, he describes love as “wings” that lift humans toward God. This view shows that for Rumi, love cannot be separated from metaphysical and spiritual aspects. If love is reduced to only human-to-human relationships, then love loses its true meaning. Love must be seen as a medium of union between creatures and the Creator (Bagir, 2017, p. 56).

Rumi's thoughts on love have a strong ethical depth. He emphasizes that love should not stop at the emotional dimension, but must be manifested in attitudes of compassion, tolerance, and respect for others. For Rumi, love is the basis of human ethics, because love gives birth to peaceful behavior, not destructive behavior. This idea is relevant when looking at modern conditions full of conflict, where love is often narrowed down to simply romanticism or even biological desire. Rumi wants to return love to its original meaning: a force that unites humans with God as well as with each other (Hadi W.M., 1999, p. 102).

In the modern world, love is often trapped in a materialistic culture. Movies, advertisements, and social media represent love as nothing more than instant desire, far from its spiritual meaning. Rumi offers harsh criticism of this phenomenon. According to him, true love requires sacrifice, patience, and humility. Without these aspects, love becomes nothing more than a fragile illusion. Therefore, Rumi's thinking is relevant as a correction to the degradation of the meaning of love in the



contemporary era. He offers a universal love that encompasses spiritual, social, and cosmological dimensions at once (Hadi W.M., 1999, p. 102).

In addition to love, Rumi also emphasizes the concept of freedom as a central theme in the spiritual journey of humans. However, the freedom he refers to is not unlimited freedom as often emphasized in modern philosophy, but rather inner freedom. According to Rumi, truly free humans are those who are able to free themselves from the shackles of ego, lust, and worldly attachments. This kind of freedom actually opens up space for humans to submit consciously to God. Thus, freedom in Rumi's perspective is not merely an individual right, but a transcendental spiritual achievement (Schimmel, 2003, p. 88).

Freedom according to Rumi is very different from Jean-Paul Sartre's idea, which emphasizes radical human freedom without the presence of God. Sartre argues that humans are “condemned to be free” and must determine the meaning of their own lives. In contrast, Rumi emphasizes that true freedom is only achieved when humans realize their connection to God. In this regard, Rumi provides a balance: humans are indeed free, but that freedom must be directed toward subduing the ego in order to achieve spiritual perfection. In this way, freedom does not fall into futility, but rather becomes a path to salvation (Sartre, 2002, p. 44).

E. Freedom in Jalaluddin Rumi's Thought

The concept of freedom (hurriyyah) in Jalaluddin Rumi's thought is a fundamental part of the human spiritual journey towards perfection. Rumi understands freedom not as external, physical freedom, but as inner freedom that lies in the human ability to free oneself from the domination of the ego and the material world. In Mathnawi, Rumi states that attachment to the world is the deepest form of slavery. He writes, “A



slave is not someone who is sold in the market. A slave is someone whose heart is attached to something other than God" (Rumi, 2018, p. 112). This quote shows that for Rumi, true freedom cannot be achieved through physical movement, but through inner liberation from all forms of worldly dependence.

In Fihi Ma Fihi, Rumi provides a more explicit explanation of inner freedom. He likens humans who are controlled by their desires to people who live in a cage even though the cage door is open. Rumi asserts, "You think you are free, but you are bound by thousands of your desires" (Rumi, 2015, p. 67). This statement illustrates that, according to Rumi, freedom is a state of purity and harmony with the divine will. Desires, ambitions, and passions not only prevent humans from achieving spiritual perfection, but also obscure the potential of beings to absorb the light of God. Therefore, freedom is a spiritual achievement that requires discipline, self-control, and gradual purification of the soul.

Rumi understood that true freedom can only be achieved when humans are able to break free from the domination of the ego. In Diwan-e Shams, he sharply states that the ego is humanity's main prison. Rumi writes, "Free yourself from yourself. That is the door to freedom" (Rumi, 2012, p. 203). This message shows that spiritual liberation is a process of purification, not a rejection of worldly life. For Rumi, the ego is a veil that prevents humans from experiencing the divine. As long as the ego is in charge, humans will not be able to feel freedom because their entire orientation in life is focused on personal interests and worldly achievements.

Freedom, according to Rumi, is also closely related to the concept of divine love. In many parts of Mathnawi, Rumi emphasizes that love is a force that breaks worldly shackles and lifts humans closer to God. He writes, "Love is a fire that burns everything but the Beloved. When that



fire burns, you become free" (Rumi, 2018, p. 254). This statement shows that love is not only an emotional experience but also a transformative energy that frees humans from all forms of lowly attachments. Love purifies intentions, melts the ego, and paves the way for the attainment of spiritual freedom that cannot be achieved through reason alone.

Freedom in Rumi's perspective cannot be separated from an understanding of the origins of human existence. In *Fihi Ma Fihi*, Rumi states that humans originate from the spiritual world and are trying to return to their origins. Therefore, the entire journey of life is a journey towards liberation from the temporary world. He writes, "You do not originate from this earth. You come from the world of eternity. Why do you make yourself a slave to mortal things?" (Rumi, 2015, p. 79). This quote shows that for Rumi, freedom is an existential awareness of the true nature of humanity. The more humans understand the essence of their origins, the more they are freed from the domination of the deceptive world.

Rumi's ideas on freedom are relevant in the modern context, where freedom is often superficially understood as the ability to act without limits. Many people claim to be free because they have the power to choose, even though those choices are controlled by never-ending desires. Rumi's view criticizes this kind of understanding. Freedom that is not balanced by spiritual awareness actually plunges humans into emptiness and a crisis of meaning. Contemporary research states that the concept of Sufi freedom as formulated by Rumi is able to provide an alternative to modern freedom, which tends to be individualistic and utilitarian, because it offers a dimension of depth and inner awareness (Sari, 2021, p. 134).



In addition, Rumi's thinking provides a hermeneutical foundation for understanding freedom as a space for dialogue between humans and God. Rumi never separated freedom from divine guidance. True freedom actually grows when humans consciously submit to God's will. In Mathnawi, Rumi wrote, "Submit, and you will feel freedom. For His will is a harbor for the lost" (Rumi, 2018, p. 310). Here, freedom is not a rejection of transcendent authority, but rather liberation from the tyranny of the ego so that humans can live in cosmic harmony.

Based on this line of thinking, it can be concluded that freedom in Rumi's paradigm is spiritual freedom that can only be achieved through self-control, the elimination of ego, and a deep relationship with God. Physical freedom has no meaning without inner freedom, because the essence of humanity lies in the soul. Rumi places freedom as a long journey beyond the world of lust, the world of ego, and the world of illusion towards a state that is clear, silent, and filled with divine light. It is this concept of freedom that gives his thinking its special philosophical value and makes it relevant across time.

F. Dialogue with Modern and Contemporary Philosophy

Paul Ricoeur adds the idea that symbols always "give something to think about." Rumi's allegorical stories are also like this. For example, the story of a feather falling from a bird's wing depicts humans being uprooted from their origins. This story is not just a fairy tale, but a philosophical symbol that requires layered interpretation. In this way, Rumi's work can be viewed as a philosophical text that combines hermeneutics, spirituality, and literature (Ricoeur, 2012, p. 47).

In modern psychology, Rumi's ideas also find relevance. Carl Gustav Jung talks about the process of individuation, which is the journey towards self-wholeness. This concept parallels Rumi's spiritual journey, in



which humans are required to conquer the ego, delve into the depths of the inner self, and ultimately find unity with the divine source. This similarity shows that despite originating from different traditions, Rumi's thoughts can be constructively reconciled with modern psychological theory (Jung, 2003, p. 69).

Viktor Frankl, an existential psychiatrist, emphasized the importance of finding meaning in life as a way out of suffering. This idea is very close to Rumi's idea of placing love as the source of meaning in life. Frankl said that humans are able to endure suffering as long as they have meaning. Rumi, on the other hand, asserted that humans are able to overcome suffering if they live in love with God. Both reject nihilism and offer spiritual orientation as a path to salvation (Frankl, 2007, p. 113).

The relevance of Rumi's thinking is increasingly apparent in contemporary social issues. The modern world is filled with conflict, discrimination, and intolerance. Rumi's universal love offers an alternative path: viewing humans not based on ethnicity, religion, or social status, but rather based on the same human nature. This view is important for building global peace amid cultural and religious diversity (Hidayat, 2006, p. 92).

In the context of modern politics, Rumi's concept of freedom can be used as a critique of liberal freedom, which only emphasizes individual autonomy. Liberal freedom often ignores moral and spiritual dimensions, giving rise to selfishness and social inequality. In contrast, freedom in Rumi's perspective does not deny individual freedom, but emphasizes that freedom must be balanced with transcendental responsibility to God as the center of moral orientation (Hidayat, 2006, p. 92).

G. Relevance in the Modern Context

Jalaluddin Rumi's thoughts on love and freedom have profound relevance for facing the challenges of modern humanity. The contemporary world is characterized by increasing materialism, individualism, and fragmentation of social relations, causing humans to lose their sense of meaning in life. This phenomenon often reduces love to merely a fleeting emotional relationship, while freedom is understood only as the ability to act without limits. In this context, Rumi's thoughts become an alternative source that can provide a spiritual and philosophical framework for re-understanding the meaning of love and freedom in a more complete and profound way.

1. The Crisis of Love in Modern Society and Rumi's Solution

In the modern era, love is often reduced to instant and consumptive romantic emotions. Social media reinforces the understanding of love as a performative relationship, where self-worth is determined by digital validation. This phenomenon causes many individuals to experience emotional emptiness and relationship instability. To address this issue, Rumi's thinking provides a deeper spiritual framework. In Mathnawi, Rumi asserts that "Love is the life of everything" (Rumi, 2018, p. 92), meaning that love is not just a feeling, but the core of human existence and cosmic energy that connects humans with God, others, and nature.

From this perspective, love is understood not only through interpersonal relationships, but as the basis of an ethical life that demands compassion, honesty, and sincerity. This then becomes a criticism of modernity, which tends to ignore the affective-spiritual dimension. This thinking is in line with the ideas of environmental ethics and the current ecological crisis. Nasr (1997) asserts that modern humans treat nature exploitative because they have lost



their spiritual connection with it. Rumi offers a solution by teaching that nature moves through love, and humans can only live harmoniously when they view nature with love and respect. This view is not only spiritual, but also a philosophical correction to the modern anthropocentric paradigm. (Nasr, 1997, p. 61).

2. Modern Education Issues and the Relevance of Rumi's Concept of Love

Modern education places great emphasis on cognitive abilities and academic achievement, while spiritual, affective, and moral aspects are often neglected. This results in a generation that is intellectually intelligent but emotionally fragile. Rumi emphasizes that true education must be based on love and inner transformation. In Fihi Ma Fihi, Rumi states that “Education without love will only fill the mind, not the heart” (Rumi, 2015, p. 144). This quote shows that education that only focuses on cognitive aspects is not enough to shape a whole human being.

Rumi's view is relevant as a critique of modern education that is trapped in instrumental rationality. Azra (1999) notes that value-based education exists to develop the emotional and spiritual dimensions of students. Rumi offers a solution through love-based education, which is education that develops empathy, compassion, and moral sensitivity. This is particularly important amid the growing phenomena of bullying, academic individualism, and a crisis of character among the younger generation. (Azra, 1999, p. 75).

3. Digital Freedom and the Modern Identity Crisis

Digital society claims to be a free society. However, in reality, many individuals are imprisoned by self-image, algorithms, and the demand to appear perfect in virtual space. Freedom is understood as a space for unlimited expression, but internally, many people are bound by digital addiction, social anxiety, and the need for validation. Rumi offers sharp criticism of this form of pseudo-freedom. In Mathnawi, he writes, “You appear to be free, but you are bound by what you love other than God” (Rumi, 2018, p. 311). When read in a digital context, this sentence describes how modern humans are bound by “new idols,” namely self-image, popularity, and social recognition.

Piliang (2004) observed that digital culture gives rise to an artificial reality that deceives and causes humans to lose their identity. In this context, Rumi's thinking offers a path to liberation through self-purification and freedom from the digital ego. Rumi teaches that freedom is not the ability to follow all desires, but the ability to control oneself. Thus, Rumi's thinking provides a solution to free humans from the pressures of an alienating digital culture. (Piliang, 2004, p. 135).

4. Identity Crisis and Rumi's Transcendental Solution

The modern generation often experiences an identity crisis due to the flood of information, relativism of values, and rapid social change. Many people search for their true identity only through psychological introspection or physical pursuits, but still cannot find peace. Rumi provides a deeper perspective that true human identity can only be found through a relationship with God. In Fihi Ma Fihi, Rumi writes, “Whoever knows himself knows his Lord. And whoever



does not know his Lord is lost in the search for himself" (Rumi, 2015, p. 201). This quote shows that Rumi sees identity as a spiritual entity, not merely a social construct.

Mulkhan (2002) reinforces this view by stating that the search for identity requires spiritual orientation so as not to fall into relativism and meaninglessness. Rumi offers a solution in the form of an inner journey through love and divine consciousness, which provides a stable foundation for identity that is not easily shaken by modern social dynamics. (Mulkhan, 2002, p. 142).

5. The Integration of Love and Freedom as a Solution to Modernity

In Rumi's thinking, love and freedom are two concepts that cannot be separated. Love lifts humans out of their egos, while freedom provides space for love to grow. Rumi saw that humans can only live authentically when they love God and their fellow humans, while being free from the domination of the ego and worldly greed. Shihab (1998) noted that Rumi's spiritual inclusiveness became a model of social ethics capable of easing conflict and overcoming polarization. In the modern context marked by a crisis of meaning, social conflict, and nihilism, Rumi's thinking offers a philosophical approach capable of building a more humane, holistic, and spiritual civilization. (Shihab, 1998, p. 110)

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that Jalaluddin Rumi's thoughts on love and freedom have philosophical and spiritual depth that is relevant to contemporary human issues. Rumi understands love not



merely as a personal emotion, but as an ontological principle that connects humans with God, fellow humans, and the universe. Love serves as the basis of social ethics that encourages compassion, tolerance, and respect for differences. Meanwhile, freedom in Rumi's thinking is understood as inner freedom achieved through liberation from the ego, lust, and worldly attachments. Freedom is not interpreted as unlimited freedom, but as spiritual awareness that enables humans to act responsibly and in harmony with divine values.

Through a philosophical hermeneutic approach to Rumi's works such as *Mathnawi* and *Fibi Ma Fibi*, this study shows that Rumi's Sufi symbolism and metaphors contain meanings that are open to interpretation according to the context of the times. Rumi's thoughts can be read dialogically with modern and contemporary philosophy, existential psychology, and social ethical discourse without losing their Islamic spiritual foundation. In a modern context marked by a crisis of meaning, individualism, social conflict, and a narrowing of the meaning of freedom, the integration of the concepts of love and freedom in Rumi's thought offers a more balanced reflective framework between the personal, social, and spiritual dimensions, and contributes to the development of contemporary Islamic philosophy.

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