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**Sufism and Transcendentalism: A Comparative Study Between Jalal El-Din  
Rumi's "*Mathnawi*" and Walt Whitman's "*Leaves of Grass*"**

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**Dedication**

I dedicate this work to the memory of the first person who inspired me, my favorite writer, Elif Shafak.

I dedicate this work to my parents who supported me along the whole way with love and patience. To my mother who is the source of unconditional love, for her support, caring touch and her belief in my potentials and to my father who is the source of my strength and the one who taught me to be patient to reach my goals .

I dedicate this work to my supportive brother and sisters, the ones who showed me how far I can go because they are a great gift in my life.

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### Abstract

Sufism is a belief in which a Sufi seeks to find the truth of divine knowledge and love by creating spiritual relationship with God .It consists of a variety of mystical tenets that are designed to assert God's oneness and to facilitate the experience of the presence of God's divinity and Love in the world. Jalal al-din Rumi, was a mystical poet , who gave a significant fame to Sufism's movement by introducing his notable piece of writing *Mathnawi*, that absolutely summarized and facilitated the major beliefs , and symbols of Sufism for the readers . Transcendentalism ,in the other hand, is a 19<sup>th</sup> century doctrine of writers and poets in New England who were bound together to form an idealistic system of ideas based on a belief in the individuality of all humans , the goodness of humanity, and the priority of insight over experience and logic for the revelation of the deepest truths. Transcendentalism witnessed the birth of its free verse writer, Walt Whitman who has a great impact on the movement, in creating new beliefs and ideas. Whitman's and the use of his unique style in terms of random verses and the use of symbol were displayed in his famous book *Leaves of Grass*. Based on the methods of comparative literature and drawing upon Sufism as well as Transcendentalism movement, the study explores the poems of the very well-known poets through highlighting the themes of love, God, and nature that both poets depicts. The different ways of conveying each poet's perception are underlined in an attempt to examine the differences and the similarities between the poets' depiction of the themes.

**Key words: Comparative literature, Divinity, God, Love, Nature, Sufism, Transcendentalism.**

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## **General Introduction**

Spiritual movements, as Sufism and Transcendentalism often preforms crucial roles in the world of spirituality; they both search for divinity which will allow them to understand both their existence and the universe. Such understanding is usually reached by following certain principles ,as performing individualism , understanding divinity ,seeking love for God and the other individual , and nature 's appreciation. As mystical doctrines, Sufism and transcendentalism are celebrated by two major poets, Jalal al-din Rumi and Walt Whitman whom have a significant impact through their special style of writings in terms of the use of free verses and the use of mystical beliefs in lines of their poems

## **Background of the study**

Islamic Mysticism or Sufism is considered to be the inner and psycho-spiritual dimension of Islam. Although, several scholars assume that Sufism is beyond the Islamic sphere .As a result, there has been always disagreement among Sufis themselves regarding the history and the origin of Sufism. The traditional view considers Sufism as the mystical school of Islam, and its beginnings in the first centuries pursuing the life of the prophet Mohammed. However, there is another view that traces Sufism during the pre-Islamic roots as mystics and mysterious schools, in which, its followers practice mystical tenets and divine movements as the whirling dervishes that are gathered in specific regions known as Islamic Sufism .The whirling dervishes or the followers who practice divine movements are known to be Rumi's followers. Rumi is a Persian poet, in which he appears to be the well –known poet in the world of Sufism. His writings illustrated the way Sufis can have a direct relationship with God through the abandons of the material world.

Transcendentalism is a concept that depicts a basic thought, that individual have awareness about

themselves and the world that transcends or goes farther away, in which their five senses lead . The awareness comes through imagination and intuition .Not through the use of senses or mind.

Transcendentalists are individuals, who understands various ideas not as a religious facts but as a system that reveals life relationships .The transcendentalist's writings were highly romantic in nature. It introduced remarkable thoughts to the American and Western readers. However, their thoughts were extremely sentimental that they required another form of expression to address individuals' Poetry, was the appropriate genre to transmit transcendentalists' thoughts to the American citizens. Eventually, Walt Whitman introduced the free verses for the American poets which led to the renounce of the English tradition verse.



## Literature review

According to Azmayesh 2012, Common people are familiar with the “Whirling Dervishes “; more likely, some of them have seen a Turkish film in which these folks appear, in which it is impossible to ignore their dance. The perception of Dervishes can be explained in two ways; on one hand, Dervishes are originally mystics of the Middle East, whose roots are to be found in Islamic culture. On the other hand, very few realize that the real philosophy of the Dervishes is considered to be the way of Sufi. (Azmayesh 55) .Whirling Dervishes are considered broadly as members of Sufism, who usually follow material poverty as a concept of life.

According to Adel, Gholamali Haddad, et all, Sufism is the inner dimension of the prophecy of Muhammad, while some say that Sufism came into existence during the Islamic Golden Age from about the eighth to tenth century; however, the predating Islamic scholars see that Hassan of Basra is considered as being one of the Sufis before the Golden Age. Ibn Khaldun agrees that Sufism was already practiced by the Sahaba. Nevertheless, with the distribution of material tendencies, the term Sufi was applied just to those who emphasize on the spiritual practice of Islam. According to the late medieval mystic, Abd-Allah Ibn Muhammad al- Hanafiyyah was considered as the first person to be called a Sufi (Adel et all 40).

For Chittick, William C 1983, *Mathnawi* is a comprehensive poem written in Persian by Jalal al –Din Muhammad Balkhi, known as Rumi. *Mathnawi* is a poetic collection of stories that was derived from the Quran and Hadith .*Mathnawi* is considered as one of the influential work of Sufism known as Persian Quran .It examines the various dimensions of spiritual life. Also, it teaches Sufis the path to reach their destination to be truly in love with God (Chittick 25).

According Goodman, Russell 2013, as a reaction to intellectualism, where it is a significant

Concern, was the intense for spiritual experiences to transcend the material world of sense and rationality. Transcendentalism has its roots in the early 1800s. It emerged from a debate between the new light theologians, who accept that religion should emphasize on the emotional experience, and the old light opponents, who cared about reason in their religious approach.

Transcendentalists embraced ideas brought by philosophers as Immanuel Kant .In fact; transcendentalism valued the individual knowledge of God, believing that there is no need to have an intermediation if the one wants to seek spiritual insight. They embraced idealism, focusing on nature and opposing materialistic world. Between 1836 and 1860 was the period in which The Transcendental Club was emerged. It was associated with famous figures among these were literary figures as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Walt Whitman. Walt Whitman is referred to as the true American voice; his poetry was of a modern form. His writings were about understanding the concept of nature and individuals (Godman, Russell 07).

Both Moon and Michael, 1991, stated that *Leaves of Grass* are a collection of poems written by the American poet Walt Whitman. In his work, Whitman elevated the concept of both individual's and nature's role in the society .Unlike Waldo Emerson a famous transcendentalist writer, Whitman did not diminish the role of both spirit and mind; rather, he valued the notion of individual and spirit .His poem has been recognized as one of the central works in the American poetry (Moon and Michael 11).

### **Research Problem**

Sufism and Transcendentalism, as spiritual movements, inspired multiple literary works, and domains. It holds universal ideas that were shared and appreciated by intellectuals amongst Rumi and Whitman. Rumi's *Mathnawi* and Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* reflected two main themes. Man's divinity in love and God and nature mysticism; which are linked to Sufi's and transcendentalists

thinking. Our study then will tackle and shed the light on how similar and different the two representations of the works concerning the two pre- mentioned themes.

### **Research questions**

- What are the various conceptions and genesis about Sufism and what are its major tenets and its well-known poet?
- What are the different notions and origins about Transcendentalism during the nineteen century and what are its major principles and its famous poet?
- How Rumi tackled the two themes in his poem?
- How Whitman tackled the two themes in his poem?

### **Objectives and Motives: This study aims**

- 1- To shed the light on the history of Sufism and its major tenets and poet
- 2- To shed the light on the origins of Transcendentalism and its significant principles and poet
- 3- To Investigate how the two works tackled the two themes

### **Research Methodology**

The conducted study is historical, analytical, and comparative in nature, in which we are going to compare the previous mentioned poems by Rumi and Whitman. Based on the nature of our study, we found that both the historical approach and the thematic one are the appropriate. The historical approach will pave the way to trace back the two main concepts of our study (Sufism and Transcendentalism) in history. In addition, the thematic approach will help us in our analysis of the two previously mentioned themes (man's divinity in love and God and the nature mysticism).

The present study is divided into three chapters. The first chapter tackles the first concept which

is Sufism, its history, tents, and its notable poet, Jalal al Din Rumi. The second chapter is the account of transcendentalism as a concept, its origins, principles, and its well-known poet, Walt Whitman. The last chapter is the practical one in which analysis will take place on Rumi's *Mathnawi* and Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

## **Chapter One:**

**Footpaths to the notion and the history of Sufism and an introduction to its well-known poet Jalal Al –Din Rumi and his famous work *Mathanwi***

## 1.1 Introduction

Sufism as a notion marked its initial traces since the beginning of Islam. Previously, people around the world realized the notion and used it as 'tassawuf'. However, and in the earlier Islamic writings the term 'Sufism' came as permanent alternative to the word 'tassawuf'. Moreover, Sufi's fundamental conception is depicted as a monotonous practices; where specialized dancers renowned as 'the whirling dervishes' express their obligedness and gratefulness monotonously towards God. Although there is identification of what Sufism is, the term raises controversy among individuals; whose major testimony is that Islam is implausible from all the abstentions practices of Sufis around the globe.

This chapter attempts to disclose Sufism as a mystical term, and expound its origins and its basic tenets which are applied by Sufis. In addition, this chapter will present a brief introduction to Rumi's work, .By understanding the esoteric notion of Sufism, and its tenets .An analysis of the concerned themes in in the Jalal AL Din Rumi's *Mathnawi* can be tackled thoroughly, and eventually will present an idea about the notion of God, love, and nature as it expressed in lines of the poem.

## 1.2 Conception about Sufism

In his 2012 book's title, *The Teachings of a Sufi Master*, Seyed Mostafa provided an explanation of his quest concerning the notion of Sufism. After being acquainted with various interpretations of Sufism between individuals, Seyed Mostafa declared he initially found the notion of Sufism to be a "collection of personal practices" (14), which are practiced in small groups, decorated and systemized to assist followers of Sufism to develop their unexploited and secret capacities. The major goal of these hidden practices is to create a personal knowledge of the self, and to develop spiritual skills for the visible and invisible world; in which and eventually will aid and guide the traveller along with his spiritual path to notably gain the reality of his existence (Seyed Mostafa 14).

Moreover, in looking at the definition of Sufism Seyed Mostafa, found that the notion itself delivers twofold purposes: the first is stated in a form of a personal development, while the second is expressed as the knowledge of the visible and invisible world. In fact, he categorized the double purposes as being relatable, because personal development eventually obtains to knowledge. This case can be explained when human beings identify and depict themselves in a single form of only a physical structure; in which, it will ultimately vanish after death. For them, this physical structure is organized and purely related to our five senses: where we apply it for a certain communication. Moreover, what humans perceive with their five senses; for example, their ability to smell and taste is associated with the visible place of entrance of the universe. While, what they bound to identify with their five senses is likely to be associated with the invisible world. This paradox urges Seyed to explicate that the real access to universe is to go beyond the five senses in order to develop and create our sixth sense; in which, he depicts it as real soul to discover the invisible world. Thus, our personal development during our interaction with the universe should be fixated and based on our sixth sense (Seyed Mostafa 18-19).

In his 1975 publication *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, both Schimmel and Annemarie 1975, corresponded with the phenomenon of Sufism and the spiritual life in Islam as being "protean" (3) and

extensive when individuals venture to give it a detailed account. They both explained the various interpretation of Sufism by providing an example of Rumi's tale *The blind men*, when group of people were invited to touch an elephant. During their fumble, each one expresses his depiction of the elephant according to which part of his hands has sensed. For some the elephant appeared as a pipe, to another like a fan, or appeared like a throne. However, none had the capacity to imagine the final structure of the animal.

This case and for Islam and Schimmel is considered as a counter part to the notion of Sufism; or "Islamic mysticism". To get nearer to Sufism's moniker in being the "Islamic mysticism". The anatomy of the word mysticism is bound to analysis; in which, mysticism's anatomy penetrates mysterious objects, objects that cannot be joined through the use of ordinary tools or intellectual exertion. Further, mysticism is understood from its root words as mystery and mystic, or from the Greek word *myein*, "to close the eyes" (4).

Additionally, mysticism has been called "the great spiritual current which goes through all religion" (4). By means, mysticism is manifested as being the consciousness' of religions reality. Last, mysticism is encapsulated with wisdom's tunic (Schimmel and Annemaire 3-4)

## 1.2 Genesis of Sufism

Various beliefs and opinions can be regarded by scholars about the origins and roots of Sufism. However, and in his book titled *principles of Sufism* Angha Nahid provided an account for his readers about the meaning of the word Sufism by introducing a series of different interpretation. In his 1994 publication, Nahid explained and exposed a set of various assumptions concerning the origin of the word Sufism. For Nahid the word Sufism derives from the word "suf" (5), which means wool. This interpretation is based on a story of the pious people who used to wear woolen garments during the first century of Islam. The pious or religious people and during the period of the prophet Muhammad peace be upon him, wore clothes of wool to denote their aloofness from the world and their simplicity in living. A



century after the emergence of Islam, Arabs had conquered empires as Persia and Egypt. These Arabs in the other hand, surrounded themselves with luxurious entourage in their severe desert lives .As a result, the pious individuals feared that the meaning of Islam was in danger of being entirely lost, they decided to dress themselves in a rough wool as a sign of protest against the prodigality of Arabs .Besides their efforts in guarding themselves against the temptation of luxury, pious individuals performed mortification, fasting, and refused the pleasure of material life to the greatest extent possible.

Thus, wearing woolen clothes became a part of the discipline related to Sufism .But even though Sufis wore wool from the beginning of Islam, the word Sufism, according to Arab grammar, is beyond the term wool, and not whoever wears woolen clothes is a Sufi (Nahid 5).

Another assumption believed that the word Sufism derives for the term “sufateh” (6), which refers to a name of a thin plant. Such assumption was based on Sufis who were thin because of their severe fasting and mortification .Thus, Sufis were associated to the thin plant as a symbol for their emaciation. However, this assumption is linguistically and grammatically false (Nahid 6) .Further, another assumption about Sufism was claimed that the term is derived from the Greek term “soph”(7) ,which refers to the combination of knowledge and wisdom .Besides that , Sufis construct hypothesis concerning the derivation of the latter by referring to the people of the pious who used to be called “sufe”(7) before the time of the prophet Mohammed ,these religious people were a collected group who used to serve in the kaaba ,but such hypothesis does not bear a valid explanation ,since people who used to serve the kaaba at that time were not only people of suf but also people from other religious sects as people of shiah (Nahid7).

Although, various efforts have been made to descry the origin of the word , they don't provide the readers a visible understanding about the word Sufism .It would appear that understanding the origin of Sufism is ambiguous like the rituals practiced by the Sufis .Also , it would seem that despite the exertion of various scholars ,we realize that and as a matter of fact no one knows the origin of the word Sufism .

So, it appears that Sufism is not a term that is derived from a pre-existing basic word; in addition, Sufism is not an analysis of a certain practice. And its followers and believers are those who have succeeded in mastering mysterious and deep tenets and norms provided by Islam (Nahid 8).

#### **1.4. Footpaths towards the beginning and Development of Sufism**

Scholars as Ibn Taymeeyah traced the initial seeds of Sufism in the early phases of the second century of the Hijri almanac (migration period), however, scholars like Ibn Khladun and Ibnul Jawzee indicated that the early occurrence of Sufism began actually after the Hijra calendar. Hence, the early variation of Sufism was manifested in matters of exaggerations in worship and in radical towards the worldly life. Since the beginning of Sufism, Sufis around the world became interested in leading a religious and pious life of what was known as Zuhd (an abstemious way of life), where, sincerity, patience, and truthfulness are one of the leading features to follow by Sufis.

Although and for Schimmel and Annemarie, in their work titled, *The origin and Early Development of Sufism*, some Sufis exaggerated in their performance in worshiping and creating religious new concepts that might introduce a sense of hyperbole, in the other hand, there were Sufis who creates a way of expressing such religious tendencies in a logical and a mystical manner. Those ways of expressions such as dancing and singings, played a mystical role in stimulating a state of ecstasy. As soon as the beginnings of the third century, Sufis introduces new concepts and practices that became more evident unlike it was known in the ages of migration. These new religious notions and performances can be illustrated, when some Sufis became curious and interested in monasticism where they chooses to live like monks, while some Sufi masters preferred to speak about hunger, poverty, sleeplessness, dancing and clamping as a method of the innovation of Thikr (remembrance). Besides that some Sufis abandons marriage and any other means of sustenance. Clearly and during the course of this development, the Sufi masters creates a certain regulations that made them perceive themselves as special creatures of God. Such

regulation marked the beginnings of the so-called “knowledge of Al-Haqeeqah (Reality), in relation to the so-called “mystic knowledge “(13) of God.

By the ending of this century , Sufism flourished and Sufis orders began to sprout ,where some of its deviant creeds as Al-Hulool (indwelling of god incarnation ) , and Ittihaad ( union between God and the created ) were embraced by their extreme masters .Moreover , new phases of Sufism were introduced and defined by masters who spoke of specific terminology to define such phases ,like Fanaa’(annihilation), Kashf ‘(perception of the realities of existence ),and samaa’ (mystic singing and dancing as a ways of inspiration. During the fourth century, Sufism as a concept shifted into orders that accommodates all kinds of Bida’( creed), and Ittibaa’ (way of following ) .It was considered as a combination for every sect. Amongst them, the shiah (adherents) and the followers of all sorts of Ahwaa’ (desires).Specifically, for Ahlul Ahwaa’ (followers of lowly desires), Sufism became a universal ground that penetrates as a spiritual guidance. At the time of the sixth century, a group of Sufis claimed to be one of the prophet’s descendants. Later each one of them established a special Sufi orders with special followers. For example, Ar-Rifaa’I appeared in Iraq; and Al-Badawi in Egypt. Further, during this century and in the next two coming centuries, the Sufi Fitnah (seduction) reached its pinnacle with the Aqeedah of Wahdat Al-Wujood (unity of Existence) ; in addition to the appearance of new sorts of Bida’ (creed) as building on graves and magnifying them .

Last , during the ninth , tenth , and eleventh centuries , the Sufi orders increased and Sufi affiliation spread over the entire Muslim world .Nowadays , Sufism established , preached , and unrestricted movements of its followers across the boundaries of several Muslim and non-Muslim countries .In short ,during the persist of Sufism and at present time , Sufism was rounded with challenges . For instance, The Salaf ‘or the followers of the suni Islamic movement gave their guidance and warned against the early acts of deviations of some of the Sufi .In addition to that, the salaf exposed the illusory concepts and beliefs of Sufism it the past and the present .Those pieces

of advice and threatens towards the early Sufi orders, benefited the Muslims worldwide. Clearly, the course of the Salaf distinguishes between the truth and illusion and Calls for unity between Muslims based on the true Tawheed (unity) and pure Ittibba '(following of the established sharia). This reveals that the Salaf are a good example of kindness and wisdom in the matters of their efforts to propagate the truth without compromising any religious rules (Schimmel and Annemaire 13-16).

## 1.5 Significant tenets of Sufism

### 1.5.1. Abandonment (Tark)

In his 1994 book titled, *principles of Sufism*, Nahid provided for both his readers and Sufis the major principles that a Sufi should follow to reach the stage of a Sufi master. One of the initial tenets presented by Nahid is abandonment .For him the latter is the first tenet for Sufis to reach, since their concern is seeking spirituality or world of spirituality. The tenet of tark is manifested in deserting the world of illusion ,in addition to the individual's transient beliefs that are based on illusion .The principle of abandonment calls the inner recognition of the superficial knowledge collected through the various stages of life , and to the perception of feelings which are based on illusion instead of reality ; in addition to the representation of slavery instead of salvation .For Nahid and during the stage of spirituality ,the individual is obliged to draw a fine line between deception and truthfulness. On one hand, it is not difficult to not tumble into falsehood by thinking that individual's appropriate the acquaintance of others as his own. However, such acquaintance should not be false for a real understanding, since this stage is the individual's everyday norm.

Besides, this limited acquaintance can hardly suit the level of understanding the information of the abstract and truthfulness life. Consequently, if an individual does not awaken from such dangerous illusion; undoubtedly, he will remain trapped in that deception until he dies, with dropping the chance of tearing the false copies of illusion to find the truth that lies behind.

Hence, the individual is like the microcosm of the entire cosmos; he has within himself the capacity to perceive the macrocosm but only if he placed the illusion that make the attachment to the world of limitations aside. (Nahid 13); for Nahid , abandonment as principle is practiced under three kinds .First, abandonment of the world of matter, which is to stand beyond the world of illusion by understanding the superficiality and the limitation of senses, as well as realizing not the misapprehension information of knowledge. Secondly abandonment of Paradise, which is to abandon the promises of the anonymous future and remain loyal in learning for sake of perceiving, instead of becoming greedy for a reward.

Finally, abandonment for abandonment, which includes in becoming free from the barriers of limitations and dimensions .At this stage, the individual has freed himself from any sort of attachments. (Nahid 14-15). Thus, Abandonment or tark is not only the initial principle for a Sufi to follow, but also it is the pillar to the stages of becoming a Sufi master. Abandonment, can be displaced in Rumi's work Mathnawi , when the individual decides to let go all of his attachment of t both material and illusive world ; in order to reach divinity .Such principle is a hidden explanation of the theme Man's divinity and the nature mysticism in Rumi's poem Mathanwi .

### **1.5.2. Repentance (tubeh)**

Repentance means "to turn away" (30), and that is the turning back from an inferior phase to a superior phase. According to the principles of Islam, repentance is the regret one feels after committing a forbidden behavior. However, in Sufism it is the separation from the boundaries that hinder the seeker from reaching the ultimate being. The direction of the Sufi is based towards God, the eternal being. Repentance is depicted when a Sufi follows the straight path that starts with him and that ends with the Divine.

The latter is expected to turn away from any destruction during his path towards divine knowledge. And as a Sufi in his practice of abandonment has learned to erase the darkness of illusion, and has acquired the mastery of being truthful in his quest, his turning towards anything

other than the Divine would create a falsehood. Yet, the condition for such falsehood is awareness, that is, the realization of the curtains and veils that detach the seeker from his goal to reach God. Besides that, awareness is the basic Column of the spiritual quest; it assists the seeker to recognize the shortcomings of his behavior, and to recognize his fraudulence and weaknesses in attempt to regret such darkness and helplessness and aim to strive for understanding.

Furthermore, the first stage that the spiritual seeker takes is to admit his lack of knowledge and ignorance, without such realization, the traveler will not attempt for advancements as he does not observe his weaknesses that are willing to be transformed to strengths. In fact, it is after truthful realization of his capacities that a Sufi can contend for improvement. Thus, the seeker must repent from all but truth with excitement in his heart for his inner discovery.

Moreover, repentance is achieved after the enlightenment of the heart and the illumination of the mind. That is when the heart and the mind become awake from ignorance and observe the lights of knowledge that recline within. Subsequently, it is after such awakening that the seeker detours his face and his heart beyond the ignorance of worldly fastening and towards the purgation of his heart. Thus, the seeker will be shaped with a heart and mind that are glorified with a spiritual strength, whose goal is self-recognition, to where he will arrive at the gateway of understanding the knowledge of the Divine. (Nahid30). Repentance as a principle can be depicted in Rumi's work *Mathnawi*, when a man chooses to separate himself from all the boundaries that might deprive him from understanding the knowledge of God, and to reach such understanding, man should use Love as a guide to enlighten his heart and mind from all the ignorance of the world. Eventually he will shape his heart and mind with a strong belief and understanding of God.

### **1.5.3. Unification (tawheed)**

According to *the Dictionary of Modern written Arabic*, the notion of unification means "asserting oneness" (1055), which means to unify, unite, or consolidate. However for Sufis, and according to the scholar Ibn Abil –Ezz al–Hanafee, the principle of unification is used in reference

to God which explains that the understanding of God's unity in all individual's actions is directly or indirectly relate to him. It is the belief that God is one; without the existence of any other single partner in his dominion and lordliness .One without comparison in his attributes and essence, and one without a competitor in his divinity and worship.

These there are the leading aspects to which Sufis follow towards their goal in understating God's unification .Moreover, for Sufis, the omission of any aspects mentioned above is a failure and a leading action to shirk (polytheism).For Sufis, the principle of unification has three major categories. The first category is refereed as Tawheed ar-Ruboobeeyah ,which is literally means keeping the unity of lordship .This category is based on the crucial notion that God in the one who created everything on this cosmos when there was nothing ; He is the single Lord of the cosmos and its citizens without any average challenge to his lordship .furthermore , based on this category , God is the only true power in the entity , it is he who gift all objects the power to move and change. Nothing happens in creation other than what he allows to happen.

The second category is known as Tawheed al –Asmaa was –sifaat, which literally explains that all the Sufis should maintain the unity of God's Names and epithets. This category denotes that Sufis are required to refer to God according to how he have depicted himself without any explanation his name and epithets by giving them meanings rather than their actual meanings. For instance, God may not be named al Gaadib (the angry one), despite the fact that God has said that he gets hungry, because neither God nor his messenger the prophet Mohammed has used this name. This may seem to be an obvious point, but it should be maintained to prevent any false depiction of God.

Moreover, preserving God's epithets is explained in the Bible and Torah, when God spent the first six days crating the cosmos then slept on the seventh .For this false assumption, both Christians and Jews take either Saturday or Sunday as a day of rest in which work is looks as a sin. For Sufis, such assumption is a false to God's epithets of his creation. Despite the importance of

the two first categories of unification, the stable belief in them only is not sufficient to satisfy the Sufis requirement of unification. Consequently the previous categories mentioned above must be accompanied by their integral ,Tawheed al –Ebaadah , in order for unification (tawheed) to be taken as complete and final understanding for Sufis .Incidentally , The most crucial aspect of unification is that of Tawheed al –Ebaadah , which insists on marinating the unity of God ‘s worship .The various forms of God in the other hand must be dedicated only to God because he is the only who deserves worship , and it is He the only who can provide and gift to Sufis as a consequence of their worship .In addition , there is no urge for any form of intercessor or intermediary between Sufis and God .God emphasized the necessity of directing worship to him only by indicating that this was the major goal of all of his inhabitants .Such emphasis also what Sufis follow and believe .The principle of unification is displays in Rumi’s work *Mathnawi* in his the theme of man and the nature mysticism ; when Rumi explained in his poems that man’s understanding of God’s existence can be fulfilled when he or she believe and understand their existence and with understanding their existence and believing in nature and all other creatures surrounding them , man will have a strong believe in the existence of God’s unification .

#### **1.5.4. Love (hubb)**

For Murata, Sachiko and Chittick 1994, the perception of love can be considered Islamic because it goes back to the three tenets of faith, which are tawheed (the assertion of divine unity), prophecy, and the reversion to God. Likewise, Muslims distinguished between God’s unity and God as a guide, so also Sufis spoke of two types of divine love: a universal love for all man and all creation, and a specific love for those who place love for God into an initial practice (Traditionalhikma.com 9-11).

For chittick , God loves everything that He created -ugly and beautiful , sinners and religious , rescued and damned , and as the all the compassionate , He gifts mercy in all His inhabitants without exception .However , this mercy for Sufis ,does not guarantee the rescue of any given pious or believer.



God as the merciful guides His inhabitants, the special possessors to choose, and inform them that He has a unique love for those who freely strive to become ornamented with beauty, love, forgiveness, humanity, and other divine epithets. Sufis perceive these two types of love as immortal, since they take them for granted during their mystical practices. Moreover, the principle of love is concerned to bring the deeper implications of the Quran by referring to God's unconditional love in two clauses extracted from verse 5:54 'He loves them, and they love Him.' This verse was cited often than any other verse in the Quran as depiction and discussion of love.

This depiction of love in the Quran was explained by Sufis that God loves His inhabitants unconditionally and eternally, and that inhabitants love God by their innate nature. (Traditionalhikma.com 9-10). Thus, Sufis realize that God loves His inhabitants beyond time and place and without His concern to their position and situation in the universe. The principle of Love can be displayed in Rumi's poem, *Mathnawi*, in the theme of man's divinity in love; Rumi mentioned the Love of God to his inhabitants and the Love of inhabitants to God. In fact, such love for divinity and according to Rumi in the lines of his poem can be reached when man starts loving himself and the other, by this practice man will have Love and appreciation to God.

### **1.6. Jalal al Din Rumi**

For both Iqbal and Afzal, 2014, Rumi was born on September 30, 1207 in a family speaking native Persian language. His family was originally from the Balkh city of Khorasan, that is known now as Afghanistan. Rumi was born specifically in a village of Wakhsh, a small town situated on the Wakhsh river in Balkh region. He was considered to be one of the influential poets in Persia that is known now as Iran. His father, Baha al Din, was a theologian expert and mystic from Wakhsh. In 1219 Rumi's father traveled with his family from the city of Balkh, because of the fear from the invasion of the Mongols. Throughout their journey, Rumi's family arrived at Nishapur, or known as the Iranian city. In Nishapur, Rumi corresponded one of the famous mystic Persian poets, Attar. After their meeting together, it has

been said that Attar, the Persian poet informed Rumi's father that his son is going to become famous figure throughout the world (Iqbal and Afzal 22-25).

Years later and specifically in the city of Laranda, Rumi met his wife Gawhar khatun. Gawhar gave birth to two sons, Sultan walad and Aladdin Chalabi .The family settled in Konia after years of traveling where they found themselves in a peaceful and beautiful place under the Royal protection of Alla al –Din Kaiqobad. Moreover, after the death of Rumi's wife, he remarried and had a son, Amir Alim Chalabi , and a daughter, Malaken khatun ( Iqbal and Afzal 30).

The peak of Rumi's life was at the moment he encountered a wandering dervish named Shams Tabriz .It was considered as one of the memorable meeting in the history of Sufism. Furthermore, from that moment, Rumi's life has come to a change. He took Shams to inhabit in his own home and later the two men were inseparable they spent days together, sometimes even isolating themselves for long period of time to pray and fast in attempt to reach a divine communication with God .this deep partnership caused jealousy and wrath among his students and his family. Because of the anger and jealousy, life in Konia was challenging for Shams; Therefore, Shams left Konia without even informing Rumi about his new place .Thereafter, for around fifteen days Rumi searched shams's place without any luck (Iqbal and Afzal 36). Finally he gathered data that Shams was living in Damascus. Rumi in the other hand, sent sultan Walad to convince Shams to return to Konia .When Shams returned to Konia, the reunion between them did not last for long .Once more, Shams left Rumi for the last time after he realized that he is creating both burned and danger to Rumi 'life .Later, several assumption about Shams's place revealed that he might traveled to Syria. Rumi eventually traveled to Syria but there was no hope to find Shams. Thus , the disappearance of Shams still a matter of mystery; however, people of Konia accused the son of Rumi, Aliaoddin in being the one who murdered Shams as an attempt for revenge(Iqbal and Afzal 44)

## 1.7. Introducing Rumi's work *Mathnawi*

In his 2005 book titled *The Sufi Doctrine of Rumi*; Chittick and Nacer introduced Rumi's work *Mathnawi* as being one of the major works in Persian history. Soon after Rumi's spiritual encounter with Shams Tabriz, He started his wondrous work, *Mathnawi*. The work includes twenty-seven thousands verses. It was written in couplets and gathered into six large volumes. Rumi's six-volume masterwork, *Mathnawi*, had a single and basic goal: connection with the Absolute. The masterwork has often been called as the Persian Quran. Rumi's *Mathnawi* gathered within its tales references to the Quran, the speeches of prophet Muhammad, Muslim history, familiar sinners and saints, poetic allusion, and other tales of animals and fantastic events. The *Mathnawi* indicates Rumi's burning love, estimable spirits, fine intelligence, and elevated mysticism. Rumi engaged for forty-three years in writing this work.

Frequently, spending nights working on the composition of his masterpiece where he was reciting his ideas while his friend Husan al-Din was copying them down (Chittick and Nacer 2).

In addition, Rumi's other work is the *Divane Kabir* or *Divane Shams* (The Works of Shams Tabriz). The work consists of over forty thousand couplets. The *Divane Shams* is considered to be a noteworthy piece of literature because it translates Rumi's enraptured experiences into poetry (Chittick and Nacer 4).

Thus, Rumi slowly disappeared in the autumnal days of 1273. He died on 17 December 1273. The day of his death was depicted as the wedding night or Rumi's night of union with God (Chittick and Nacer 6).

## Conclusion

To write about Islamic Mysticism or Sufism is considered to be nearly an impossible task. At the beginning, a thick wall crosses your vision—and the longer your vision acquires deepness, the more difficult it seems to reach such depth. You may reside in the various assumptions about the valid

meanings of Sufism, or you may try to reach at least one stable conception of Mystical Mysticism; you may walk your feet's in the hallways of Sufism's Genesis; or you may be content to have all these various tenets that will absolutely help in paving the way to seek deepness as a seeker, where you enjoy the mystical beauty of such principles .In any case, only the real Sufi will reach the deepness in which he realizes that he have reached only what was already in himself .

Moreover, Jalal al-Din Rumi as a mystical poet , gave a significant fame to the world of Sufism by introducing his notable piece of writing *Mathnawi*, that absolutely summarized all the major beliefs , principles , and symbols of Sufism for the readers .

Thus, to place out and depict some main notions of Sufism, both as a mystical notion and a way to reach divine will generate no result that satisfies every reader.

## **Chapter Two:**

**Footpaths towards Transcendentalism in Nineteen Century  
and an introduction of Walt Whitman and his work *Leaves of  
Grass***

## 2.1. Introduction

The nineteenth century in America viewed a great number of movements and events that modified the American thoughts, norms, and attitudes. During this epoch, transcendentalism began as a philosophical movement in the mid-1830s in the eastern Massachusetts, this movement was established on logic instead of imagination; it came to change thoughts into concrete actions, and growing from the branches of religion, literature, education, philosophy, and social reform.

Transcendentalism witnessed the emergence of several writers among them: Walt Whitman who was considered the father of the free verse in American poetry, he believed that the divine and individual have no relation to nature, and every individual should be separated and have self-celebration.

The purpose of this chapter is to acquire about transcendentalism, its conception, origins, major principles, and its free verse poet Whitman who had a significant impact on the American thinking through his Collections of poems Leaves of Grass which based on self-celebration, divinity, individuality, nature and love.

## 2.2 .Conceptions about transcendentalism

Like any epoch, that characterized by a certain beliefs and culture in any country; America viewed some movements that changed the perception of people in the nineteenth century. Because of these changes individuals developed their perception that liberate them from strict guides and orders of different types of slavery. Thus, various philosophers start to work for the spread of a modern way of perception under the name of Transcendentalism; it believes that divine, individual, and nature are merged to form the

notion of life. Transcendentalism is an American and philosophical movement that appeared in the United States of America during the nineteenth century; it is a combination of new thoughts in literature, religion, education, society, and culture. It took a place in the eastern United States and exactly, in New England. It prospered from almost the mid 1830s to the 1860s, it also witnessed as a step toward the spiritual world, which eventually led to the breaking of the materialistic world in American society at that time (Emerson 15).

In addition, transcendentalism is a concept that depicts the thought that every female and male should have perception about themselves in which should not be based on logic and science, but on feelings and imagination. Consequently, in the early nineteenth century transcendentalism regarded as a conventional movement of Unitarianism which was the pioneer religion in the city of Boston in America that believed in God and his unitary (Emerson 20). Moreover, transcendentalism has significant impact on several fields such as religion, literature, and society as a crucial element in man's development.

In religion, transcendentalism was established in the thought of intellect that revealed that the perception and the observation of nature would assert the presence of God. It became as a religious notion and radicalized in the perception and thoughts of American individuals. It also introduced spiritual beliefs as love, self-celebration, and freedom and stressed on the thought that humans should be individual in this universe (Emerson 17).

Moreover, in literature, several transcendentalists believed that literature itself played significant role in expressing their thoughts about the notion of transcendentalism, and helped in writing these thoughts in forms of a collection of poems as Walt Whitman who was considered as the most notable transcendentalist poet with his famous work *Leaves of Grass*. His work affected individuals' way of thinking because it has shown the significance of transcendentalist's poetry.

Furthermore, in society, transcendentalism agreed that society should be relied on one major element which is conforming that will help American citizens to put emphasis and focus on their individual perception and self-celebration. Therefore, transcendentalism was a new way of perception and thinking that changed people's thoughts that influenced its citizens to work on their individuality (Emerson 25-28).

According to A reader, oxford university press and to Myerson (2000b), Transcendentalism arrived with its sense of originality and the Transcendentalists were depicted as "New School" (4) so the novelty that accompanied Transcendentalism was notable in America when there was a famous shift in the life of American and Americans.

Undoubtedly, Transcendentalists borrowed thoughts and ideas from several literatures, religions, and philosophies. Also, they inherited whatever suits their new beliefs. These borrowings were structured into a new system that suits their ideas. However, and according to Myerson, Transcendentalism was initially a religious infatuation, and Transcendentalists who were occupied with the notion of Unitarianism were a group of ministers who realized that Unitarianism with its severe shape cannot dismiss the chains of theology as a source to learn about religion (Myerson 6-10).

Hence, Transcendentalism is an early nineteenth century movement that joined literature, philosophy, and religion into the individual's life where he comes to understand the importance of his individuality and the perception of life from a natural perspective.

### **2.3. Footpaths towards the Origins of Transcendentalism**

Transcendentalism believes in several beliefs like: the singleness and unity of God (all religions share the same faith). The divinity of man (man was depicted as God, controlled by a mature spirit in himself) and the innocence of nature.



According to *the New York journal American Transcendentalism 2007*, and according to Gura, Transcendentalism first began among New England's Groups, who withdraw Calvinists Orthodoxy for two reasons: they believed in the worth of people's endeavor, rather than the sabotage and permanent depiction of unavoidable people's decay; they stressed in unity of God rather than the Christian notion of trinity. Consequently, groups of atheists saw that Jesus Christ was in somehow inferior to God, although he was gifted with particular authority.

Moreover, Transcendentalism was associated closely with Harvard and Boston University in New England. It was not a refusal of Unitarianism; but was establishes as a movement similar to the thoughts and concepts stated by the Unit. Unitarianism in the other hand was the first dominant movement that appeared in Boston in the early nineteenth century and began to spread in the Harvard University in the New England. Unitarianism started as a reaction against Calvinism's effect on religious life. It was depicted as a movement that was based on the notion of optimistic religion that was affected by philosophical enlightenment.

Transcendentalists, in the other hand, realized that there is something missing in Unitarians and they are required to complete such blank in a way that they are required to combine their religion and philosophy in transcendence elements that cannot be changed or fabricated, but more into elements that derives from the mental and spiritual nature of mankind .

Despite the urging changes to complete the missing gap missed by the Unitarians. Transcendentalists were Unitarians, who changed Calvinism pessimism of optimism; by stating that divine is love and justice, not hater or oppressive. Humans are not necessarily mistaken but capable of moral goodness and virtue .In addition, the Unitarians defined the

importance of nature against the mechanical universe by believing that nature help in manifesting the purpose of the divine and the existence of man. And man should celebrate the beauty of nature, but man and throughout such understanding and celebration towards nature is obliged to create such celebration of nature with divinity. (Gura 90-91).

Thus the birth of transcendentalism was a spiritual process that stressed on the fact that man is sinner by nature, but if he or she believed in the unity of God and the beauty of nature as a crucial source for virtue he or she will ultimately transcendence into a universe full of optimism and purity

## **2.4. Major principles in Transcendentalism**

### **2.4.1. Individualism**

The term Transcendentalism contains several principles that influenced American society in the nineteenth century, and one of its essential and fundamental principles is individualism, this principle emphasizes that a human being should have his or her separated personality without being under the effect of society; individualism believes that actions and ideas of a human being must be independent.

Certainly , Ralph waldo Emerson was among transcendentalists that were famous with the principle of individualism .In his well-known essay self-Reliance , Emerson stressed on the concept that man can achieve notable goals if he or she work within themselves .In addition , Emerson , performed against the social , religious ,and cultural effect of society on individuals , in order to urge them to be conscious and to have an important position in society without any reliance on everything . Undoubtedly, and foe Emerson such individualistic attitudes can work as an act against movement restrictions (Thoreau 15).

For example, and in 1830's, several citizens in New England viewed that the religion they adopted from their puritan ancestors had become severe and objective .Consequently ,

Emerson's essay self-reliance came as a counterpart reaction against such religious restrictions: Emerson, supported that citizens must be responsible for their personal life's and decisions, and encouraged citizens to rely on themselves, to be independent and free, he also provide them a freedom platform to express their ideas and certain ambiguities concerning different fields of religion and culture( Thoreau16 ).

During the late Nineteenth century and the early Twentieth century the principle of individualism could be seen in the works of many American writers .Walt Whitman owned the vision and courage to be able to express his beliefs and become the first voice of the revolution, firstly in European literature and then making its way to American literature. His individualistic can be seen clearly in his poem *Song of Myself*. It deals with relating a blade of grass to an individual encircled by other people. Despite, from a far the grass may show up to be all the same, in reality, each blade owned their special characteristics. The fact that Whitman mentioned the child who asks the question, "What is grass?" This particular symbol could have several interpretations based on what one would perceive it to be. Although, individuals want a democratic world where people are treated with equality, they also have to respect the beliefs and cultures of the others. Whitman wrote this poem to represent the fact that we should take pride in what each individual in this world has to give (Whitman, and Stacy).

Thus, individualism as a major principle insisted that men have the right to perform whatever they want and neglect what other people perceive about them, men should be responsible and should not wait for any kinds of protections from the government.

#### **2.4.2. Transcendental Idealism**

The term transcendental idealism emerged as a principle in the eighteenth century by, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. In 1781, Kant influenced society with his

principle, and what is known as Kantian or transcendental idealism; this principle believes that men's consciousness had a system that allows them to behave properly.

According to Kant the men's consciousness's is the engine that help people to perform correctly in the society. Moreover, Kant explained the principle of transcendental idealism in two parts: the first part which is based on transcendental idealism that insists on the concept that both fields of reality or truth and spirituality are above the material reality, such concept help people to express more about their true identity and their real spiritual tendencies .Besides the first concept, the second part was based on empirical idealism which emphasizes on the concept that both ideal observation and perception should be beyond the level of spiritual speculation. Indeed, the principle of transcendental idealism and its two parts helped people to seek reality without relying on material society, and to seek truth and perception beyond the empirical restrictions. (Allison 111).

Moreover, for Whitman, transcendental idealism as a principle, can be hidden in his famous poem "Song of Myself "; in which he mentioned his celebration of nature .He insisted on the symbol of nature as a way to withdraw the material world and to accomplish such step, Whitman urges his readers to follow a transcendental idealism, in which they became aware of their existence by understanding nature as a strong tool to abandon the material world and reach the level of spirituality.

Thus, to acquire more about the principle of transcendental idealism we should put emphasis on Kant's account of how people perceive things. Since, people's perception has a special relation to freedom, consciousness and rationality.

### **2.4.3. Self- Reliance**

The first thought that comes to the mind when making a relationship between the principle of self-Reliance and the term Transcendentalism is the well-known essay, self-

Reliance which was written by the essayist and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson during nineteenth century. Emerson motivated his readers to be individual and count on their capacities instead of wasting time in churches, he supported people to remain at home and create their individual knowledge and culture to develop an ideal and individual character. Moreover, Emerson urges that people must be independent, to follow their emotions and spiritual perception, and to not pay any attention towards the judgments of others, but if only their inner self is not corrupted (Emerson 26).

The essay self-Reliance is the initial phase in America that formed a new method of thinking based on self -confidence, Emerson in his essay wanted to address several messages to the audience ; his essay spoke many aspects in the society with a strong motivation to tackle many phenomena in the American society. Self-Reliance is ultimate definition of Emerson's principle of individualism; this essay values the principle of individualism rather than relying on society.

Moreover, the major and foremost goal of Emerson's essay is to assist people to perform freely instead of performing spontaneously following people's beliefs and corresponding to the desire of the majority .Emerson preferred people who insists on their personal will, instead of those who rely on the corrupted will of others (Emerson 36) .

Thus, the principle of self-Reliance urges people to be original in their perception rather than being followers of the majority.

#### **2.4.4. Nature**

Transcendentalism commenced as a movement from church's hierarchy and religious dogmas and toward the lectures of nature as perceived by individuals through both intuition and observation. Transcendentalism rejected their ancestors' puritans' belief in a fearful God and an unchangeable destiny. And they moved away, to from their own ancestors'

Unitarian belief that all knowledge arrives through sensational process and that we can perceive God only through religious interpretation of his words mentioned in the bible.

The passion towards nature, led to the rise of several critics, among them people of pious. Transcendentalism was accused of pantheism, and atheism, but the movement considered nature as being a crucial principle that will create eventually a decent understanding of God and his divinity.

Moreover, for the transcendentalists', nature can be perceived the way their ancestors' perceived the bible; for the underlying truths of universe it would disclose to the noticed eye. If God springs through ever item and ever individual in the universe, then the perception of even the most decent aspects of the universe would disclose universal wisdom .For example, Walt Whitman in his most influential collections of poem Leaves of Grass, revealed the universal wisdom in its deepest particular.

Furthermore, Whitman was also a gifted poet .His celebration of the "body electric" from Leaves of Grass expands into a celebration of an equally electrifying nature as he memorializes the seashore, the night sky, animals, even daydreaming grass. Whitman passion towards nature, made him use such symbol in his collection of poems" *songs of Myself*""; where he put emphasis on the celebration of nature and humanity's place within it. In fact, Whitman never separate from earth, instead he embraces it.

The rise of Transcendentalism: coincidence with the spring of American growth of factory; and economy. At that time when, Americans wealth was becoming the significant sign of worthiness. As a reaction against the capitalist's economy, the transcendentalists viewed to use nature as a method to measure the soul .Later, the movement quickly adopted philosophy and politics, literature, individual, and self-reliance (Emerson 22-26).

Consequently, and after the shift from all the ancestors' and from the materialist life, nature as principle shifted American citizens to a transcend thoughts where they commenced to perceive divinity as a way of both intuition and inspiration.

## **2.5. Walt Whitman**

Walt Whitman was born on May 31, 1818, in West Hills, Long Island in United States of America. He was the second child of an elven family member .His parents were Walter Whitman; who was known as a house builder, and his mother Louisa Van Velsor who was a household .Whitman was raised in the Brooklyn district of New York and Long Island. At the age of eleven, Whitman commences working as a printer. It was during this period of working that he discovered a great love for literature. He spends a great time in self-teaching where he read about Shakespeare, Homer, and even the Bible. Suddenly, and after a terrible fire in the printing of New York, Whitman was left without a work, however, in 1836, and at the age of 17 years old, he commenced his career as a teacher in the school houses of New York. He continued to teach until 1841 when he returned to journalism as a stable career. He established a weekly newspaper, Long-Islander, and later edited a decent number of Brooklyn and News York papers.

During the years that followed up until 1855 Whitman wrote repetitively about the common people, a topic that remained crucial to him all his life .Whitman was also concerned in politics and the political regime in America. He considered himself a democrat and his journalistic writing in many cases supported Democratic Party. Since, he was not an activist engaged in ending the slave trade he did not identify as an abolitionist, despite; he was strongly against slavery and showed dedication to end slavery in America.

Whitman was highly influenced by Emerson who was eminent in the literary circles of American, in fact, it's because Emerson's influence and passion towards the notion of American individualism and self-reliance that made Whitman writers his masterpiece *Leaves of Grass*, in which he became the American free verse nowadays. (Walt Whitman | Encyclopedia.com, n.d).

## 2.6. Leaves of Grass

*Leaves of Grass* are a collection of poems written by the American poet Walt Whitman (1819-1892). Although the initial edition was published in 1855, Whitman spent majority of his life writing and rewriting *Leaves of Grass*, examining it several times until his death. This produced in vastly various editions over four decades: the first edition, was a small book of twelve poems and the last edition. The poems of *Leaves of Grass* are roughly connected, with each depicting Whitman's celebration of his life, humanity, and philosophy. The collections of poems are famous for their discussion of joy in sensual enjoyment during an epoch when such emotional pleasures were immoral. Unlike several previous poetry, especially English, which relied on allegory, symbolism, and speculation on the religious and spiritual, *Leaves of Grass* went beyond such characteristics, in which it praised the body and the substantial world. However, and after the effect of Transcendentalism movement and Ralph Waldo Emerson on Whitman's, he praises both nature and individual role in his poems. Yet, and more like Emerson, Whitman did not withdraw the role of the mind or the spirit; he celebrated the human structure and the human mind, believing both worthy of poetic respect (Whitman, and Stacy)

When Whitman turned thirty-six years old, *Leaves of Grass* was published for the first time. In fact, he spent approximately the next thirty-six years, rewriting his book until he



finished the last edition in 1891-1892, the year of his death. All in all, the book was published in seven different editions and it was considered as his life work (Whitman and ecstasy)

Today, Walt Whitman's book of poetry is an essential part of the American canon as one of the ground-breaking pieces of literature in the history of America, though, his work has not gone without criticism, and it was much thanks to Ralph Waldo Emerson's acknowledgment that Whitman was accepted by literary circles in the 1800s despite the negative criticism. Emerson's recognition had a great impact on Whitman, since Emerson's writing had been a major source of inspiration for Whitman.

Thus, the book was highly controversial during its time for its visible sexual imagery, and Whitman was subject to mockery by several critics. However, and over time, the book has penetrated public culture and been familiar as one of the vital works of American poetry.

### **Conclusion:**

To conclude, Transcendentalism was the term given to a group of individuals and a colony of new and old nation that buzzed through America, and specifically in New England, in the ages before the civil war. The movement was difficult to define, because its ancestors refused definition, and hard to categorize into principles because its ancestors also railed against such categories. Moreover, it was certainly idealistic rather than materialistic and universal instead of parochial. It strived to discover a new relation between the individual and society through the understanding of nature. Unexpectedly, the natural universe was perceived as the intervention of God's divinity and absoluteness and transcendentalists sought to seize such scent of absoluteness from every plant in the garden.

Thus , Transcendentalism witnessed the birth of its free verse writer , Walt Whitman who has a great impact on the movement, in creating new beliefs and ideas .Whitman's and the use of his unique style in terms of random verses and the use of symbol was displayed in his famous book *Leaves of Grass* .

### **Chapter Three:**

**Comparative study between Rumi's work *Mathnawi*, and Walt  
Whitman's *Leaves of Grass***

### **3.1. Introduction:**

The comparative study of Jalal El –Din Rumi and Walt Whitman is important for several reasons. First, Rumi’s work *Mathnawi* is celebrated as one of the most significant mystical literary works in Persian literature as well as the Islamic literature. Similarly; Whitman’s work *Leaves of Grass* is known as one of the most challenging literary works in the history of literature as well as world Literature. Second, Rumi maintained the word of mysticism as a traditional concept in his rhythmic poetry as a profound reaction to the universe; on the other hand, Whitman introduced a new concept of mysticism in his poems as a natural response to the material world. Besides, both Rumi and Whitman cherished the body and the soul, the material as well the spiritual. Thirdly, Rumi may well be the single poet in history to express and formulate a new system of ideas in a form of verses. In addition, Whitman performs new forms of poetry in the American literature that are beyond the use of lyric, epic, ode, or even verse. Instead; Whitman applies forms of poetry as if he addresses the readers by putting pieces together that are irrelevant while they indirectly reveal a notable meaning. Moreover, Rumi and Whitman both write about the sacred in nature and in humanity with a deep assurance. Thus, both Sufism and Transcendentalism adopt the principle that God is the only creature of this cosmos and the crucial goal of human life is to believe in such adoption and unite with the Divine.

### **3.2. Man’s divinity in nature:**

For Smith, 1973, mysticism is not a concept that defines an independent religion, however, it’s considered as the most vital component in all religions which revolt against restricted formality and religious torpor. Moreover, it is not a philosophical program .The goal of several mystics is to create a conscious relationship with the absolute, in which they

can reach the personal target of love; their aim to know love. Their aim for union is accomplished neither by curiosity nor self-interest. In a general way, religions detach the divine from the human; mysticism aspires to relate union with the divine within the soul. They transcend the material and the transient for the sake of communion, even of union, with the real and the abiding. They abandon the old life of the common humans, with all its desires and limitations in order to reach the freedom and the salvation of a new supernatural life or an entity that is everlasting. Thus, the mystics present their true experience in a form of eternity (Smith 5).

According to Nasar, 1976, the forms of the Divine in Islam and Christianity are introduced with specific human emotions such as affection, mercy, anger, kindness, or wrath. In other words, there are several verses in the Quran as well as the Bible in which God is depicted in terms of human emotions in order to be more understandable to humanity. It is obvious that the relationship between human being and God is the major goal in these holy books. Moreover, in the Koran God is given nineteen names which is a classical list of the names of God; even God refers to Himself as the outward and the inward (Nasar 16). Rumi and Whitman employ such forms of notion of God; mostly in a transcendental and mystical structure. For both writers love is sufficient only to qualify God in his perfect image and humanity in the creation.

Therefore, the initial goal of Rumi and Whitman is to transform the classical images of the Divine (God) into a humanistic and mystical one; God is affirmed as the Divine Beloved and the Great Camerdo. Rumi and Whitman, in their mystical poems, usually use images to present the sympathetic relationship between human being and God. God is depicted as the source of love and affection in the human heart, therefore seeking the world within is considered the major work in order to be unified with Him. In their literary writings, the Divine is the loving Father, their compassionate Brother, and the companion

of their soul. In other words, through understanding the divine love, the human being lies within the greatest being (in Ekhitari, 1976, 95).

According to Emerson, the reason why the world lacks unity is that human chooses to disunite with himself. For Rumi and Whitman, the crucial reason for existence is to travel from the outward, the world without God, to the inward, the world within God, to return to the roots; to the transcendental core (in Ekhitari, 1976, 95).

Whitman believes man and God the major theme in his poems .He depicts God as the original source of love in his "*passage to India*" .Rumi also depicts God as his beloved , when he dies and leaves the world he reunite with his Beloved .This Beloved grants him another life (InStar and Shiva 1992, 19 and 82):

You call me an Infidel.

You call me old, young, a newborn.

When I leave this world, don't call me Dead.

Say rather, he was dead, then suddenly he came to life and ran off with the Beloved.

...

So you want Union?

Union is not something found on the ground or purchased at the marketplace.

Union comes only at the cost of life.

Otherwise, everyone and his brother would have this union.

For the mystics, God as the source of love is a perfect image that can justify their concept of a universal unity. In several religious writings and as a rational believe God might be Reason, but form a mystical believes He is Love.

One of the initial guides for Rumi and Whitman in order to travel on their upward path as mystics is the theme of love .To them whatever they discover and to whatever kind of

religion they relate themselves, their goals is conceived as the Beloved .They see themselves as the lover, yearning for the consummation of their massive love in sake for union with the one they love.

Rumi and Whitman explain the perception and the understanding of how love performs as a cosmic weapon in the universe .Moreover, both writers refers also to the images of the sea as the earliest source of life in which humans seeks to be submerged in order to be permanent .Their source of love is depicted by immortal images of the sea. For them this is the perfect type of love that provides man with immortal soul :

Rumi:

The Fount of Immortality

In love is found

The come, and in His boundless sea

Of love be drowned. (In Arberry 1949, 25)

And in Whitman (1990, 321):

Bathe me O God in thee, mounting to thee,

I and my soul to range in range of thee.

O Thou transcendent,

Nameless, the fiber and the breath,

Light of the light, shedding forth universes, thou center of them,

Thou mightier center of true, the good, the loving,

Thou moral, spiritual fountain—affection's sources—thou reservoir,

(O pensive soul of me—O thirst unsatisfied—waitest not there?

Waitest not happy for us somewhere there the Comrad perfect?)

According to Fayeze 1979, the God of anger may have his position in a universe encapsulate with evil and sin, but He has no connection to a universe depicted by the mystics; a universe overwhelmed with love and unity .Although the mystic does the same koranic and biblical anthropomorphic God, all his anthropomorphic is changed into love(Fayeze 150).

For Nicholson 1989 , it is because divine love that God becomes incarnated in humanity that becomes divine , as Rumi says “ Be drunken in love for love in all that exists ; /Without the dealing of love there is no entrance to be sic beloved “ .Through these lines , readers can understand Rumi’s nontraditional vision of the divine .It is obvious that his mystic visions are beyond religion and his love is an immortal one .All of these aspects , and according to Rumi , are because of the divine nature of human beings .Moreover , for Whitman , the soul of the human is seen as both holy from the inside and the outside .The divinity of humans nature is far away from religions .Whitman , and in section 2’ of 3songs of Myself“ also calls himself as a “Kosmos” and “Divine” (Nicholson,51).

Walt Whitman, a kosmos, of Manhattan the son,

....

Divine am I inside and out, and I make holy whatever I touch or am touch’d from,

The scent of these arm-pits aroma finer than prayer,

This head more than churches, bibles, and all the creeds. (1990, 48-9)

Since, for the mystic, God is embodied in humanity, the mystic poets’ spiritual love for humanity can be elevated to symbolize it in love for the Divine .Rumi and Whitman have also a believer in such a divine nature in humanity .For instance, when Rumi found Shams Tabriz, his spiritual teacher and partner, he wrote a poetic celebration for their reunion.



In the other hand, Whitman seeks also his appointed “rendezvous “with his Lord”, the great “camerado “, in these lines of “Song of Myself “:

My rendezvous is appointed, it is certain,

The Lord will be there and wait till I come on perfect terms,

The great Camerado, the lover true of whom I pine will be there. (1990, 73)

Moreover, Fredrick Schimberg in 1951 provided a clear explanation for both poets’ symbolic beloved; Rumi symbolic begins with the Beloved by embracing and celebrating his spiritual partner Tabriz and Whitman’s relationship with his “Great Camerado”.

In addition, we cannot forget when Rumi describes his reunion with his partner shams as a symbolic of his union with God, and we cannot fail to recall and at the end of the road in “Songs of Myself“, the greatness Whitman’s gave to his Camerado as he gave it to God .

Such understanding and realization of the unity of the Divine in terms of love, partnership, and comradeship prevents Rumi’s and Whitman’s mysticism from becoming a dogmatic one .There is nothing more mystical and poetic than to address all human beings as lovers and God as The Beloved, as Rumi does, or to address all human beings as partners or comrades and God as the Great Camerado, as Whitman does. Such a fraternal relationship between human beings and God makes the universe of poet overflowed with peace, beauty, love, and unity .The mystics poets, like Rumi and Whitman, find no limits in the universe because they always want to touch life and sense it.

Whitman, like the Persian Sufi poets, view God in the faces of all human beings, men and women, the American poet view something of God each moment and everywhere. Therefore, he is not curious about Him? He clearly confirms his vision of God:

And I say to mankind, Be not curious about God,

For I who am curious about each am not curious about God,  
 (No array of terms can say how much I am at peace about God and about death.)  
 I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand God not in the least,  
 Nor do I understand who there can be more wonderful than myself.  
 Why should I wish to see God better than this day?  
 I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four, and each moment then,  
 In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face in the glass,  
 I find letters from God dropt in the street, and every one is sign'd by God's name,  
 And I leave them where they are, for I know that wheresoe'er I go,  
 Others will punctually come for ever and ever. (1990, 76)

Since these poets believe in the divine nature of human beings and in the existence of the Divine not only in humans but also in nature and all creatures, they view and listen to God's sighs everywhere. Whitman, as a Sufi believer, reaches the level of Shohud, which is considered as one of the stages, where he has the ability to see the Divine. Whitman asserts that the divinity in nature is not fully understandable to humans; however, it brings his soul to such a state which can experience its divine nature by being in love with God.

It is clear that neither Whitman nor Rumi view a dualism between the universe and its creative soul. For Whitman, "Santa Spirita" is, body and soul, the form and the essence; it is the universe in its absolute spiritual and material being, as he depicts in "Chanting the Square Deifice":

Santa Spirita, breather, life,  
 Beyond the light, lighter than light,  
 Beyond the flames of hell, joyous, leaping easily above hell,  
 Beyond Paradise, perfumed solely with mine own perfume,

Including all life on earth, touching, including God, including Saviour and Satan,  
 Ethereal, pervading all, (for without me what were all? What were God?)  
 Essence of forms, life of the real identities, permanent, positive, (namely the unseen).  
 (1990, 340)

As a notion, the self is an individual like the object of its own reflective consciousness. Since the self is a reference by a subject to the same subject, this reference is surely subjective. The meaning of having a self or a self-hood should, however, not be related or confused with subjectivity itself. Seemingly, this meaning is directed outward from the subject to refer inward, back to itself. For instance, psychiatric conditions such as sameness may become inoperative include depersonalization. Which; sometimes occurs in schizophrenia where the self seems different from the subject.

However, Both poets presents the “self” shifting back and forth , between the conscious and the unconscious , between the real and the ideal , life and death in a spiritual rebirth , between itself and its immortal source ; the higher self or the over-soul .

Therefore, the “self” celebrated in the lines of poems of Rumi and Whitman in a universal way .This universal, imaginative, and creative “self” provides the key of the most basic affinities. To compare the mystic thought and images of both poets in this situation one can consider how Whitman’s “Song of Myself” starts with “I” and “thou” duality

“I celebrate myself, and sign myself, And what I assume you shall assume

For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you (1990, 90)

Whitman searches for “Me myself”. In his “Song of Myself” .Whitman’s “Me myself” is the highest self, soul, and Divine. Rumi tackles the same concept as he addresses his Beloved:

“ Thou didst continue this ‘I’ and ‘we’ in order to play the game of worship with Thyself

That all 'I's' and 'thou's' might become one soul and at last be submerged in the Beloved"

(in Nicholson 1925, *Mathnavi*, I. 1776).

According to Nicholson 1966, Rumi believes that God is both the object of worship and the Worshiper, the illusion of individuality, "I" and "we", grows from the interaction of two opposite aspects, essence and form, under which the one Reality may be, regarded (Nicholson, 34).

For Sufi poets, all phenomena are individualized forms of Real self; when Removed of their individuality, they become one with each other and with Real Being. Therefore, God presents Himself in every union of loving souls. Rumi says the same in his poetic verses in *Mathnawi*:

Where are threshold and dais in reality? Where the Beloved is, where are "we" and "I"? O Thou whose soul is free from "we" and "I", O Thou who are the essence of the spirit in men and women,

When men and women become one, Thou art that One; when the unites are wiped out, lo, Thou art that Unity. (in Nicholson 1925, *Mathnawi*, I. 1784)

For Whitman, man is both in and out of the game and watching and out of the game watching and wondering at it; the father who is the brother also .Whitman addresses God as the big brother that is always approachable. Moreover, Whitman as a mystic poet and during the half of nineteen century was known by his celebrating himself, as a person, and as a human being .A human being who can actually speaks to all humankind as emblems of God. He believes each human is the result of the past and the promise of the future:

I am an acme of things accomplished, and I am enclose of things to be.

....

Before I was born out of my mother generations guided me,

My embryo has never been torpid, nothing could overlay it.  
 For it the nebula cohered to an orb,  
 The long slow strata piled to rest it on,  
 Vast vegetables gave it sustenance,  
 Monstrous sauroids transported it in their mouths and deposited it with care.  
 All forces have been steadily employ'd to complete and delight me,  
 Now on this spot I stand with my robust soul. (1990, 72)

By seeking to find Whitman's God, we realize that he depicts God as the great camerado whose spirit is the brother or the partner of his own. Thus, for both poets, their beloved has undoubtedly a great power that holds every phenomena, every object, and every creature originated from God and returns to Him. Mystic poets as Rumi and Whitman develop a journey within to raise humanity up. This is the real job of mystic. They transcend the humankind to experience the eternal nature of the human soul by being in love with the beloved.

### **3.3. God and Nature-Mystics:**

Rumi and Whitman, as mystic poets, often believe that nature, humankind, and also the whole universe are attributes and images of God. They view nature and humanity as a diverse attributes of a single unifying power. Rumi depicts such unifying universal power as an archetypal power and Whitman as an eidolon power or seed's perfection. Such universal power has various names in various creeds and religious schools, in Hinduism for instance, its known as Brahman, in Sufism it is Al-Haq and in Transcendentalism and for Whitman as Santa Spirita or the Over-soul. According to Nicholson, Rumi view all of these various images as similar attributes, and there is no need to categorize them (in Nicholson

1966, 152). Whitman teaches humankind to see God as everything, as an immanent force in every object, animate and inanimate:

Finally my children, to envelop each word, each part of the rest,

Allah is all, all, all—is immanent in every life and object,

May-be at many and many-a-more removes—yet Allah, Allah, Allah is there.

...

It is the central urge in every atom.... (1990, 419)

These lines recall Rumi's notion of unity in his *Mathnawi*. In other words, these lines show how Whitman was familiar with Persian Sufism. Actually this is the Sufi voice of Whitman at the age of sixty-nine, three years before his death. One may result the impact of Rumi's mysticism on Whitman. In the following lines, Rumi explains the way every atom is moving towards its origin. His idealistic philosophy is based on the belief that God is everywhere in nature and humankind; in other words, God has an omnipresent existence:

The motion of every atom is towards its origin;

A man comes to be the thing on which he is bent

By the attraction of fondness and yearning, the soul and the heart

Assume the qualities of the Beloved, who is the Soul of souls. (In Nicholson, 1989, 152)

For Whitman it is the "central urge" in everything, in "Song of Myself":

It is the central urge in every atom,

(Often unconscious, often evil, downfallen,)

To return to its divine source and origin, however distant,

Latent the same in subject and in object, without one exception. (1990, 419)

Moreover , Whitman believes that the images of God are everywhere , he believes that Divinity permeates and spread through all objects ;he also sees in his “salut au Monde “ objects and feels them , embraces them as a part of a whole :

What do you hear Walt Whitman?

I hear the workman singing and the farmer’s wife singing,

...

I hear the Arab muezzin calling from the top of the mosque,

I hear the Christian priests at the altars of their churches, I hear the responsive base and soprano,

...

What do you see Walt Whitman?

...

I see distant lands, as real and near to the inhabitants of them as my land is to me ...

I see the cities of the earth and make myself at random a part of them,

I am a real Parisian,

I am a habitant of Vienna, St. Petersburg, Berlin, Constantinople,

...

And I salute all the inhabitants of the earth.

You whoever you are!

...

Health to you! good will to you all, from me and America sent!

Each of us inevitable,

Each of us limitless—each of us with his or her right upon the earth,

Each of us allow’d the eternal purports of the earth,

Each of us here as divinely as any is here...

*Salut au monde!*

For Keenan 1965, Whitman in the lines above gives his “salut” to everybody. His poetic voice has a massive capacity to see and be everything. One should keep in mind the poet’s notion of material and spiritual unity in the world. However, the drama of self-performance and self-identification is fulfilled by experiencing both the world within and the world without. One may view that Whitman contradicted the American and the transcendentalist romantic notion of nature as the ‘not me’, that is, Whitman does actually believe in the Neo-platonic sense of nature as a symbol of God. In this connection, one should remember how did Whitman in his “Song of Myself”, sees God in everybody (Keenan 31).

Moreover, for both Rumi and Whitman, as mystic poets the universe or the world is not a false idea or an illusion. As a consequence, it should be remembered the mystic’s poets like Rumi and Whitman as poets that they never view or depict the material universe as an illusion. For them, the material universe or nature plays the role of a veil through which the individual can see God. As Rumi says, “I have put duality away, I have seen the two worlds are one ... He is the Outward, He is the Inward” (in Nicholson 1966, 45). For Him the material universe itself is not delusion. However, this material world manifests the eternal truths. Rumi concludes that there is no death and that the notion of life does really exist.

Rumi as well as Whitman, often seeks unity. Based on their artistic vision, the unity is love. They never permitting any fragmentation in God’s omnipresent.

According to Allen and Davis and in section 6 of “*Song of Myself*“, Whitman is propped with a new knowledge. After confronting the question what is the grass? He provides an adequate evaluation of “grass” as the “babe” of the vegetation, symbol of the external organic world (Allen and Davis 150).



In section 17 of “Song of Myself” the image of the “grass” symbolizes in its greatest with a unity of several parts. The meeting of the “grass” image with the image of “common air” identifies the equality, and the universality that was already associated with infinite “grass”. In this section, Whitman returns to the symbol of the mystical grass and pairs it with an element equally as endless and widespread: “This is the grass that grows wherever the land is and the water is, This is the common air that bathes the globe” (Whitman 1990, 43).

Whitman, in discussing nature, resorts both to “grass” and “animal», because they remind him of the question of God, nature and humankind in the universe. In *Leaves of Grass* the “truths” that lie in every portion of reality are accompanied by the frequent image of the “grass”. The wonders of the universe are mirrored in the malicious and the most common creatures. “I believe”, says Whitman, “a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars...” (1990,53). Of course, there are many examples in *Leaves of Grass* that indicate the poet’s huge wonder at creation and the miracles that lie behind even the lowliest flower:

“That I walk up my stoop, I pause to consider if  
it really be” (Whitman 1990, 49).

Whitman’s belief in the union and equality of every object in creation; does not exclude his awareness of man’s abilities. For a mystic poet, however, Whitman, man is always the perfection that forever exceeds all other perfections in creation (Keenan 1965, 48-9). Whitman often moves toward realizing of his own place in the order of objects. Whitman, understanding the animals’ place in nature’s pattern, says:

I am enamour’d of growing out-doors,  
Of men that live among cattle or taste of the ocean or woods,  
...  
I can eat and sleep with them week in and week out.

What is commonest, cheapest, nearest, easiest, is Me.... (1990, 39)

Consequently, Rumi and Whitman, as mystics, always feel united with nature and Earth, for the earth is in them and they are in the earth, like a child is connected to his Parents “I am ever in concord”, says Rumi, “with this father (the earth) of ours, and it ever appears a paradise” (1975, 214). Whitman, in his “A Song of the Rolling Earth” explains what it means to be “in concord” with the earth: “I swear the earth shall surely be complete to him or her who shall be complete, / The earth remains jagged and broken only to him or her who is jagged and broken” (1982 ,164). Rumi’s love for Nature and the earth is occasionally much like that of Whitman’s:

And earth ever appears to me as a paradise.  
 Each moment a fresh form, a new beauty,  
 So that weariness vanishes at these ever-fresh sights.  
 I see the world filled with blessings—  
 Fresh water ever welling up from new fountains.  
 The sound of those waters reaches my ears,  
 My brain and senses are intoxicated there with,  
 Branches of trees dancing like fair damsels,  
 Leaves clapping hands like singers...  
 These glories are a mirror shining through a veil... (1975, 214)

Walt Whitman, as Rumi, uses natural elements as a means for showing his mystic Thoughts like; the “caresser of life,” the singer of “chants”, and of “Omens! Omens!” the poet cannot exclude the land, the sea or nature itself from his consideration. Because they include the endless “items” of catalogues. In his section 22 of “Song of Myself” the poet chants: “Shall I make my list of things in the house and skip the house that supports them?” (1990:46).

For him the earth is supposed to be His language. The material universe and objects in nature are “the substantial words». Whitman considers that human physical structures, as well as the things in the earth and sea, are “myriads of words” in the true Logos. The earth is “complete”, “positive and direct”, and its “greatness and power” are ideals to be praised. In “A Song of the Rolling Earth” Whitman believes that such a “divine ship sails the divine sea” for man. And finally this earth, the universal mother, is filled with the “seed perfection”:

In the broad earth of ours,  
Amid the measureless grass and the slag,  
Enclosed and safe within its central heart,  
Nestles the seed perfection. (1982, 166)

Despite things by nature are flawless and beautiful, it is love and divine joy in the heart of the mystic poet that penetrate its surroundings.

A song of the rolling earth, and of words according,  
Were you thinking that those were the words, those upright lines? Those curves, angles,  
dots?

No, those are not the words, the *substantial words* are in the ground and sea,  
They are in the air, they are in you.

...

Air, soil, water, fire-those are words. (1990, 167; emphasis added)

Based on Whitman’s and Rumi’s point of view the earth or material universe are not simply the symbols and signs eternalizing the presence of some spiritual power. The unity of the Divine is translated into both forms and ideas. Therefore, the forms are seen to be more than symbols, for each one, “from the smallest atom of dust to the largest orbs”, is a “microcosm”.

For both poets the earth is seen to be as a macrocosm complete in itself and complete within the rest of its parts. It is the thought that nature works as a veil above the Divine by which an individual cannot see Him physically, but can see Him metaphysically. In another description, He uses such natural and physical elements to lead individuals to the metaphysical world. The Divine plays with humanity's physical capability. An individual also uses nature to admit and understand God through self-knowledge.

Consequently, the mystics, as Whitman and Rumi, believe in nature to reach a higher Reality, Rumi clearly characterizes the significance of these physical veils (*hijab* or *niqab*) in nature in his *Fihi ma fihi* :so he [man] does not see the Master at this moment without a veil. So it is with all wishes and affections, all loves and kindness which individuals have for every variety of thing, father, mother, heaven, earth, gardens, palaces, branches of knowledge, acts, things to eat and drink. The man of God understands that all these wishes are the desire of God, and all those things are veils. (in Arberry 1961, 46)

When an individual surpasses this physical universe and observes the Divine without these veils, he will understand that all those were veils and coverage's. "his quest" says Rumi "being in reality the One Thing ... and they ['men'] will hear in their hearts the answer to all questions and all problems, and everything will be seen face to face" (In Arberry 1961, 46). God has created nature and these veils for a positive aim. Individuals could not have the ability to endure and enjoy God's beauty, if He would appear without a veil. Rumi says: "Through the intermediary of these veils we desire succor and benefit" (In Arberry 1961, 46)

Whitman's opinion of God is not a form of a divine being in the traditional Christian or Hebraic sense. He is not a pantheist because creation for a pantheist is not only the effort of a creator; it is really the core of the creator itself. In the world of pantheism, the created is equal with the creator.

The poet says:

I believe in you my soul...

And I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own,

And I know that the spirit of God is the brother of my own,

...

And that the kelson of the creation is love. (1990, 32)

### **Conclusion**

Rumi and Whitman characterize God's relation to nature and the material universe both in a transcendent ontologically, as well as epistemologically, and mystical perception. Both poets establish some balance between the two pillars of mystical and transcendent in such a way that they never affirm one pillar more than the other.

Moreover, they are mystic poets who never affirm transcendence in such a way that God becomes far and distant from His creation. And it is love that balances these two pillars. One should be loved so as to be able to establish the balance to see the transcendental force as his/her Beloved. Therefore, they describe nature, the world or universe, as a restricted creation within the restricted being of God. They state that everything in creation derives from God. He is the Single Reality. He is the Absolute Reality.

Thus, the two poets have something in common concerning the depiction of the themes of love, God, and nature that both of them are searching for the utmost existence by observing everything around them. Moreover, both of them see in love and nature keys that lead to the divine that appears in every beautiful element. The difference between both poets is in the way each one demonstrates his beliefs and in the way he perceives love, divinity, and the beauty of nature.

### General Conclusion

Sufism or Islamic Mysticism is a belief and practice in which a Sufi seeks to find the truth of divine love and knowledge through creating a direct and a personal relationship with God. It consists of a variety of mystical tenets that are designed to ascertain the oneness of God and to facilitate the experience of the presence of God's divinity and Love in the world. The mystical movement had a rich account of various writers and poets that helped in the recognition of the movement's system of beliefs. Jalal al-Din Rumi as a mystical poet, gave a significant fame to the world of Sufism by introducing his notable piece of writing *Mathnawi*, that absolutely summarized all the major beliefs, principles, and symbols of Sufism for the readers.

Transcendentalism is a 19<sup>th</sup> century movement of philosophers and poets in New England who were bound together by adherence to from an idealistic system of ideas based on a belief in the individuality of all humans, the goodness of humanity, and the priority of insight over experience and logic for the revelation of the deepest truths. Yet the movement was difficult to define, because its ancestors refused definition, and hard to categorize into principles because its ancestors also railed against such categories. Moreover, it was certainly idealistic rather than materialistic and universal instead of parochial. It started to discover a new relation between the individual and society through the understanding of nature. Like any movement, transcendentalism witnessed the birth of its free verse writer, Walt Whitman who has a great impact on the movement, in creating new beliefs and ideas. Whitman's and the use of his unique style in terms of random verses and the use of symbol was displayed in his famous book *Leaves of Grass*.

The two poets, Rumi and Whitman depict God's relation to nature and the material universe both in a transcendent and a mystical perception. Both poets establish some balance between the two pillars of mystical and transcendent in such a way that they never affirm one

pillar more than the other. Moreover, they are mystic poets who never affirm transcendence in such a way that God becomes far and distant from His creation. And it is love that balances these two pillars. One should be loved so as to be able to establish the balance to see the transcendental force as his/her Beloved. Therefore, they describe nature, the world or universe, as a restricted creation within the restricted being of God. They state that everything in creation derives from God. He is the Single Reality. He is the Absolute Reality.

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## Résumé

Le soufisme est une croyance dans laquelle un soufi cherche à trouver la vérité de la connaissance et de l'amour divins en créant une relation avec Dieu. Il consiste en une variété de principes mystiques qui sont conçus pour affirmer l'unité de Dieu et pour faciliter l'expérience de la présence de la divinité de Dieu. et l'amour dans le monde. Jalal al-din Rumi, était un poète mystique, qui a donné une renommée significative au mouvement du soufisme en présentant son morceau notable d'écriture Mathnawi, qui a absolument résumé et facilité les principales croyances et symboles du soufisme pour les lecteurs. Le transcendentalisme, en revanche, est une doctrine du XIXe siècle d'écrivains et de poètes de la Nouvelle-Angleterre qui étaient liés par un système d'idées idéaliste basé sur une croyance en l'individualité de tous les humains, la bonté de l'humanité et la priorité de un aperçu de l'expérience et de la logique pour la révélation des vérités les plus profondes. Le transcendentalisme a vu la naissance de son auteur de vers libres, Walt Whitman, qui a un grand impact sur le mouvement, en créant de nouvelles croyances et idées. Whitman et l'utilisation de son style unique en termes de vers aléatoires et d'utilisation de symboles ont été présentés dans son célèbre livre *Leaves of Grass*. Basée sur les méthodes de la littérature comparée et s'inspirant du soufisme ainsi que du mouvement transcendentaliste, l'étude explore les poèmes des poètes très connus en mettant en évidence les thèmes de l'amour, de Dieu et de la nature que les deux poètes dépeignent. Les différentes manières de transmettre la perception de chaque poète sont soulignées pour tenter d'examiner les différences et les similitudes entre la représentation des thèmes par les poètes.

**Mots clés: Littérature comparée, Divinité, Dieu, Amour, Nature, Soufisme, Transcendentalisme.**