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## INVESTIGATING THE CONCEPT OF THE OVER-SOUL IN THE WORKS OF EMERSON AND RUMI

### INVESTIGACIÓN SOBRE EL CONCEPTO DE ALMA SUPREMA EN LAS OBRAS DE EMERSON Y RUMI

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#### ABSTRACT

There is the One, Perfect, Informed and Infinite Essence behind all the phenomena in the world. One side of the world is the finite world, full of contradictions and changes; the other side is the world of infinity and the Over-Soul. Rumi and Emerson shared in their understanding of existence, truth, and human, and have benefited from similar mystical concepts and motifs. These similarities could be the result of either a kind of unity in the intellectual system of human beings in illuminated thoughts, or the calque of opinions of the Eastern thinkers, especially Persian mystic poets, such as Hafiz and Rumi, since Emerson has repeatedly acknowledged in his essays and lectures that he had read their works. In spite of the similarity in their thoughts about the path of human emancipation and perfection, the attitude and epistemology of the transcendental concepts, and the common ontology in the path and the destination of this knowledge, there are differences to observe which their dissimilar results should be mentioned. In this regard, in Rumi's epistemology, we need to pay much attention to love, because love is the cause of unity. From this point of view, this Absolute Infinite (God) is distinct from the universe of the creatures and is primordial and eternal; he was before the creation and will be afterwards. In Emerson's view, God and Being are not separate from one another.

#### Keywords:

The Over-Soul, Emerson, Rumi.

#### RESUMEN

Existe la esencia única, perfecta, informada e infinita detrás de todos los fenómenos del mundo. Un lado del mundo es el mundo finito, lleno de contradicciones y cambios; El otro lado es el mundo del infinito y el Alma Suprema. Rumi y Emerson compartieron su comprensión de la existencia, la verdad y lo humano, y se han beneficiado de conceptos y motivos místicos similares. Estas similitudes podrían ser el resultado de una especie de unidad en el sistema intelectual de los seres humanos en pensamientos iluminados, o el calco de opiniones de los pensadores orientales, especialmente los poetas místicos persas, como Hafiz y Rumi, ya que Emerson ha reconocido repetidamente en sus ensayos y conferencias de que había leído sus obras. A pesar de la similitud en sus pensamientos sobre el camino de la emancipación y perfección humana, la actitud y la epistemología de los conceptos trascendentales, y la ontología común en el camino y el destino de este conocimiento, existen diferencias para observar cuáles deberían ser sus resultados diferentes. En este sentido, en la epistemología de Rumi, debemos prestar mucha atención al amor, porque el amor es la causa de la unidad. Desde este punto de vista, este Infinito Absoluto (Dios) es distinto del universo de las criaturas y es primordial y eterno; él estuvo antes de la creación y lo estará después. En opinión de Emerson, Dios y el Ser no están separados el uno del otro. Dios, el espíritu del universo, fluye en la naturaleza. La naturaleza es la base de la filosofía de Emerson.

#### Palabras clave:

Labor de tutoría, gestión tutorial, formación de profesionales, Escuela Administración de Empresas.

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of oneness of being, as God is one and the only, is the most important topic of mysticism. The concept of the universal spirit or the Over-Soul with its equivalent terms, such as the Unity of Being, Unity, Union, We and Unification in the mysticism and Islamic philosophy of Iran, have been among the most important subject matters. The origin and destination of the mystics are to reach that stage and other stages are helping the seeker to achieve that transcendence. 'From the point of view of the Islamic mystics, the real being is simple and pure, which is not associated with any diversity in its pure unity and perfection.' There is a one, perfect, informed and infinite essence behind all the phenomena in the world, whom we call God. One side of the world is the finite world, full of contradictions and changes; the other side is the world of infinity and the Over-Soul, and man experiences his presence amid. It is possible to reach the Over-Soul by transcendence of the soul and it is knowledge that transcends the soul. Knowledge is a gradual course; step by step and stage by stage, it transcends the soul. The equivalent term for knowledge is 'mysticism'; it is the mysticism of Rumi, who became the Sufi master of the East and West, and Emerson the pastor, who established the school of Transcendentalism in America; it is the same parable in which a seed becomes a fruit and a drop an ocean. When we try to examine the mystique of the two about a concept, in fact, we examine the degree of the knowledge of these two.

Truth is one and the men of truth are always unanimous. Their words are also of unity. Despite their different languages and nationalities, there is no contradiction between their ideas. They see their true faces in God. The unity and the Over-Soul repeatedly appear in the words of the mystics and Sufis in different times and places.

Emerson and Rumi believe in the originality of human perfection, the breaking of the old customs, and incorrect beliefs and systems dominant in the human moral community to achieve unity with the Origin of creation. They also use the concepts of 'the Over-Soul' and 'unity and union' to describe the transcendental being. The Over-Soul is a state of consciousness that does not belong to any religion, sect or tradition and is immediately available to all humanity. It is the consciousness that lies in the depth and is the essence of any existence. The Over-Soul is shapeless and is not mundane. It is the existence beyond the temporary life and the transient and personalized concept of self.

In this regard, before addressing the main body of the paper, several topics in the theoretical basis should be

defined, that requires a comprehensive understanding of Transcendentalism and Romanticism.

Transcendentalism is an American philosophical and literary movement in the nineteenth century, which played an important role in the American cultural resurrection and the formation of national and independent literature.

The founder of this American school, Ralph Waldo Emerson, was a religious person who was more inclined toward the subject of mysticism. Asian mysticism strengthened his mystical beliefs.

*"I was the pampered child of the East. I was born where the soft western gale breathed upon me fragrance of cinnamon groves, and through the seventy windows of my hall the eye fell on the Arabian harvest."* (Fakahani, 1998, p. 2)

Transcendentalism was regarded as the manifestation and continuation of Romanticism in America. Although Transcendentalists followed Europe as the example, they sought originality in their spiritual and mystical experiences. Romanticism was the last movement that emerged in Europe in the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries and was a response to the Enlightenment Age, which merely focused on the absolute validity of reason. Sensibility, imagination, nature, love, and passion replaced the reason. *"Romanticism is not only a literary school but a global movement which includes different fields, such as literature, philosophy, social and political sciences, architecture, music, painting, and cinema"* (Ja'fari, 1999, p. 2). Romanticism involves individualism, introversion, idealism, inspiration from nature, and the expression of pure human emotions. *"Yes, one of the features of Romanticism was this yearning for nature and nature's mysteries. ... It means viewing nature as a whole. ... Now it was said that nature is nothing but one big 'I'. The Romantics also used the expressions 'world soul' or 'world spirit. ... The philosophers observed with their own eyes that nature was in a constant state of transformation. But how could such transformations occur?"* (Gaarder, 1991)

Epistemologically, it can be said that Transcendentalists fought against the method of empiricism, the way in which science came from the sensory experience, and the human mind was like a white sheet waiting for the experience.

The philosophy of the eighteenth century was scepticism and materialism, and it was mainly mundane. This philosophy was sceptical about God, and even about the human spirit, but nineteenth-century idealism completely opposed to this view of man and the universe, and they believed that within the mind there was a special insight that is above all experiences. Emerson and his friends

honoured this knowledge and became Transcendentalists. Transcendentalists did not have a particular plan of salvation. They were mainly concerned with the right thought and life, and their principles emphasized in transcendental thoughts and simple life. *“But despite whatever foreign influences may have inspired American Transcendentalism, the doctrines of it quickly assimilated into an idiosyncratically national product, for it grew out of the fusion of two fundamental American qualities: religious mysticism and the love of nature. Whenever it appeared in literature it had two subjects, nature and man. Nature was regarded as an open book of the Lord. Man was seen not as a poor creature enslaved by the senses, but as an immortal and divine being”.* (McLoughlin, 2003, pp. 17-18)

## DEVELOPMENT

Transcendentalism believed that reason is an intrinsic gift from God to mankind that every person should cultivate. Besides, God is present in nature, and nature should be read as a spiritual book. *“Transcendentalists learned from European Romantics that communication with nature is necessary to regain human chastity and morality. Intimacy and friendship with nature can bring the individual and the author back to childhood, openness, wonder, and Emerson saw this as a primitive and intrinsic response to Existence. They were interested in the religion of India and the eastern scriptures, believing that every human being has God in himself and should see Him”.*

The transcendental man should be able to free himself from systems and structures of artificial life and enjoy the divinity and spirituality of the natural world: *“For them, God was not only in the church and religious texts; He was in nature, too. From their point of view, artists should be able to decipher and interpret the final lessons of nature. Nature is a teacher and can teach moral correction. Following nature is, in fact, following the nature and essence of man and divine knowledge”.*

Emerson introduced nature as a universal tablet and an open book, in which human beings could read the messages of God. *“The happiest man is he who learns from nature the lesson of worship”.* (Yeganeh, 2002, p.33)

In the eighteenth century, the East was the focus of attention for Europe. The influence of Europe on Asia led to the discovery of Asian-Islamic culture and civilization by European writers and intellectuals. These individuals presented the results of their studies as translations. This pursuit brought them back to a new world. The newly independent America also contributed to the excitement of this awareness and discovery.

Emerson had no interest in Persian poets before the age of forty, but from the age of forty to fifty-five, Persian literature was the source of his poetic inspiration. He continued his study for fifteen years without further delay. As a result of these studies, he translated seven hundred verses of Persian poems. He is one of the first translators of Hafiz's Ghazals for Americans. In 1847, he translated two excerpts of the poem, one of which was the two greatest poems of the Divan of Hafiz. One of his lectures in Manchester was about Hafiz and Persian literature. Four years later, he translated several other poems from Hafiz and published it in the Liberty Bell.

He became familiar with Eastern literature and philosophy, especially Persian literature through European orientalists. ‘To Baron von Hammer Purgstall, who died in Vienna in 1856, we owe our best knowledge of the Persians. He has translated into German, besides the Divan of Hafiz, specimens of two hundred poets who wrote during a period of five and a half centuries, from A. D. 1050 to 1600. The seven masters of Persian Parnassus - Firdusi, Enweri, Nisami, Jelaledin, Saadi, Hafiz and Jami \_\_ have ceased to be empty names; and others, like Ferideddin Attar and Omar Khayyam, promise to rise in Western estimation (Emerson, 1904).

*“Transcendentalism had found a great deal of correspondence with Persian literature due to its mystical insight and the ability of the American community to accept similarities; hence the Persian literature easily influenced the American literature and thought”.* (Qaderi & Azarandaz, 2000, p.18)

Emerson did not know Persian; therefore, he relied on Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall's German translations. The first Persian poet that he read was Hafiz. In 1843, he started reading from Saadi. Emerson's next reading from Sufi literature comes from Akhlak-i-Jalaly. This book introduces the “seeker” in the Sufi order to methods of cultivating spirituality in mind and soul. During this period, Emerson's persistent interest in Islamic culture would show in his work. The first example of influence appears in his lectures at the Masonic Temple in Boston in 1841. In 1850 he becomes more vocal in his references *to the Islamic culture, as we can see in his “Plato,” “Swedenborg; or, the Mystic,” and “Goethe; or, the Writer.” “His Persian Poetry, which is his most elaborate discussion on the subject, appeared in 1858. From this essay, we learn that he also read Farid al-Din Attar's The Conference of Birds, a cornerstone text in Sufi literature. In 1865, Emerson wrote a preface for Saadi's Gulistan, introducing the book to the American reader. From this considerable exposure to Persian Sufi poets, I argue that Emerson's theme of annihilation and union with the Spirit comes partly from Sufi literature,*

*whose men of letters had vastly and repeatedly discussed it. His symbolism of wine and intoxication echoes this Oriental source too*." (Al-Mansour, 2005, p. 13)

In Emerson's view, the soul is the most precious, pure, and righteous being, and even has a deeper and subtler meaning. Soul naturally possesses these qualities and virtues. For perfection and transcendence, the man should be addressed to his heart, the home of the soul. 'This is the law of moral and of mental gain. The simple rise as by specific levity not into a particular virtue, but into the region of all virtues. They are in the spirit which contains them all The soul requires purity, but purity is not it; requires justice, but justice is not that; requires beneficence, but is somewhat better; so that there is a kind of descent and accommodation felt when we leave speaking of moral nature to urge a virtue which it enjoins. To the well-born child all the virtues are natural, and not painfully acquired. Speak to his heart, and the man becomes suddenly virtuous (Emerson, 1883).

Emerson wanted to create an all-encompassing unity called the Over-Soul that transcends everything and is omnipresent; that is, the soul appears in the material world. The spiritual world surrounds the material world and mixes with it. He states that every particle reflects the whole soul that goes beyond natural phenomena. There is unity between man and nature, and this unity is the unity with God, which is difficult to describe. *"The currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or parcel of God. About the difficulty of the definition of God, Emerson writes in his Nature: We can see God in the rough and distant phenomena of matter, but when we try to define and describe himself, both language and thought desert us, and we are as fools and savages"*(Yeganeh, 2002, p.33)

The concept of the perfection of the soul is also different from the perfection of other creatures. In Emerson's view, transcendence of the soul does not have the same meaning as child growth, from childhood to adolescence and from adolescence to youth, but it is the transformation from human to angel and beyond. At this stage, these manifestations and diversities become one single unity. *"Before the revelations of the soul, Time, Space and Nature shrink away"*(Emerson, 1883, p. 257). *"The soul's advances are not made by gradation, such as can be represented by motion in a straight line, but rather by ascension of state, such as can be represented by metamorphosis, — from the egg to the worm, from the worm to the fly"*. (Emerson, 1883, p. 258)

Emerson believes that one can find the truth with a new look towards the world. He finds the truth in nature and sees the two flowing because nature has spirit, and the

reason is its perpetual change. If nature had no soul, it would be stagnant. Man also enjoys the same spirit, and this is the meaning of unity with Creation and the Over-Soul, which, in spite of different appearances, are in harmony with one another: *"So shall we come to look at the world with new eyes. It shall answer the endless inquiry of the intellect of what is truth? And of the affections, What is good? By yielding it. Self-passive to the educated will. Then shall come to pass what my poet said. Nature is not fixed but fluid. Spirit alters, moulds, makes it. The immobility or brightness of nature, is obedient. Every spirit builds itself a house, and beyond its house, a world, and beyond its world, a heaven. Know then, that the world exists for you. All that Adam had, all that Caesar could you have and can do"*.(Yeganeh, 2002, p.40)

There is a harmonious order in the creation of the universe that is closely intertwined, and make a transcendental power fascinating all phenomena, and in this unique course, whatever happens, is based on divine wisdom. The poem 'The Informing Spirit' is a good example:

There is no great and no small

To the Soul that maketh all:

And where it cometh, all things are;

And it cometh everywhere.

I am owner of the sphere,

Of the seven stars and the solar year,

Of Caesar's hand, and Plato's brain,

Of Lord Christ's heart, and Shakespeare's strain (Emerson, 1847, p. 189).

This verse of Sura Al-Nur confirms the Over-Soul: 'God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The Parable of His Light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp.' 'Everything in this Universe is revealed by and has a divine light. The Holy Olive tree is neither the Oriental nor the Western, but the same Tree of Knowledge; God allows you to receive inspiration and leads you from the prison of the body towards the infinite place of thought.'

In Emerson's view, genius, virtue and love are the different manifestations of divine light: *"From within or from behind, a light shines through us upon things and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all. A man is the facade of a temple wherein all wisdom and all good abide. What we commonly call man, the eating, drinking, planting, counting man, does not, as we know him, represent himself, but misrepresents himself. Him we do not respect, but the soul, whose organ he is, would he let Him appear through his action, would make our knees bend.*

*When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love. And the blindness of the intellect begins when it would be something of itself.* (Emerson, 1883, pp. 254-255)

Emerson believed that the revelation is not prophet-specific, but that all human beings have the ability to find revelation. He considered the revelation as the connection and flow of the Over-Soul to human soul: *“We distinguish the announcements of the soul, its manifestations of its own nature, by the term Revelation, They are always attended by the emotion of the sublime. For this communication is an Influx of the Divine mind into our mind. It is an ebb of the individual rivulet before the flowing surges of the sea of life.”* (Emerson, 1883, p. 264)

Concerning his Transcendental mystical experience, Emerson writes: *“Standing on the bare ground—my head bathed by the blithe air and uplifted into infinite space—all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or parcel of God.”* (McLoughlin, 2003, p. 22)

Emerson introduced nature as a universal tablet and an open book, in which human being could read the messages of God. He sought an ideal theory to proclaim that matter and spirit are both valuable, and human and nature like matter and spirit, have been merged and coordinated, and science and religion are correlative with each other. *“One cannot help responding to his radiant presentation of the idea that Nature is not mechanical but vital, that the universe is not dead or inanimate but radiantly alive, and that God is not remote but ever-present. Emerson saw Nature as a medium of the Transcendental Being’s appearance to man, to show the latter some aspects of ultimate reality.”* (McLoughlin, 2003, p. 22)

Emerson rejected the theory of God as the father and Man as the son in the Unity of Being. He tried to establish a closer relationship. He wanted to bring all human beings into a single connection, accessible only through a single general plan. He described his new theory as follows: *“Man, thus, is not a static, finite creation, but a part of a constantly flowing stream into whom being is continuously descending “that flowing river, which, out of regions I see not, pours for a season its streams into me. This source of being is “that Unity, that Over-Soul, within which every man’s particular being is contained and made one with all other; that common heart of which all sincere conversation is the worship.... The soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs; is not a function, like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison, but*

*uses these as hands and feet; is not a faculty but a light; is not the intellect or the will, but the master of the intellect and the will; is the background of our being, in which they lie—an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed. From within or from behind, a light shines through us upon things and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all.”* (McLoughlin, 2003, p. 23)

This unity also affects time and space; it covers the entire history. Considering the theory of the Universal Intellect, he writes: *“There is one mind common to every mind, and history is a revelation of God in the domain of freedom. The whole of history is necessary to reveal the whole of the Soul—as each individual expresses but a part of himself, so does each historical event. Man can best comprehend history through his own life, since history is a revelation of the Over-Soul, and each individual has the key in himself.”* (McLoughlin, 2003, p. 24)

Emerson believed that prophets and sages have come to this unity (unity with the Over-Soul) and have a direct and immediate relationship with God, but it is regrettable that, in other epochs, logic and calculating sciences replaced intuition.

The only solution, in Emerson’s view, is to pay much attention to the soul and knowledge of self. There should be a direct and immediate relation between individual souls and God: *“We know that all spiritual being is in man. A wise old proverb says, God comes to see us without bell; that is, as there is no screen or ceiling between heads and the infinite heavens, so is there no bar or wall in the soul, where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away. We lie open on one side to the depths of spiritual nature, to the attributes of God.”* (Emerson, 1883, p. 255)

Man is a creature that reflects all the names and attributes of God. ‘For Emerson, it is the “indwelling Supreme Spirit” within each man that must be worshipped: *“Miracles, prophecy, poetry; the ideal life, the holy life, exist as ancient history merely”* (Wayne, 2010, p. 78). The church is built on “indolence and fear” and insists that *“you must subordinate your nature to Christ’s nature and accept our interpretations rather than your own.”* (Wayne, 2010, p. 78)

This is one of the differences between Emerson and Rumi. Rumi has no problem with the miracle and accepts it. In his opinion, fate is the very limited view of eternity that we call it ‘nature.’ In general, Emerson expresses that it is the correspondence between the microcosm and the macrocosm that can lead us to divine science. In this regard, the human heart is a mirror in which it can reflect the divine thought:

“Onward and on, the eternal Pan,  
 Who layeth the world’s incessant plan,  
 Halteth never in one shape,  
 But forever doth escape,  
 Like wave or flame, into new forms  
 Of gem, and air, of plants, and worms.  
*Alike to him the better, the worse,  
 The glowing angel, the outcast corpse.  
 Thou metest him by centuries,  
 And lo! he passes like the breeze;  
 Thou seek’st in globe and galaxy,  
 He hides in pure transparency;  
 Thou askest in fountains and in fires,  
 He is the essence that inquires.  
 He is the axis of the star;  
 He is the sparkle of the spar;  
 He is the heart of every creature”.*(Emerson, 1847, p. 40)

Emerson’s selection of the last chapter of the book for his reader stands as a clear evidence that he was interested in including a morsel of Sufism, and not merely its poetry, for his readers. He chooses the moment when the birds become one with the Simorg. The scene starts when the birds are let into his presence:

*“They saw themselves all as Simorg  
 Themselves in the eternal Simorg.  
 When to the Simorg up they looked,  
 They beheld him among themselves;  
 And when they looked on each other,  
 They saw themselves in the Simorg.  
 A single look grouped the two parties,  
 The Simorg emerged, the Simorg vanished,  
 This is that and that is this,  
 As the world has never heard”.*(Al-Mansour, 2005, p. 84)

Emerson believed that he should worship the divine spirit within all human beings. In his view, miracle, prophecy, poetry, ideal, sacred life are all merely ancient history. Now the church is based on weakness and fear and insists on the fact that man must bring his nature into accordance with the nature of Christ and accept not his findings but

the interpretation of the Church. Emerson believed that: *“To aim to convert a man by miracles, is a profanation of the soul”* (Wayne, 2010, p. 78). This is another difference between Emerson and Rumi. Rumi accepts the miracle and, in many cases, brings many examples of the miracle in his works. Emerson’s History’ begins with this poem:

*“There is no great and no small  
 To the Soul that maketh all:  
 And where it cometh, all things are;  
 And it cometh everywhere.  
 I am owner of the sphere,  
 Of the seven stars and the solar year,  
 Of Caesar’s hand, and Plato’s brain,  
 Of Lord Christ’s heart, and Shakespeare’s strain”.* (Wayne, 2010, p. p. 130)

The mention of the pronoun ‘my’ and the names of the famous people in this poem reflects the universal features that we have to cultivate in ourselves. Emerson believed that everyone is history for himself, and has an encyclopaedia of truths in his possession that makes up the whole history of the world. The Universal Intellect has written the history of the human being and now we have to read it through our own experience.

Although the term ‘Unity of Being’ or ‘union’ was not introduced by Rumi in mysticism, his poems are full of the experiences of this union. In the present day, Rumi’s mystical messages are being taken seriously in Europe and America. Rumi, with his unique worldview, possesses an infinite romantic mysticism that, beyond the philosophy and science, has embraced the whole universe. The ultimate goal of humanity and the perfection of human consciousness and transcendence is, according to Rumi, to achieve unity with the Creator; God is the only absolute power beyond the Being. And we ‘interpret his notes in harmony with our own feelings’, so that we could reflect his divine light to the universe.

The destination of all the thoughts of Rumi is God. This infinite God is beyond the understanding of human beings, but he is the origin and source of the whole existence and nature and the universe is praising him:

*These trees are like the interred ones:  
 They have lifted up their hands from the earth.  
 They are making a hundred signs to the people  
 And speaking plainly to him that hath ears  
 With green tongue and with long hand.*

They are telling secrets from the earth's conscience (Al-Din Rumi, 2008a)

In Rumi's view, this Absolute Infinite (God) is distinct from the universe of the creature and is primordial and eternal; he was before creation and will be afterwards. Rumi sees the universe as a finite being, with all its majesty and magnitude, and that it is a small particle in the glorious Court of God. Nature and the world, in his view, is ephemeral and mortal:

A man knows that a house is made;

The spider which plays idly in it (knows) not (this). (Al-Din Rumi, 2008b).

All the creatures have taken their existence from God, but the essence of Oneness is above all of these diversities:

***Now thou becomest the Sun, and now the Sea;***

Now the mountain of Qáf, and now the 'Anqá.

In thine essence thou art neither this nor that,

O thou that art greater than (all) imaginations and more than (all) more!

(Al-Din Rumi, 2008b)

When God is the only one involved in this creation, then everything returns to its origin and this universe is a perfect and flawless system:

If you are a ball in His polo-field,

Keep spinning round from (the blows of) His polo-stick.

The ball becomes right and flawless (only) at the time

When it is made to dance by the stroke of the King's hand!

(Al-Din Rumi, 2008b)

Rumi says that 'you,' which you have made in your mind, is borrowed and is not your real 'I'; and your real identity is but unity and union with the Being:

***Your reality is the form and that which is borrowed:***

You rejoice in what is relative and rhyme.

Reality is that which seizes (enrapures) you

And makes you independent of form. (Al-Din Rumi, 2008b)

Unity with the universal soul is a stage free from any colour and shape. The returnees do not even notice the divine attributes; they have reached the stage of Annihilation. Rumi and Emerson lead us to see the signs of God. Emerson remains at this stage, but Rumi, in higher stages, says that all signs are worthless after Union:

Inasmuch as those united (with God) are absorbed in the Essence,

O son, how should they look upon His Attributes?

When your head is at the bottom of the river,

How will your eye fall on the colour of the water? (Al-Din Rumi, 2008b)

At this colourless stage, when you become the sea, you are delivered from every corruption:

***(And) may be united with the Sea of Alast:***

When it becomes the Sea, it is delivered from every corruption;(Al-Din Rumi, 2008d)

Union with the Infinity (the Over-Soul) is the essence of Transcendentalism:

That the inhabitant of the earth

May become one in heart and one in aim and one in nature with the sublime celestial.

(Then) separation and polytheism and duality will disappear:

In real existence there is (only) unity.

When my spirit (fully) recognises thy spirit,

They (both) remember their being one in the past, (Al-Din Rumi, 2008d)

The result of the union with the Soul is composure, satisfaction, and happiness. Hence, the reason for people's sadness is that they are anxious:

Because I have passed beyond (all) thoughts,

And have become a swift traveller outside (the region of) thought.

I am the ruler of thought, not ruled (by it),

Because the builder is ruler over the building. (Al-Din Rumi, 2008b)

Man, when he recognizes himself as the conscious in whom the phenomenal world forms, will be free from attachments, the curiosity of situations, places, and conditions. Occasions do not matter him anymore, and their seriousness diminishes; a kind of playfulness comes into his life, and he realizes that this world is but a fantasy.

According to Rumi, despite the fact that consciousness and intelligence of life exist in all beings, among humans, saints are those who are capable of joining the consciousness of the universal soul and to conform to the whole Being:

This breath of the Abdál (saints) is from that (spiritual) springtide:

From it there grows a green garden in heart and soul.

From their breaths there comes (is produced) in him who is fortunate

The (same) effect (as that) of the spring rain on the tree. (Al-Din Rumi, 2008a)

This union and Unity of Being, in addition to the time, exist in forms; there is no past and future; the only real time is the present. The past and future give rise to thoughts, and ignoring these two is the seeing of everything. The reason that human being cannot find the composure of the Over-Soul, is that he is lost in his thoughts. He spends his entire life within the limits of his thoughts and never goes beyond the limited personal and mental concept that has been conditioned with the past. This Unity makes the man feel the Over-Soul with all his heart. The presence, which requires humans to think unnecessarily, makes all human cells alive and aware. If you need to think, superior intelligence works through it. *“The division of life into past, present, and future is mind-made and ultimately illusory. Past and future are thought forms, mental abstractions. The past can only be remembered Now. What you remember is an event that took place in the Now, and you remember it Now. The future, when it comes, is the Now. So the only thing that is real, the only thing there ever is the Now.”* (Tolle, 2003, p. 40)

Transcendentalism is walking beyond that range. Those who have such a vision to the existence are, in fact, a single Being, and to them, the time and place are next to nothing:

His being past or future is (only) in relation to thee:

Both are one thing, and thou thinkest they are two. (Al-Din Rumi, 2008c)

Thought is of the past and future;

When it is emancipated from these two, the difficulty is solved.

When you see two of them met together as friends,

They are one, and at the same time (they are) six hundred thousand.

Their numbers are in the likeness of waves:

The wind will have brought them into number (into plurality from unity).

The Sun, which is the spirits, became separated

(Broken into rays) in the windows, which are our bodies. (Al-Din Rumi, 2008b)

In the above, Rumi describes the concept of the Over-Soul with the most beautiful expressions and that this soul, like the sun, shines on all human beings and nature.

In Persian mystical literature, as well as in the Mathnavi ‘mole’, is the symbol of unity that has all the beauty of this world and the Hereafter in one piece and is inconceivable to ordinary people.

O my comrade on the way, dismiss thy weariness for a moment,

That I may describe a single mole (grain) of that Beauty.

The beauty of His state cannot be set forth:

What are both the worlds (temporal and spiritual)? The reflection of His mole.

When I breathe a word concerning His beauteous mole,

My speech would fain burst my body. (Al-Din Rumi, 2008b)

As water can be solid, liquid, and gas, consciousness, too, can be solid, in the form of matter; liquid, in the form of thought and mind; or formless, in the form of pure consciousness:

This world is one thought (emanating) from the Universal Intellect:

The Intellect is like a king, and the ideas (are his) envoys. (Al-Din Rumi, 2008b)

In Islamic texts, love is the most pronounced term to express the nature of Divinity in Islamic spirituality: ‘If only a single word can be a summary of Islamic spirituality, it is undoubtedly the word love. I believe that the word ‘love’ is the most vivid to express the nature of godliness, which is in the heart of the Islamic tradition. When the value of the poets like Attar and Hafiz is known among Western readers, the reason is that they represent the mercy which inspires the demand for meaning and perfection to man; in particular, Rumi has explicitly taught that True love can only be found in the Ultimate source of mercy and grace.’

Rumi puts a great emphasis on the love on the path of Union and sees it as a connection between God and man:

Everything except love is devoured by Love:

To the beak of Love the two worlds are (but) a single grain. (Al-Din Rumi, 2008e)

Rumi believes that love is the only way to achieve this unity, and says that love consumes the forms and ideas that lead to disconcerted and contradictory thoughts:

Here the mind may bring (suggest) many difficulties,  
But a good beast will break the tether.

His (God's) love is a fire that consumes difficulties:

The daylight sweeps away every phantom. (Al-Din Rumi, 2008c)

Rumi expresses this Unity in the allegory of drop, sea, and almonds; the drop that joined the Sea of Unity should be in the shelter of such a drop because he is superior to the Seven Heavens:

The drop that has become an envoy from the Sea of Unity—

The seven seas would be captive to that drop.

If a handful of earth become His courier,

His heavens will lay their heads (in homage) before His earth.

(Al-Din Rumi, 2008b)

In nature, Rumi mediates on the constant evolution of everything, from rocks to the human mind, and in this regard, refers to the gradual stages of transition from non-living nature to the most complex of the living phenomenon: ***“I died to the inorganic state and became endowed with growth... Emerson, also, did not consider this change straightforward, but a transition from one stage to another”***

As Emerson takes the constant change of nature as a sign that it has the soul, Rumi, too, sees the nature novelty and change as the reason for its spirituality; Emerson's interpretation is philosophical, while Rumi's is purely poetic. Rumi says that this world is transforming by new and original emanations from God, and it is because of him that the manifestations of the universe are transforming endlessly:

Every day He is (busy) in an affair, O son:

Every moment the world is renewed,

And we are unaware of its being renewed whilst it remains (the same in appearance).

Life is ever arriving anew, like the stream,

Though in the body, it has the semblance of continuity. (Al-Din Rumi, 2008a)

Rumi, believing in the laws of creation, introduces them as the main causes of metaphysics, and for this reason, miracle, prayer, revelation, and inspiration are true, not anti-truth. In spite of the many examples of the miracle in Rumi's works, Emerson does not accept the miracle in his works and, in confirmation of his saying, never brings an example of a miracle. In the case of revelation, Rumi

believes that every human being cannot understand the revelation, but Emerson believes that all human beings understand revelation. The universal soul and the human soul are residents of the kingdom of heavens, but God is in a higher position. From Rumi's point of view, the human soul has a certain hierarchy; every soul desires to move on to a higher order, but it does not have the power to reach the higher soul. Prophets and mystics have a higher soul:

The intellect of Ahmad (Mohammed) was not hidden from any one;

(But) his spirit of (prophetic) inspiration was not apprehended by every soul. (Al-Din Rumi, 2008b)

Besides the understanding and soul which is in the ox and the ass,

Man has another intelligence and soul;

Again, in the owner of that (Divine) breath

There is a soul other than the human soul and intelligence.

(Al-Din Rumi, 2008d)

The common people cannot endure the light of the prophets:

Those in the last (lowest) rank, through their weakness,

(Are such that) their eyes cannot endure the light in front (of them);

And that front rank, from weakness of sight,

Cannot support the light that is more advanced.

The light that is the life of the first (highest rank)

Is heartache and tribulation to this squinter; (Al-Din Rumi, 2008b)

In Rumi's opinion, human beings as a microcosm have a higher capacity than other creatures; in his inner journey, he could find other realms within himself and in the outer journey, the relations and components of the universe. However, having reached the self-knowledge, he should not be fascinated by it, and this is another difference between Emerson and Rumi.

The soul of the man of God should regain his divine face to find himself and get rid of the perplexities and depressions. He desires transcendence and perfection and attempts to escape the snares.

The souls of the men of God are in harmony with each other, and in fact, they are a single one:

The souls of wolves and dogs are separate, every one;

The souls of the Lions of God are united.  
 Just as the single light of the sun in heaven  
 Is a hundred in relation to the house-courts (on which it  
 shines),  
 (Al-Din Rumi, 2008d)  
 I saw that thou art the Universal Mirror unto everlasting:  
 I saw my own image in thine eye.  
 I said, "At last I have found myself:  
 In his eyes I have found the shining Way."  
 My false instinct said, "Beware! That (image) is (only) thy  
 phantom:  
 Distinguish thy essence from thy phantom";  
 (But) my image gave voice (spoke) from thine eye (and  
 said),  
 I am thou and thou art I in (perfect) oneness. (Al-Din Rumi,  
 2008b)

## CONCLUSIONS

Truth is one and the men of truth are always unanimous. Their words are also of unity. Despite their different languages and nationalities, there is no contradiction between their ideas. They see their true faces in God. The unity and the Over-Soul repeatedly appear in the words of the mystics and Sufis in different times and places. The Over-Soul is an intersection point in Rumi's and Emerson's philosophy.

Rumi and Emerson shared in their understanding of existence, truth, and human, and they have benefited from similar mystical concepts and motifs. These similarities could be the result of a kind of unity in the intellectual system of human beings in illuminated thoughts, or the result of calque of the opinions of Eastern thinkers, especially Persian mystic poets, such as Hafiz and Rumi, since Emerson has repeatedly acknowledged in his essays and lectures that he had read their works. Emerson and Rumi believe in the originality of human perfection, the breaking of the old customs, and incorrect beliefs and systems dominant in the human moral community to achieve unity with the Origin of creation. They also use the concepts of 'the Over-Soul' and 'unity and union' to describe the transcendental being. This paper examines the recognition of human perfection and transcendence in the context of Emerson's 'the Over-Soul' and Rumi's 'Union'. Rumi and Emerson believe that there is the One, Perfect, Informed and Infinite Essence behind all the phenomena of the world. One side of the world is the finite world, full of

contradictions and changes; the other side is the world of infinity and the Over-Soul; this union and Unity of Being, in addition to the time, exist in forms; there is no past and future; the only real time is the present. The past and future give rise to thoughts, and ignoring these two is the seeing of everything. The reason that human being cannot find the composure of the Over-Soul, is that he is lost in his thoughts. He spends his entire life within the limits of his thoughts and never goes beyond the limited personal and mental concept that has been conditioned with the past.

As Emerson takes the constant change of nature as a sign that it has the soul, Rumi, too, sees the nature novelty and change as the reason for its spirituality; Emerson's interpretation is philosophical, while Rumi's is purely poetic.

In nature, Rumi mediates on the constant evolution of everything, from rocks to the human mind, and in this regard, refers to the gradual stages of transition from non-living nature to the most complex of the living phenomenon: 'I died to the inorganic state and became endowed with growth... Emerson, also, did not consider this change straightforward, but a transition from one stage to another.

In spite of the similarity in their thoughts about the path of human emancipation and perfection, the attitude and epistemology of transcendental concepts, and the common ontology in the path and the destination of this knowledge, there are differences to observe which their dissimilar results should be mentioned.

'Nature' is the foundation of Emerson's philosophy. Like the philosophers of the Romanticism, he calls the 'soul of the world' the 'I'. Emerson rejects the miracle that the church is endorsing, and believes that we should worship the divine spirit within all human beings; revelation is understood by all, but according to Rumi, every soul is not the same kind as the heaven lies; the soul has a hierarchy. Every soul desires to move on to a higher order, but it does not have the power to reach the higher soul. The prophets and the mystics have a higher soul. A man of transcendence must regain his divine face.

Rumi expresses the concept of the Over-Soul with allegories such as light and energy of the sun that shines on all human beings and nature, the mole, the droplet and the sea, a thought from the Universal Intellect, and the flow of love in the whole Being.

In Rumi's opinion, the human being as a microcosm has a higher capacity than other creatures; in his inner journey, he could find other realms within himself and in the outer journey, the relations and components of the universe. However, having reached self-knowledge, he should not be fascinated by it, and this is another difference between

Emerson and Rumi. Rumi sees the universe as a finite being, with all its majesty and magnitude, and that it is a small particle in the glorious Court of God. In this epistemology, God is beyond the perception of human beings; only prophets and saints can receive His revelation and have the ability to join the consciousness of the universal soul and to conform to the whole Being. Nature is also praising Him. Rumi puts a great emphasis on the love on the path of Union. Love is the most pronounced term to express the nature of Divinity in Islamic spirituality.

Rumi and Emerson lead us to see the signs of God. Emerson remains at this stage, but Rumi, in higher stages, says that all signs are worthless after Union.

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