

CRITICAL CONSIDERATION OF SPIRITUAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS IN WORKS OF EMERSON WITH REFERENCE TO BHAGWAD GITA

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ABSTRACT

Ralph Waldo Emerson was a one who drew his own road and sought to dive deep into the traditional beliefs of ordinance of the Church. Every writer has a different style of thinking to create something relevant for the society, but Ralph Waldo Emerson was a one who drew his own path. Emerson was a great hero during his legendary era due to the fact that he was both a poet and an essayist. Never could the dogmas and cultural norms of his age's religious background persuade him to change his mind. Because it encourages readers to raise their souls, mix with the Over-Soul, and sense the genuine essence of God, his idea has always been intriguing to readers. This is because it advances the readers to raise their souls. His poetry and essays express his desire for moral and spiritual growth as well as his hunger for reality, which was consistent with Emerson's belief that one should seek the truth and the supremacy of thinking. He turned to the Katha Upanishad and The Gita, The Vishnu Puranas and The Laws of Manu.

Keywords: Soul, Spiritual, Moral, Society, Belief.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Bhagavad Gita is where R.W. Emerson got his idealist and transcendental ideas, such as Nature, the trinity of truth, goodness, and beauty, the absence of hypocrisy, intuition, a great soul, the relation of thoughts and motives with circumstance, the relation of the self with the attribute less, to the Over Soul (Brahman), God within, the law of Karm, Own Nature, modes of Nature, deity or personal God and its relation with everything divine. Only a "Great Soul" like Emerson was capable of elevating Immanuel

Kant's philosophy to the highest philosophical level of idealism, which would have resulted in the creation of an epoch, a completion, and perfection that could be attained through thought. Kant's philosophy related the universe, the material, and the mind. Kant and Emerson both developed ideas that were already in use in Vedic Dharma when they wrote their respective works. I have demonstrated that Emerson's idealist and transcendentalist ideas are actually Vedic and Hindu ideas. R.W. Emerson's article titled "The

above soul" is where one of the most glaring examples of the effect of the Bhagavad Gita and the Vedas, more specifically, the influence of Non-Dualism as it was expounded by the great Hindu saint Sri Adi Shankaracharya, can be found. According to R.W. Emerson, "Nature is transcendental." We have looked at R.W. Emerson's concept of "Nature" which is described in the Bhagavad Gita under the heading "Nature" and may be found in Chapter 13 of the Gita. "However, brilliance and virtue both foretell in man the same absence of private purposes and of deference to circumstances," The themes of "genius and virtue" can be found in the Bhagavad Gita, namely in the sections on "Self-Reliance" and "Compensation," respectively. Since both "virtue" and "genius" are components of Dharma, we can deduce that "virtue" is beneficent, while "genius" works toward the improvement of society and humankind.

II. THE DOCTRINE OF SELF-RELIANCE

In his explanation from 1841, Emerson said, "Metaphysics and Ethics look inwards." The time had come to reject the mainstream metaphysics of John Locke, which maintained that the mind receives reality from external facts and experiences mediated by the senses. The age had come to repudiate this position since it was no longer supported by the evidence. The "Idealism" of the time eventually became known as "Transcendental Idealism." Emerson came to this conclusion based on the use of the term "intuitions" by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant to refer to concepts that originate from the mind itself. Emerson was simplifying the situation too much. Locke was not a heavy-handed materialist like Aristotle. Emerson knew better than to confuse every passing whim or

mood with true intuition, and the American transcendentalists' usage of Kant allowed for a certain amount of leeway in their interpretation of Kant's ideas. Despite this, Emerson rose to prominence as the preeminent spokesman in the United States for a new school of metaphysics that originated in Europe, primarily as a result of the writings of British commentators such as Thomas Carlyle and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. This school of thought declared that every individual possessed the capacity to know the truth deep within themselves. The Scottish Common Sense philosophy, which had such a stronghold on the educational landscape at Harvard in the early nineteenth century, had aided in preparing Emerson's generation for the introduction of such innovative approaches.

The poem "Each and All" (1830) was written by Emerson on the sense of harmony that may be found in nature. The poem was based on a paragraph that was extracted from his journal. It provides his transcendentalism with a language that is both trenchant and strong. The poet has the opinion that a man does not even realize what value he has contributed to the belief system of his neighbor through the deeds he has performed and the lessons he has taught. The thing is that everything depends on everything else, and nothing in and of itself is either good or beautiful. This is the thing. The poet has offered a lovely self-analysis, which includes the fact that one morning he brought one sparrow at his home thrilled with its melody. He said that all things are complementary to one another. The sparrow continues to sing, but the poet believes that the bird's song does not have the same upbeat quality because he was unable to provide a natural atmosphere for the bird. The natural setting contributed greatly to the exquisiteness of the sound that was created. Following their parting,

the bird no longer have the same allure. Therefore, there is no value and significance to any of them apart from the others. It is important that there be complete harmony in nature and that it not be disrupted in any way:

“I took him back to his home in his nest at even, and although he sings the song, it does not cheer now.” (The Bhagavad Gita 2002)

The everlasting law is the fundamental principle behind everything. It actually needs something Godlike in a man, the feeling of being "one with all," in order to function properly. An independent man won't be able to tell the difference between other people and other men. He believes that everyone is the product of a single soul and that there is no distinction between them. A man who is self-sufficient will follow the example set by God or "over Soul," who does not recognize any distinctions or distinctions between men, and will instead view all men as being one and the same. Emerson, much like Robert Browning, subscribes to this point of view. "There is only one family here." Every single guy should be able to live in this universe with a sense of love and peace on an equal footing. There is a reciprocal link between man and nature, in which man receives support from nature in order to achieve divine urge. Him should grasp this thing in nature, which is that nature helps man realize divine impulse. Emerson is also of the opinion that these things will not be achievable until every man has the capacity for both self-realization and the realization of his spiritual worth. Every man has to start a new chapter in his life with new ideas and new ways of doing things. If a man really wants to be rewarded with the power of divine impulse of the immortal soul, he will have to resist the

temptation. Owning one's own property is a necessary step toward achieving financial independence. It is the opposite of having to rely on oneself. It ties a man down to worldliness, which makes him nasty and self-centered. It acts as a barrier between him and the inspirations of the divine. The belief that a man should own property prevents him from standing tall because it prevents him from realizing the urges of the divine. His sole possession is his own spirit. If he has a refined spirit, he will be embarrassed by his material possessions. It is both dishonest and illegal to acquire wealth through unethical means, such as gambling, winning in games of chance, or receiving gifts. According to this interpretation, Emerson is opposed to the possession of political, social, educational, and religious institutions. Only when a man abandons the support of others and property in order to rely only on the 'Self' can he develop the spiritual fortitude necessary to become a spiritually powerful person.

Once he is able to stand in an upright stance, exert command over his limbs, and raise his spirit to a transcendental level, he is able to perform miracles. As it is said in The Bhagavad Gita, Emerson is alluding to the fact that a man should not concern himself with the results of his deeds and instead work altruistically, much like a yogi who has mastery over his own body and mind.

The knower of Truth, (being) centered (in the Self) should think, "I do nothing at all"—though seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, going, sleeping, breathing, speaking, letting go, holding, opening and closing the eyes—convinced that it is the senses

that move among sense-objects.(Isloka –8,129)

Emerson writes in the second line of the epigraph for the essay "Self-Reliance" that the soul is capable of power and speed if it is reared up on rocks of sufferings and difficulties:

Cast the banting on the rocks,
Suckle him with the she wolfs teat;
Wintered with the hawk and fax,
Power and speed behinds and feet.

III. THE DOCTRINE OF OVER- SOUL

During those times, Emerson was reading about the superstitions used by Native Americans. Even within the context of his own rural village, he lagged behind the times. The piece of classic Indian literature that was first published in the United States was in the journal that his father edited, The Monthly Anthology and Boston Review. His father was the editor of both of these publications. In the late 1780s, Victor Cousin's précis, the Oriental Renaissance of the discourse between Krishna and Arjuna from The Bhagavad Gita, had a greater impact on him. This led to a greater awakening in him. The warrior's hesitation to shed the blood of friends and kin is erroneous, according to Krishna, who tells him that the material world is an illusion and that he should not be afraid to do so. It has been said that "what is today a man was yesterday a plant, and what is tomorrow may once again become a plant." Arjuna is expected to behave in a manner consistent with his status as a Kshatriya, a member of the warrior caste. However, in order

to act with integrity, one must act "as if, on, n agissait not" (Si, on, n agissait pas), which means acting in a manner that demonstrates a spirit of non-attachment to the results of one's own activities. Because action, too, is an illusion, there is no such thing as anything save the principle of being in the world. Platonism, Coleridge, and Swedenborg all had a greater impact on Emerson's religious ideas than did the scriptures of India, which for a long time remained a more marginal effect. Eastern philosophy was of particular assistance to him and helped him strengthen his thesis of spiritual impersonality. It also enabled him to comprehend how the material world could be an illusion without ceasing to exist. Emerson gives credit to the Hindus for having the most vibrant awareness of both the essential identity and the illusion of diversity that they consider variety to be. "The thought that I am and that this is mine, which influence men, are nothing more than delusions of the mother of the world, and the beatitude of man, they hold that it lies in being freed from fascination," (Frank, A. Von.) This statement, which Emerson quotes here from the Vishnu Purana, was recorded during his first intensive absorption in Scriptures of India in the middle of the 1840s. Later cities in Representative Men cite this passage as evidence of the antiquity of the notion of the oneness of consciousness. The fact that he had doubts about the capacity of humans to have godlike perception did not lessen the force of appeals to his sense of moral integrity; rather, they made those appeals more compelling. Despite this, Krishna uses many of the same tactics in The Gita in order to convince Arjuna to overcome his impulse.

In this way, Hinduism legitimized the symbolic interpretation of the physical universe. Emerson's preference was something he never could explain

away, even when he was young. He is adamant that the correct doctrine is not immortality but eternity, which ought to be equally distributed among all people. Emerson had a significant influence not only on Hinduism but also on Buddhism. As a piece of confirmatory evidence, it's possible that Emerson used the presentation copy of *The Light of Asia* that Edwin Arnold gave to him. Soon after that, Emerson and *The Light of Asia* were interconnected. One of the reading journals published by the Transatlantic Theosophical Movement, which had close ties to Buddhism, discovered a connection between Emersonian Over-Soul and Karmic law. Edwin Arnold was a staunch supporter of British imperial control, despite the fact that he rarely condoned imperial excesses. Arnold was a thorough researcher who based his poetry on the greatest scholarship available at the time. In addition to being a dedicated student of Sanskrit, Arnold attempted to educate himself in Marathi. Mediators such as Arnold and Emerson were responsible for igniting western curiosity in the knowledge of the east, which assisted in setting the stage for seekers such as the Brahmin Bigelow and those of a more obscure background. It was thought that Emerson and Arnold were switching identities when they were living throughout that time.

Journal Sequence is where Emerson first mentions the year 1857 as the year in which he read the short stories of Hindu Mythology. These stories reflected one of the major poems Brahma, which was produced in the same year. It is considered to be one of Emerson's most well-known poems. His research into Hindu scriptures served as the source of creativity for this work. There is an ultimate power that rules and directs everything in the cosmos, according to the philosophy of the Hindu religion. This greatest

power is the source and the creator of all living beings as well as the objects that are perceived by them via their senses. It is also the destination of the soul once it has completed its journey through the body. This Hindu Vedantic notion is one of the fundamental themes that run throughout his poetry, and Brahma is one of those themes:

If the red slayer think he slays,
or if the slain thinks he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again

Both the bloodstained murderer and the victim are mistaken if they believe that the other has committed murder against them. They do not know the mysterious ways of Brahma, the God, It is he who lives, he who dies and he who is born again. It is he who is both the creator and the destroyer. What gets done, gets done because of him. The same idea can be found in the conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna in *The Gita*; a wise man cares little for his family because he knows that everyone is here simply to play a role, and that the one who plays his role well will rise to greatness.

(Now) do, being stationed in your proper places in the divisions of the army, support Bhishma alone."(*The Bhagvad Gita*, Chapter 1, Shloka 11)

Do not be sad for the dead or the living, Shri Bhagvan advised Arjuna. "Arjuna, you weep over those who should not be grieved for and speak like a knowledgeable smart man." He went on to say that they were both naive. That one who is aware of the soul's lethal potential and that one who assumes the soul is dead:

Then, O Lord of Earth, seeing
Dhritarâshtra's party standing marshalled
and the shooting about to begin, that
Pândava whose ensign was the monkey,
(The Bhagvad Gita,chapter 1-Isloka 20)

Emerson argues that the holy soul, or Brahma, is superior to all else. They are all similarly close in proximity. To him, distance is of no consequence. The difference between the shadows and the sunlight doesn't exist for him. In his mind, the departed are still with us even if they've long since passed on. Celebrity and disgrace are equal in his eyes.

For or forgot to me is near; shadow

and sunlight are the same.

The Vanquished Gods to me appear. And

one to me are shame and fame

And thus Lord Krishna says to Arjuna, "If you should expose of this soul to be the subject of continual birth and death, even then you should not lament like this, for sorrow is ignorance." All three of these texts—the Brahma - Sutra, the Upanishads, and the Gita—are reflected in what is known as the Doctrine of Brahma. There is a lot of philosophical pondering in it. The transcendentalist critic has offered an interpretation of this piece. Maya, which meaning the material world or full of illusion, was Emerson's second book after Brahma because he recognized the actual part of existence. He understands now that all he has known to be true about this universe was an illusion. There is no truth there. Because there is no conclusion to this circular and misleading thought, it is impossible to progress beyond it.

Emerson gives us an insight into the antithesis of Brahma in this poem. Emerson penned the little poem Maya in 1904. The poem's title clearly borrows from Hindu principles that refer to the concept of delusion. Maya is diametrically opposed to Brahma and distinct from him in many ways. The poem is written entirely in couplets. Three quatrains make up the total number of verses. The perfectly balanced length of the poem makes it a work of art without blemish. Illusion, or Maya, functions impenetrably according to Emerson's description. That makes no sense at all. It spins its unchanging, digit-free thread. The flashy visuals will undoubtedly grab our attention. Replicating itself again and over again, cover after cover. A magician is someone who will always violate the trust of a man who has placed his faith in him. There is no denying that Maya is dishonest and cunning. The idea that everything we see is an illusion is central to Hindu mythology. There is no truth there. It captivates momentarily and then drags the target into deep blackness:

Illusion works impenetrable, weaving
webs innumerable,

Her gay picture never fail crowds each on
other,

Veil on Veil, Charmer who will be
believed

By man who thirsts to be deceived .

A guy who was inspired by Hindu thought was Emerson. Their ideas satisfy him to the core. For example, Arthur Christy's *The Orient in American Transcendentalist Thought*, "Maya takes many shapes, but Brahma transcends them all. While Maya manifests in many forms, Brahma remains unchanged in being. The

Brahma is surrounded by a thick fog of Maya, and only the wisest among us can see through it."

To begin his writing career, Emerson wrote *The Over-Soul*. This article was published in the first series, which began in 1841. It's almost transcendental in tone. Indian mysticism and philosophy clearly had an impact on it. The religious texts of the East, and the Hindu scriptures in particular, have some of the highest levels of expression in this regard. To him, the soul is analogous to an invisible and mysterious source of steam. In this essay, Emerson argues that the *Over-Soul* is independent of all other things. The following ideas are how Emerson develops his doctrine of the *Over-Soul*. It seems that Emerson realized this after having a spiritual awakening of his own. All these things and more are what make up the *Over-Soul*. All over the natural world, it is enormous. Emerson thinks man is capable of developing such a vast intellect using only his own unique set of skills and strategies. This is the 'Divine Light' that Emerson associates with metaphysics. It's a huge, ethereal realm of existence. It's everywhere, within us, and kind. The *Over-Soul* is intuitively grasped by the mind. Emerson draws a line between poets like George Herbert and Pope, philosophers like Kant and Coleridge, and others based on the most crucial characteristic they share in common: their devotion to the divine. This divide results from the exclusive utterances of a select group of academics, artists, and thinkers. While a different breed of poets observes and comments on events from the outside. It is futile to address the populace or attempt to educate them from a logical perspective.

IV. THE DOCTRINE OF INDIVIDUAL SOUL

The soul of each individual is an essential component of the greater Brahma. Emerson makes it very obvious in the poem *Brahma*. In the December 1857 issue of *Atlantic Monthly*, this poem had its debut. Readers at first struggled to grasp it since it was grounded on the Upanishad conception of God. Some transcendentalists understood it and gave it high praise, but a Christian critic called it Emerson's most famous or infamous poetry regardless of interpretation. Emerson's obvious disagreement with the Christian belief that Jesus Christ is God is the primary motivating factor. God is called "Brahma" in the Upanishads, the *Braham Sutra*, and *The Gita*. It is timeless, unvarying, self-sufficient, everywhere, all-powerful, and all-knowing. *Jivatma* is the embodiment of *Atma*, and it too is eternal. 'If the Killer thinks that he is killing (a particular person), and his victim thinks that he is being killed, both of them do not know the genuine nature of the soul,' as is written in the *Katha Upanishad*. This thing kills no one and is itself immune to death. (Chapter 19) of Part One.

There is a similar reflection and reiteration of this idea in the *Gita*: "He who thinks that his soul kills and he who believes that his soul is being slain both of them do not know the truth that his soul neither kills nor is killed."

He who takes the Self to be the slayer, he who takes It to be the slain, neither of these knows. It does not slay, nor is It slain. (The *Bhagvad*, Ch-2, *Isloka*-19)

In the first stanza of *Brahma*, the same idea is reflected: the soul can neither be dead nor kills.

They reckon ill who leave me out;

When me they fly, I am the wings;

I am the doubter and doubt.

And I the hymn the brahmin sings.

Gita's line "I keep and pass as well as turn again" is repeated elsewhere in the text. The embodied soul, like a man, sheds old, worn-out bodies and reincarnates into fresh ones, just as he sheds old, worn-out clothes.

Even as a man casts off worn-out clothes, and puts on others which are new, so the embodied casts off worn-out bodies, and enters into others which are new.(The Bhagvad Gita, Isloka-22)

Though the body may be destroyed, the soul lives on eternally, as the Gita proclaims: "Weapons cannot cut it nor can fire burn it; water cannot wet it nor can wind dry it."

This (Self), weapons cut not; This, fire burns not; This, water wets not; and This, wind dries not. (The Bhagwad Gita, Isloka-23)

The reason for this is plain to see: artificial light and natural light are essentially identical. To put it another way, the soul of a human being and the soul of the universe are the same thing. Once again, this is the Upanishad view. "Having entered the subtle cave of heart, the two souls observe the fruits of perceptions and doings," it is described in the Katha Upanishad. "The knowers of Brahma characterize these two souls alternately as the shadows of the sun and the sun itself, the individual soul and the supreme soul." (Chapter Two, Section Thirty-Three, Part One) This means that each person's soul, together with their body, undergoes a series of reincarnations determined by their karmic debts. Moksha, or salvation, is attained when a person's soul joins

with the Over Soul. But the vast majority of males are guilty of bad behavior. They fall right into Maya's trap. The flowery, novel, varied, and appealing wordiness that, in truth, contains neither joy nor tranquilly. It's all an elaborate hoax.

In Emerson's view, each person's soul is a divine spark since it is an interstellar component of the Over-Soul. According to the Gita, "the spirit that inhabits this body is the same as the Supreme." He has been called everything from a mere bystander to a True Guide to the absolute ruler of all experience (in his capacity as the Embodied soul).

With hands and feet everywhere, with eyes, heads and mouths everywhere, with ears everywhere in the universe,—That exists pervading all.(Chap-13, Isloka-21)

The presence of the Divine is everywhere. It's a message for everyone. That which is highest resides within us all, and all things are fundamentally interconnected. If the desire to do one's duty is present, he thinks everyone has the right to learn the meaning of revelation by his or her own senses. A man must lock Jesus away in his bedroom in order to hear what the Almighty God has to say. God does not choose to reveal himself to fearful people. A man needs to tune out the voices of other guys and focus on what he has to say. If a man hasn't internalized prayer as his own practice, he might as well not pray at all. Our faith bases its legitimacy on the sheer number of his followers, which is a huge mistake. When the number of people who claim to be religious goes down, it's a sign that religion is on the decline. With wonder and joy, he takes in numerous examples of the unity of consciousness. A part of him recognizes himself there. His relationship

with God is like that of a plant with soil: both begin small but eventually flourish. The human population is massive, and every single one of them is unique. The human organism, the mind, and the soul are the three components that make up a whole person. The physical form is finite. Existence begins and ends with its birth and death. It reflects the soul as the source of life and reason. Things like life and intelligence are conceptual. Without matter, they are unable to move. Since it is made of subatomic particles, the mind can never be completely annihilated. The individual soul reflects the Over-Soul and is a unified whole with the mind. In death, it morphs into the embryo of another body. Both the Upanishads and the Gita elaborate on the aforementioned characteristics of the human spirit.

V. THE DOCTRINE OF CORRESPONDENCE

To Emerson, "The Over Soul" is equivalent to "the one" in Plotinus and "Brahma" in Hinduism. Emerson was well-versed in Hindu theology and philosophy. His works are colored by his knowledge of Hindu traditions. His view of the super soul owes much to both Buddhist and Hindu philosophies. Besides Plato and Aristotle, he was influenced by the German idealist philosophers Kant, Hegel, Fichte, and Schelling, as well as the works of Goethe and Richter. One's status is instantaneously elevated if he performs an act of kindness. One of the benefits of doing good deeds is a closer relationship with God. Someone's sphere of influence shrinks as a result of his or her own nasty deed. He who rids himself of filth also dons cleanliness. If a man lies or pretends to be something he is not, he loses touch with his true nature. When confronted by perfect goodness, a man responds with profound

modesty. When you go down, you go up. The man discovers himself after he has abandoned himself. Lord Krishna tells Arjuna the same thing in The Gita: "He who hates no creature and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of 'I and mine,' who is even-minded in pain and pleasure, forbearing, ever content, steady in meditation, self-controlled, and owned of firm conviction, with mind and intellect fixed on Me,—he who is thus dedicated to Me, is dear to Me." (The Bhagavad Gita, chapter 12, verses 13–14) A disciple of mine is dear to me if he is free from hate toward all beings and compassionate, if he has overcome attachment to "I" and mine, if he is balanced in joy and sorrow, if he forgives easily, if he is overly content and mentally joined with me.

VI. CONCLUSION

Emerson offered a view of the living universe and the mystical center of human nature in his beliefs. He exerted an incessant amount of effort to infuse everything with a spiritual perspective. His philosophical endeavors were directed on eradicating the modern mind's deeply ingrained hopelessness, which is the primary cause of lying and causes it to lose its purpose and aim. Emerson's writings and poetry have a character that is somewhere between quiet and hopeful throughout their entirety. He highlighted that this universe is regulated by moral and spiritual rules, and that there is always a hope that those laws can be discovered. The only way to acquire the potential power to know the truth is to hold on to this "hope." Reading Emerson is a great way to learn about culture and the human mind, to steer clear of pompous fancies and illusions, and to get in touch with your nobler side. Emerson discovered his own theological ideas by examining the fundamental concepts present in

the Upanishads. He picks and chooses various Hindu philosophical ideas and organizes them according to each school's own way of thinking. His self-reliance thesis might be summarized as a trusting theory. One cannot know or understand God if they do not have this kind of confidence or faith. In this sense, trusting oneself is the same as trusting in God. If one believes in themselves, then it is possible for them to believe in God. A lack of faith in God is often accompanied by a lack of faith in one's own abilities. Therefore, in order to believe God, one must first trust themselves. Self-reliance is the same thing as relying on God; a person who cannot rely on themselves cannot rely on God. This philosophy outlines fundamental ideas that one should adhere to, such as praying altruistically to God, cultivating one's own soul, maintaining a calm mind regardless of the circumstances, believing in the value of one's own efforts, and so on. Only due to the fact that he is internally fragile does it become silly when a person, out of sheer obstinacy, insists on doing this or that. The defining characteristic of a man is his capacity for self-discipline and independence.

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