DOI: 10.9744/kata.16.2.109-118

ISSN 1411-2639 (Print), ISSN 2302-6294 (Online)

OPEN ACCESS

http://kata.petra.ac.id

A Poet Builds a Nation: Hafez as a Catalyst in Emerson's Process of Developing American Literature

Behnam Mirzababazadeh Fomeshi*, Adineh Khojastehpour
Independent scholars
* Corresponding author
emails: behnam.mirzababazadeh@gmail.com , adinehkhojastehpour@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have tried to elucidate the relationship between Emerson and Hafez. While most of these studies laid emphasis on influence of Hafez on Emerson and others on similarity and/or infatuation, they left untouched some vital historical aspects of this relationship. Taking into consideration the political and literary discourses of Emerson's America may illuminate the issue. America's attempt to gain independence from Britain, Emerson's resolution to establish an American literary tradition, his break with the European fathers to establish that identity, his open-mindedness in receiving non-European cultures and the correspondence between Emerson's transcendentalism and Hafez's mysticism led to Hafez's reception by Emerson.

Keywords: Hafez; Emerson; comparative literature; reception; national identity

INTRODUCTION

In addition to being considered the father of transcendentalism, the American poet and philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) was a remarkable figure concerning Persian literature. The poet's most fruitful years coincided with his careful study of Persian poets. He translated some seven hundred lines of Persian poetry including Saadi, Hafez, Attar, Nezami, Anwari and Rumi from German to English (Yohannan, 1943a, p. 407). The total number of the translated poems was sixty-four (Dimock, 2009a, p. 63), of which, at least, four hundred lines belonged to Hafez (Ekhtiar, 1976, p. 113). Emerson's familiarity with Hafez came from his study of two anthologies of Persian poetry in his library (Dimock, 2009b, p. 36), translated by the Austrian scholar Joseph von Hammer: *Der Diwan von Mohammed Schemsed-din Hafis* (1812–1813) and *Geschichte der schonen redekunste Persiens* (1818). His interest in Hafez started when he found a remarkable resemblance between his thoughts, i.e., American transcendentalism and those of the Persian poet, i.e., Iranian mysticism. Emerson was so infatuated with the Persian poet that he paid many extravagant compliments to Hafez. Emerson's activities played a significant role in introducing Persian culture to the American society. The present paper aims to throw new light on the relationship between the American poet and his Persian counterpart.

The relationship between Hafez and Emerson has been extensively studied. Most of the researchers have highlighted *influence* and some have emphasized *similarity* or *infatuation*. For instance, Fotouhi and Taebi (2012) believed that Emerson's poetic taste made him study Persian poets and "correspondence between their mystical insight and his transcendental view fired his enthusiasm for Persian poetry" (p. 113). They concluded that "On Persian Poetry" is "the most decisive evidence indicating the influence of Iranian poets, particularly Hafez, on the foundation of transcendental philosophy" (p. 113). Another scholar, Yohannan (1943b) believed that Hafez had a marked influence on the structure of Emerson's sentences (p. 35). Yohannan (1943a) is not sure whether the poem "Hafiz" is a free translation of Hafez by Emerson or an inspiration from Hafez (p. 415). According to Ekhtiar (1976), Emerson's survey of Iranian culture began with Zoroastrianism, and after reading the holy Quran and Sa'di, he ended up infatuated with Hafez. The critic mentioned the titles of some of Emerson's essays and laid emphasis on the similarity between the titles and the notions in the Iranian-Islamic mysticism (Ekhtiar, 1976, p. 73). He traced similar symbols in their works, and discussed the influence of Hafez on Emerson. The previously mentioned critics are not the only researchers who worked in this field. Gay (1928), Carpenter (1930), Christy (1932), Richardson (1995), Obeidat (1998), Almansour (2005) mentioned the *influence* of mysticism, whether

eastern or Iranian, on Emerson and/or his *interest* in it. The aforementioned works referred to *influence* of Hafez on Emerson, *similarity* between the two poets, Emerson studying and translating Hafez, Emerson's *infatuation* with Hafez and Hafez as an *inspiration* for Emerson. Although these works covered some aspects of the relationship, none of them did touch upon *whyness*. Why did an American philosopher become interested in and inspired by a poet from a remote time and place and with a different language and culture? The present paper is aimed at finding the reasons behind Emerson's reception of Hafez in the political, social and cultural discourses of Emerson's time and the correspondence between mystical thoughts of Hafez and Emerson's transcendentalism. In fact, Hafez was received by the American poet as a result of the similarity of thoughts and the particular conditions of Emerson's America.

Jost (1974) divided comparative studies into four categories: the first, similarity, whether as a result of influence or not; the second, movements and trends; the next, form and genre and the last, theme and motive. What is worth mentioning in connection with the category of previous works on the relationship between Emerson and Hafez is that almost all fall in the first category, literary influence and similarity. Literary influence has been a highly disputed issue in literary studies; Simon Jeune considered it the very center of comparative literature (as cited in Prawer, 1973, p. 51) and Wellek (1970) denounced it because of its 'unreflecting positivism" (p. 35). According to Prawer (1973), "'influence' studies proper are perhaps the most suspect and maligned area of comparative investigation" (p. 60). Aldridge believed that "questions of 'influence' cannot be divorced from questions of 'analogy', 'affinity' and 'tradition'" (as cited in Prawer, 1973, p. 52). He defined "analogy" or "affinity" as "resemblance in style, structure, mood or idea between two works which have no other connection'" (as cited in Prawer, 1973, p. 52). Literary analogy may result not from influence, but from similar social and political processes. Russian comparatists proposed some ideas concerning the issue of analogy. Viktor Zhirmunsky found the reason behind similarities not in borrowings but in the similarity in the historical context of literary phenomena (Fomeshi and Khojastehpour, 2014, p. 72). Veselovsky believed that similarities are results of similar psychological processes. This belief brought him closer to the American school of comparative literature (p. 69).

Henry Remak (1961) believed that the French approach depended on factual evidence (p. 3). He considered influence studies in this school unimaginative and proposed his alternative:

> In a good many influence studies, the location of sources has been given too much attention, rather than such questions as: what was retained and what was rejected, and why, and how was the material absorbed and integrated, and with what success? If conducted in this fashion, influence studies contribute not only to our knowledge of literary history but to our understanding of the creative process and of the literary work of art. (Remak, 1961, p. 3)

According to Prawer (1973), a writer's willingness to connect with another writer and "to allow it to affect his own literary creations, must depend on a feeling of kinship, or fascinated hostility" (p. 31). These factors have determining roles in the reception of a writer in a foreign country. He proposed several questions which authors must not evade:

> Which were the periods that saw especially intensive literary relations between two given countries? What were the factors --- cultural, social, political, economic --- which facilitated relations of this kind? What was it that the reading public, and the authors, of a given country sought and found in the foreign literature they welcomed? (Prawer, 1973, 31)

Research in the field of reception, dissemination and literary fortune forms a large portion of comparative studies. According to Zhirmunsky, the cultural importations don't materialize spontaneously, but according to ideological necessity of receptor country (as cited in Londero, 2012, p. 134). Reception of a foreign writer happens when the foreign works import those cultural and ideological elements to a given country which either correspond to those of the receiving country or help them develop. Prawer (1973) believed that "'reception' studies and studies of 'effect' or 'influence' must go together" (p. 38).

The present paper makes use of analogy between the two figures and focuses on Hafez's reception by Emerson. Since literary influence does not happen in a vacuum and analogy is not accidental but the result of cultural, social, historical and political factors, the reasons behind Emerson's reception of Hafez can be traced to political, social and cultural characteristics of Emerson's era, his literary ambitions and the correspondence between mystical thought of Hafez and transcendental ideas of Emerson.

EMERGENCE OF AMERICAN NATIONAL LITERATURE

American writers were very obsessed with the idea of the "Americanness" of their national literature;

"indeed few major literatures have been as preoccupied with the idea of nationality" (Ruland and Bradbury, 1991, p. xvii). In American literary history, "early national period" (1775-1828) referred to a period which saw the emergence of national literature. Americans believed that with a revolution a new chapter began in the history of the nation, an era of liberty and artistic achievement. John Adams' idea of the arts in the early republic is illuminating. In a letter to his wife from Paris in 1780 he wrote

> I must study Politicks and War that my sons may have liberty to study Mathematicks and Philosophy. My sons ought to study Mathematicks and Philosophy, Geography, Natural History, Naval Architecture, Navigation, Commerce and Agriculture, in order to give their Children a right to study Painting, Poetry, Musick, Architecture, Statuary, Tapestry and Porcelaine. (as cited. in Ruland and Bradbury, 1991, p. 54)

Adams shrewdly realized that literary development of the new nation is a time-consuming process that needs three generations; the first generation involved with political and military issues, the second with science and economics and the third with art and literature. The period between the Revolution and the 1820s belonged to the first generation. In that period of national construction, the new nation was engaged in political and military issues. It is not surprising that no great literature is produced in that age, inappropriate for creative imagination. In that era of early nationalism the cry for "declaration of literary independence" and a "truly American literature" was heard, but the new nation had to wait for the third generation in the 1850s to realize that national dream (p. 61).

The poetry of the early Republic contributed to the development of a sense of nationhood. Thus, oral forms, such as the ballad and the song were widespread. Poetry and nationalism were related in another important way. Americans tried to have their own poetry. Americans believed that new nation would first translate and then surpass the arts of the English Empire. Judith Sargent Murray (1751–1820) wrote an essay series, *The Gleaner* (1798), in which she discussed some issues, including literary nationalism. Figures like Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Joel Barlow and Noah Webster in the earlier years, William Cullen Bryant, William Ellery Channing and Ralph Waldo Emerson in the later ones, supported the idea of nationalism.

The literary activities of various figures such as Washington Irving (1783-1859), Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810), James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851), William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878) and Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) distinguished American literature from its British counterpart (Abrams and Harpham, 2009, p. 246). The War of I8I2 quickened national self-awareness. While acknowledging the limitations of local poetry, Bryant believed in a promising future for the national literature. Bryant, "who was to be the major figure of American poetry for the generation between Freneau and Emerson, represented that promise himself" (p. 74). His poetry stands somewhere between classicism and the philosophic Romanticism of Emerson (p. 75). His essay, "On Trisyllabic Feet in Iambic Measure" (1819), was a declaration for the end of neoclassicism and beginning of a "literary revolution." He preferred blank verse because of its freer and more natural music than that of rhyme. In the meantime, he advised a greater freedom in prosody to allow occasional irregularities such as feet of three syllables in poems of iambic measure. In the postcolonial era, America poetry first tried to get rid of colonial tradition of European tradition, then it made an attempt to create its distinct voice. Bryant's *Thanatopsis and Other Poems*, published in 1821, was an instance of such an attempt. He strongly believed that his homeland could provide materials for a national poetry.

The Young America Movement was an American political and cultural attitude in the mid-1840s and early 1850s. It was inspired by the European youth movements of the 1830s. Cornelius Mathews (1817–1889), best known for his crucial role in the movement, adopted the name for the movement. Literary figures, including William Cullen Bryant, George Bancroft (1800-1891), Herman Melville (1819-1891), Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) and Evert Augustus Duyckinck (1816-1878), joined the movement. The writers of the movement supported literary nationalism and believed one of the marks of that literature should be its morality teaching.

Although "early national period" was the beginning of American national literature, the flourishing of distinctly American literature which established its identity belonged to the "American Renaissance" (1828-1865). It was an important period in American literary history. The American Renaissance refers to burgeoning of distinctively American literature in the years leading to Civil War (Baldick, 2001, p. 8). This flourishing of national literature is characterized by the works of Emerson, Thoreau (1817-1862), Hawthorne (1806-1864), Melville (1819-1891) and Whitman (1819-1892). American Renaissance was an American model of European romanticism that

manifested itself in transcendental philosophy. Like its European counterpart, this period is concomitant with nationalism and the creation of a national identity. The American classics are produced in this period. The period saw a "remarkable outburst of creativity in American letters" (Quinn, 2006, p. 21). Crucial to the growth of literature and thought in the period was transcendentalism, a "rich mixture of Romantic ideas and American individualism" (Quinn, 2006, p. 21). In all the major genres except drama, writers created original and excellent works not surpassed in later American literature. The beginning of distinguished American criticism and the inauguration of African-American novel belonged to this period. In fact, the identity of American literature that discriminated between this national literature and other English literatures developed in this period.

In the years leading to the Civil War American thinkers tried to form a national identity. Nationalism and independence were two dominant discourses of the time (Fomeshi, 2015, p. 3). Although independence from Britain was declared in 1776, literary and cultural independence as a prerequisite for true political independence was not realized until a century later. Transcendentalist like Emerson propagated independence and freedom in their works. The independence and freedom were not restricted to the individual level; it covered the national level as well. Transcendentalism celebrated the self and individuality which paved the way for the formation of identity, whether individual or national. America wanted to form national identity both political and literary.

Emerson is a central figure in the history of American literature; any understanding of the originality of American writing depends on the discussion of Emerson and his idea of self-reliance. Harriet Martineau (1802-1876), an English social theorist, believed that to know Emerson is the road to know America. In him "one leading quality is to be distinguished . . . modest independence", "independence equally of thought, of speech, of demeanour, of occupation, and of objects in life" (as cited in Ruland and Bradbury, 1991, p. 119). Whitman acknowledges this position: "America of the future, in her long train of poets, and writers, while knowing more vehement and luxuriant ones, will, I think, acknowledge nothing nearer this man, the actual beginner of the whole procession . . ." (p. 104). The critics' opinions reveal Emerson's seminal position in American literary history and his role in developing the identity of American literature. Cleanth Brooks, R. W. B. Lewis, and Robert Pen Warren (1973), in their anthology *American Literature: The Makers and the Making* denominate Emerson as "the indispensable figure in American literary history" (p. 690). As Brooks et al. (1973) believe the themes Emerson "sounded most frequently will always be found close to the center of any fair account of the continuity and development of American literature" (p. 690). Ironside (2009) refers to the inevitability of orbiting around Emerson and the difficulty of avoiding Emerson for a thinking person of Emerson's era (p. 55). The critic believes that "most of the major writers of the time orbited at some point around Emerson, from William Dean Howells to Samuel Clemens to Henry James" (Ironside, 2009, p. 55). He also mentions Emerson's influence on the writers of his time. Bloom (2008) calls Emerson "the Mind of America" (p. xi) and argues that "after Emerson, every strong American writer and thinker has been an Emersonian or an anti-Emersonian but not indifferent to him" (p. xi). Bloom's comment on Emerson would elucidate his position in American literature:

> Towards Emerson I feel nothing but admiration: he gave me as much self-reliance as I know. Out of Emerson came Walt Whitman, Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, William James, and John Dewey. In a more antithetical way, Emerson provoked creativity in Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Emily Dickenson, and Henry James. During the twentieth century, the catalog becomes too large to list. But as representative figures I would cite Robert Frost in the direct line of descent and Wallace Stevens as a rather rueful literary grandchild of the sage of Concord. (Bloom, 2008, p. xi)

EMERSON'S LITERARY NATIONALISM

Emerson strongly supported literary nationalism. "America is a poem in our eyes", wrote Emerson in "The Poet". He expressed the idea in his works, particularly "The American Scholar," a speech delivered to the Phi Beta Kappa Society, at Harvard University on August 31, 1837: "Perhaps the time is already come . . . when the sluggard intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill" (as cited in Packer, 2004, p. 11). In the same work, known as America's intellectual/literary Declaration of Independence, he declared:

> The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. . . . Mr. President and Gentlemen, this confidence in the unsearched might of man

> belongs, by all motives, by all prophecy, by all preparation, to the American Scholar. We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. . . . A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men. (as cited in Billitteri, 2009, p. 44)

In an 1854 lecture, entitled "Poetry and English Poetry," Emerson elaborated on the same subject:

> The question is often asked, Why no poet appears in America? Other nations in their early, expanding periods, in their war for existence, have shot forth the flowers of verse, and created mythology which continued to charm the imagination of after-men. But we have all manner of ability, except this: we are brave, victorious; we legislate, trade, plant, build, sail, and combine as well as any others, but we have no imagination, no constructive mind, no affirmative books. (as cited in Packer, 2004, p. 11)

To create an American poetry distinguished from the British tradition, Emerson experimented with different meters and poetic forms. In the Boston edition of his *Poems*, published on Christmas Day in 1846, one can trace that kind of experimentation (p. 96). The volume included poems in rhymed stanzas and blank-verse and also poems with irregular lines:

> The verse-paragraphs of these poems contain lines of varying lengths (tetrameter, trimeter, dimeter, even monometer), usually iambic, though sometimes headless and hence trochaic in effect. The poems rhyme, though the rhyme scheme that obtains in one verse-paragraph may be discarded by the next. That Emerson cast some of his most important poetic, political, and theological statements in this verse form indicates that he found it suppler and more expressive than either regular stanzaic poetry or blank verse. (p. 99)

In "Threnody," Emerson combined passages of varying line-lengths with long stretches of tetrameter couplets (p. 104). In "The Sphinx", another such poem, Emerson uses fourteen of its seventeen eight-line stanzas in iambic-anapestic dimeter and three stanzas and the four-line coda of trimeter lines (p. 99). "Even in these hymns to wild freedom Emerson's mythic bards never completely forgo meter and rhyme, though his delighted response to Whitman's 1855 *Leaves of Grass* shows that he was perfectly willing to see someone else do so" (p. 99).

Emerson believed, "It is not metres, but a metre-making argument that makes a poem". Some writers condemned his praise of other poets' experimentation with different meters and poetic forms. Poe, for instance, believed that such "partisanship guaranteed continued mediocrity in the nation's literature. To make excuses for poets who could not observe the rules of grammar or meter was to confess one's belief that American poets could really do no better" (p. 128). James Russell Lowell agreed with Poe. To him, the long history of nationalistic fervor resulted in literary incompetence. "The feeling that it was absolutely necessary to our respectability that we should have a literature, has been a material injury to such as we have had" (p. 128). These comments did not discourage Emerson. As the editor of *Dial*, he supported different poets by publishing their works in his journal. Emerson also wrote encouragements to poets who were at the beginning of their poetic career. An introduction to Emerson's definition of the poet and poetry would be useful here. As mentioned earlier Emerson was influenced by the Orient and his poetic theory was no exception. In "The Poet" he elucidated his poetic theory and described the characteristics of a poet. Emerson's poetic theory was under the influence of Persia. He asserted that the "best definition of the poet and poetry would be that of the oldest sentences and claims to come down to us from Zoroaster" (Ekhtiar, 1976, p. 53). Emerson was interested in the mysticism of Persian poetry and its emphasis on the transcendental and the extraordinary. He wrote that the poets' employment consisted in "producing apparent imitations of unapparent natures, and ascribing things unapparent in the apparent fabrication of the world" (as cited in Ekhtiar, 1976, p. 53). He believed nothing was "of value in books, excepting the transcendental and extraordinary" (Emerson, 1960, p. 259). Like Persian mystics Emerson's poet was not "contented with a civil and conformed manner of living" (Emerson, 1960, p. 240). He or she was a "complete" person isolated "by truth and by his art" (Emerson, 1960, p. 241). The poet was not "selfish" and "sensual" (Emerson, 1960, p. 239). In terms of place and time the poet's cultivation was not local but universal and he or she was not a contemporary, but eternal person. Emerson believed it was "dislocation and detachment from the life of God" (Emerson, 1960, p. 250) that made things unpleasant and it was the poet, who through reattaching "things to nature and the whole … by a deeper insight" disposed "very easily of the most disagreeable facts" (Emerson, 1960, p. 250).

Emerson belonged to the poets who were harshly criticized by Plato for their belief in poetic inspiration. He compared an individual to a flute or a pipe, or to a mountain which played or echoed the sounds, the notes, and the voice of divinity. Also, in his works

Emerson used “flute” or “pipe” as symbols of man's inspiration or of God's emanation. He wrote "Man is but the poor organ through which the breath of Him is blown; a pipe on which stops are sounded of strange Music. A torch not lighted for itself" (as cited in Ekhtiar, 1976, p. 64). In his view, by not interfering with the pure spirit, the poet may let it act through him at the moment of intoxication to create talent, art, beauty, discipline, language and goodness. He preferred inspiration over study and wrote "Imagination is a very high sort of seeing, which does not come by study" (Emerson, 1960, p. 255). The following quotation would illuminate the leading role of poetic instinct in his literary theory.

> As a traveler who has lost his way, throws his reins on his horse's neck, and trusts the instinct of the animal to find his road, so must we do with the divine animal who carries us through this world. (Emerson, 1960, pp. 255-256)

After enormously admiring poets and describing their characteristics and abilities Emerson wrote

> If I have not found that excellent combination of gifts in my countrymen which I seek, neither could I aid myself to fix the idea of the poet by reading now and then in Chalmers's collection of five centuries of English poets. (Emerson, 1960, p. 263)

Extracts like this highlight Emerson's nationalist fervor. He was after a national poetry distinguished from the British. He praised his countrymen and encouraged them to have confidence in themselves. Emerson believed his countrymen were the ones who had characteristics which were not to be found anywhere except in America. He was after creating a national identity for America through unique American literature.

AMERICAN TRANSCENDENTALISM AND SIMILARITIES WITH HAFEZ

As a philosopher, Emerson should be considered in the light of the context in which he lived. Since he was a prominent figure in American transcenddentalism, it would be necessary to briefly touch upon the movement. Transcendentalism was a literary, political and philosophical movement in the early nineteenth century America. In addition to Emerson who was the leading figure of the movement, other figures included Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller (1810-1850), Amos Bronson Alcott (1799-1888), Frederic Henry Hedge (1805-1890) and Theodore Parker (1810-1860). Inspired by English and German Romanticism, the Biblical criticism of Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), and the skepticism of David Hume (1711-1776), transcendentalists were looking for a new era (Goodman, 2011, ¶1). The movement was primarily a religious one that highlighted individuals and conscience. It harshly attacked corruption in religion and politics.

The fact that this movement flourished just as the American literary tradition began to thrive is no coincidence. American transcendentalism—although motivated by European Romanticism—was a noticeably American movement in that it basically associated with theories of American individualism. Besides the theme of American democracy, transcendentalist literature endorsed the idea of nature being divine and the human soul intrinsically wise (Milne, 2009, p. 837). The movement reflected “ideals of individual freedom, closeness to nature, simplicity in living, and the divinely ordered universe” (Milne, 2009, p. 855). The two principles of transcendentalism that are similar to Hafez’s beliefs include support of intuition and degradation of reason and nonconformity in religion.

In transcendentalism, “understanding,” or the typical means of capturing truth through the senses was discriminated from “Reason” (insight), a sophisticated, more natural form of knowledge. For the transcendentalists, intuition, rather than reason, was the utmost human faculty. Based on transcendentalism, ethical and religious principles highlighted individual conscience and intuition. The movement believed in the inherent wisdom of man. This emphasis on intuition made the transcendentalists praise childhood as a period of higher intuition. Emerson was influenced by Kant (1724-1804). Kant challenged Locke (1632-1704), who believed that the only way to knowledge was experience which came through the senses. In transcendentalism intuition overweighed reason. In “The Poet”, Emerson (1960) discriminated the poets from the thinking men (p. 222). For him, the scientific and empirical mind could not answer the fundamental questions of humanity. Hafez, too, in a good number of his ghazelles challenged reason. According to Hafez (2002), “Reason if realize how happy heart is in the snare of their hair/Witans will go crazy after our manacle (p. 8). He believed “O thou who learn love’s verse from book of reason/I’m afraid you can’t know the point by research” (Hafez, 2002, p. 35).

Emerson depicted the poet as an individual who attained the most profound secrets of the world not through research and study, but through a particular means of understanding i.e. intuition (Wilson, 1999, p. 84). Neither did Hafez believe in research and

study as a way to true knowledge. Superficial knowledge was not able to satisfy his desire. According to Hafez (2002), Only the bird of aurora knows the value of a flower collection/Not anybody who reads a page knows the meaning (p. 116). He believed "Discard papers if you are our fellow student/Since the knowledge of love is not found in books" (Hafez, 2002, p. 116). Emerson attacked the ignorance of the learned (Rusk, 1949, p. 318). His Persian counterpart, too, denounced reason in favor of intuition. "Want nothing from us but submission of the insane/Since the sheikh of our religion considered sanity a sin" (Hafez, 2002, p. 34).

The second point of similarity between Emerson's beliefs and those of Hafez is nonconformity in religion. Having its roots in American democracy, transcendentalism began as a religious movement. When Emerson and a group of Bostonian clergies came to the conclusion that Unitarian Church was entrapped in too much conservatism, they began to preach a new religious philosophy that preferred intuition over principles and laws of any church. Emerson's idea of God was noticeably different from the one propagated by the conservative Unitarian Church. Emerson was an instructor of religion who taught at several universities and even in churches, but he finally left the customary religion and stuck to individual religion (Porte and Morris, 1999, pp. xvi-xvii). The major crisis in his life was the religious crisis. From 1826 to 1832 he was active as a preacher. What tormented him in the period was the lack of any basic correspondence between his enthusiasm for a dynamic religion and the religion he was supposed to accept and preach. He believed that historical Christianity had corrupted the attempts to define religion. He revolted against Church's idea of God and universe and in 1832 resigned his position in church (Fakahani, 1998, p. 291). In, "The Divinity School Address" (1838) Emerson clarified his attitude toward the established religion. He was harshly attacked by conservatives and some called "The Address" blasphemous. His transcendentalism was a religion free from conventions of any church and party. He was against worshipping God who was introduced by church or religious institutions. He attacked the formalism of Christianity for being bogged down under the dust of history and proposed a novel spirituality. The transcendentalists hated institutionalized religion and aimed at wiping the dust of conventions from Christianity. To realize the goal they took advantage of teachings of other religions, especially eastern ones. Emerson's search for a fresh spirituality is indicated by various books on Persian mysticism available in his personal library and the books he borrowed from Harvard library. His study of Hafez freed Emerson from the restricting religious heritage of Christianity and introduced the philosopher to spirituality outside Christianity (Kleitz, 1988, p. 17). According to Emerson (1904), when working on religions, people focus on points of difference while the pleasure comes from finding the points of similarity (pp. 226-227).

Hafez lived in a situation with the same problems. There existed a schism between mystics and religious leaders. Mystics believed that there was no need to any mediator in an individual's relation with God. As a result of such dispute Hafez was treated with anger. He believed that worship coming from conventions was a veil preventing man from perceiving the beauty of the beloved (Mahmoudi, 1989, p. 39). How Hafez treated words such as "ascetic", "robe", "turban" and "cassock," symbolizing religious hypocrisy, revealed his attitude toward institutionalized religion. Hafez broke away not only from restrictions of any religious jurisconsult but also from making mysticism a custom (Zarrinkoub, 1976, p. 170). Emerson's not following the institutionalized religion was a similarity between the two figures rather than a matter of influence since the religious nonconformity was a fundamental principle of transcendentalism. It is also true for the other point previously mentioned. Emerson first developed his transcendental ideas and then he became interested in Hafez because the Persian poet acted as a spokesperson for Emerson's transcendental ideas.

HAFEZ AND EMERSON IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING AMERICAN LITERATURE

Taking Emerson's time and discourses into consideration throw new light on the relationship between Hafez and Emerson. Huge is the presence of the orient in the American letters between the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783) and the Civil War (1861-1865). The presence becomes more significant when considered in the light of its coincidence with the development of American literary identity. Although the country's interest in the orient did not originate at home and was an extension of a forceful European movement (Almansour, 2005, p. 2), America studied the orient to realize its own national goal i. e. to create a literary identity of its own and gain independence from Britain. As mentioned above, Emerson was after a national literature independent from that of European fathers in order to form a distinctively American national identity. Open-mindedness ensued from transcendentalism made Emerson welcome cultures other than European ones, eastern religions like Islam and Buddhism and texts from various oriental languages like Persian, particu-

larly Hafez. Emerson's concern with Hafez was tied up with his deep yearning for establishing a national literary identity not restricted to British heritage. Emerson's freethinking along with Hafez's universality and the correspondence between Emerson's transcendentalism and Hafez's mysticism (as depicted in previous parts) led to the reception of Hafez by Emerson. In the particular social and political situation of Emerson's time he found Hafez useful for the process of establishing a distinct national literary identity independent from Britain.

Putting Emerson's study of Hafez in its social, political and literary context would be illuminating. Emerson's life coincided with an intensive literary importation from the orient. The cultural, social and political factors emanated from transcendentalism and the concomitant nationalism facilitated the importation. Transcendentalists' attempt to develop a national identity and Emerson's prime objective of cultivating an American literary identity mixed with his open-mindedness in welcoming non-European cultures and Hafez's universality. Moreover, similarities between Emerson's transcendentalism and Hafez's mysticism such as degradation of reason and nonconformity in religion made Emerson observe his own thought in Hafez. The ideological necessities of the receiving country i. e. the attempt to create an American nationnal identity coincided with Emerson's resolution to establish a literary identity for the country and break with European fathers. In his attempts to establish that identity Emerson turned to the East. That was the time when he faced Hafez and observed the similarities between the Persian poet's thought and his own beliefs. The aforementioned factors resulted in the reception of Hafez by Emerson in a crucial period in American literary history. With Hafez, those cultural elements were imported to America which were in line with those of the receiving country and helped them cultivate in America's struggle for independence from Britain and in the process establishing the national and literary identity of the country.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned**,** Prawer believes that reception studies and studies of influence should go hand in hand. Concerning reception he poses some thoughtful questions: In which periods serious literary relations were established between two given countries? What factors facilitated those relations? What in the foreign literature absorbed the writers of the receiving country? Based on the findings this study, in the period between the American Revolutionary War and the Civil War Hafez along with oriental literatures was intensively imported to the U.S. The factors which facilitated those importations included America's struggle for independence from Britain, Emerson's resolution to establish an American literary tradition, his break with the European fathers to establish that identity, his open-mindedness in receiving non-European cultures and the correspondence between transcendentalism and Persian mysticism. The factors in Hafez that absorbed transcendental figures in general and Emerson in particular included degradation of reason and his nonconformity in religion. These facts depict the reasons behind Emerson's reception of Hafez in the 19th century America.

REFERENCES

Abrams, M. H., & Harpham, G. G. (2009). *A glossary of literary terms*. 9th ed. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Almansour, A. N. (2005). *The middle east in antebellum America: the cases of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Edgar Allan Poe* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). The Ohio State University, Columbus, U. S.

Baldick, C. (2001). *The concise Oxford dictionary of literary terms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Billitteri, C. (2009). *Language and the Renewal of Society in Walt Whitman, Laura (Riding) Jackson, and Charles Olson: The American Cratylus*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bloom, H. (2008). *Ralph Waldo Emerson*. New York: Infobase Publishing.

Brook, C., Lewis, R. W. B., & Warren, R. P. (1973). *American literature: The markers and the making*. Vol. I. New York: St.Martin's Press.

Carpenter, F. I. (1930). *Emerson and Asia*. New York: Haskell House Publishers Ltd.

Christy, A. (1932). *The Orient in American transcenddentalism*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Dimock, W. C. (2009a). Internationalizing the curriculum: nations, languages, religions. *English Language Notes, 47*, 59-70.

Dimock, W. C. (2009b). Hemispheric Islam: continents and centuries for American literature. *American Literary History, 21*, 28-52.

Ekhtiar, M. (1976). *Emerson & Persia: Emerson's developing interest in Persian mysticism*. Tehran: Tehran University Press.

Emerson, R. W. (1904). *The complete works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Vol. 10. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Emerson, R. W. (1960). The poet. In *Selections from Ralph Waldo Emerson: An organic anthology*

(pp. 222-241). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Emerson, R. W. (2013). Speech at the second annual meeting of the free religious association, at Tremont Temple, Friday, May 28, 1869. - Ralph Waldo Emerson, the works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, vol. 11 (Miscellanies) [1909], the online library of liberty. Retrieved February 13, 2013 from http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/1961/123130

Fakahani, S. J. (1998). Islamic influences on Emerson's thought: the fascination of a nineteenth century American writer. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 18*, 291-303.

Fomeshi, B. M. (2015). *Walt Whitman's and Nima Yushij's literary innovations: A study in comparative poetics* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran.

Fomeshi, B. M., & Khojastehpour, A. (2014). Comparative literature in Russia. *Comparative Literature Journal of Academy of Persian Language and Literature, 9*, 65-88.

Fotouhi, M., & Taebi, Z. (2012). Contemplating on Emerson's 'On Persian Poetry.' *Studies of Language and Comparative Literature Quarterly, 4*, 91-121.

Gay, R. M. (1928). *A Study of the poet as seer*. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

Goodman, R. (2011). Transcendentalism. *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy*. Spring 2011 Edition. Ed. Edward N. Zalta. Retrieved November 10, 2012 from http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/transcendentalism/

Hafez. (2002). *Divan*. Tehran: Javaheri.

Ironside, F. (2009). *Bloom's how to write about Ralph Waldo Emerson*. New York: Infobase Publishing.

Jost, F. (1974). *Introduction to comparative literature*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merril.

Kleitz, D. R. (1988). *Orientalism and the romantic imagination: The Middle East in the works of Irving, Poe, Emerson and Melville* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of New Hampshire, Durham, U. S.

Londero, R. R. (2012). We see cyborgs differently: a comparative study between North American and Latin American cyberpunk. In A. M. Alves (Ed.), *Unveiling the Posthuman* (pp. 133-144). Oxford, UK: Interdisciplinary Press.

Mahmoudi, A. G. (1989). *He, you, me in mysticism of Hafez*. Tehean: Ketabsara.

Milne, I. M. (2009). *Literary movements for students*. 2nd ed. New York: Gale.

Obeidat, M. M. (1998). *American literature and orientalism*. Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag.

Packer, B. (2004). American Verse Traditions, 1800–1855. In Sacvan Bercovitch (Ed.), *History of American Literature* (9-144). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Porte, J., & Morris, S. (1999). Chronology of Emerson's life. In J. Porte, & S. Morris (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Ralph Waldo Emerson* (xvi-1). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Prawer, S. S. (1973). *Comparative literary studies: an introduction*. London: Duckworth.

Quinn, E. (2006). *A dictionary of literary and thematic terms*. 2nd ed. New York. Infobase Publishing.

Remak, H. (1961). Comparative literature, its definition and function. In N. Stallknecht, & H. Frenz (Eds.), *Comparative literature: method and perspective*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press.

Richardson, R. D. Jr. (1995). *Emerson: The mind on fire*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ruland, R., & Bradbury, M. (1991). *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A history of American literature*. New York: Penguin Books USA Inc.

Rusk, R. L. (1949). Leaping and piercing melodies. In R. L. Rusk (Ed.), *The life of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (pp. 305-330). New York and London: Columbia University Press.

Wellek, R. (1970). *Discriminations*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Wilson, R. J. (1999). Emerson as lecturer: man thinking, man saying. In J. Porte, & S. Morris (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Ralph Waldo Emerson* (pp. 76-97). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yohannan, J. D. (1943a). Emerson's translations of Persian poetry from German sources. *American Literature, 14*, 407-420.

Yohannan, J. D. (1943b). The influence of Persian poetry upon Emerson's work. *American Literature, 15*, 25-41.

Zarrinkoub, A. (1976). *From the alley of rends: On life and thought of Hafez*. Tehran: Amir Kabir.