



**Epitome : International Journal
of Multidisciplinary Research**

ISSN : 2395-6968

REDISCOVERING IDEALISM IN TRANSCENDENTALISM



Dr. Pramod Ambadasrao Pawar

Assistant Professor & Head, Dept. of English,
Sant Dnyaneshwar Mahavidyalaya, Soegaon,
Dist. Aurangabad (MS), India

Editor-in-Chief, Epitome Journals, Aurangabad (MS)

<http://www.epitomejournals.com>

Hans Ndah Nyaa opines :

When Romanticism started blossoming in Europe in the 19th Century, little did some of its proponents like Wordsworth, Blake nor did Balzac know that it will be embraced beyond the frontiers of Europe. Romanticism ushered a new source of knowledge that seemed to debunk the emphasis on reason, science and logic that characterized the Age of Enlightenment. When this current of romanticism reached the United States of America, it was however whole heartedly embraced and even radicalized. What therefore started timidly in Europe in the form of Romanticism was now received and practiced in America in the form of Transcendentalism.

After religion, what comes is Humanity. Humanity was God like. So, if you are talking about humanity, you will survive yourselves on every stage in the world. Nobody is going to object

you if you are talking about humanity. **Life is meaningful because all religions love humanity. Remember my words, everything is for us, we are not for things.** It is very important if you are here, everything is there. If you die, nothing is there. All the theories will perish with your existence. That's why, everything is for us. That's why, humanity is God like and sees the world in which only good existed. So, here look at the peculiar ideas of transcendentalists, they think that they are talking about only good things. **Transcendentalists think of only good things in life. They say that humanity is the only religion in the world.** And talking about humanity, they think in that fashion. So, here transcendentalists usually think of positive things rather than evil and darkness. Then, the next is about the roots of transcendentalism. We need to first think about idealism, Greece 4th BC, Plato, secondly Puritanism, North America, 17th century, and then, Romanticism, Europe and North America, late 18th century through mid-19th century, then finally the emergence of transcendentalism is in North America, 19th century, 1900 and 2000.

In Romanticism, Romanticism was a school of thought that began in late eighteenth-century Europe and spread to America in the nineteenth century. The Romantics valued imagination, feeling, and nature over reason, logic, and civilization. They championed individualism and reflected on nature to gain spiritual wisdom. About Romanticism and Transcendentalism, Transcendentalism was one of the faces of American Romanticism. Transcendentalists took the Romantic belief that spiritual wisdom could be found in nature one step further—they believed that everything in the physical world, including human beings, is a reflection of God. They believed that because human beings are a part of the Divine Soul, they are capable of perfection, that they can meet the Absolute.

Idealism is a philosophy explained by the Greek philosopher, Plato in the 4th Century BC. What they think true reality will be found in ideas rather than in the physical world. Where is a true reality? The true reality is in ideas. The idealist itself reflects to the fact that the true reality is in our ideas, not in physical world. Then, the next is the combination of idealism and transcendentalism. Both the things, the transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson claimed that **transcendentalism was idealism simply rediscovered.** It's very nice here. All the concepts are cleared with this statement, "Transcendentalism was idealism simply rediscovered." Idealism is rediscovered.

Transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson claimed that Transcendentalism was simply Idealism rediscovered and applied to the nineteenth-century world. They applied Idealist ideas to human life, believing in human perfectibility and working to achieve that goal.

This rediscovery itself is transcendentalism. It means that we are talking about ideas only. Who claims that my idea is correct? And who claims that what I think is reality? What I think is the truth? If applied to 19th century world, so here, transcendentalists shared Plato's belief in all-encompassing spiritual reality.

To a large extent, idealism can be described as a philosophy that asserts the importance of individual perceptions over scientific and material viewpoints. Idealism is a word that many a times describes a person, whose thoughts are considered impractical and far from reality. Such people are often less productive, since they tend to escape reality by dreaming too much about a rosy future. For example, thinking of a better idea to repair a broken limb is not actually repairing one now. To cut the long story short, idealism bets on the power of mind and is concerned with the internal workings of psyche. Idealism states that the world we see around us isn't the real world, but our perception of it. It also states that the best reflection of the world cannot be felt through any mathematical or physical means but through self-awareness. Idealism offers a few advantages, like positivity for instance. A person who imagines his future to be like a bed of roses tends to believe in happy endings. Thus, there's no scope for pessimism.

So here, Plato and Ralph Waldo Emerson both come to one conclusion that whatever exists in the world they're talking about the spiritual reality. Here, they applied idealist ideas to human life, perfectibility and working to achieve the goals. It means that here we are talking about human perfectibility. Do you think that human is perfect? Why do you not think that human is perfect? First of all, give me the definition of perfection. As far as my understanding is concerned, if you really rely on reason, you think that you are imperfect. If you rely on reason, intelligence, understanding, comprehensibility, then you think that you are not perfect. If you rely on your soul, you think that you are perfect. If you think you have a center and the over-soul, you think that you are perfect. And you follow the doctrines and principles of Swami Vivekananda. And if you think everything intellectually, rationally and interpret everything in the nature with the help of your logic, experimentation rather than experiences, you think that

you are not perfect. In this way, it can be categorized the idea of perfection. Next is puritanism which is American religious philosophy. And what they think, religion is a personal inter-experience that should not be filtered through clergy or government. Religion is a personal inner experience of an individual. Secondly, people should be self-reliant. Thirdly, God's presence reveals itself primarily through the Bible. So, the science through physical world is unreachable to God and Human salvation is reserved only for a few elect people. The majority of human is destined to damnation. So, these are the ideas of puritanism they think it in this way.

Romanticism was a school of thought that began in the late 18th century Europe. It spread to America in the 19th century, that is, romanticism. It talked about imagination, feeling, Nature or reason, logic and civilization. They championed individualism relected on the Nature to gain spiritual wisdom. Romanticism and transcendentalism are one of the facets of American romanticism. It took the romantic belief that spiritual wisdom could be found in Nature. Going one step further, they believed that **everything in the physical world including human beings is a reflection of God. So, the transcendentalists believed that human beings are the part of the Divine soul. They are capable of perfection.** So, you believe in action. The transcendentalists believed in the possibility of human perfection. They perceived practice goals for improving people's lives. They developed plans for creating a perfect or a utopian society worked for a social change. Ralph Waldo Emerson is highly known as a transcendentalist. He is a highly influential writer, lecturer and social reformer. He lectured and wrote extensively on transcendental ideas. He influenced other writers and artists including Henry David Thoreau and Walt Whitman. Last but not least, that is, the eyeball through which the world is perceived. The transcendental eyeball simultaneously absorbs and observes information. This is a part of information which is nothing, but a symbolic manifestation of ideas. In literary terms, transcendentalists and romanticists forge distinctively, American literature and philosophy that value the power of the individual.

Most importantly, every religion is wholly transcendental. According to Swami Vivekananda, "Consciousness is only one of the many planes in which we work; you will have to transcend the field of consciousness, to go beyond the senses, approach nearer to your own center." He further says, "And as you do that, you will approach nearer and nearer to God." Everyone wants to meet God through direct perception, *pratyaksh*. "What is the proof of God? "The proof of this wall is that I perceive it. God has been perceived by all, who want to perceive

Him.” But, this perception is no sense perception at all. One needs to think and act beyond the senses. This is super-consciousness, a spiritual union of the soul with the Absolute.

We need to discover romanticism to know all the concepts of the transcendentalism. If you go deeper and deeper in order to ascertain the existence of God, we will often experience it within.

A student asked me, “I’ve a very small doubt about the word “God”, who has coined this word? The question is correct. This is the question that each and every person feels. What is God exactly? Linguistically speaking and etymologically speaking, the term ‘God’ is a product of our over-thinking about the existence and non-existence of things in the Nature. As we think that whatever man perceived, he came to theorizing things. These theorizing aspects of the human nature philosophizes numerous notions about incomprehensible perception of God. God, yes, it's a creation of the human mind. Right, it's a creation of the human mind to fathom incomprehensible things. “I believe in the incomprehensibility of God.” It means that God is incomprehensible, God is difficult to understand to all of us and God is beyond human perception and understanding. If we think rationally, our notions will be like that. If you rely on the spiritual things, we think that God is with us. God is within us. God is the center and this is the interpretation that we usually talk about God. God is nowhere; it's the part and parcel of the human personality.

It is within us that make us be alive forever and it's a God who takes us to Redemption. It's a God who takes us to have a spiritual communion with the Absolute, the Truth, that is, the God itself. So here, in Ayurveda, the concept of or the notion of God is different. In the Yajurveda, the existence of God is stated that God is in the form of Lotus in every sacred human body. It is in your body. It is in the invisible form and someone dwells in the Lotus and that is, God, the Truth that is Lord Shiva. So here, every person every man has his own wit. Everyone thinks in his fashion. Everyone tries to understand God through his religion, through his religious inclinations and many more. So, here we cannot force a person that he should accept what I say. If a person accepts it, it's good. If he doesn't accept it, it's better.

The basic thing is to know the state of mind, how you perceive things, how you think about life. Most of the times, we always say that we have become old, we cannot do this. That perception we have to take away. The key message is that **anybody can do anything and change is a must**. I’ve been referring to transcendental consciousness and one should learn about Yogi Mahesh who used to talk about transcendental meditation.

The questions like explaining the transcendental aspects in Plato's Republic or the transcendental aspects in romantic poetry specifically on Wordsworth's Prelude or any one of the poems may make you focus on transcendentalism. This is ingrained within literary studies. I focused on the western aspects of transition to thought and transcendentalism. There is an equally important Indian and Eastern part of transcendental thoughts which go back to our Vedas and it's got an evolution of its own. The entire English literature from Plato to the present needs to be studied in details on the same issue.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

EMERSON, Ralph Waldo. Selected poems - <https://www.poetryfoundation.org>

Pawar, Pramod Ambadasrao. Ubiquity. Yaounde: Nyaa Publishers, 2018

http://www.epitomejournals.com/VolumeArticles/FullTextPDF/362_Research_Paper.pdf

http://www.epitomejournals.com/VolumeArticles/FullTextPDF/377_Research_Paper.pdf

[https://www.google.com/search?sxsrf=ALeKk00JqOym_uVxXyqIN-](https://www.google.com/search?sxsrf=ALeKk00JqOym_uVxXyqIN-vzI7C8UeEgPg%3A1584290427733&ei=e1puXtu8LO-W4-EP3IWA-A4&q=ralph+waldo+emerson+idealism+rediscovered&oq=ralph+waldo+emerson+idealism+red)

[vzI7C8UeEgPg%3A1584290427733&ei=e1puXtu8LO-W4-EP3IWA-](https://www.google.com/search?sxsrf=ALeKk00JqOym_uVxXyqIN-vzI7C8UeEgPg%3A1584290427733&ei=e1puXtu8LO-W4-EP3IWA-A4&q=ralph+waldo+emerson+idealism+rediscovered&oq=ralph+waldo+emerson+idealism+red)

[A4&q=ralph+waldo+emerson+idealism+rediscovered&oq=ralph+waldo+emerson+idealism+red](https://www.google.com/search?sxsrf=ALeKk00JqOym_uVxXyqIN-vzI7C8UeEgPg%3A1584290427733&ei=e1puXtu8LO-W4-EP3IWA-A4&q=ralph+waldo+emerson+idealism+rediscovered&oq=ralph+waldo+emerson+idealism+red)

[iscovered&gs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dI1c01Oy8Gg&t=84s)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dI1c01Oy8Gg&t=84s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rI6sITtGog>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkcZUMx-xvw&t=221s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLGk3hdkrXw&t=20s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=egBfZebR66w&t=349s>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbMNzkh9e_A&t=229s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mx39epz8wgI&t=358s>

http://www.epitomejournals.com/VolumeArticles/FullTextPDF/362_Research_Paper.pdf

http://www.epitomejournals.com/VolumeArticles/FullTextPDF/128_Prasad_Pawar_Review.pdf

http://www.epitomejournals.com/VolumeArticles/FullTextPDF/9_Research_Paper.pdf

<http://www.nyaandpartners.com/index.php?page=Vmlldy9wYWdlcy9ib29rRGV0YWls&idr=28>

<http://www.epitomejournals.com/Contact.aspx>