

RESEARCH ARTICLE



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

2395-2636 (Print); 2321-3108 (online)

**DIVINITY IN THE WRITINGS OF
RALF WALDO EMERSON AND RABINDRANATH TAGORE**

Dr. VIVEKANAND RAO

Assistant Professor, National PG College Barahalganj
Barahalganj, Gorakhpur, UP, India

doi: <https://doi.org/10.33329/rjelal.7119.35>



Dr. VIVEKANAND RAO

ABSTRACT

The religious thoughts and views of Ralf Waldo Emerson (1803-82) and Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) has been focused for this mundane society. They are from different cultures and belonged to different literary periods, their intellectual correspondence shows how both of them transcended contemporary religious traditions and established an original relationship with the Supreme Being that was a great effort towards divinity by both of them. In my opinion, this comparative analysis, will provide us with insights into understanding religion and its root that will help to create peace across the globe. There are many issues due to different cultures, races and religions and we are unable to get along and to work together to solve problems such as racism, religious extremism, terrorism and ethnic conflicts. They taught people about the reality of life, the philosophy of divinity, the philosophy of oneness, self-reliance and the real way of life in this crucial phase of human life. American Transcendentalism began its transformation of the American intellect through a circle of friends that was led by Emerson & the awareness of divinity started by Tagore in India. They reformed the religious beliefs and awaken the individual's realization of his own spirituality. These Transcendentalists drew upon the philosophies and religions of the world and show the path of the self in spiritual life. Their views talks regarding the importance of the individual in moral and intellectual development is "Self-Reliance" and the individual is identical with the world, and that world exists in unity with God.

Keywords – Emerson, Tagore, Self, God, Nature, Soul, Divine.

INTRODUCTION

The worldliness and materiality is too much expended that humankind unable to rise beyond these evils. Ralf 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.

Emerson understood and adopted: a major part of his transcendentalism from Indian and German school of philosophy in which the central core was Puritanism, Platonism and monastic idealism. The philosophy of Kant influenced his main by his empirical understanding in place of theoretical reasoning.

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. He grasps her law with his ideas to be himself a creator of the yet unformed future. The Lyrics of Tagore are a moment's monument – the unique creation of a moment the individual soul either longs. Earnestly for its union with his Almighty beloved or catches a glimpse of his face in one or the other form of his play in the open ground of life.

The Supreme one, Tagore maintains, is a living unity and our deepest aspiration is to be one with that unity. He says "We all belong to a divine unity, from which our great soul have their direct inspiration, they feel it immediately in their own personality and they proclaim in their life, "I am one with the supreme, with the Deathless, with the perfect". We feel this divinity directly within us and then we recognize our essential oneness with the all comprehensive reality. The "Great-Souled men", those who have attained expansion of consciousness, realize that divine unity as God. Tagore says "With the extension of the consciousness of human unity his God is revealed to him as one as universal, proving that the truth of human unity is the truth of Man's God". The truth of unity which the man realizes gives him the insight that the truth is the supreme one. According to Tagore, somehow men feel that "This comprehensive spirit of unity has a divine character and in the unity he apprehends God." Advaitam which is Anandam and Anantam, is the truth and in the religion of Tagore this is recognized as God. The Supreme one is also the Supreme person.

For Tagore, the realization of the essential oneness of all things is the highest achievement of mystical consciousness. He remarks, "To find out the one is to possess the All". The experience of a unifying vision is generally asserted by all the mystics of different ages and varied cultures. There is a common agreement among the religious mystics as regard the apprehension of a divine unity; there have been divergent approaches in the interpretation of the Nature as this unity. Some mystics assert the vision of an individual unity in

which the distinction of subject and object is obliterated and what is achieved is an impersonal one.

Thus, there are a lot of similarities between both as elaborated in above lines about their theme and style and it shows the immense deepness of Indian mythology in their works. Both of them are highly influenced by Indian philosophy and their complete theme and style is moving all around Indian writings. There are Humanism, nature, soul, god, spirituality, universal oneness, simplicity, over-soul, man, beauty, and worship.....etc are the major theme of both of them of divinity.

DIVINITY

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. Some critics claim him to be an imitator. 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.

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

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.

His passion for knowledge further impelled him to study the Hindu scriptures like the *Bhagawad Gita*, the *Vishnu Purana* and *Veda*. Owing to his increasing interest in oriental literature, he got a copy of English translation of *Bhagawad Geeta* by Sir Charles Wilkins and also went through many translation of the sacred and secular literature and expositions of India religions e.g. '*Translation of Ishopanishad*', one of the chapters of the Yajier Veda by Rammahun Ray: 'Oupnekhat' a perversion of the Up anishada and Rak Beid, Djedjr Beid, Som Beid, Athravan Beid by Auguetit Duporon, '*Institutes of Hindu Law*', the ordinances of Menu by William Jones, '*The Magha Duta*, or cloud Messenger by Horace Wilson, Works in six volumes by Sir William Johns which contain the translations from oriental literature and his poems on oriental themes: '*The Heetopades of Veeshanoo Sarma*' a series of connected fables, interesperesed with Moral, Prudential and Political maxims by Charles Wilkins 'The Vishnu Purana: A system of Hindu Mythology and tradition by Horce Hiayman Wilson, Miscellaneous Essay which are expositions of various Hindu School of Philosophy such as the Yoga, Sankhaya, Nyaya and Vaiseshika system.

Emerson not only read the translated works but also, "digested and transmulated" them. He

discovered that they contained sublimity of thought, Profundity of theme, Enlightenment of vision, and liberalism of views and universal oneness of Divinity, Oriental Fatalism and, "Transmigration of spirit" and other ideas and ideal of the East inspired him to give up orthodox views of Christianity. This emboldened his soul to work ceaselessly. His literature reflects this deep impact of oriental sublimity and divinity, in his poems like *Brahma*, *Oversoul*, *Maya*, *Illusions and Hametrya*.

Emerson not only read the translated works of Indian thought but also, "digested and transmulated" them. He discovered that they contained sublimity of thought, profundity of theme, enlightenment of vision, and liberalism of views and universal oneness as of Divinity. Oriental fatalism and, "transmigration of spirit" and other ideas and ideals of the East inspired him to give up orthodox views of Christianity. This emboldened his soul of work ceaselessly. His literature reflects this deep impact of oriental sublimity and divinity, in his poems like *Brahma*, poems, *Oversoul*, *Maya*, *Illusions* and *Hametrya*.

His theories of friendship and love are also inherent in the doctrine of the Atman, which transcends and yet pervades men. The simplest person who lovingly and unwaveringly worships God becomes God. There is a continued influx of this better and universal self into man, and it is new and unsearchable. Emerson could only explain it by the term 'Over-Soul'. As an order-loving individual, he thought that without the Over-Soul there was nothing meaningful, "*Without identity at base, chaos must be forever.*"

Emerson's deep insight into the Hindu books is clearly seen here. He resorted to the same things in his essay on, "fate":

"It was a poetic attempt to lift this mountain of Fate, To reconcile this despotism of race with liberty, Which led the Hindus to say, Fate is nothing but The deeds committed in a prior state of existence.....

Like the Hindus, Emerson asserted the principle that whatever a man reaps, that must e

have sowed. As Emerson grew older, he rejected the Greek interpretation of Fate as too easy-going, found that the Gita and the Upanishads approved to his own theory, and discovered that Karma and Compensation were practically two coins of the same mintage, until he came upon the Mohammedan Kismet which he mistook for Karma because it was Oriental.

In Emerson's view, man's coming to consciousness, his projection into a world from the unconscious source, was his fall. Spirit no longer functioned according to its own perfect laws. In considering Evil, Emerson pushed his monism to its logical ultimate. "Good is positive", he once wrote. 'Evil is merely private, not absolute: it is like cold, which is the privation have hear. All evil is so much death or non-entity.' He thought that in the absolute sense Evil must be relative; for instance, to a mouse, the cat is the greatest evil, but to a man, the cat may be a benefaction. The strong optimism of Emerson gives a coloring to his thought on Evil and Sin. Emerson never placed the responsibility on evil on God, nor did he relieve him of it. Had he done so, he would have betrayed his belief in the Universal Oneness of the Over-Soul. He had a firm belief in the moral universe run by an undeviating law, and not by an arbitrary Calvinistic deity.

According to Emerson, Sin and Evil belong to the unreal phenomenal world and cannot possess metaphysical significance. To reason thus is not to deny their existence; it is but to say that do not touch the Absolute. God must be beyond out little good and ills, relative as they are to individual human tastes and ends that are ephemeral. All difficulty was overcome for Emerson by the doctrine of compensation, as it is overcome for the Hindu by Karma. God's acts, he argued, were not arbitrary but with reference to the deeds of men.

This is not correct. In Hindu philosophy, God is often represented as a Trinity. The three aspects of Godhead comprising the Trinity are the creative, the preservative, and the destructive. God the Creator is called Brahma; God the Preserver is known as Vishnu; and God the Destroyer is designated as Siva. The subject of the poem is not Brahma the creator but Brahman, the Absolute or

the Universal Soul whom Emerson elsewhere terms the, "Over-Soul". Therefore, the correct title of the poem ought to have been, "Brahman" and not, "Brahma" the central ideal of the poem seems to have been taken from the Gita. Compare the following:

"If the red slayer thinks he slays,

Or if the slain think he is slain.

They know not well the subtle says

I keep, and pass, and turn again."

And

"Ya anam veti hantaram yashehainam
manyatehatam,

Ubhau tau na jijanito nayamhani na
hanyae."

The Hindu influence upon Emerson is well – pronounced in this poem. A likewise reading of the poem with relevant sources in original and as they existed in the translations studied by Emerson helps us in elaborating the nature and the extent of the influence. Charles Wilkins has rendered the first stanza as follows:

"The men who believe that it is the soul,
which kill and he who think that soul may
be destroyed are both alike deceived, for it
neither kill nor is it killed."

The 'Subtle way' I keep, and pass, and turn again' throws light on the inexplicable nature of the Soul. For a parallel in Hinduism we may quote the following, "*Anoranjanmahato mahiyanatma guhayam nihitoasya janthoh, Tamkratum pashyati vitashoko dhatuh prasadanmahimanmisham.*"

The central idea in the second and third stanzas of, "Brahma" is not so much the unity of the universe as opposed to its apparent diversity, but the reality behind illusion or Maya. The phenomena, which the sense of man perceives, are the works of Maya, but the wise man alone realizes that behind all these phenomena there is the unchanging reality of Brahman.

The last stanza of, "Brahma" contains philosophical ideas, which might well puzzle the reader because of their novelty and riddle-like, epigrammatic language. The 'strong gods' who pine for the abode of Brahman are the devas of the

Hindu cosmology, an order of celestial beings akin to angles, who are as much the creatures of Brahman as human beings, and hence:

"The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
Both you, meek liver of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heave."

The gods pine for the abode of Brahman because thereby the union with Brahman is possible. The 'Sacred Seven' are the Sapta Rishis (The seven sages) celebrated in the Hindu religious literature for their quest of God through austerities and penance. They are said to 'pine in vain' for realization of Brahman does not come so easily through the observance of religious rites and the mortification of the flesh as through the spontaneous surrender to the Diving Will.

Though Emerson's attitude to Buddhism is obvious enough, traced the 'colossal conceptions of Buddhism home', and found them to be, "always the necessary or structural actions of the human mind."

Thus, Emerson drew from Indian thought and tradition right from his Youth to the end of his life. This enables him to present a synthesis of East and West. His response to Indian thought and tradition is marked with an attempt to synthesize the value of the old and the new world.

Many enthusiasts consider him to have been the greatest poet America has yet produced. His disdain of mere form led him to produce verses which read with heaviness and halting but the beauty of the thought atones for missing symmetry and freshness of rhyme and Emerson as a poet will always have an audience of admirers and some worshippers, oblivious of his verse's fault. Once when someone praised his poetry Emerson interrupted, you forget; we are damned for poetry. And he wrote to Carlyle that he was

"Not a poet, but a lover of poetry and poets"—a sort of harbinger of the poets to come.

Tagore was one of the greatest creative geniuses of the Indian mind who played a vital role in the history of Indian Renaissance in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. His

encyclopedic mind had many facts, as an enlighten poet, philosopher, educationalist, musician, painter and composer. He was one of the greatest pioneers. Tagore was in search of a new vision of man, a new civilization, a national education keeping with the genius of Indian mind, its psychological tradition and needs. His educational system aims at creating a modern Indian and redefining "Indianness" by a new birth, by developing the powers of the human mind and spirits in pursuit of truth (knowledge). Nehru in his tribute to Tagore brings out the greatness of the sun of India.

"Rabindranath Tagore has given to us nationalism the outlook of internationalism and has enriched it with art and music and magic of his words so that it has become full blooded emblem of India's awakened spirit".

Tagore's poetry is deep-rooted in the rich associations of Indian philosophy and he tries to recapture its theme and spirit. The very first song of "Gitanjali" describes the body of man as the temple of soul and the soul as the abode of God, there by emphasizing that the human soul is eternal.

The poet in the first song of 'Gitanjali' through the images of Lord Krishna playing the flute, not only lays stress on the immortality of the human soul, but also suggests that ups and downs in life are like the melodies played by Lord Krishna. The thought and imagery of 'Gitanjali' are Indian. The characteristic features of Tagore's lyrical poetry are full of spirituality, a love of Nature and Man and the expression of beauty and the splendors of the earth. All are inspired by Tagore's lyrical poetry. Tagore has done great service to Indian writing in English. He showed that the English language can be a suitable medium of expression of Indian sentiment, thought and imagery whatever Shakespeare wrote of Cleopatra is truly applicable to 'Gitanjali'.

"Age cannot wither nor custom stale
Her infinite variety: other women clay
The appetites they feed: but she makes
hungry
Where most she satisfies".

Rabindranath Tagore a true poet of divinity has used many symbols in 'Gitanjali'. The very first section is Metaphorical. The human body is referred to as a 'Frail Vessel' The transmigration of soul and the succession of births and rebirths is treated in a metaphorical way. In the next section the poet calls himself God's small flute of a read out of which his melodies are sung.

"She" or the "Women" represents the poet's self. He has preserved himself in pristine purity to make it an appearing to God (Git. Song no. 46).

"Many a man knocked at my door and asked for her and turned away in despair. There was none in the world who ever saw her face to face and she remained in her loneliness waiting for they recognition".

'The Boat' is a romantic and also a spiritual symbol for voyage: I must launch out my boat" again "Early in the day it as whispered that we should sail in boat... only thou and I....." God is the enchanter. He lures the soul to the mystic trust by his music. "Journey" is the journey of life. It is also referred to as "Voyage".

The Poet's self is the traveler and the companion of God.

"Sword" is another effective symbol. God the king of the kings is associated with the sword (Git. 50). "Beautiful is thy whitely decked with stars and cunningly wrought in myriad colored jewels. But more beautiful to me is thy sword with its cure of lightning....." If God's wristlet symbolizes. "Aparigraha" (non attachment). "The sword is with me to cut asunder my bands and there shall no fear left for me in the world".

"Cloud" is used with romantic association. It also stands for God's grace. (Git. No. 27) "The sky is overcast with clouds and the rain is ceaseless. I know not what this is that stirs with-in me. – I knew not its meaning".

All these images combine the abstract conception of the Vedanta, Absolute and it's creating manifestation. The poet through these mytho-mystical symbols creates the play of love and beauty and thus strives to express and absolute

truth and beauty beyond the scope of imagery. There is a profusion of imagery and symbolism in the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore as may be more than evident from the abundance of illustrations from 'Gitanjali'. It should be noted that the poet does not use them deliberately for any specific purpose. They come to him automatically and spontaneously. These images and symbols not only lend grace but also help the reader to comprehend the poet's mind and heart easily. They concretize the abstract, familiarize and unfamiliar and spiritualize the sensuous and the material.

The merger of the individual soul is an impersonal one as the highest state of mystic realization is preached by a dominant school of Vedanta represented by Sankara and his followers. In the words of Tagore, "According to some interpretations of the Vedanta doctrine Brahman is the absolute truth, the impersonal it, in which there can be no distinction of this and that, the good and the evil, the beautiful and its opposite, having no other quality expect its ineffable blissfulness in the eternal solitude of its consciousness utterly devoid of all things and all thoughts.....through the process of Yoga a man can transcend the utmost bounds of his humanity and find himself in a pure state of consciousness of his undivided unity with Parabrahman". The modern Hindu mystic Sri Aurobindo also asserts the ultimate absorption of the individual in an undivided unity. He says "At the gates of the Transcendent stand that mere and perfect spirit described in the Upnishads, Luminous, pure, sustaining the world, without flow of duality, without scare of division, the transcendent silence".

The poet is in the opinion that God is not only omnipresent but also the creator of everything and he dwells in the temple of human body. God is Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. Tagore has been eternized the mood and a moment. God is truth that illumines the dark recesses of the poet's mind. The poet feels the true worshipper of God consists in total identification with ordinary, suffering men irrespective of self and power. Tagore's consciousness reminds the purification and conversion of "Kinglear" so that the poet 'identifies' himself with the sufferer humanity in order to feel the presence of God.

It is God himself who expresses his joy in the form of our soul and then the eternal lover finds in this joy form his other self to make his love possible. Being a manifestation of the ever abiding joy of God, this joy form, the individual soul of man is immortal. Professor Humayan Kabir has rightly said: "Tagore's love for man unconsciously and inevitable merged into love of God..... for him God was essentially loved. The love of the mother for her child or the love the lover for the beloved are only instances of the supreme love that is God. And this love expresses itself not only in the ecstatic devotion of the mystic, but also in the routine of everyday life of the common man. Tagore respectfully declared that God is to be realized in the common realities of life and in the daily work which sustains the world". God, from whose immortal joy this immortal self has taken form, has willingly made it separate from himself and has invested it with a free will.

The thread of oneness running through the universe, according to Tagore, has its source in our inner unity. "Through all the diversities of the world", says he "The one in us is threading its course towards one in all". The sense of oneness which we have in our soul, spreads out its illumination to bring all the diversities with in a comprehensive unity. In the darkness of the night we stumble over individual things and are made conscious of their separateness. But the light of the day makes us aware of their essential relatedness and harmony. So long we are under the envelopment of Avidya, ignorance, the span of our consciousness of things;".....when a man lives the life of Avidya, he is confined within his oneness. It is a spiritual sleep". When the soul is emancipated from the envelopment of Avidya, it at once recognizes the truth of the unity. The dark night of ignorance then come to an end and the enlighten souls no more stumble over separateness of things. The man who has emancipated himself from the thralldom of ignorance finds within himself a centre around which everything can find its proper place. When the man finds the centre within himself, all the isolated impressions are integrated into a unified vision and all our thoughts and deeds are united in harmonious life. "I have known this wonder of

wonders," says Tagore. "This one in myself which is the centre of all reality for me".

'Gitanjali' is an anthology of one hundred three devotional lyrics. It is a rosary of prayers offered of God, a lotus the petals of which close within them the poet and the readers. The religious and devotional lyricist, Tagore is in the tradition of those bands who have sung of the spirit soaring high above the falsehood and ugliness of a mundane life and living in delights and beauties of a diviner consciousness. In 'Gitanjali'; "Tagore seeks a perfect order of human existence : the mystical joy, the sense of inadequacy as a mystic, a desire for death, the devout dedication to God, the wailing of the heart of the people; these are found in 'Gitanjali and Sadhana'.

"To me the verses of the Upanishads and the teachings of Buddha have ever been things of the spirit, and therefore endowed with boundless vital growth; and I have used them, both in my own life and in my preaching" (sadhana).

To conclude, I quote the words of 'Gitanjali'.

"In one salutation to thee, my God, let all my senses spread out and touch this world at my feet.

Let all my songs gather together their diverse strains into a single current and flow to a sea of silence in one salutation to thee."

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 of 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, 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.

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 consciousnesses. 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. Evert 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 poorer 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 upholder 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.

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 excitement 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’.

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

CONCLUSION

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.

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.

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. 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, and the individual must follow the spiritual path which leads towards the Eternal, the Truth, the Force, and the One. All vital forces 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.

REFERENCES

MACMILLAN PUBLICATION. Tagore's *Gitanjali*, Song offerings (III). G-347, New Delhi: Goodwill Publishing House, Print.

Gandhi, M.K. *Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*,
Colltd., Sriman Narayan, Mumbai: BVB,
1998. Print.

Introduction to *Early Poems of Ralph Waldo
Emerson* by Nathan Haskell Dole, 1899 P. 2.
(<http://www.writespirit.net/>).

Mac Giffert A.C. *Young Emerson Speaks Boston*:
Houghton Mifflin and Co. 1938, (Sermons
Preadhed between 1926-32).

Raychel A. Haugrud, 'Tyndalls Interest in Emerson' in
American Literature; 41; January 1970;

The Complete Works of Ralf Waldo Emerson,
Centwnary ed., II, 271-2. Hearafter as
Works.

The Katha Upanishad commences with this story.
Next to the Gita, the Katha was the most
influential of the Hindu scriptures in
Emerson's Works.

Ralf Waldo Emerson: Representative selections
(New York, 1934).

Ralf Waldo Emerson: *Representative Emerson's
'Brahma'; An Indian Interpretation*" *New
England Qarterly*, XXXIII, No. 4(December
(1960), 506.

The Upanishadls, tr. Prabhavanda and Fredrick
Maichester, Mentor series.

Bhagved – Gita tr. Swami Prabhavanda and
Chrisopher Isherwood, Mentor ed.

Emerson: Letter to Samuel Gray Ward, Dated july
18, 1840, quated By Egverd S. Oliver in
studies in American Literature, 1965.

Emerson: The Over-soul in Ralf Waldo: Emerson;
Selected Prose and Poetry ed. By Reginald
L. cook, New york. 1965.