

# Suhrawardi's *Ishraq* in Ralph Waldo Emerson's Transcendentalism: A Phenomenological Reading of Knowledge and Intuition

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Received: 28/11/2022

Accepted: 16/02/2023

Published: 01/03/2023

Volume: 4 Issue: 2

How to cite this paper: Jahromi, K. M., & Amjad, A. F. (2023). Suhrawardi's *Ishraq* in Ralph Waldo Emerson's Transcendentalism: A Phenomenological Reading of Knowledge and Intuition. *Journal of Critical Studies in Language and Literature*, 4(2), 20-29

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46809/jcsll.v4i2.197>

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## Abstract

Among all the Transcendentalists, Ralph Waldo Emerson (May 25, 1803 – April 27, 1882) looked forward to a more glorious state in America than history had yet recorded at a turning point in the foundation of his nation's literature. The belief in human progress culminating in a religion of humanity is the reason that Transcendentalism came into understanding Asian religions and doctrines to which *Ishraq* (Philosophy of Illumination) belongs. By explicating the phenomenological ontology of Suhrawardi's concept of light in The Discourses of Philosophy of Illumination and placing this ontology within regard for Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's *Ontopoiesis* (phenomenology of Life) and Emerson's Transcendentalism, a descriptive framework for such an analysis can be found with an emphasis upon knowledge and intuition. This comparative reading will bring an entire range of genuine phenomenological reflections in *Ishraqi* philosophy to the occidental forum of Transcendentalism, looking for parallel development and cross-cultural dialogue to reflect an intellectual affinity.

**Keywords:** Illumination, Knowledge-by-Presence, Logos of Life, Phenomenology of Life, Unity

## 1. Introduction

Among the American Transcendentalists, Ralph Waldo Emerson, the great original American visionary, longs to possess a mystical perspective. Emerson's textual analysis and close readings of his rhetoric may interrogate his claim of radical originality in the figurative realm of American literature, revealing the extent to which it remains contingent upon his adoption of Persian tradition. The insightful readings into Emerson's specific interest in Persian tradition and its correspondence to his aesthetic will be informed by Sufi Mysticism for sustained comparative analysis. American Transcendentalism and its mystical tenets might have contained philosophical, theological, and gnostic counterparts in the Islamic intellectual history of Transcendent Theosophy. Hence, even the ideological differences in dialectics of schools of thought might not be excluded from philosophical concerns. With a phenomenological reading of Suhrawardi's *Ishraqi* school and its thematic relevance to American Transcendentalism, the close rapport between philosophy, literature, and mysticism, or more precisely between the esoteric dimension of revelation and spiritual terminology of mystical discipline, becomes established by both theoretical knowledge and spiritual vision.

In order to survey American Muslim relations within the old clash of religions, provocative Anouar Majid, in *Islam and America: Building a Future Without Prejudice* (2012), tries to rise above the ideological biases through self-reflection and by taking the measure of one's place in the cosmic scheme. The author mentions Emerson in the third chapter of his book, "How Islam shaped America," and studies the influence of Islam on Emerson. Majid proclaims that Emerson echoed Rāis bel Cossim: "In the matter of religion, men eagerly fasten their eyes on the differences between their creed and yours, whilst the charm of the study is in finding the agreements and identities in all the religions of men" (p. 57). As a quintessentially American writer, Ralph Waldo Emerson read broadly across Muslim history and culture. He attempted to transcend cultural and historical prejudices by reaching for a common understanding. The examination of Emerson's engagement with Sufi mysticism continued in *Emerson in Iran: The American Appropriation of Persian Poetry* (2019), where he stated:

Fully realizing Emerson's Eastern gaze means looking as much towards his vision as at his focus on Iran. Predicating self-depictions on his [own] elusive rhetoric begins to productively foreground why the influence of S'adi, Hafez and others proves especially hard to discern. (Sedarat, 2019, p.3)

Likewise, Emerson's idealized relation to the Persian Sufi poets led him to identify their voices and project himself onto his English renderings by thematic and spiritual claims upon foreign poetics. Besides, tracking Emerson's reading of literature from and about Iran and other Islamic cultures will invite us to a more significant investigation of his subtler mining of Eastern influence closer to the onset of his career development as a writer.

Being trapped in a Plotinian transparent eye, Emerson was attracted to the contemplative and mystical. As Lawrence Buell stated: "Transcendentalism is fundamentally an intuitionism, a belief that Truth can be intuitively perceived by higher Reason that this intuition precedes and invigorates all religious awareness and that it can penetrate the various forms of world religions, extracting from their essence" (p.3). There is a call to intuitive knowledge which pervades classical mystical literature and comparative studies of east and west that announces itself in Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's *Phenomenology of Life* and Suhrawardi's *Philosophy of Illumination*. In her *ontopoiesis/phenomenology of life*, the "ontopoietic intuition" registers the dynamism of life and captures the very process of emergence through the deployment of the virtualities of life: "We must seek the differentiation of living beings not in their participation in the world, but their ontopoietic process as much as their integrating or gathering reach" (Tymieniecka, 2000, p. 234). Besides, the high standards of Sufism revealed insight towards a unique positioning of awareness and meditations on the dynamic origins of things: "A human being endows every emergence from the life-matrix (i.e., life's "dynamic flux is a [that] articulates itself") with a significance uniquely its own" (Louchakova-Schwartz, 2012, p. 293). Within "ontopoietic intuition", ongoing integration of life's thematization will be scrutinized, while in transcending the *aporia* between being and essence, the philosopher's presence restores the wholeness of living in the inquiry's process. *Phenomenology/ontopoiesis* takes from life vivid evidence of the self as the stable basis from which to delineate life's trajectory, retracing the dynamic existential contours of the *logos* of life in the work of the mind. In philosophical interrogation and Islamic existential philosophy, the integrative faculty of reason and intuition embraces a principle of the unification of all faculties of knowledge. As a result, phenomenological reading of Ishraq can unite adversity of interpretations of philosophy and Mysticism to bring people of perennial, hybrid, or non-Sufi Muslim backgrounds together and to contribute to the establishment of a long-lasting community. Of the few lines along which phenomenology has developed, only the phenomenology of life reaches the transcendent and otherworldly domain toward a broad transformative vision. Correlating this approach with Suhrawardi's metaphysical principle of light suggests a new universal *a priori*. Seyyed Hossein Nasr hints at the significance of illumination in *The Garden of Truth: The Vision and Promise of Sufism, Islam's Mystical Tradition* (2009):

"Illuminative knowledge concerns primarily knowledge of the Light of lights, to quote the language of the twelfth-century Persian Sufi and philosopher, Suhrawardi, but it also casts light upon all modes of knowing and turns the objects of knowledge from fact to symbol, from spacity to light, from veil to transparent manifestation of inward reality." (p.53)

This wisdom that the mystic referred to as light is not information or intellectual understanding but rather the knowledge that illuminates both the subject and object of knowledge. Accordingly, Suhrawardi's methodology presupposes reflection on intuitional knowledge- "It is meant to stand in dialectics of proofs and clear evidence to champion it," and in "an empirical reliving of intuitions by climbing the ladder of the soul" (PI, "Introduction," 2,1). The evidentiality of visual/visible light under the reductive phenomenological assumption *a priori* maintains the transcendental empiricism of visual/visible light and the ontological construction of causality. Thereby, Suhrawardi's philosophy of Illumination conveys a new perspective on phenomenological-transcendental philosophy. At the core of Suhrawardi's argument lies the essence of evidentiality that the knower's consciousness and the visible light have in common. The ontological signification of light is partly placed under transcendental empiricism. Sight/ Visuality dominates perception, but this dominant character of visual cognition must not be considered concerning evidentiality. Metaphysically speaking, light is a principle of self-evidentiality that acquires visual/visible light's status. The world is given into the cognizing subjectivity through phenomenological order, and the self will be partaking in the complete immanence of light (Louchakova-Schwartz, 2019, pp. 278-295).

Drawing on Suhrawardi and Emerson might seem counter-productive in discerning basic structures of mystical experience. The refined character of their lives enables us to see more clearly the essential structures of that founding interpersonal sphere. In contrast to the exclusive mystical relations, Emerson and Suhrawardi are exemplary of what is happening in that interpersonal sphere that is lived. Given that, Bergson writes: "In reality, for the great mystics, it is a matter of radically transforming humanity, to begin with, by setting an example. The goal could be attained only if there existed in the end what should have theoretically existed in the beginning, divine humanity" (Steinbock, 2009, p.31). The mutual interrelationship of mysticism and

its academic-phenomenological study developed a normative effect on the thematic understanding of knowledge and intuition in cultural discourses. A phenomenological reading of Illuminism and Emerson's American Transcendentalism entailed an inherent interrelatedness between categories of religio-philosophical knowledge, as well as an interdependent relationship between academia and popularized notion about Mysticism, Phenomenology, and Transcendentalism.

## 2. The Various Types of Knowledge Modalities

While considering the starting point of philosophy, the shift from consciousness to life invokes a pivotal reorientation in the mode of witnessing and in the paradigm of knowledge. Therefore, there is an attempt to investigate two onto-poietic factors in the great system of life's dynamism, which is conducted within the comparative-phenomenological vision of Ralph Waldo Emerson's Transcendentalism in his selected works: the element of light, which is present at the origin of life and omniscient within it; and intuition, an element that may offer us the entire panorama of human life experience. Both will reveal Emerson's specific passion and proficiency in creating life's uniquely individual significance concerning his ascribed mysticism and American school of thought. This comparative-phenomenological investigation reveals an enlightened truth: the uniquely human-life significance arises and unfolds in aesthetic engagement in the arts, particularly in literary creativity. Literature provides incomparable access to the realm of our inquiry by attempting to unravel the constitutive sources and intentions of the mindset's unfolding—the specific outgrowth of the human being's onto-poiesis as he endows his beingness with its essential aspirations. In reverse, if we want to understand what literature is about, we must bring these original sources and motives to light, which are hidden in the deepest recesses of inner/outer functioning where the path of the unfolding of beingness through all phases of life is determined. Subsequently, Emerson's yearning to transcend through a translingual gaze based on revealed wisdom beyond intellectual understanding, which is strongly tied to the battle with language itself in an attempt to transcend all predictions of meaning for a glimpse of the divine, is reflected in the efficacy of Sufi mysticism on American Transcendentalism. This approach not only uses phenomenology to explain Emerson's general affinity for mysticism's spiritual essence but also demonstrates how closely Emerson approaches the style and meaning of his foreign sources.

Emerson's mind was shaped by the concept of form, which had many different interpretations in philosophy and literary theory: "The intellect pierces the form, overleaps the wall, detects intrinsic likeness between remote things and reduces all things into a few principles" (Emerson, 2014, p. 167). Even when his idealistic tendencies were at their strongest, secular constraints of particularity and diversity continuously dissuaded him from believing in one's ability to pierce beyond the visible world to its spiritual, formal core. The issue of taking the stance of the man of infinite possibility in a world that diminishes and delimits possibility from the moment we are in it forms the backdrop of his *The Method of Nature*: "So we must admire in man the form of the formless, the concentration of the vast, the house of reason, the cave of memory" (Emerson, 2014, p. 127). Emerson appears to have leaned on the intellectualized probing of inspired epistemology to declare a manner in which the traces of an intuitive reason may be the subject of hermeneutical inquiry, particularly since the psychology of suspended subjective sovereignty postulated in these discussions reflects the kind of impenetrable intuition of which Emerson was confident but lacked the substantiating basis for (Pickford, 2014, p. 20). Epistemology and ontology are two philosophical areas that are part of all human enterprises. The two are united in onto-epistemology, emphasizing the constant connection between knowing, interpreting, and existing. Traditionally, knowledge is divided into logical or intuitive epistemology, which considers knowledge in terms of origin, constitution, and genre. As a branch of philosophy, epistemology "attempts to discover the grounds on which our knowledge of the world, ourselves, and our consciousness can be established, including identifying the limits to which our knowledge can extend" (Cox, 2006, p. 10). These are pure eidetic science, highly abstracted which will only ever be partially achieved. Phenomenology claimed to overcome the basis of opposition between empiricism and rationalism and the relation between consciousness and objectivity in a holistic approach. In conducting a phenomenological clarification of knowledge, Husserl employs epistemology to "refer to the kinds of epistemic justification usually marshaled to overcome the threat of skepticism, but rather, more in the Kantian sense of an a priori investigation in the nature of those acts which yield cognition (*Erkenntnis*)" (Moran, 2000, p. 92). The failure of traditional epistemology to illuminate the typology of knowledge connected with human individuals led the scholars to embark on new investigations of epistemology in Islamic metaphysics, "[...] that philosophy is something philosophers do rather than think about, and that philosophy done well has no 'East' or 'West'" (Lusthaus, 2006, p. 10). In the phenomenological understanding of mystical ideas, therefore, rigorous phenomenology and logic are considered to be crucial.

The east, according to Emerson, provides new knowledge that can help enhance American understanding. It has a new religion and traditions, yet they all share Emerson's belief in the universality of the human mind. As a result, religious or cultural differences fade away as Emerson focuses on how the east may illuminate deeper insight (Carpenter, 1930, pp. 1-4). His mind was preoccupied with understanding the reality of things; therefore, he argued for a pursuit of knowledge that defied societal standards, and his attempt to revitalize knowledge by adding from all parts of the world may be seen in his study of eastern works. Generally speaking, the sources of knowledge in Islam differs from the materialistic atheism; for whom a methodology of knowledge rests upon the realities of the physical universe and a pure existence as the only source:

"The pivotal difference between Islamic concept and these other systems is that the latter establishes proofs from the observable universe for its claim that there is a second source of knowledge, i.e., revelation, while the materialists deny this reality, which is indicated by the source of knowledge they acknowledge". (Azram, 2012, p. 180)

According to this view, the Islamic perspective and materialistic atheism are incompatible. In addition, proponents of various religious, metaphysical concepts believe in knowledge sources for which they have no evidence of veracity. In the Islamic perspective, the ingredients of knowledge combine epistemology, social action and insight “embraces both the universals of knowledge and the particulars of differences in personal constitution” (Louchakova-Schwartz, 2012, p. 293). This is in marked contradiction to the disadvantage of defining knowledge as logical or intuitive, which overlooks the typology of knowledge about human individuality.

Correspondingly, more than rational deduction or sensual experience, “knowledge of the heart” figures as the most significant source of Sufi wisdom (Schimmel, 2011, p. 4). The pinnacle of this knowledge is alluded to as: “And this because the heart in thee is the heart of all; not a valve, not a wall, not an intersection is there anywhere in nature, but one blood rolls uninterruptedly an endless circulation through all men, as the water of the globe is all one sea, and, truly seen, its tide is one” (Emerson, 2014, p. 152). According to critical consensus, Sufism’s intuition links to Emerson through knowledge based on phenomenological insight. Lewisohn explains that it is “[t]hrough the Romantic experience of becoming ensnared by earthly beauty through contemplation... that the mystic paradoxically contains release from the bonds of selfhood” (p. 51). Despite grave challenges in formulating the phenomenological account of spiritual/prophetic modes of knowledge, it might still be a promising path toward showing how individual constitutions’ qualities are related to the predominant type of awareness in communities. More specifically, the prophet fulfills “lucidity of knowledge”, “perfection of the imagination”, and the “power of making external matter serve him” as the bodies of fellows obey their instructions. As long as all of these conditions are fulfilled, the degree of prophetic consciousness is received by the prophet, as a “sacred intellect which receives all of knowledge, directly, suddenly and without any previous human instructions, from the Active Intellect and thus comes to know at once all things past, present, and future” (Nasr, 1964, pp. 42-43). The relevance of prophetic witness shall be examined within the mystical context where “the idea resonates with the contemporary view that every paradigm has its leading thinkers who summarize and define main aspects of knowledge” (Louchakova-Schwartz, 2012, p. 293). It so happens that the alternative consciousness for which the prophetic modes of knowledge stand for being in harmony with a sequence of the modes of witnessing espoused by history: “The prophetic consciousness is the perfection of the human state possessing all of the human faculties in their perfection in all times” (Nasr, 1964, p. 42). With such reassuring evidence, one might trace the influence of an individual’s mental constitution on the development of phenomenological philosophy. It is noteworthy that “reflection on constitution uncovers normative satisfaction conditions embedded in the experience itself; it does not impose such conditions on experience as logical desiderata”. Moreover, “Phenomenological analysis shows that constitution of the perceptual world entails more than vision conceived as a mental act; it requires an embodied subject” (quoted in Otto & Tuedio, 2012, pp. 21, 25). Thus, every philosophical phenomenological approach asserts specificity, but the route to universals, direct intuition, varies according to the philosopher. It is the edge of vision/perception, the orientation of awareness, or, in Sufi’s plain words, the predisposition of the heart that determines the contours of the phenomenological terrain and the articulation of the truth by a particular knower. Even enlightened minds vary considerably in their direct intuitions; if this were, phenomenological systems would be replicas.

As the first Sufi philosopher who constructed his philosophical doctrine based on unitive experience, Ibn Arabi’s *Wahdat al-Wujud* (unicity of being) examines the varieties of the modes of knowledge through phenomenological hermeneutics in Sufi circles. His doctrine establishes the ontological unity of the Real and the Truth. His all-encompassing idea of knowledge or the ideal reality of knowledge is that it is an essential and eternal attribute, and God’s knowledge of Himself and His knowledge of things is one knowledge, indivisible and non-different. There is a possibility of connecting Ibn Arabi’s concept of sources of knowledge and Suhrawardi’s knowledge-by-presence. In the case of Ibn Arabi, “a primary source is the gnostic knowledge being received in states of contemplation and made possible through the grace (*barakah*) of the prophet”. The property of the self that underlies the direct perception of reality modalities is dependent upon “knowledge through the illumination of heart by Divine theophanies and only in the expression and formulation of inner experiences”. If considered from the point of view of being and the attainment of knowledge, this principle is applied to the “contemplation of the celestial essences in the heart as well as to the consideration of the Universe as a Divine theophany” (Nasr, 1964, pp. 100-108). Suhrawardi’s *ishraqi* epistemology is a specific mode of cognition upon which the self “attains knowledge directly and without mediation, thereby transcending the subject/object distinction”. Similarly, the most outstanding feature of knowledge-by-presence is offered by Ha’iri in *The Principles of Epistemology in Islamic Philosophy*, where he states that the “immediate objective reality of the thing as it is, is its being known” (Burrell, 1994, p. 155). For Suhrawardi, all cognition depends on knowledge-by-presence through which the mind apprehends what exists within it (Cf. Husserl’s *noesis*): “knowledge-by-presence is therefore defined as [an] awareness or presence of the object before its essence. He reminds us that this essence, which he considers the same as the self, light, and knowledge, is such that by virtue of its presence bridges the subject-object distinction” (Aminrazavi, 2014b, pp. 102, 112). Islamic or Eastern mysticism’s direct intuitive epistemologies are not egalitarian in the sense that they are not accessible to all types of minds. On the other hand, they correspond to the maturation of the mind’s capacity to know. These abilities can be developed naturally or via training. As in Islamic mystical philosophy’s epistemology of knowledge-by-presence, these developmentally available abilities produce epistemologies anchored in direct, unmediated awareness of “things themselves”.

Emerson’s unmediated awareness of things, reflected in his doctrine of the “Over-Soul”, is a receptive and responding power off and to intuitive consciousness: “From within or from behind, a light shine through us upon things and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all. A man is the façade of a temple wherein all wisdom and all good abide...” (Emerson, 2014, p. 140). Subsequently, Ziai delves into a fascinating aspect of Suhrawardi’s *Illumination theory*, from which some people have

an al-ilm al-huduri (knowledge-by-presence) experience that stems from robust, intuitive understanding. This knowledge is linked to speculative mysticism, which is the consequence of combining strong intuitive knowledge with the Divine Light. The person who reaches this level not only understands the reality of everything but can also explain it in poetry. Ziai uses Persian poetry as an illustration of the effect of the Illumination philosophy: "Persian poetic wisdom seeks to unravel even the mysteries of nature...by looking into the metaphysical world and the realms of myth, archetypes, dream, fantasy, and sentiment. This knowledge forms the basis of Suhrawardi's views of Illuminationist knowledge" (AlQaisi, 2014, p. 451). When the Divine Light penetrates the heart, it is so powerful that the individual feels as if his or her heart encompasses everything. This is also where the concept of the Divine Light, which allows one to see the reality of oneself and all things, comes from in the Illumination philosophy: "A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the luster of the firmament of bards and sages" (Emerson, 2014, p. 26). Emersonian thinking that knows no bounds needs to be revived in today's day and age. His thinking included Western, Far Eastern, and Islamic civilizations, which he saw as sources of new knowledge that would help him grow in wisdom.

Ontologically, Suhrawardi maintains that "I" is nothing but pure light and that pure knowledge-by-presence is a part of the same family of manifestations as incorporeal light: "The existence of each thing is not a totally separate form of existence but that all existence is a degree of the light of Being" (Nasr, 1964, p. 26). The transition from subjectivity to the physical world—where in Husserlian terms, noesis becomes noema—belongs to his theory of knowledge-by-presence. In his book *Language of the Termites*, Suhrawardi elaborates on the nature of the knowledge needed to come to know the Absolute. Pure knowledge/awareness is among topics that "they [Peripatetics] all disagree upon as long as the veil is not removed and knowledge by presence is not attained" (Suhrawardi et al., 1999, p. 297). However, once this knowledge is achieved, "the crystal ball (jam-i Jam) is at your disposal, and whatever you want can be studied and you become conscious of the universe and the unseen world" (p. 298). There are references in oral Sufism to a continuum of states of union associated with a fluid orientation of awareness on the precipice between subject and object: "This is the very essence of the theory and practice of esoterism-Islamic or other—for this union in divine is the prefiguration of, and the pattern for, the union of man with the Divine" (Stoddart & Austin, 2012, p. 70). This hermetic zone of experience, which is rarely accessible to consciousness, is overlooked by Western phenomenological philosophy. By way of illustration, according to the *philosophia perennis*, Reality is not overwhelmed by the psycho-physical world in which human beings typically operate, nor is consciousness restricted to the ordinary degree of awareness of modern humanity's men and women. Ultimate Reality is undefinable and unconstrained (Nasr, 2007, p. 21). For such an unresearched subject, it would be imprudent to forfeit data from other epistemologies on the basis of a direct measure of self, even though these systems are not exclusively philosophical in the strict sense. Both Ibn Arabi and Suhrawardi ensure that awareness is universal but is particularized by one's mental constitution: "Consciousness... is a constant like water, flowing into containers according to their capacity to receive it, and that over time the manner in which this consciousness is manifested will change according to the receptivity of the collectivity of human containers..." (Yiangou, 2017, p. 439). This description implicitly acknowledges the evolution of consciousness and culture over time, with a growing number of individuals engaging as the structure and form of the upcoming age become perceptible.

In Emerson's writings, the reflecting 'I' is thus in a state of perpetual solitude, separated from the presumed full capacities of a complete ME, and perpetually delayed in its relation to some inconceivably remote and historical intellectual intuition. There has been little doubt about where primacy lies in the relationship between the self and its representations over the vast majority of Emerson's critical writing. The imperial self's autonomy has always been debatable: "I know nothing of the source of my being but I will not soil my nest. I know much of it after a high negative way, but nothing after the understanding. God himself contradicts through me" (Emerson, 1966, p. 71). Emerson is a plain and logically impoverished intuitionist, asserting immanent divine understanding from the faculty of Reason. Along with the socio-political issues that have dominated nineteenth-century Americanist analyses over the previous two decades, several philosophically minded studies have collectively cast doubt on the Emersonian self's sovereignty. The reconstructed reader of a philosophical Emerson reacts with "annoyance at having to stand the repetitive, conforming depiction of Emerson as a philosopher of intuition". Cavell refers to him as a proponent of a pedagogy that teaches us to educate ourselves, and it is within the confines of this dynamic that the challenge to ultimate sovereignty and self-possession exists. Cavell and others believe in an Emersonian self-model that goes through stages of self-relation rather than a continuous, immanent self-identity (quoted in Pickford, 2014, p. 39). Emerson believes that "intuitions which disseminate information" are more important than particular specifics that can help translate a concept into English. In *Quotation and Originality*, he reiterates his statements about 'divine truth' and the concept of 'genius', both of which transcend factual beginnings. This primary metaphor subsumes various features of verse translation that ordinarily require careful negotiation insofar as it allows him to examine and understand the deep past of a foreign tradition like Persian poetry. Despite the importance of "purity of lens" and "field-wide concerns", the "fundamental value" of literature is found in "intuitions that disseminate facts". The reader/viewer can "supersede all history" with such an imaginative vision (Sedarat, 2019, p. 119).

Emerson stated in his *Self-Reliance* that "Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world" (Emerson, 2014, p. 29). The extreme ultimate grounding of manifoldness in a primordial oneness is the methodological question of conscious unity based on lived experience. The Phenomenology of life, to which the task of such mediation is appropriately assigned, can now be considered a life phenomenon, and it can be brought to mediated unity in a dialectic with reverence to its fundamental positions and contrasting elaborations so that it ultimately tends to suggest itself expect in dialectical philosophy the unified philosophical knowledge that truly unifies and

overrides the abundance of forms within itself. Tymieniecka's phenomenology opens an onto-poietic realm that shows the key characteristics and "fulfills the main prerogatives" of what was given to metaphysics, to *Philosophia prima*. We are not stopping at reality as "exhibited" – "life as manifested" in its constituent forms, animal or human, by reaching intentionally below the modern division of subject and object. On the other hand, traditional metaphysical questions gain their fundamental, basic formulations in this freshly opened arena of primogenital sense-emerging (Tymieniecka, 2012, p.11). She has stated: "We have to rediscover it within the maze of novel data revealing the reality and to assess it with the givens newly emerging and hence freshly available to our mind. Logos, the sense of sense, penetrates" (Tymieniecka, 2009, p.26). Philosophy has been abandoned, with its whole spectrum of concerns going to the abysses of physics and beyond physical frontiers to the most profound existential promptings raising spirit or mind, all as an extension of problems traditionally deemed metaphysical. The great principles formerly encircled by speculative imagination to deal with philosophy's queries and to undertake the innermost personal quest for wisdom have lost their application in today's effusive multiplicity of empirical-experiential inquiries into reality.

### 3. The Proper Modalities of Direct Intuition

While considering Emerson's egoic rationality and intuitive knowledge, the ascension from the knowledge procured in semidarkness to the knowledge obtained through direct apperception of mental phenomena and accomplished in total enlightenment and illumination will come forth. However, excluding the ego pole from the formation of intentional relations results in the highest acceptable abstraction of relations during the knowing process: all personal distinctions are lost in over-reduction. Conversely, in twelfth-century Islamic metaphysics, the direct intuition-based approach to knowledge shuns over-reduction, and the individual predisposition manifests itself through differences in the modes of knowledge.

According to Richardson, for Emerson, "the spiritual appears only through the senses", which rather closely relates to how the Sufis also sought an experiential realization of a higher wisdom. Even more specifically, like the Sufis, Emerson believed that "the ideal poet should speak through the symbolic language of nature" (quoted in Aminrazavi, 2014a, p.112). As a thought vehicle, Nature, is a metaphor for the human mind in and of itself. There is an unconscious reality hidden behind the truths of nature, which, if disclosed, will become part of the sphere of knowledge: A subtle chain of countless rings /The next unto the farthest brings;/ The eye reads omens where it goes/, And speaks all languages the rose; And, striving to be man, the worm Mounts through all the spires of the form (Poem Hunter: Ralph Waldo Emerson's Poems, n.d., p. 91). Pickford points out that according to Emerson, "The natural world that we perceive restores to us a sense of our relation to intuition because it is, in a sense, created in our perception, generalized into a singularity in our 'finite scope'" (p.58). Additionally, spontaneous noetic functioning is modified when direct intuition is used as a discursive tool in phenomenological philosophical inquiry. While noema-noesis relationships are always present in the shadows, they should be brought to the forefront of one's awareness in the phenomenological method; this occurs only when a transition in self-awareness brings these relationships out of incognito. Direct intuition is a personal perception characterized by the conscious awareness of intentional consciousness acts. The degree to which this awareness exists varies between individuals. Having progressed beyond the existential/evolutionary parameters of vitally important (survival-oriented) horizons to spheres of experience in communal/societal life, which are founded on existential foundations, the creative logos offers spiritual and, finally, sacral horizons of experience that surpass the now narrow confines of the existential horizon (Tymieniecka, 2009, p. 135).

Beyond intuition, however, Emerson's intellect demands a conscious decision to sit down to consider an abstract truth: "we keep the mind's eye open whilst we converse, whilst we read, whilst we act, intent to learn the secret law of some class of facts", stated by Emerson (Emerson, 2014, p. 169). As previously stated, it is the faculty of intellect that establishes the cohesion of purposeful interlinkage and cooperative fusions within the luminous sphere of life experience spread by consciousness around the pole of self-consciousness as it gathers all our experiences, their performance, their motivations, and their forces together into the unity of our beingness through networks of rational connected-ness and structural linkages. The essential web of the unity-of-everything-there-is-alive brings together a vast network of critical linkages and relevancies. This web encompasses all types and concrete individuals in an eternally flexible, moveable, changeable, transformable whole that is necessarily bound together for success or failure, flourishing or destruction. The human condition's enigmatic position within this web—a predicament that has given rise to unjustifiable views on nature and human culture's autonomy and existential independence, as well as an equally unjustified existential reduction of all that is genuine to the human psyche and culture to vital nature—resides in its existential stance within the web: the functionality of human condition and the synergies of life's vital flow. According to Tymieniecka, "Human beingness, which crystalizes the Human Condition, is existentially dependent even as it projects a new "intellective" significance of life, one autonomous and free of entelechial constraints, one through which new avenues of life are opened and the inner workings of the organic and cosmic synergies in their logocic ordering are cognized and employed to promote those avenues" (Tymieniecka, 2009, p.190). This intrusion into the internal dynamics of life's logos may enhance or impede it, accelerate or demolish it. Human intellect is now overseeing the logos of life as it ascertains, evaluates, and decides to some extent.

Interestingly, within the constraints of the logos of life, for the majority of American Transcendentalists, consciousness is not only a quality of human subjectivity but also of the natural self, which might be interpreted in this context as the manifestation of the Emersonian Over-soul that shares in the essence of all essences. The overarching goal of the "Over-Soul" is to describe the nature of a universal presence of identity, and Emerson drew on various sources to do so. The essay begins

by referring to the supreme deity experienced through spiritual intuition: “Our faith comes in moments; our vice is habitual. Nevertheless, there is a depth in those brief moments that constrains us to ascribe more reality to them than to all other experiences (Emerson, 2014, p. 138). Besides, “The soul knows only the soul; the web of events is the flowing robe in which she is clothed” (Emerson, 2014, p. 142). Thus, Emerson’s Over-Soul is the universe’s eternal wholeness, which reveals itself in individual acts of intuition as well as in the authenticity of life and consciousness. However, at the same time, it is man’s greater experience: “Persons themselves acquaint us with the impersonal. In all conversations between two persons, tacit reference is made, as to a third party, to a common nature. That third party or common nature is not social; it is impersonal; is God” (Emerson, 2014, pp. 142-143). From the beginning, the concepts of intuitive knowledge at the heart of transcendental idealism were created using an esoteric, unconventional, and, basically a personal lexicon that was not always understood and often underappreciated (Pickford, 2014, p. 66). It thus happens that

[B]y the necessity of our constitution, a certain enthusiasm attends the individual’s consciousness of that divine presence. The character and duration of this enthusiasm vary with the state of the individual, from ecstasy and trance and prophetic inspiration—which is its rarer appearance—to the faintest glow of virtuous emotion, with which form it warms, like our household fires, all the families and associations of men, and makes society possible”. (Emerson, 2014, p. 145)

It is necessary to separate focus on the premise that direct intuition is always immersed in variable, dynamic contexts of the mind, rather than being a solitary agent in the idealized mental universe from that of cognitive relativism. According to the latter, cognition is almost always determined by belief, enthusiasm, and inspiration. Likewise, predisposition, which governs the qualities of direct intuition, specifies cognition more than reflective thought. As a result, the concept of the subject is crucial to our consideration. However, identifying the subject as the integral ego of consciousness or the identical self of self-consciousness, or even accepting its autonomy as a source of selfhood and personality, is debatable today (Tymieniecka, 2012, p. 349). Predisposition, or in Emerson’s terms, enthusiasm and inspiration, cannot be bracketed out: first, since it is mainly anonymous and unreachable through awareness, and second, because bracketing it out would lead to the loss of all self-consciousness and, with it, of all knowledge possibilities if one believes that in order to provide an ultimate justification for any knowledge claim, one must admit that all of our knowledge is ultimately based on a type of inner awareness (per our inner predisposition) that is not itself knowledge and cannot be considered self-consciousness in the pure sense (Tymieniecka, 2012, p. 549).

In the initial phrases of Experience, Emerson describes intellect as a clear substance that exists independently of or outside nature. He underlines that the mind’s vision is not like sight’s, meaning that intellect functions independently of the natural laws that govern the physical body. The eyes look forth on the universe from a specific point of self, whereas “Intellect separates the fact considered, from you, from all local and personal reference, and discerns it as if it existed for its own sake (Emerson, 2014, p. 167). The mind is larger than the ego because it is a basic problem of existence beyond person or location. That is why, throughout the book, Emerson emphasizes spontaneous action, or the intuitive principle—of thought prior to the imposition of human volition (Emerson, 2014, pp. 211-233). Thus, the interior vision that is fundamental to our alive beingness’ oneness - the work of the subliminal forge in which our organic/vital, gregarious/psychological, and distinctively human aspects of significance come together within a new mold - is in no way self-contained. It is ‘inward’ in that it can prompt our beingness ‘out of itself’ - ourselves - through the sensory experience of sight, an entire system of intentionality, and, above all, through our subliminal longings and quests. As a result, this external image of man as a part of a world with unlimited horizons is the result of these subliminal workings, and it merely represents the enlargement of the inside vision, which draws on the outward vision. In a bright emerging from brute nature into the human realm of existence with its boundless vistas, elemental human vision, the fruit of our particular subliminal workings, which draw upon our complete organic, vital, psychic/gregarious, and creative virtualities, links them all. It cannot be overstated how marvelous it is that we exist within a sphere of light or an orbit of light into which the luminosity of our internal mental realm naturally extends. Our inner vision reaches out into the radiance of our psychic vision’s outward life-world. As a result, human life is all-luminous.

The modes of knowledge range from one phenomenological philosopher to another, much like the prophetic forms of knowledge articulated by Sufis—such as Suhrawardi and Ibn ‘Arabi. In his “The Sublime Visions of Philosophy”, Mohammad Azadpur suggested that “Avicenna and Suhrawardi go beyond Heidegger (and Kant) by expanding the common original ground to include visions of the divine and prophetic insight” (Tymieniecka, 2006, p. 191). Besides, as Emerson witnessed in his “Over-Soul”, the light that consciousness brings is not only the inward-outward reaching subtle vision of the individual life, but also the vision of the self’s roving eye, which moves in lockstep with the network of the individual’s operations - the network of their rational connections clad in innumerable experiential molds - that becomes transparent to the eye, operations that he can oversee, scrutinize, and control. We exist in the bright zone of our consciousness, which encompasses everything of our beingness. Our intellect has now revealed the intelligibility of the rational interlockings in the phenomena of our inside and outward experiences: “When I watch that flowing river, which, out of regions I see not, pours for a season its streams into me, I see that I am a pensioner; not a cause, but a surprised spectator of this ethereal water; that I desire and look up, and put myself in the attitude of reception, but from some alien energy the visions come” (Emerson, 2014, p. 138). The modes of knowledge are linked to how, at what angle, and on what horizon, a particular thinker’s direct intuition takes the transcendent features of the natural world out of anonymity. Furthermore, the investigation will be based on the degree of mental transparency to direct intuition, as well as self-awareness and self-knowledge (Louchakova, 2005, pp. 87-112). Phenomenological philosophizing is tied not only to streamlined cognitive processes but also to the organic growth of the philosopher’s insight, which is associated with a

particular mental predisposition as both a systematic inquiry and an intuitively conceived process. This line of thinking can be extended to dig at the origins of any knowledge that has the connotations of certainty and truth: discoveries are made possible by the “unique positioning of individual direct intuition”. As a result, many such knowledge systems are anchored in the various forms of direct intuition that provide us with a framework to work with while examining Tymieniecka’s phenomenology of life. In this scenario, the particularities of direct intuition begin with its premise, life.

#### 4. The Phenomenal Manifestation of Evolving Life

Emerson’s visionary experience maintains the transcendental constitutive system of the human being in infinite degrees of life: “If I have described life as a flux of moods, I must now add that there is that in us which changes not and which ranks all sensations and states of mind. The consciousness in each man is a sliding scale, which identifies him now with the First Cause, and now with the flesh of his body; life above life, in infinite degrees” (Emerson, 2014, p. 226). Besides, the visionary experience strengthens the vital rationalities of living beings, thus reaching the frontiers of its transcendental exertion; however, that system lacks the means to thematize these frontiers and estimate or appreciate the significant gap that exists between its apparatus and the schemas of the forces. The gap, as mentioned earlier, might be fulfilled through Tymieniecka’s Life intuition. Life intuition, which Tymieniecka has separated from the human creative process, demonstrates its ability to penetrate and give due consideration to all other approaches and techniques to the real, as well as recognizing all the idiosyncrasies of their findings, whether connected or presumably disconnected. In summary, we will pursue the intuitive path of life in search of the meanders and potentially interesting of all-that-is-alive, finally seeking the distinguishing and integrating articulations of life’s origination and being at the crossroads of multiple perspectives. Emerson’s ultimate grounding of ultimate opposites and manifoldness in an ultimate primordial oneness is the methodological question of consciousness unity. Objectivity and subjectivity are not mutually exclusive; neither outweighs the other; instead, they are linked in a relationship. The sense of the complexity of lived experience, immediacy, actuality, individuality, and subjectivity is controlled by this preconception: “[...] each man’s genius being nearly and affectionately explored, he is justified in his individuality, as his nature is found to be immense; and now I add that every man is a universalist also, and, as our earth, whilst it spins on its own axis, spins all the time around the sun through the celestial spaces...” (Emerson, 2014, pp.312-313). We must consider whether individuality as a mode of life should be supposed to be distributed across a wide range of productive efficiency, accomplishment realms, and primal and segmental entities and whether it should be differentiated accordingly: “Indeed individuality appears to instigate and preside within more or less complex life-processors, definitive life-agents up to the complete living beingness, a whole individuality phenomenally manifesting itself within the world of life” (Tymieniecka, 2009, p. 77). Individuality as a mode of life should not be presumed to be distributed throughout varying extents of productive efficiency, numerous domains of accomplishment, and countless segmented things, and should not be differentiated accordingly.

The operative-coordinating principles make meaning of organic, vital, and gregarious life-promoting actions. It results in their merger or coalescence. As it is stated in *The Poet*: “We stand before the secret of the world, [there] where Being passes into Appearance and Unity into Variety” (Emerson, 2014, p.195). Each of these phases is marked by the appearance of a notable novum. It is freed from the increasing complexity of its operation, which stimulates the virtualities inherent in its constituents. However, it will only be achievable in the entirely cognitive functioning of the individual as the stimulating cause pushes his selective mechanism toward submission or rejection in the completely conscious functioning of the individual. The submission and rejection are foreshadowed in Emerson’s statement, “Life will be imaged, but cannot be divided nor doubled. Any invasion of its unity would be chaos” (Emerson, 2014, p. 229). That is why, Tymieniecka says, “full consciousness, in its uniquely inventive projection, means not only the instinctive sharing of self-interest with other individuals but also the propensity to expand one’s meaningfulness into transactions with other individuals” (Tymieniecka, 2012, p. 393). In his *Threnody*, Emerson mentions that “Life is life which generates/And many-seeming life is one” (Poem Hunter: Ralph Waldo Emerson’s Poems, n.d., p. 220). Accordingly, the force of life, which reveals itself in the union and becomes the principle of detachment in ontogenetic reality, is hidden in the dynamic. As a result, in logos and life, one speaks of unity and diversity among various creatures: “Space is ample, east and west/But two cannot go abreast” (Poem Hunter: Ralph Waldo Emerson’s Poems, n.d., p.234). To use Tymieniecka’s terms, this is linking the nodal points together. The reality of difference and unity extends beyond phenomenological ontology to onto-poiesis in that it aspires to reach the most fundamental level and dig deeper to its pure state. It is best illustrated by the following: “The onto-poietic unfolding of the logos of life manifests itself in the spectacle of all, cosmos, world, nature, life, the works of the human spirit ... We live within its network and speculate without noticing it. Yet the philosophical query dives below the spectacle to find its genesis and underpinnings” (Editors, 1991, p. 211). Through the designs of life, the agency of the unity and Tymieniecka’s Logos Omnia will be uncovered: “[...] that Unity, 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, to which all right action is submission; that overpowering reality which confutes our tricks and talents, and constrains everyone to pass for what he is” (Emerson, 2014, p. 139). As a result, the nature-nurture dichotomy is replaced by a depiction of the onto-poietic unfolding of the unity-of-all-that-is-alive and the self-ciphering of new logoc possibilities. This level of understanding would be unattainable if life were approached with a natural, commonsense mindset. Life is exposed to epoche in Tymieniecka’s philosophy and Emerson’s Transcendentalism, making it open to direct examination and reinterpretation on its terms.



Suhrawardi has already established some co-generic points that convert light's illuminating power to find the world of life and the uniquely human world into its essential companion or effect: vision as the gnostic mode of cognition. Indeed, when we consider the emergence of dimensionality in space, the separation of spaces, the differentiation of shapes and qualities such as color, fragrance, and texture, and, even more importantly, the differentiation of things and beings in nature, we are already touching on the essential aspect of living creature experience: vision. There is a reason why science and philosophy have ascribed primacy to sight among the ways of recognizing these attributes or the means of constructing them for recognition by living beings. Emerson also adds to the meaning of sight in his *Intellect*. He says, "We only open our senses, clear away as much as we can from the fact, and let the intellect see" (Emerson, 2014, p. 168). The sight of intellect, on the other hand, spreads to all sides and is not constrained by the contours of the specific perceptual object of this single perception; it also extends above each perception to encompass the horizon of a world that appears to be the circumference of experience as a whole. In his *Voluntaries*, Emerson wrote: "Yet happier he whose inward sight/ Stayed on his subtle thought/ Shuts his sense on toys of time/ To vacant bosoms brought (Poem Hunter: Ralph Waldo Emerson's Poems, n.d., p.239). Not only does sight, as a sensory experience of humans, expand the living individual into innumerable, if not infinite, perspectives beyond himself - perspectives within which he can differentiate other beings as well as the entire spread of living nature - but it also allows him to place himself among them. Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly for his life-world existence, he can use sight to 1) centralize his position in any field, no matter how uncharted, without becoming lost himself, and 2) do so naturally because the structure of sight experience synchronizes visual perspectives in such a way that he can gather them all around himself. The outward sight provides us living beings, particularly humans, with a global vision of the world of life.

## 5. Conclusion

In a process-phenomenological analysis, intuition catches life as a self-sustaining, dynamic force that drives it forward. The structural or constitutive perspective and the dynamic of energies and forces are differentiated and expanded by intuition and investigation. Emerson's Transcendentalism, Tymieniecka's phenomenology of life, and Suhrawardi's philosophy of illumination would have shown that direct intuition is the core of self-consciousness and pervades the entire phenomenal field of knowledge. In terms of Emerson's abstracting quality of Transcendentalism, the upsurge of life's onto-poietic dynamism discerning the universal structures of life and light is akin to the eidetic intuition and fundamental to the mind's functionality. Nevertheless, even in its abstraction, it maintains integrity to its substratum per se and entails the idiomatic nature of things pre-thematized by intuition within the personal psychological scope. The most appropriate way in Tymieniecka's investigation is a dynamic engagement of direct intuition of life's continually shifting forms and vistas. Following her method, Emerson's Transcendentalism and Suhrawardi's Illumination are applicable in this process orientation not only to identify the structures that remain in this dynamic expanse but also to trace the human condition's location in the onto-poietic cycle of life and light. Both the eidetic reduction and intuitive awareness of the phenomenal field occur in the context of various individual constituent effects in the reality of experience, and the process is configured by the mind's distinctive individuality as a whole.

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