

RESEARCH ARTICLE



PHILOSOPHICAL FUSION BETWEEN RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND RALPH WALDO EMERSON

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ABSTRACT

The boon of the almighty to human beings, a beautiful gift, and life on the planet nurtured by nature was a harmonious and magnificent beginning but the greatest problems of the world result from people of different cultures, races and religions being unable to get along and to work together to solve problems such as racism, religious extremism, terrorism and ethnic conflicts. These problems have started with anxiety, fear, and suspicion. The mundane and common being due to ignorance and delusion thinks appearance as reality. Thus people have separated themselves from the grandiose and higher existence. In this article I discuss the religious thoughts of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82) and Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941). They try to relate people with their real and higher existence through their works and they advocate how to realize the world within us. They are like the messenger of god on earth and the fusion of their thoughts have started a new era of spirituality. The aspiration for achieving something higher is inherent in every soul. The ephemeral world of turbulence and turmoil is unable to diminish the aura of divine consciousness. It is my hope that this comparative analysis will provide us with insights into understanding religion at a time when religious intolerance is disrupting peace across the globe.

Keywords - Emerson, Tagore, religion, culture, god

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INTRODUCTION

Ralph Waldo Emerson and Rabindranath Tagore endeavoured for the intermingling of the alien forces of east and west. Vedanta in the east and Emerson's idea of freedom in the west are almost parallel, they in fact talked about the freedom of humanity from darkness and the establishment of truth, light, bliss and peace. Emerson was America's poet-prophet. He was one of the first American intellectuals who thought freely, went beyond the conventions of contemporary time, and paved the way for a modern and secular America. Born in 1803 in Boston, Emerson lived his whole life in Massachusetts. He was the leading member of a

group known as transcendentalists. Transcendentalism, or American transcendentalism, was a multi-faceted movement, which introduced freethinking in religion, intuitive idealism in philosophy, individualism in literature, new spirit in social reforms and new optimism in the collective psyche.

Emerson was the first American who ventured into the literature of Asia and absorbed it so well as to become one of its earliest interpreters the American people. He went through Indian literary, philosophical scriptures and came under the impact of India transcendentalism. The Hindu scriptures – the Vedas, Puranas, the Bhagwat Geeta,

Upanishads, and the Kthopnished exercised a great influence on his inquisitive mind. This overwhelming influence transformed his spiritual core so much; that he composed poems like 'Brahma' and 'Hamatreya' in which he reflected whatever he had assimilated from India religious books. His oriental studies liberated his mind from many ideas, which were holding his mind closed to accidental religious orthodoxy, social conservatism and lack of spiritual enlightenment. About this personal quest, he admitted:

"..... I will be

Light hearted as bird and lives with god
I find him in the bottom of my heart
I hear continually his voice there in."

Whatever Shelley wrote about 'the skylark' is absolutely true about Gurudev, the great Rabindranath Tagore, whom Dr. Radhakrishnan felicitated as 'the most dear to all the muses'. He appears to be a jovial bright spirit among the earthly beings. He is heavenly, divine celestial in his thoughts and his poetry is a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings because it flows in profuse strains, which are lucid, fluent, and full of ease and devoid of any premeditation strenuous mental activity. Tagore is great in many ways as he brought honour to the nation when he was awarded the Nobel Prize for his 'Gitanjali'. He is a poet, a dramatist, a novelist, a composer, a musician and a great singer who has given melodious renderings to Bengali music similarly another romantic luminary Keats is a poet of 'beauty and truth'. The same concept of beauty is prominent in Tagore's poetry which is picturesque, vivid and lively. Like Keats, he has travelled in 'the realm of flora and pan' so the entire scenery, natural background, the mountains, rivers, birds and universal elements are coloured with a mystic and divine celestial light. Tagore appears to be highly romantic in the simplicity of diction, the pasteurization of 'nature as a friend, philosopher and guide', and his transcendental meditation on the ephemeral the eternal world. Tagore once said, 'a poem is a speaking picture'. 'Gitanjali is a proof to his vivacious, grandeur and lofty expression. One feels like moving in a golden mine of beautiful, glittering images of his poems.

These small songs are offerings to god so he calls them 'Gitanjali'.

The worldliness and materiality are too much expended that humankind unable to rise beyond these evils. Ralph Waldo Emerson and Rabindranath Tagore illumined mankind to perceive the power and puissance of the inherent glory. Emerson and Tagore strove to seek the eternal and the infinite will erect the edifice of self- fulfillment, self-abnegation and self-surrender for the attainment of the universal consciousness.

Both are universally applauded for guiding humanity towards the path of truth, simplicity and spiritualism and known as a profound thinker, humanist, individualist and national leader who tried to save humanity. He is the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, who has been spiritualized in the form of nature and is established as the conscious-force of cosmic existence. Both are universally applauded for guiding humanity towards the path of truth, simplicity and spiritualism and known as a profound thinker, humanist, individualist and national leader who tried to save humanity.

Fusion

The extraordinary personality of Ravindranath Tagore as a poet, novelist, playwright, musician, painter, thinker, socialist, individualist and humanist who inspired W B Yeats, many other contemporaries and became the first non-European Nobel laureate in 1913, the prize for literature. Tagore considered lack of education to be the main obstacle in the way of India's progress. The prevailing, colonial education system he found unsatisfactory that can only produce clerks to man offices and British business in India. The basic objectives of any worthwhile national education system, such as promoting creativity, freedom, joy and an awareness of a country's culture, heritage, were completely ignored Tagore focused on the education system and tried to improve it and during that time he established a new and modern center of education at Shantiniketan. Tagore became an incentive and motivated human beings to attain the education and divine twilight and supernal glory. Mahatma Gandhi just like Tagore & Emerson advocate his great faith in the notion of truth is apparent here: I would say with those who

say 'god is love', god is love. But deep down in me I used to say that though god may be love, god is truth, above all. If it is possible for the human tongue to give the fullest description of god, I have come to the conclusion that for myself, god is truth. The supreme presence of truth is an illuminating assertion which establishes humankind as the potentially divine entity. Tagore gives his idea regarding "marks of the genuine man". As, he believes in himself, he speaks the truth, he thinks the truth, he acts the truth. He produces the ideal of co-operation and human welfare. Tagore's notion was that faith in the great power motivates human beings to achieve something higher. He proclaims that acceptance of one's own faults exalts and transforms the being. This acceptance generates positivity and all the negativities resolve in it.

He unfolds the real nature of a humble and truthful man in his works and he has a different kind of notion regarding religion that leads a new path to a better way for humankind. Life of Tagore is the epitome of knowledge and understanding who followed the path of truth and self-realization. The preaching of Tagore says that nothing can bring you peace but yourself and there is only one way to realize it, that is self-realization and that extends the experience and self-knowledge. He propagated those principles of life with which he lived and his deliberations are the outcome of his practical experience and intellectual understanding.

Transcendentalism which emerged as a progressive movement of new England between 1815 and 1836 was proud to have Emerson as a leader. Transcendentalism is a "philosophy that asserts the primacy of the spiritual and transcendental over the material and empirical". Emerson was a learned and a man of extraordinary genius. The world classics played an important role in enriching his knowledge about the reality of life and the importance of nature. He perceived the divinity in nature. He reckoned that nature is the magnificent companion to man and his celestial abode. Emerson's brilliance and ability is apparent in his writings. His intelligence and skill has established him as the major figure whom the critics reiterate to be a genius and an interesting author. He was seen as a champion of individualism and a prescient

critic of the countervailing pressure of society, and he disseminates his thoughts through dozens published essays more than 1500 public lectures across the united states *self-reliance, over-soul, poems and nature are* remarkable work where Emerson remarks that man's life is based on truth, non-violence, simplicity and spirituality. He experimented the cardinal aspects of life while living in the lap of nature where he got seclusion to observe the natural element

Emerson was greatly influenced by the Indian thought current. He had a reverence and regard and better understanding of Indian culture. The impact of the Gita, the laws of Manu, and Hinduism is perceptible in his life and works.

The oriental mystic thinks that the world is all *Maya* an illusion, and tries to pierce through this deceptive curtain and look beyond into the transcendental reality. Tagore's understanding of this reality, of our transcendental union with the eternal and divine being, apart from its specific eastern element, bears a close resemblance to Wordsworth's perception of the divine. Neither Wordsworth's mystical attitudes nor Rabindranath's mystical perceptions can be fitted into a doctrine or system. They are the genuine expressions of their inmost selves, the flames that feed their inner being. Rabindranath, in *Gitanjali* and several other poems has sung of the relationship between our being and infinitude.

Rabindranath speaks of man's intimate relationship with nature and indirectly of its organic growth, "how often great earth have I felt my being to flow over you," sharing in the happiness. Of each blade that raises its signal banner in answer to the beckoning. I feel as if I had belonged to you ages before I was born. That is why, in the days when the autumn light shimmers, on the mellowing ears of rice, I seem to remember a past when my mind was everywhere, and even to hear voices as of play - fellows echoing from the remote and deeply veiled past.

If in his mystical rendering of the transcendental unity, Rabindranath recalls the ideas poetically expressed by Wordsworth, in his passionate singing of and devotion to the idea of liberty he shows an affinity of spirit with Shelley and Byron. Whereas Shelley in *Prometheus unbound* rejoices over the

downfall of tyranny - Prometheus over throwing Jupiter - and the victory of forgiveness and love in lyric rapture, Rabindranath poetically visualizes a world, where the mind is without fear and the head is held high. Tagore does not seek merely the salvation of the individual, but like Shelley also cherishes the ideal of the collective happiness and freedom of the human race.

Tagore was a great admirer of Walt Whitman and specifically praised him, "pictures" in his lecture on; "the world of personality" Tagore also praised Whitman's philosophical beliefs. American transcendentalists used the term, "personalism" to show that, "the ultimate reality of the world is a divine person who sustains the universe by a continuous act of creative will." Rabindranath, too quoting the teaching of Isha Upanishad, "that all that moves in this moving world is held by the infinity go god" in his lecture on the world of personality, almost echoes Walt Whitman's ideas when he declares, "these world movements are not mere blind movements, they relate to the will of a supreme person."- the inner is the beauty which elevates the outer appearance contends Emerson "evokes his view.... (iv, 'the problem of self: Sadhana')

The meaning of our self is not to be found in its separateness from god and others, but in the ceaseless realization of yoga of union; not on the side of the canvas where it is blank, but on the side where the picture is being painted '. This is the reason why the separateness of ourself has been described as 'Maya'..... .

Tagore, like many of his forbears, turned away from established outworn religious creeds to refreshingly independent and highly individualistic ways of realizing the divine. Rabindranath Tagore is neither completely influenced by English and European poets nor his forbears in Bengali or Sanskrit literature wholly affect him. He surely draws sustenance from the tradition of Bengali and Sanskrit poetry. Romanticism in his work, therefore, is related to his Vaishnava, his adherence to the doctrine of Bhakti; his intuitional awareness of the divine, his mysticism, his idealism, and his intense love of liberty.

Tagore remarks that the conflict of good and evil, light and darkness existed since time immemorial,

but all things are wrought by prayer. Prayer is the healer and consoles the sufferings and sorrows of man. This is the crux of the "food for the soul". According to Emerson prayer brings peace and surmounts the miseries of the world. He affirms: "o fool, to try to carry thyself upon thy own shoulders! O beggar, to come to beg at thy own door!

"Leave all thy burdens on his hands who can bear all, and never look behind in regret."

Tagore's convictions reveal the influence and inspiration which he sought from the Bhagvad Gita and from other literary books. The deliberations of Yeats, and many other writers also had great impact on Tagore. He was an impetus to W. B. Yeats, Gandhi and many Indian writers they regard Tagore's genius and look towards him for inspiration.

As a transcendentalist, mystic, philosopher, essayist and a poet Ralph Waldo Emerson is the renowned and influential thinker. Emerson being the contemporary to Whitman and Thoreau endeavoured for the elevation of humankind through his transcendental philosophy of upsurge and upliftment of the gross to the subtle. He advocated the principles of truth and non-violence. He also explicated to follow the doctrines in each and every aspect of life so as to exalt towards the higher realm. Emerson believed in the universality of human entity and judged things through his insight and experience. His contribution to the field of literature is phenomenal and establishes him as a leader and the pioneer of the transcendental movement.

Emerson studied the classics at an early age and when he got admission in Harvard he was a profound Greek scholar, just at the age of sixteen. He was fascinated towards nature and had a great love for books. Emerson's writings have depth and explicate his knowledgeable and intellectual aspect. He studied science, history, philosophy and also the scriptures with great interest and passion. People remark Emerson as a devoted reader and haunter of libraries.

As an outstanding scholar Emerson dedicated his life for all round development of the students. He searched and unfolded new methods of teaching that bring students close to nature. Emerson was against corporal punishment and encouraged

everyone to participate in this matter. His reputation is splendid and superb and he is recognized as the champion of the philosophy of transcendence which is universal in nature.

Emerson believed that for the up growth and development of mankind there is a need for transformation of the mundane. This would lead man towards the divine aura. Emerson's isolation from the worldly life and living in natural surroundings inspire the individual to proceed beyond materiality. The progress of the outward world by leaps and bounds is splendid but the inner glory is diminishing gradually. This advancement was troubling Emerson and motivating him to work for the betterment of humanity. He contends for a balanced harmonization in every walk of life. He proclaims for the manifestation of the inner potential and its elevation so as to attain purity and bliss. Emerson's speculation of universal freedom reminds us of the independence of the self propagated by Vivekananda. The sage believed that slavery is grievous and realization of the potential divinity of the soul would liberate humanity. Emerson advocated being true to the self and never discarding the voice of conscience which he also practiced in his life. Emerson protested against the tyrannical regime which enslaves and ceases human beings to live freely. The essay has a universal appeal. It examines the relation of the individual to the state and the central idea is, "freedom". Emerson inspired Thoreau and Thoreau inspired an eastern entity Gandhi who adopted the path of passive resistance, *Satyagraha*. Leo Tolstoy, William c. Douglas, Martin Luther King and John f. Kennedy were his eminent followers. George Eliot, Thoreau, Whitman, Recharad Drinnon studied him deeply and expressed their views in the *reviews and essays in criticism*. Emerson, one of his contemporaries

'Where in far fields the orchids' grew the confluence and conglomeration of the cultural values would pave the path to resurgence and elevation of humanity. The progression and advancement would be beyond discord and disintegration. The august and ineffable simplicity of Emerson and Tagore left an indelible mark on mankind. They reiterated to realize and manifest

the inner power and glory so as to attain the spiritual consciousness which is the core and kinesic aspects are akin to Vedanta, the core of Indian philosophy. But his individual and self-centered attitude is an obstruction to his advancement and progression. Vedas proclaim that an individual is the part of the whole, the supreme and his manifestation into various forms is the experience of a mundane existence. Vivekananda through his declamations on Vedanta endeavoured for the resurgence of spiritual ideals in the west pronounced: "there is then but one all-comprehending existence, and that one appears as manifold. This self, or substance, is all that exists in the universe."

The material progress of the contemporary world tormented Emerson and Tagore. They contemplated for the creation of a refined world devoid of selfishness, anxiety, disharmony and cut-throat competition. Emerson and Tagore endeavoured for the resurgence and upliftment of humanity. The awareness of the soul-force, the inner power would establish the peaceful and blissful atmosphere. This stupendous thought current of the thinkers will be a path-breaking effort in the convergence of the east and the west. I will endeavour to explore the ideals of Emerson and Tagore in the succeeding chapters. The assertion of Emerson and Tagore to follow the path of truth and non-violence along with simplicity and to explain the theme and style of these writers are the theme and the substance of the thesis. Their radiant speculations would endeavour for the welfare of whole humanity.

Nature, to Emerson appears as a formative influence superior to any other, the educator of the senses and mind alike, the shower in our hearts of the deep-laid seeds of our feelings and beliefs. Emerson's main theme of nature is related to his organic concept - a belief in living, impulsive still in the process of becoming. A nature immanent with spirit, fulfilling the ideas of god and capable also of fulfilling the ideas of man, in the emersonian concept, man is not estranged from nature, but intimate with her, sharing the flow of his own creative powers of perception. There is an occult relationship between man and the universe around

him. His main aim was that man should improve his insight and grasp new revelations of both spiritual and material realities to better the life of man in the view of the vast and dynamic changes in nature. To him, 'mind not matter was supreme. Ideas were sovereign and with them as his instruments man could shape the universe to his needs.' his intercourse with nature liberated his mind and added some new dimensions to his spiritualism. In his opinion, human approach to god is possible only through nature with an eye of trust and faith, 'all natural objects make kindred impressions,' when the mind is open to their influence, Emerson says in his essay, nature. Every rational creature has all nature, for his dowry and estate.

Men use it for their own development and have shown path to others to imbibe their spirits. Thus, to Emerson, nature is not refuge from worldly cares and anxieties but a ladder to climb higher. Emerson realises that there is some, "alliance between truth and god" which has been conceived by the earlier philosophers in communion with nature. To him to love nature is to love god, and to be face to face with god is to be friendly with nature. Here, for him, nature is a staircase to enter divinity, to catch, 'the footsteps of the same'. Nature is 'always ethical. She has the power to regulate our conduct' with her changes operated in mysterious way and by mysterious force to Emerson, nature works with spirit secretly to liberate us from involvement in the worldly affairs. Man is a receptive agency to what nature presents to reveal. Man not only feels pleasure or inner delight at the sight of beauty but also experiences sublime, pleasure mixed with awe," in the objects of nature. The unusual pleasure, which he experience or gathers from ordinary things of the worlds, "makes him reflect greatly. He changes the dimensions of objects and their inter-relationship and disposes them a new" before our mental eyes, "by a subtle spiritual connection," Emerson's oft-quoted statement from the poem the rhodora, "beauty is its own excuse of being," shows how the poet unites nature and philosophy into one.

We can say that Emerson's concept of nature is slightly different from some other great worshippers of nature. He recognises, man, nature and god-there distinct identities'. Man is with a

conscience; nature is conceived with spiritual attributes and god is the supreme creator who pervades in the concrete form of nature for the service of mankind.

Tagore, like William Wordsworth, defines nature, but like Keats and Shelley turns to her for imagery. To him nature is not only a store-house of beauty-of colour, form, smell and rhythm-but also a veritable symbol of the emotional and conceptual truth. They are symbolic transcriptions of an imaginative and spiritual reality envisioned by the poet. Tagore is a pantheist. To him, every object of nature pulsates with life. Naturally, personification is his most favourite figures of speech. He gives animation to the abstract ideas. Besides endowing the elements of nature with living personifications to, Tagore's imagination, which is continually in search of concrete picture, of often turns to the world of 'nature for evocative atmospheric images. In "*Basundhara*" the earth itself becomes a primordial image of the mother of everyman. Tagore is called the poet of light. The light image symbolizes not only the spirit of love and freedom but also the triumph of life over death, of knowledge over ignorance. The famous song 57 of *Gitanjali* is built round the image' of light. Light is imaged as laughter passing over the earth delighting butterflies and jasmines. Light symbolizing god or human soul impels man to love freedom.

Emerson used the over-soul as -an obvious parallel to Brahman since he was concerned with the concept of interrelationship between soul atman and the over-soul (Paramatman) and his concept of god is also related to his parallelism. Emerson's god is personal as he remarked, 'to represent him as an individual to shut him out of my consciousness'. In formulating his doctrine of the over soul Emerson paralleled, the Vedanta but in application of his doctrine he was Christian. His own self-reliance was a personal god-reliance, a curious synthesis of Christian beatitude and oriental monism - blessed is the day when the youth discovers that within and above are synonymous.

The doctrine of *Maya* too attracted Emerson in Indian thought and it came so close to all his thinking that he accepted it as a fixed rule and theory of life. Ever after the death of his son,

Emerson could say that affection; emotions and persons were all to be set-aside as illusions. Grief too will make us idealist: the Vedanta teaches that *Maya* has no power over the liberated soul, therefore only the liberated soul alone can escape, from the world of illusion and Emerson too developed his doctrine of emanation along the lines of the Vedanta, Emerson reflects in his doctrine of compensation the doctrine of *karma* which is upheld as important as that of *Maya* in Indian philosophy. 'Emerson found that Gita and the *Upanishads* approved of his own theory and discovered that *karma* and the compensation represent the counterpart of the physical law of uniformity in the moral world and both are the consequence of very similar attitudes towards the world and the over-soul. God's acts, he argued were not arbitrary but with reference to the deeds of men. The creation men live in is the result of their deeds; the scene of atonement for their past actions and god is beyond our little goods and ills. One can recognize the true nature of god and can attain union with god or Brahman only then when one has pierced through the veil of *Maya*.

Emerson thus learned the doctrine that the absolute self and the individual self are identical and developed the concept of fundamental oneness of over-soul, the idea of one deity in which all things are absorbed and refracted. But Emerson's New England transcendentalism was the fusion of both oriental and German transcendentalism. His deep study of German mysticism, especially Goethe freed his mind from the narrow Puritanism and widened and refined his views on morality. The philosophy of Kant rationalizes his views in practical way and he tried to blend science and soul. He attempted to let the saint have the mind of the scientist and the scientists have the heart of the saint. He asserted the significance to self to discover all truths related man, nature and god and manifested the importance of union of human soul with god without any intermediary role of lord Christ because there is one god and Jesus being his son or messenger is not that one god. Thus, philosophy, mysticism and religion became an effective vehicle for Emerson to enlighten people with spiritual

values and he cherishes inward nobility of soul and sincerity of spirit.

CONCLUSION

Emerson and Tagore, the epitome of love, light and bliss conveyed the message to tread the path of truth, self-realisation conclusion and simplicity. Many a great preachers of humanity, since time immemorial stressed upon the elegant laws of nature. When the world is overpowered by hatred, violence and fear, the ideal of truth, non-violence and simplicity of Emerson and Tagore console the bewilderment prevailing in the world.

The embodiment and practitioners of the higher principles in their lives, Emerson and Tagore endeavoured for redemption of mankind from darkness and agitation to conquer the mundane and proceed towards the spiritual realm. The prophets explicated that it is self-realisation, the path of love which rules the planet and they urge to implement the doctrine in all walks of life. The path may be full of hardships and difficulties but consequently the glory and magnificence of divine existence is attained and the love of god is beyond all the materialistic and worldly luxuries and comforts providing ephemeral joys devoid of divine love. The divine grace strengthens the being to confront any situation and accomplish the allotted tasks. If man seeks inspiration from Emerson and Tagore, he could achieve the wisdom and enlightenment to defeat the turbulent and agitating forces.

Their legendary and august personalities endeavour to redeem the world from the tyranny of war and violence to bring harmony and peace in the world. Tagore reiterates in "realisation in love": "we live in the world when we love it" "want of love is a degree of callousness; for love is the perfection of consciousness. For love is the ultimate meaning of everything around us. It is not a mere sentiment; it is truth; it is the joy that is at the root of all creation. It is the white light of pure consciousness that emanates from Brahma. So, to be one with this all feeling being who is in the external sky, as well as in our inner soul, we must attain to that summit of consciousness, which is love: -it is through the heightening of our consciousness into love, and extending it all over the world.

Emerson influenced American people in the idealism and cultural revolution. This led him to be appreciated widely and enable him to win universal recognition. Though in spirit and extent, he was basically different from European literary luminaries yet he received great, applause from his British critics. In spite of his being influenced by ancient Greek, German, and English literary and philosophical literature, his philosophy clearly led to new progress, which could not be achieved, by following old ways and old values of religion and old political and social patterns. His nobility of soul is brilliantly reflected in his literary works. His ideas not only illuminate the mind but with his spiritual, "new vigor" also lends strength and hope to the readers. Thus, Emerson stands as one of the towering figures that contributed to the building of new America with the true spirit of new-nationalism in every respect because the west is outwardly gorgeous and there is inner poverty that Thoreau one of the Emerson's contemporary in *Walden* declares:

The farmer is endeavouring to solve the problem of a livelihood by a formula more complicated than the problem itself. To get his shoe-strings he speculates in herds of cattle. With consummate skill he has set his trap with a hair-spring to catch comfort and independence, and then as he turned away, got his own leg into it. This is the reason we are all poor in respect to a thousand savage comforts, though surrounded by luxuries.

Emerson was the first American who ventured into the literature of Asia and absorbed it so well as to become one of its earliest interpreters to American people. He went through Indian literary, philosophical scriptures and came under the impact of Indian transcendentalism. The Hindu scriptures - the Vedas, Puranas, the Bhagwat Geeta, the Kathopnished, etc exercised a great influence on his inquisitive mind. This overwhelming influence transformed his spiritual core so much; that he composed poems like 'Brahma' and 'Hamatreyal in which he reflected whatever he had assimilated from Indian religious books. His oriental studies liberated his mind from many ideas, which were holding his mind closed to accidental religious orthodoxy, social conservatism and lack of spiritual enlightenment. About this personal quest,

He admitted:

" I will be
Light hearted as bird and live with god
I find him in the bottom of my heart
I hear continually his voice there in."

Through *Upanishads*, *Bhagwad Geeta* and the *Vishnu Purana*, he learned the doctrine that the absolute self and the individual self are identical: that Brahma and atman are one. In his essay, over-soul Emerson developed the concept of the fundamental oneness of the over-soul. According to Hindu scriptures, the central core of one's self, 'Antaratman' is identifiable with the cosmic whole, 'Brahman' the *Upanishads* state, "the self within you"; the resplendent immortal person is die internal self of all things and is the universal Brahman. Emerson affirmed that god is self-reliant and self sufficient, man, being god in miniature should also be self-reliant. The coordinial doctrine of Vedanta manifests that there is a spiritual kinship in the universe. Emerson establishes this kind ship in his famous essay, Plato or the philosopher his, 'conception of fundamental unity', the ecstasy of losing, 'all being in one being' have been derived from Indian scriptures.

Emerson got further strengthened in his spiritual search when he found a new view regarding the transmigration of soul a view in which, 'all things subsist and do not die out but only retire a little from sight and afterwards return again.' This idea filled his mind with new hope and encouraged him to know more and he found that Indian philosophy of transmigration of things and western scientific constitution that matter is indestructible are one at the root. He went to the point of saying that this applies to systems. Systems are not ruined forever. They too revive but in different forms and names. He expressed this view in his poem. Threnody, 'by the will of god, material things welcome changes in their forms in order to get better and improve in their evolutionary cycle.'

According to Hindu philosophical view, "fate is nothing but the deeds committed in the prior state of existence." the effect of one's action in one's own life enabled Emerson to conclude, "Person makes event and event person."

Emerson did not appreciate inert dependence of fate. In this matter, he appreciated the *Bhagwad*

Geeta, which exhorts and inspires man to do action without the desire of fruit. According to him, “man” sound relation is to see and command and not to cringe before the seeming immensity of fatalism. He inspires man to fight against destiny with faith and fire:

New England transcendentalism was not only the product of oriental philosophy but it was the fusion of both oriental and German transcendentalism. Emerson’s deep study of German mysticism, especially Goethe, freed his mind from the narrow Puritanism and provincialism of his New England heritage. Under the impact of “Germans inward eye” his view on morality grew more widened and refined. He recognised that transcendental knowledge can be supplied through communion with the encompassing universe; ‘the *Geeta*’ became “an infallible guide of conduct” for Tagore and Emerson. They found all the answers to his questions which were difficult to be solved. Thus interaction of nature and human spirit through his conscience is the most essential factor for achieving higher knowledge and deeper joy of life and religion. He affirmed the unity of all things in god and regarded god and nature as the source of creative inspiration. He believed in the self to discover all truths related man, nature and god, he asserted enlightedly that the individual should, ‘love god without mediatory or will’.

The Maharshi, as Devendranath is generally known, “possessed an excellent command of Intoxicated” by his verses that during the moments of mystic frenzy they would naturally come on to his lips and sustain his sustain his spirits. In hafiz, he found sympathetic responses to his mystic feeling and experience. Hafiz became the favourite poet of Tagore also. He felt a deep sense of kinship with the poems of Shiraz and his admiration for him never waned. Hafiz’s criticism of the pseudo-Sufis or the religious and moral hypocrites, his dislike for self-assumption, clerical ostentation, and attempts at exciting social reproach, among other things, have found copious expression in his *Diwan*. In *Gitanjali*, for instance, his portrayal of the psychological reactions of the mystic against the ridicule and indifference of the people bears witness to the fact. He is convinced that the *Malamatiyeh* way of devotion is hazardous

but it leads one directly to the presence of god. In the same way, hafiz’s attitude towards the problem of predestination or choice of action leaves deep impression on Tagore’s mind. Hafiz takes to the middle course. He maintains that the functions of man’s physical as well as instinctual beings are predestined while his moral being is endowed with freedom of choice. Tagore in this respect follows hafiz. Hafiz’s doctrine of making an effort to attain something seems to have been reverberating Tagore’s mind when he wrote. And it shall be my endeavour to reveal thee in my actions. Tagore talks about it, he exclaims: “this is the ultimate end of man, to find the one which is in him; which is his truth, which is his soul; the key with which he opens the gate of the spiritual life, the heavenly kingdom. His desires are many, and madly they run after the varied objects of the world, for therein they have their life and fulfillment. But that which is one in him is ever seeking for unity –unity in knowledge, unity in love, unity in purposes of will; its highest joy is when it reaches the infinite one within its eternal unity. Hence the saying of *Upanishad* with the great emphasis, - only those of tranquil minds, and none else, can attain abiding joy, by realising within their souls the being that manifests one essence in a multiplicity of forms.” (Sadhana. li, soul consciousness)

We hear echoes of the teachings of Christian missionaries, Brahoma Samaj, Bengal Vaishnav singers, self surrender of devotional poets like Chandidas and Meera, of the *Upanishads*, the mysticism of Kabir and hafiz, Blake Whitman and Wordsworth, yet Tagore created poetry which had the fragrance of all but the colour of its own. Dr. Radhakrishnan says of him, Tagore uses the, “visible world as a mean of shadowing forth the invisible” and “touches the temporal with the light of the eternal” and he does it in a way that no other poet of the world has done. Although, on account of the development of science and technology world _now is robbed of its mystery and we are deprived of our mystical susceptibility to things both visible and invisible yet the imaginative awe and sense of wonder, produced by the mystical thought of Tagore, hold their power even today since their spiritual understanding and sympathy are of more importance than intellectual ability. He

is a pure poet and a theorist, therefore unlike Emerson a rigid system to describe his mystical experiences, which have for him no emotive value, has not been formulated by him. The imaginative awe is produced in the readers through the stirring of excitement experienced by them in the presence of the extra - ordinary created by poet's imagination. Tagore's mystical thoughts cease to remain mere thoughts as they are emotionally charged with the joy and excitation of participation in the glory of infinite and a longing and waiting for that glory to manifest itself in the heart of the poet. He is different from the upanishadic seer and German transcendentalist Emerson who depends on the conceptual thoughts and on the theology and who set aside affections emotions and persons as illusions and even grief is considered to make one idealist. Tagore's mystical thoughts derive substance from the emotional experience of one whose soul yearns to feel intuitively the 'soul of existence' through love and faith in this, 'world's festival'. The restless in the poet is keen to establish the relationship with the, 'great beyond'.

Unlike Emerson who believes in possibility of merging into the absolute, Tagore always maintains a safe distance between, "thou and me" and it is with the discovery of 'thou' that the poet finds his own identity. Tagore always remains a thirsty traveler and seeker of the 'unknown'. Longing, waiting and the realization of the divine touch are three dominant aspects of his mystical experience. The individual soul's longing and joyful partaking of the immensity of the almighty beloved results in a mysterious awareness of this grand play - the cosmic *Lila*. Emerson makes an appeal to our intellect and reason while Tagore always appeals to our heart -to our inmost feelings of love and longing for the supreme creator as our beloved who transcends this world of man and nature and yet remains immanent in it. The poet delights in the realization of the mysterious over lapping of the transcendence and immanence of his lord who is not nature but is definitely in nature -the play house of the infinite in which the poet; 'caught the sight of him that is formless' the mystic poet's whole body and. Limbs are, 'thrilled with his touch who is beyond, touch...' in the poems of the *gardener* too the poet longs for the, 'great beyond'

and the, 'keen call of his flute'. The poet expresses the mystic awareness of a presence, "i feel in the air a faint smell of thy sweet presence," and sometime he recollects that his lord "came down from his throne and stood at his cottage door." the mystic in Tagore rejects the very idea of liberation and asserts the significance of his own identity as the cause and the object of his lord's love, "o thou lord of all heavens, where would be thy love if I were not." like most of the saints, he also comes to the conclusion -that the wall separating him from god can be demolished only by subjugating his worldly desires and ambition. Like Emerson, Tagore also feels that mere spiritual is inadequate; performance of one's duties assigned by god in this world is absolutely necessary to have realization of the divine being:

"I have had my invitation to this word's festival...

* * * * *
* * *

It was my part at this feast to play* upon my instrument,

And I have done all I could. »

Now I ask, has the time come at last when I may go in and see thy face and

Offer thee my silent salutation?"

Tagore appears to be a dualist in this song and says that he has also performed his duties and he has resisted worldly temptation, hence he deserves to be one with god. Tagore comes from dualism to monism as he realizes that he will be able to realize him only by annihilating ego. Tagore realizes that god is the impelling force within and also realizes the presence of god everywhere. Unlike Emerson this realization, the poet could have after a long fought spiritual battle and he was left with no option but to surrender to the will of god.

Emerson's attitude towards nature is that of an idealist and transcendentalist. His association with nature is friendly and genuine for he perceives in it fresh knowledge and insight. His intercourse with nature widens his mental sphere and adds some new dimensions to his spiritualism. He worships and approaches nature not for amusement or recreation but for discovering new facts and realities to liberate mankind from suffering with a fresh wave of moralizing notions and elevating spiritual levels for the betterment of human life

with material achievement and cultural refinement. Nature works with spirit secretly to liberate us from involvement in the worldly affairs. He recognizes man, nature and god three distinct entities. Man is with a conscience, nature is conceived with spiritual attributes and god is the supreme creator who pervades in the concrete form of nature for the service of mankind.

Tagore is a pantheist like Wordsworth, but like Keats and Shelley turns to her for imagery. Unlike Emerson, Tagore reaches the mystical consciousness through the transfigured sense of taste, sound, colour and sight and celebrates the knowledge gained through them in his poetry. Nature is not only a store - house of beauty - of colour, form, smell and rhythm but also a symbol of the emotional and conceptual truth. In his poetry, the objects of nature ~ the sun, the moon, the star the sea, rivers, wall falls fountain, rain, clouds, trees, flowers, birds and insets seldom appear singly: they appear in groups to symbolize his poetic idea of love and beauty 'and are used for ornamentation. But later on objects of nature and the senses becomes the source of the, "consciousness" of divine reality, and once this experience is attained; even the outer world unfolds new meanings. The sunrise and sunset, clouds and stars, flowers and leaves, each and everything renders new messages. The whole world becomes an open letter of lord. He communicates with the elements and understands the language of the cosmos. In all the changes of nature poet feels the presence of god. In the forest he is present in the form of sweet perfume when april comes with its sunny warmth; in the dark nights of July he is present in the forms of rain and thunder. He is delicate and pleasant like the fragrance of flowers, and ferocious and frightening like thunder and lightning. He is present both in sorrow and joy and Tagore is convinced of the fact that god's bounty is inexhaustible.

Emerson and Tagore did not lead any movement as political or social leaders do. But they were the leaders of huge potentials. They motivated and influenced people through their works to think, to reflect and to act. They preached through both poetry and prose and brought about a great change

in the attitudes of men and their minds towards new values in morality and of religion.

They opted for pragmatic ways and manners to transform the life of poor natives by recognizing the aspects of faith and ethical values. Both emphasized more on practical realism than frail idealism.

Emerson, in his poem, *ode: inscribed to wh channing pleads that life is* to be lived like friends and lovers. Truth ought to be the governing force:

"Let man serve law for man.
Live for friendship life for love,
For truths and hannony's behoof;
The state may follow how it can,
As olympian follows love."

Emerson's pragmatic ways and approach to institutions touched the hearts and minds of the Americans. They took him to be a sage to be followed and not questioned. His views blended democracy and nationalism. He propounded and propagated his philosophical ideas in literatures religion and ethics. He fed the American consciousness with his theory of new transcendentalism, Yankee realism, Puritanism and love for nature and mankind. He becomes a, "great American mediator" who sought to mediate between mysticism and practically, transcendentalism and science, romance and politics, optimism of the 19th century and old puritan morality and between the democratic dreams of America tradition. He came to regard and practice realism of his own which characterized respect for, the tools; riches, old age, land, health' and the understanding of spirit too. It was his conviction that active performance of some deeds awakens and strengthens faith in self-reliance without which higher achievement in the material world and spiritual attainments are not practicable. His pragmatism had' its roots in mysticism.

Poets and literary men are never misers in their love and sympathy when they worship nature and believe in universal spirit. No doubt he is a staunch nationalist and patriotic. But in his philosophic realm and ideal adventures of poetry and prose, he echoes universal concern for the betterment of mankind. The following lines show his eminent characteristic of both his idealism and the vein of iron through him:

"through love repine, and reason chafe.

There came a voice without reply,
Tis' man's perdition to be safe.
When for truth, he ought to die"

Emerson was a sage in the real sense of word. Emerson's views on freedom, equality and democracy were expressed in America and by him for the Americans. But they are equally valuable for all the nations, for all the ages and for all the climates.

Emerson as a patriot does not move the spirit of America narrowly local or temporal. He relates his abstract thoughts to physical realities from which it springs and towards which it is redirected due to his philosophical vein. He lays stress on self reliance of every individual and says that

"So each man's life shall have its proper light".

he advises to

....."worship that world - warning spark,
which dazzles me in midnight dark.

Equalizing small and large,
Which the soul it doth surcharge,
Till the poor is wealthy grown,
And the hermit never alone."

As a philosopher he thinks that too much indulgence in material well being without the, similar advance in the sphere of ideals & morals may not refine people. He has individual equality & social values in which common man will have central peace, the structure of which will be woven with the threads of the labourers and farmers. He urges Americans to progress marching, making a chain of hands helping each other taking the weak with them. He emphasizes, 'democracy freedom has its root in the sacred truth.' his theme of democracy and freedom is deeply rooted in his religious ideals. Tagore's poetry is too a synthesis of all that is best in past and the present, in the Indian and the western traditions, therefore naturally gives comfort to many a troubled soul. In Tagore, love as youthful and exuberant passion is sublimated in to devotion to the one and unseen or into patriotism. Patriotism and nationalism impels to rise up against tyranny and bondage and is therefore based on spirituality. Submission to force and injustice is, in his view, a hindrance to self-realization through free development of human personality. Hence the cult

of nationalism strongly attracted him and in *Naivedya* the country is put up on a high pedestal and glorified. Political freedom or end of the foreign rule alone is not his avowed goal; it is the restoration of the culture and spiritual freedom of ancient India. One of the poems of Tagore conveys some indication of this:

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,

Where knowledge is free ,.....

Where the clear stream of reason has not
lost

It's way into the dreary sand of dead habit;
Where you lead the mind forward into
ever

Into that heaven of freedom, my father, let
my country awake."

Tagore exhorts his countryman never to forget ancient India, but to take pride in its spiritual culture. He tried to spiritualize patriotism. He feels that god can be realized through love for mankind. He finds god in the company of downtrodden and he far removed from them. He feels that the true worship of god consists total identification with ordinary suffering of man irrespective to self and power. "he is there where the tiller is. Tilling the hard ground and where. The path maker is breaking stones..."

In the idealism, spiritualism and cultural revolution Emerson and Tagore influenced their country people in a great measure and both are widely appreciated and universally recognized. Their philosophy and mysticism clearly led to new progress, which could not be achieved by following old ways and old values of religion and old political and social pattern. The most distinguishing feature of their poetry is its appeal to the reader. Whatever they have left is not 'time's fool'; it has stood the test of time. The underlying idea of their poetry that renunciation is no cure for the evils of this world is really the core of their philosophy. Life in its fullness embraces both good and evil, and both have to be accepted in the same spirit. Their firm faith in god redeems them at a time when they may turn into poets of despondency. Their mystic and philosophic approach to life encourages and cheers them in the moments of dejection. Emerson and Tagore through the convergence of the east and the west endeavored for the realization of potential

divinity of the soul. Their aspiration to understand the unseen power is an impetus to humanity to realize the functioning of divine twilight. The transformation of the lower towards the spiritual is the remarkable pronouncement of the prophets. They as the reservoirs and receptacles of the divine energy excelled the ephemeral and worldly living. Emerson & Tagore believed that the ascend towards the illumined territory along with self-surrender and renunciation of the worldly pleasures will establish a spiritually strengthened existence. The tenet of practical Vedanta that is the translation of thoughts into action and its manifestation is exemplified by Emerson and Tagore because they lived up to their expectations and invoked mankind to strive for the attainment of the higher self.

Although there is a basic difference between the ideals of the east and the west but then also both are striving for spiritual upliftment and a spiritual aim is inherent in their culture and civilization which amalgamates the east and the west. The meeting point of the two cultures is perfected by Emerson and Tagore. There should be an urge to transcend the lower stage of orthodox and conventional beliefs to attain the knowledge and intelligence of heavenly kingdom. The higher truths are the fruits of soul's internal experience and intellect is the entrance through which a passage towards the infinite begins. Emerson and Tagore contend that to attain the highest consciousness, universal in nature, the individual must follow the spiritual path which leads towards the eternal, the truth, the force, the one. All vital force and the thought-world are means for advancement towards self-realization. The contemporary world is in great need of unison so that human beings may not confront each other. The evil prevailing in the world in the form of terrorism, corruption, massacre, calamities and havocs is not against any country or state, is against mankind. Therefore humanity has to rise together and fight the demonic and diabolical forces. Instead of blaming each other and thinking the latter one as a downtrodden, man as an individual, a community and a cosmic and celestial being should be recognized and adorned as the potential divine being. The doctrine of Emerson and Tagore should

be implemented wholly and then humankind will experience a new dawn replete with the glory and grandeur of heavenly joys.

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