

Mediating Intimacy: Essential Ibn-Arabi for Education and Psychotherapy

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Argument

- Tradition as developmental psychology: the problem of borrowing
- Spiritual Heart - living body's gateway to knowledge
- Lost in Translation: The Imperfect (Wo)Man
- Topological phenomenology of the Heart: Comparative Analysis
- Hermeneutic cycles of wisdom in therapy



Positioning the Enquiry

- Traditions as Developmental Psychologies
- Self in the mode of ego-transcendence (remediating postmodern loss of self)
- Onotogeny as individuation, learning as maturation of epistemology



Tensions

- Transformation: Praxis vs Love
- Wisdom: Body vs Mind
- Self: Essential or constructed
- Gender: Relative or Absolute
- Translation: Verbatim or interpretive
- Tradition: Oral or Textual



History of the Mirror: from Soul to Self

Soul (Heart) of the Ancients

Inner , spiritual and
psychological,
frequently affective,
experiences, via
body

Self of the Modernity

- from inner
subjectivity to the
outward disposition
- Mind-Body Split
- Individuality
- Agency
- Choice
- Will

Regarding Praxis

“For if the properly prepared person persists in ***dhikr*** (remembering God) and ***spiritual retreat***, emptying the ***place*** (of the heart) from thinking, and sitting like a poor beggar who has nothing at the doorstep of their Lord- then God will bestow upon them and give them some of that knowing of Him, of those divine secrets and supernal understandings, which he granted to His servant al-Khadir”...(Meccan Revelations, p. 14).

Commentary

Ibn-Arabi's expression here apparently refers to characteristic understanding that each being's inner strivings or petitions to God (i.e. "prayer" in the broadest possible sense, whether or not consciously or appropriately formulated) necessarily are directed towards one or another specific aspects of the overall Divine Reality, expressed in Qur'anic terms by many of the divine Names ("Lord", "King" etc.), that constitute the ontological "lord" of the individual.

Historical changes in the bodily aspects of consciousness (Lind, 2001) , i.e. current mind-body split, creates the interpretive frames which are likely to distort the picture of actual practice recommended by Ibn-Arabi

or

The actual “inner doing” might’ve remained known only within the oral tradition

History of Presencing the Heart: Dhikr, Prayer of the Heart, Somatic Self-Enquiry



Oral Tradition

*Psychospiritual
centers of
somatic
awareness
in the chest*



Studies of the Place of the Heart

focus groups and individuals, dialogical explication of the heart-self, participants $n > 300$

- a) Phenomenological analysis of perception
- b) topological phenomenological analysis
- c) transcendental and psychological phenomenological analysis



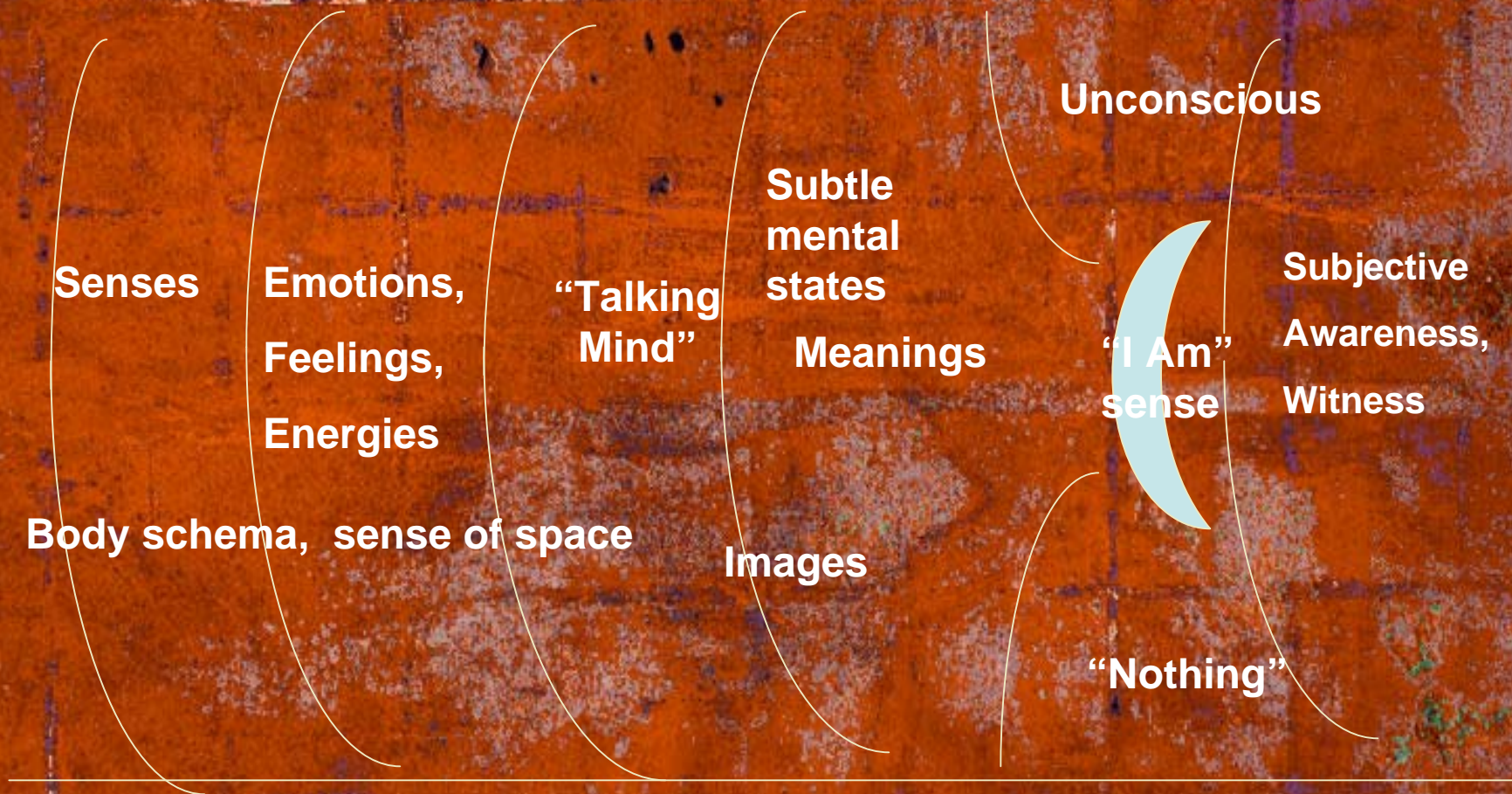
Topological Multidimensionality of the Heart



Entering the Egological Self in the Heart



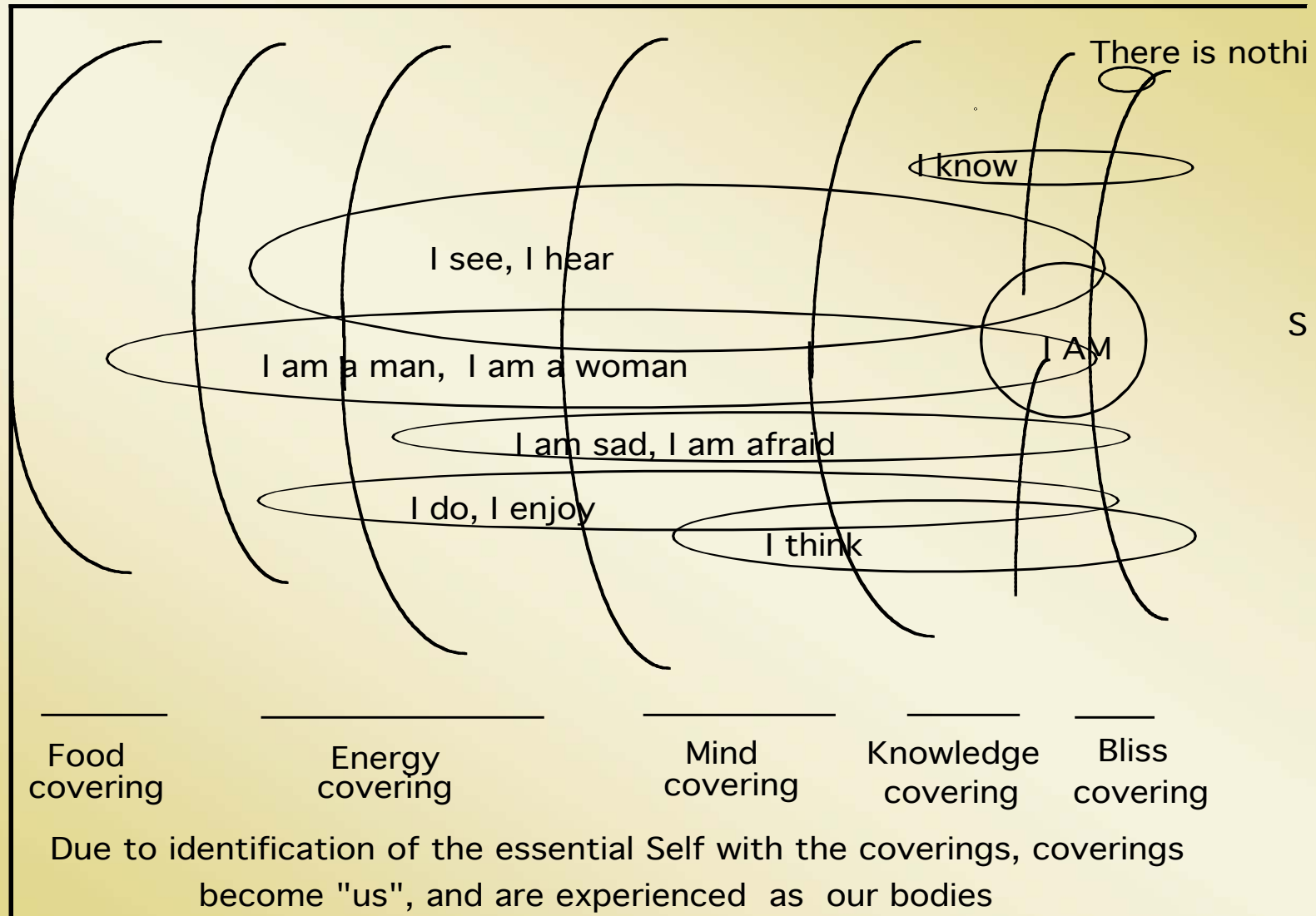
Phenomenological Architecture of Self-Awareness (heart-consciousness, intrasubjectivity)



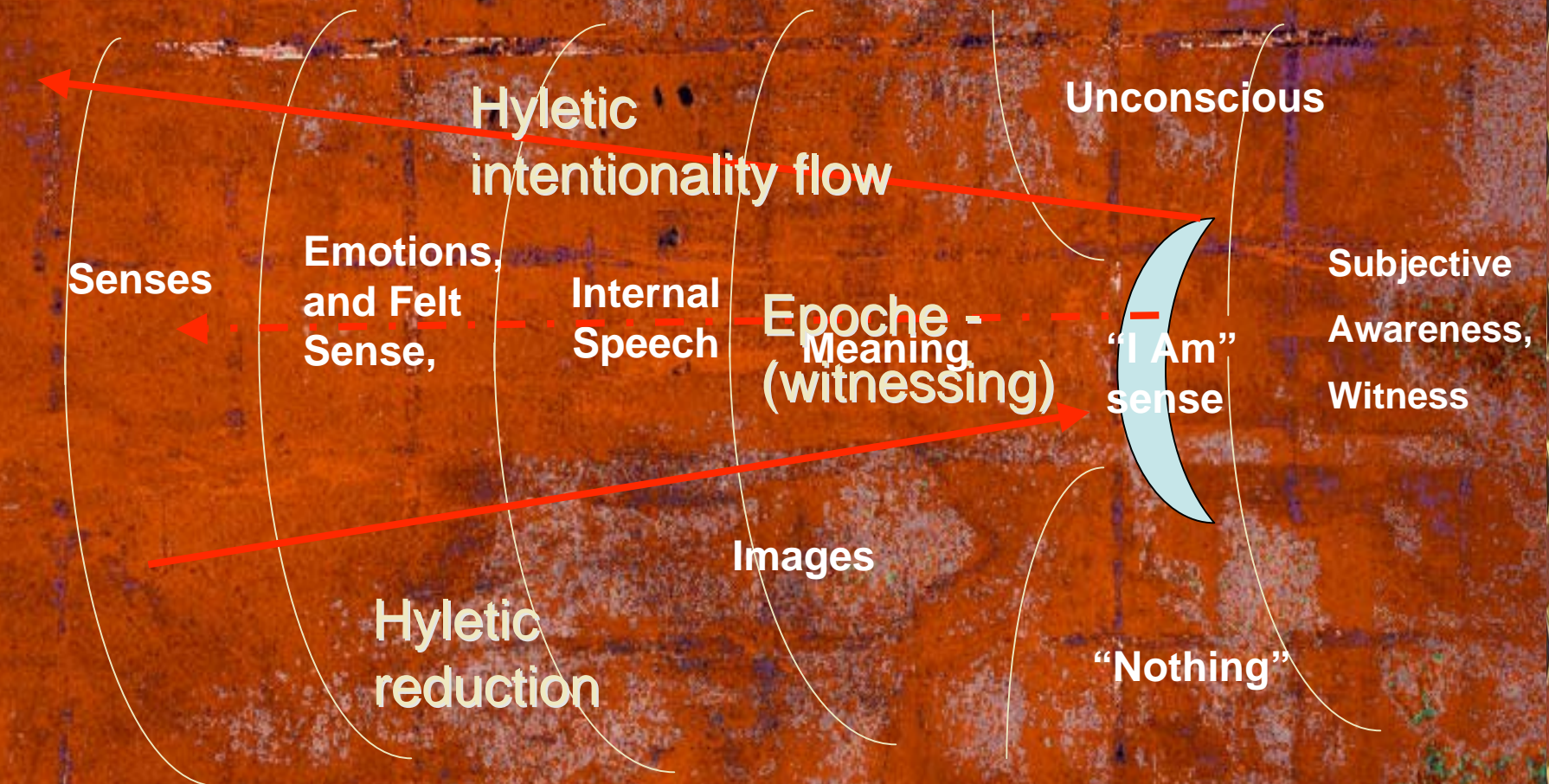
Dialogical Heart-Self: Intersubjectivity



Structures of the Self: Mode of Identification



Structures of the Self: Hyletic Intentionality



Life-World of the Heart

Knowledge by presence

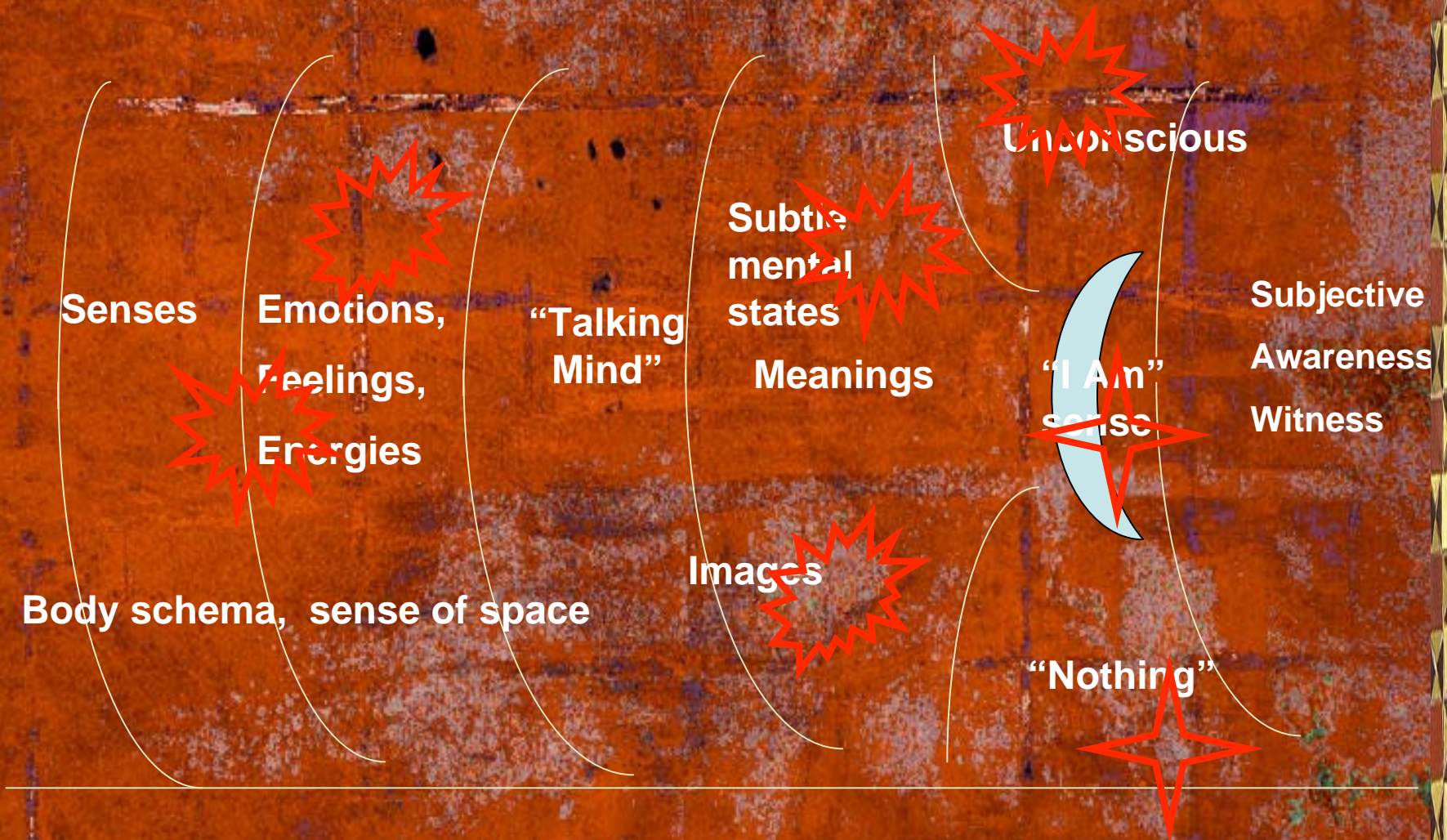
Multiple times, spaces and
bodily focuses

Soteriological affects

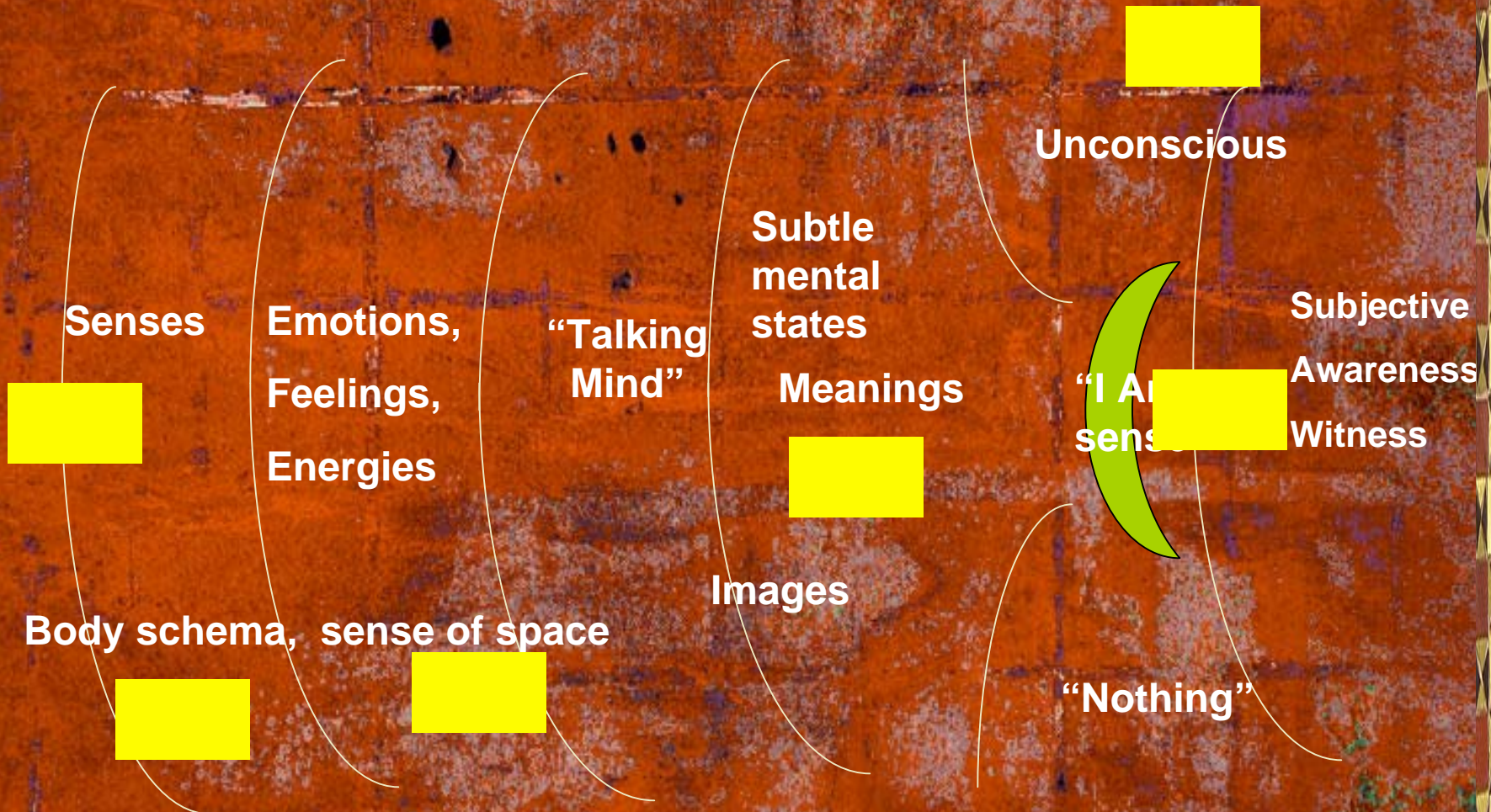
Hyletics

Images and Meaning

Ego-Transcendencencies



Zones of structural reorganization after transcendent experience



Dialogical heart-self: Changes of Identification

Individual

**I
am**

Origins of intentionality,
sense of “Ultimate
dependence”, sense of
ontological primacy, or
“principial autonomy...



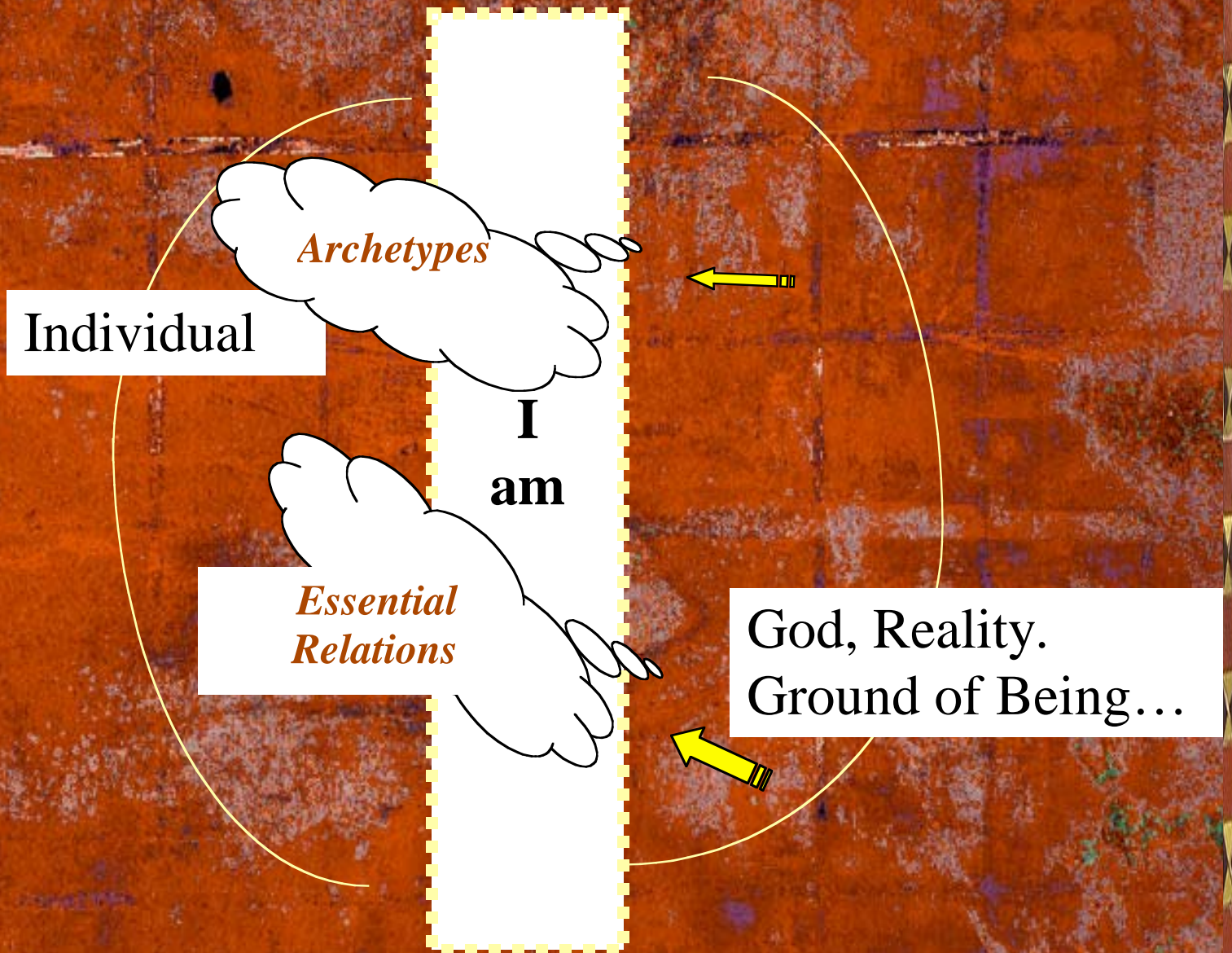
God, Reality.
Ground of Being...

What psychological phenomenological analysis can help to decipher...

“Finally, and even more mysteriously, each chapter concludes with a long but highly enigmatic catalogue of spiritual gifts and insights that are given in connection with Divine encounter, often connected with the particular details of the corresponding Sura” (p.20, Futuhat, commentary on Spiritual Points of Descent)

“...influence on the twenty eight specific Divine Name on the world. Why it should have been included in Section 3, which is dedicated to the”states (ahwal), is not particularly clear” (p. 51, commentary on Breath of All Merciful)

Dialogical Heart-Self: Ontopoiesis



A photograph of a courtyard with a row of columns and trees, overlaid with yellow text. The scene is bright and sunny, with a clear blue sky. The columns are white and have some decorative elements. The trees are green and leafy. The text is in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font.

***Reconstitution of the Self after
Ego-Transcendence***

Me-Other; Me-World; Me-God;

Real-Unreal;

Fear, Desire;

Living and Dying;

Spontaneous epoche;

Transparency of inner space;

Direct intuition;

“Ontopoietic” intuition

Lost in Translation: The Imperfect Man

“...Story of a personal acquaintance who frequented the same masters of hadith in the city of Ceuta, a highly respected and unusually modest religious judge (qadi) who was famous for his rare charismatic ability (baraka) to establish peace among feuding parties or tribe – an ability Ibn-Arabi attributes to his extreme conscientiousness and concern for maintaining only a **disinterested, “divine point of view”** in his inner relation to his legal duties. This leads him to take up a broader divine standards of judgement (ahkam) regarding all our actions, especially their inner spiritual aspect (Futuhat, p.77)

Missewd dialogues

Hermeneutic cycles in education and psychotherapy

- At “Existential core” of every human being there is an **intuitively individualized spiritual life.**
- **Soma-psyche-spirit-teachings cycle**
- Interiority of consciousness
- Desire for self-knowledge
- Names as interventions

Conclusions

- a) life-world of Ibn-Arabi is relevant for the depth work with the postmodern psyche
- b) this psyche can be generally accessed via somatic awareness
- c) insight of Ibn-Arabi Himself is connected with the use of somatic practice
- d) in order to bear the fruit of Self-Realization, self-enquiry has to include introspection on the embodied sense of self.