

THE SPIRITUAL CROSS-CURRENTS IN THE WRITINGS OF WORDSWORTH, EMERSON AND VIVEKANANDA- A CELESTIAL SOJOURN

Priyanka Gupta

*Research Scholar, Department of English and Other Modern European Languages Course, Deen Dayal Upadhyay
Gorakhpur University, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, India*

ABSTRACT

The issue of cultural crisis and the decline of human values has announced the onset of a 'present' in the contemporary world, which is the compelling man to break up his association with his glorious past, with his grand history. With every passing day, the journey of mankind is receding towards the outbreak of cultural and social anarchy. Like forest fire is capable of burning, all that comes to its way, in ashes; this approach is on the verge of setting all cultural, moral and social values ablaze. This turmoil is afflicting humanity with ceaseless unrest and turbulence, not only in the East but also in the West. Its state is now that of a worldwide furor. The root cause of this intolerance and commotion is the undue privilege that is being given to the mundane mental resources.

KEYWORDS: *Decline of Human Values, Mundane Mental Resources*

Article History

Received: 29 Apr 2019 | Revised: 30 Apr 2019 | Accepted: 06 May 2019

INTRODUCTION

This paper is an effort to help mankind establish a bond of cognizance with the spiritual flights of Wordsworth, Emerson, and Vivekananda in order to pave the path for the transmutation of human beings from terrestrial to the supra terrestrial realm of consciousness. The enlightenment of the human soul is the solution to this atrocious situation. In the contemporary world, the measures, suggested by the seers and the visionaries, would help human beings in the functioning of physical, vital and mental hemispheres in an approach which would not only be different but also novel.

** Voluntary Researcher in Vivekananda Studies.*

The glory of humanity exalts through the luster of consciousness which is potentially divine and inherently true. The veracity gifted by the Supreme to human beings is diminishing by the setting sun of spiritual values. Remarkable material progress can be seen in the world, the result of which is disintegration and dispassionate advancement. The industrialization and mechanical development exhibit the paramount worldliness and utilitarian aspect of growth. This phenomenal march is towards the destination which is not only unimaginable but also quite unacceptable for human beings. The human being, today, is unable to perceive the power being radiated from his instinct, the reason being, his immense occupation towards utilitarianism. The soul seeking human has been replaced by a man caught in the web of desires and their fulfillment. As a result of it, the soul, in the man, is unable to identify its inherent power and underlying

vigor. The consequences of the same have disabled the man from facing and fighting this chaos. Therefore, man's intellectual, moral and spiritual sense seems to be marred by superficiality, hypocrisy, and inability to perceive the power guiding him.

The need of the hour is the realization of the divine spark within oneself which would not only enlighten the man but would also ensure his headway towards the higher hemisphere of existence. This would demand man's complete submission before the Absolute and lead to the restoration of his innocence. Emerson says...

Help must come from the bosom alone. ⁽¹⁾

None else but only the Divine Providence would be able to take a man out of this web and lead him to his destination. Besides he would seek guidance from the stalwarts for divine consciousness and its attainment. The magnificent concord of the thought currents of Wordsworth, Emerson, and Vivekananda is an effort towards the same, towards the unison of boundaries; boundaries of society, boundaries of nations, boundaries of globe and, above all, boundaries of self, seeking a merger with the Supreme Soul.

Wordsworth, the pioneer of Romanticism, perceived and felt beyond the levels of worldly existence. He not only understood the role of the poet as a prophet but also played it par excellence. As a pantheist, Wordsworth worshipped Nature and called it his friend, philosopher, and guide. Nature for Wordsworth was not a separate entity, but a spirit within himself.....

Because the lovely little flower is free

Down to its root,.....

And so the grandeur of the forest-tree

** Voluntary Researcher in Vivekananda Studies*

Comes not by casting in a formal mould,

But from its own divine vitality. ⁽²⁾

His poems present an insight into his disappointment with the French Revolution and anger at the industrialization of London. Not only this but he also criticized the extra-ordinarily modern way of life. His ideas, on the same, can be summed up along within the following lines.....

.....truth, of Grandeur, Beauty, Love, and Hope,

And melancholy subdued by Faith;

Of blessed consolations in distress;

Of moral strength and intellectual Power;

Of joy in widest commonality spread;

Of the individual mind that keeps her own

Inviolable Retirement, subject there

To Conscience only, and the law supreme

Of that Intelligence which governs all. ⁽³⁾

Wordsworth was highly let down by the loss of faith and the decline of virtuosity among mankind. He believed that man is created, not for mundane or gross activities, but his existence is meant to conquer the ephemeral and transient subsistence; man is not sent on the earth to rejoice in the materialism but to jubilate in the eternal and heavenly bliss. This urge is very well observed in Wordsworth. Wordsworth believed that the Divine Power manifests itself explicitly through nature and its various forms. Nature is man's eternal companion, in whose company, the being advances towards the state of transcendence from mundane to the subtle level and from lower to the higher hemisphere of state of mind, intellect, and soul. In the company of nature, the joy, man receives, is inenarrable. The human psyche, the human soul, thus, experiences the 'blessed mood' which is very well expressed in the following words

*...that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,-
Until the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In the body, and become a living soul....* ⁽⁴⁾

Identical to Oriental scriptures, Wordsworth also found that the human soul is not destined for this evanescent world; in fact the sole purpose behind man's inception on this planet is to pierce the veil existing between the soul and the Super Soul, and to comprehend the reality that he is potentially Divine and has inherited his divinity from the source lying latent in himself only. He then concludes that seeking a merger with the Supreme Soul is what he is sent on earth for. This realization leads to the union of the soul with the Over-Soul; of the microcosm with the macrocosm; and of the being with the Divine. He, thus, initiates his journey from transitory to the unceasing, from finite to the infinite and from impermanence to eternity.....

Perpetual flights, unchecked by earthly lies. ⁽⁵⁾

As a consequence, his illuminating journey's destination will be the state of enlightenment.

Wordsworth emphasized on the fact that all objects, existing in the world, are not more than only means to attain the real goal of a man's life. These objects are only meant to facilitate a being's journey towards the sublime. Though Wordsworth does not completely reject the existence of the outer world, he certainly places the internal world at a much-elevated level. The way a man perceives the external objects as a medium of channelizing a being towards the inward journey, not only strengthens but also interfuses the contradictory facets towards the ONE.

Emerson, the pioneer of Transcendentalism, equally advocated the relevance of human body, mind, soul, and life. For him, human body and mind were means to perceive the portion of the Divine lying dormant in the human soul and thus, to transcend human life towards the supra terrestrial region in order to realize and become ONE with the Divine. When this state is experienced, the man realizes tranquility and serenity within oneself. As a being fathoms the infinite calm, the chaos and the turmoil around him begin to disappear and what remains is the man, standing one with the Cosmic

Self in the highest realm. The attainment of this state is the cardinal purpose and the primal message of Transcendentalism.

Alike Wordsworth, rather, it would be more suitable to say that as Romanticism believed in the teachings of the Oriental Scriptures regarding the Oneness of all beings, so did the Transcendentalism, so did Emerson. He had faith that the Divine Bliss lies in every human being; and the man can experience it by unveiling the Celestial Truth of his coherence with all, of his oneness with the Supreme. The realization of this harmony will have its impact on the affinity between the man and the Supreme and the bond of equality, the bond of oneness will be established; and would empower the bond of fraternity among all beings of the world.

After Wordsworth and Emerson, the next to ascend the horizon of civilization was the 'Wandering Monk of India'-Swami Vivekananda. His advent, on the globe, marks the beginning of a novel and an incredible era in the history of human society and culture. He proclaimed a being's transcendence together with the logical-rational interpretation of the faith in Divinity and the being's descent from the Supreme. He emphasized the fact that though we all appear different from each-other, at the core, we share the same relation, the identical bond with the Divine, and therefore, we are all connected to each-other. He fondly relied on the truth that the entire universe is pervaded by the uniformity and oneness of the *Brahma*, the macrocosm, the God, the Supreme Being, the Over-Soul.

A being's existence on the earth has semblance with the rays of the sun. As the sun rays fall on different parts of the earth till the sunset, so is his existence which lasts as long as he has not reached the day, i.e. he has not discovered his oneness with the Supreme. The measures, to attain this merger, are four- namely *Jnana*, *Bhakti*, *Prema* and *Sneha*, to say Knowledge, Devotion, Love and Affection, respectively- all from the *Brahma*, all for the *Brahma*, leading towards the *Brahma*, heading towards union with the *Brahma*. Therefore, it becomes immensely essential that a being recognizes his oneness with God and realizes the purpose behind his existence on the planet. This is why Vivekananda has said.....

I shall inspire men everywhere until the world shall know that it is one with God. ⁽⁶⁾

Vivekananda preached Divine Potentiality in all beings. His teachings included the betterment of humankind through selfless service; immense faith in the power above; renunciation of the thoughts that cause weakness for wealth and power; the well-being of others; and of serving to the poor and the pauper alike (observing the *SHIVA* in the *JEEVA*, i.e. the presence of the Divine spark among every being, every object on the earth).

These harbingers of divinity treaded on the path to their inner selves in order to be guided by the Supreme Soul seated in them. They not only preached the celestial powers lying latent in the human soul but also guided our steps towards their attainment, paved the routes to their discovery and channelized us on the path towards the union of the self with the Cosmic Self.

The merger of the microcosm with the macrocosm, the union of the human soul with the Supreme Soul, and the alliance of the being and the Divine culminates a character which is far beyond expression or an explanation. Such a persona gives rise to the thoughts that are '*all-enveloping and all-encompassing*'. Such a being realizes that.....

Character is higher than intellect.... A great soul will be strong to live as well as strong to think. ⁽⁷⁾

Emerson not only found a man and his self one with God but also perceived the reflections of this semblance in nature. He found the natural surroundings as the visible and the visual representation of his imperceptible self or soul. He worked for the man to help him realize that-

.....nature is the opposite of the soul, answering to it part for part. One is a seal and one is print. Its beauty is the beauty of his mind. Its laws are the laws of his own mind. ⁽⁸⁾

When this realization dawns upon the man, he awakens to the solidarity of nature and the soul and prepares himself for channelizing his senses towards the attainment of the Supreme Bliss. The realization of God, then, becomes part of his nature. This leads to the emergence of the conscient being, the soul-seeking, the Gnostic being, who would embark the sail of his soul in nature and would reach on the shore of the cognizance of his soul. Having acquired this realization, through the deeper realms of his mind, amid the natural surroundings, a man- a perfect man- a sage- a realized being- an awakened soul- is born, who would be at peace with himself and in harmony with nature and the Divine residing in him.

Wordsworth, Emerson and Swami Vivekananda were the visionaries, the preceptors of truth. By marching forward on the path they disclosed before us, we are sure to develop a glorious, elegant and a beautiful approach towards this world. The spirituality, inculcated among us, by these visionaries, will present a panoramic view of this globe and of all the life forms existing on it. It would take us on a journey of transformation- a journey from the darker deeper regions of ignorance, sorrow, and discontent towards the illumined, unforeseen, unfathomed peak of the ecstasy of the self attained, of the joy emanating from it and of the contentment arising out of it. The dust of fabrication, lying on the mirror of the human consciousness, will be removed by the attainment of this wisdom. We would, then, realize that our true self is divine, is celestial, in nature. This realization will wipe off the dust of barbarism, diversity and the so-called civilization from ourselves and, then will emerge the resplendent human soul which has its oneness with the Supreme and who has inherited his lineage from the Cosmic Self.

These pioneers of self helped man realize his identity, recognize the goal of his soul and discover his oneness with the *Brahma*.....

Trust thyself- every heart vibrates to that iron string.....the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. ⁽⁹⁾

When Emerson says that the self is present in the very existence of the being, Wordsworth also declares.....

In placid beauty and sublime content!

Such the repose that sage and hero find;

.....whose souls do like the flood

.....Neither to be diverted nor withstood,

Until they reach the bounds by Heaven assigned. ⁽¹⁰⁾

He says that the recognition comes only when man sheds off the boundaries of his physicality and reaches in the realm of divinity. It is this divinity only that Swami Vivekananda has emphatically proclaimed in each and every address of his. His words.....

“Each soul is potentially divine.” ⁽¹¹⁾

.....still echo in the heart and soul of every individual who aspires to be a soul-seeker, who pursues to be a seeker of the self.

Such a man, then, finds himself transcended from the body consciousness to a soul-seeking being. He, then, embodies the crux of the scriptures- “TAT TVAM ASI” meaning “You are that.”

Wordsworth, Emerson, and Vivekananda cultivated the ideas of belief in the presence of the Divine spirit in the human soul; and harvested the emergence of a soul-conscious, soul-seeking Gnostic being. They were the envoys of a new universe and their mission was to disseminate cognizance among the human beings about their Divine Descent. Their ascension, on the planet, heralded the initiation of a new social age where every being identified his affinity with the other and discovered each one of themselves to be a part of the universal race residing all over the planet.....

It is one soul in all bodies, pervading, uniform, perfect.....made up of true knowledge..... ⁽¹²⁾

Our scriptures also state the same when our sages declare.....

Just as the form, the waves, the dew, and the bubbles are not different from water, even so, this world which has come out of the self is not different from the self. ⁽¹³⁾

The very same day a human being realizes that he has inherited his descent from the God, that he is one with the Supreme Self, that he is also a source of joy indescribable; he would cherish his being, rejoice in his existence and would gloriously tread on the path towards the attainment of the union of his self with the Supreme Self.

Wordsworth, Emerson, and Vivekananda are but names being transferred to the soul-conscious beings, the humans who have recognized the goal of their lives and are not only heading towards the advancement but also channelizing others towards the same. As long as the scriptures, the ideas and the works of such genius continue to exist, mankind will never fall short of motivation for its ultimate goal, for its destination.

REFERENCES

1. Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *American Literature of the Nineteenth Century: An Anthology. The American Scholar.* Edited by Fisher, Reninger, Samuelson and Vaid. New Delhi: Eurasia Publishing House, 2002.
2. Wordsworth, William. *A Poet! He Hath Put His Heart to School.* www.PoemHunter.com- The World's Poetry Archive.
3. William Wordsworth: *The Recluse* [en.m.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Recluse(Wordsworth)]
4. Wordsworth, William. *Golden Treasury- Lines Written A Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey.* Annotated by Dr. Rajendra Nath Srivastava, Dr. P. N. Dubey and Dr. Aniruddh Prasad Pandey. Gorakhpur: New Uttam Prakashan, 2002.
5. Wordsworth, William. *A Morning Exercise.* www.PoemHunter.com- The World's Poetry Archive.
6. Swami Vivekananda: *Life and Teachings* [www.belurmath.org/swamivivekananda.html]
7. Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *American Literature of the Nineteenth Century: An Anthology. The American Scholar.* Edited by Fisher, Reninger, Samuelson and Vaid. New Delhi: Eurasia Publishing House, 2002.

8. Suneetha, Swamy Vivekanandas Women Empowerment, *IMPACT : International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature(IMPACT : IJRHAL)*, Volume 6, Issue 9, September 2018, Pp143-146.
9. Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *American Literature of the Nineteenth Century: An Anthology. The American Scholar.* Edited by Fisher, Reninger, Samuelson and Vaid. New Delhi: Eurasia Publishing House, 2002.
10. Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *American Literature of the Nineteenth Century: An Anthology. Self Reliance.* Edited by Fisher, Reninger, Samuelson and Vaid. New Delhi: Eurasia Publishing House, 2002.
11. Wordsworth, William. *A Fact, And An Imagination, Or, Canute and Alfred, On The Seashore.* www.PoemHunter.com-The World's Poetry Archive.
12. Vivekananda, Swami. *The Life of Vivekananda and The Universal Gospel. The Universal Science-Religion,* by Romain Rolland. Kolkata: Advaita Ashram, 2005.
13. Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *American Literature of the Nineteenth Century: An Anthology. Indian Thought in Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman.* Edited by Fisher, Reninger, Samuelson and Vaid. New Delhi: Eurasia Publishing House, 2002.
14. Raman, Maharishi. *Yoga Vashishtha Saara.* Bengaluru: Sri Ramanassrama, 1980.

