

RŪMĪ'S RELEVANCE TO OUR TIMES

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As heavy machinery gets replaced with computers on the frontline of scientific progress and business powered by steam gives way to business at the speed of thought, we also find oversimplified statements about the nature of social conflicts giving way to the urge for a deeper understanding of the complexity that is the human being in individual as well as collective capacities.

The phenomenal rise of Rumi's popularity in such an age makes much sense and in fact it was predicted by his great admirer and interpreter Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal almost a hundred years ago when he pointed out that the Western emphasis on empiricism was an inevitable passing stage in the overall progress of human thought and the next phase would begin with the understanding that "*Rumi is an ocean, tempestuous and deep.*"

The significance of Rumi for our age is that he not only provides foundations for a holistic worldview in order to discover the inherent unity between the world within us and the world outside – the microcosm and the macrocosm – but he also offers a complete system for acquiring that perfect balance between the two in order to arrive at what has been aptly described by one of the greatest statesmen of our times as "*peace within and peace without.*"