Chapter 3: Sufi Element in Prose of Emerson

“The good man has absolute good, which like fire turns everything to its own nature.”

Emerson

The concern of this chapter is to bring out the reflection of the salient features of Sufism outlined in the previous chapter in the essays of Emerson. Emerson, being a famous transcendentalist, has contemplated and meditated on various aspects of nature, man, and Reality (God). On the one hand, he was a true ardent admirer of Holy Scriptures, especially orient scriptures, and on the other, he was familiar with Sufi poets of Persian literature like Hafiz and Sa’di through German translation. Hence, it is not strange to find Sufi elements in his prose works and poems. The essays selected for this purpose are ‘Self-reliance’, ‘Compensation’, ‘Spiritual Laws’, ‘Prudence’, ‘Heroism’, ‘Over-Soul’, ‘Circles’, ‘Intellect’, ‘Art’, ‘Experience’, ‘Character’, ‘Nature’, and some others not so well-known.

Sufi Element in Emerson’ Essays:

Every man of God is a great man and a man of God never can be a coward. A Sufi as a man of God tries to do his best and when he does a job he does it wholeheartedly. One can find happiness in oneself after doing a great job and Emerson as a great man makes similar statements and in his essay entitled
‘Self-reliance’ he says:
"A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace."¹

Again he claims about the subject:

Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, are predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors and invalids in a protected corner, not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but guides, redeemers and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort and advancing on Chaos and the Dark.²

Swimming with the current is easy, but difficult it is to swim against it. All people can live by the usual principles of the world, but the strong man obeys some other principles and that time one can taste the sweetness of solitude and individualism. Emerson in ‘Self-reliance’ says:

"It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude."³

Sufism says that Solitude and hermitage are important for a Sufi. Why does he leave society and family at least for forty days and stays in convent? Sufism says it is because of God and a Sufi should lose all mundane things and stick to God only as Jesus did. Emerson in his essay ‘Intellect’ writs:

Jesus says, Leave father, mother, house and lands, and follow me. Who leaves all, receives more. This is as true intellectually as morally. Each new mind we approach seems to require an abdication of all our past and present possessions.
A new doctrine seems at first a subversion of all our opinions, tastes, and manner of living.\textsuperscript{4}

About the **material world** and man's understanding, Emerson says:

The material world is an imperfect copy of the world of spirit, and understanding is imperfect because it is a product of the imperfect mind of man. The truths of the material world are temporal, relative, partial revelations of eternal truths. Reason, which is an emanation of the mind of God, offers all people immediate access to truths that are eternal.\textsuperscript{5}

A child who has his/her mother always lives in tranquility and comfort. Being with its mother is the most excellent advantage for a child always. Then what about being with the Creator of mothers? Lucky are those people who **live for their entire life with their original Mother – God**. In his ‘Self-reliance’ Emerson explains his idea about being with God: "When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn."\textsuperscript{6}

As Emerson was a religious person, like a Sufi he too remembers his God. He talks about **sincerity, simplicity**, and **God**. The light that penetrates the darkness of the material world is a light from God, who "is the eternal, extempore, creative power, sustaining and superintending the universe which he has designed, not for his own glory, but for the benefit of mankind." God is the all-knowing spirit, elusive, but whose truth is eternal. "I count it," said Emerson, "the great object of my life to explore the nature of God."\textsuperscript{7}

Emerson's God was a living God, as active today as ever before, continually creating, and available anew to people of every generation, who are not only dependent on him for their origin, but for what they had become or might have
become had they sought Him more often. He offered to each opportunity for fresh revelation of his divine intention. Nature was a gateway to those revelations, and nature to Emerson was everything that was not spirit; not only trees and flowers, mountains and lakes, sunrise and sunset, and starlit or moonlit nights, but his own body also with all of its sensory apparatus. Emerson has been called a pantheist, but he was not. Nature only provides symbols, hints, analogues of the God who, whoever named, existed within and above all people – the Over-Soul, the all-knowing spirit.

What does Over-Soul mean? Is there a good definition for such a heavenly word? How can it affect us? Emerson describes the Over-soul in these memorable words in his essay ‘Over-soul’:

"But the soul, whose organ he is, would he let it appear through his action, would make our knees bend. When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love."8

The 19th century descendents of the Puritans to whom Emerson spoke declined adherence to the notion that the visible fabric of nature presented only to a God-elected few the shadowed images of divine truths, like the inexpressible immensity, the power and the redeeming grace of God. Emerson gave calm assurance that this ecstasy of insight was available to all. When "currents of the Universal Being circulate through me," he said, "I am part or parcel with God."9 The universal essence which he named the Over-Soul and which embraced all beauty, love, wisdom, and power, was revealed through nature, accessible to every perceptive person. Salvation was available to all those who would claim their inheritance, they were indeed children of God whose essence each contained and of whom nature was both alphabet and index.
“Essence, or God, is not a relation or a part, but the whole. Being is the vast affirmative, excluding, self-balanced, and swallowing up all relations, parts and times within itself. Nature, truth, and virtue, are the influx from thence.”

White, black, red, yellowish, rich and poor, king and beggar, and all other human beings from God’s point of view are equal. All of us are children of Adam, and then are we not brothers and sisters? Sa’di as a great Sufi poet chants:

\begin{quote}
Bani adam azaye yek pekarand  
Ke dar afarinesh ze yek goharand  
Cho ozvi be dard avarad rozeghar  
Degar ozyhara naman gharar  

“All men are the members of the same body,  
Which is created from one Essence.  
If fate brings suffering to one member,  
The other can not stay at rest.”
\end{quote}

As Emerson was an ardent devotee of Sa’di, he chants also like him:  
"All men have my blood and I have all men's."

Every one in his own way, consciously or unconsciously, is praying to his God. Even birds, trees, flowers, rivers, …are praying to their Creator. As we believe in the verse of the Holy Koran, "enna le-allah" – from God we are, so all are with the One and adore Him. Emerson knows well about the subject and he says:

Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul. It is the spirit of God.
pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to affect a private end is meanness and theft. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg. He will then see prayer in all action. The prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weed it, the prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature, though for cheap ends. Caratach, in Fletcher's Bonduca, when admonished to inquire the mind of the god Audate, replies,

"His hidden meaning lies in our endeavors;
Our valors are our best gods."\(^{14}\)

What about false praying? About it Emerson spoke as below:

Another sort of false prayers are our regrets. Discontent is the want of self-reliance: it is infirmity of will. Regret calamities if you can thereby help the sufferer; if not, attend your own work and already the evil begins to be repaired. Our sympathy is just as base. We come to them who weep foolishly and sit down and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks, putting them once more in communication with their own reason. The secret of fortune is joy in our hands. Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide; him all tongues greet, all honors crown, all eyes follow with desire. Our love goes out to him and embraces him because he did not need it. We solicitously and apologetically caress and celebrate him because he held on his way and scorned our disapprobation. The gods love him because men hated him. "To the persevering mortal," said Zoroaster, "the blessed Immortals are swift.\(^{15}\)

In Sufism there is a doctrine which says that every man has **predestined** portions of life and one should not vainly challenge life, because those things will come automatically to one. The great Sufi Ali Ibn Abitaleb, son-in-law of
Mohammed, has the same idea and Emerson has translated it into English:

"Thy lot or portion of life," said the Caliph Ali, "is seeking after thee; therefore be at rest from seeking after it."\(^{16}\)

In the world of Sufism there is one hot discussion which says that **if one does good, one will receive good**, and if one does bad, one will receive bad though it takes a long time. This is called *Mokafat-e-Amal*. If God created man it was because angels originally are good and they do not know evil things and they can not imagine evil. But, man possesses a power which can distinguish between good and bad. Every thing has good and bad qualities and nothing is absolutely good or evil. Even a most beautiful flower – rose, in spite of its smell and red bloom possesses thorns. Sweet taste goes with sour and bitter taste. Dark colour has its enemy – white. And any way, everything contains its opposite as Emerson believes and writes in his essay ‘Compensation’.

Every excess causes a defect, every defect an excess. Every sweet hath its sour; every evil its good. Every faculty which is a receiver of pleasure has an equal penalty put on its abuse. . It is to answer for its moderation with its life. For every grain of wit there is a grain of folly. For everything you have missed, you have gained something else; and for everything you gain, you lose something. If riches increase, they are increased that use them. If the gatherer gathers too much, Nature takes out of the man what she puts into his chest; swells the estate, but kills the owner.\(^{17}\)

Again the great man of Persian poetry Sa’di says, “O Sa’di, a good man never dies.” Plato, Aristotle, Mohammed, Hafiz, Khayyam, Shakespeare, Milton, and died centuries ago, but they are always with us. They are living with us even in our private rooms. Mansour Hallaj was crucified, but there are Sufis who always murmur his name in their celebrations. Though he is not
present among Sufis, every one of them aspires to be another Hallaj or at least his fellow. There are good men like fire which takes everything into its nature. Emerson also has similar idea in his essay.

“The good man has absolute good, which like fire turns everything to its own nature.”

Emerson also speaks about goodness in his ‘Immortality’.

It is a proverb of the world that good will make intelligence, that goodness itself is an eye: and the one doctrine in which all religions agree is that new light is added to the mind in proportion as it uses that which it has. “He that doeth the will of God abideth forever.”

Again he says about being good:

“Whoso would be a man must be a non-conformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last good but the integrity of your mind.”

*To niki mikono dar dejleh andaz*

*Ke izad dar biabanat dahad baz.*

It means that you do goodness and throw it into the *dejleh* – one of the big rivers of Iraq, and then God will give it to you the same in a desert. This is one more doctrine of Islamic mysticism and Sufism which Emerson expressed in his prose:

“Honest service can not come to loss.”

Further, he says,

“The martyr cannot be dishonoured.”
He also states that there is no tax for good of virtue.

“There is no tax on the good of virtue, for that is the incoming of God himself, or absolute existence, without any comparative.”

Further,

“I learn the wisdom of St. Bernard, -- “Nothing can work me damage except myself; the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and never am a real sufferer but by my own fault.””

“Honest service is never lost” said Emerson. Do your best to everyone and they will do their best to you even if they are enemies. What did Jesus Christ do to that man he who betrayed Him? What did he ask God for those who crucified him? He only said “My Lord! Bless them”. Emerson says:

"Trust men and they will be true to you; treat them greatly and they will show themselves great, though they make an exception in your favour to all their rules of trade.”

And also he says,

Thus truth, frankness, courage, love, humility and all the virtues range themselves on the side of prudence, or the art of securing a present well-being. I do not know if all matter will be found to be made of one element, as oxygen or hydrogen, at last, but the world of manners and actions is wrought of one stuff, and begin where we will we are pretty sure in a short space to be mumbling our ten commandments.

“In every particle there are signs of God”. God is here, God is there, God is everywhere. This doctrine is known as ‘Omnipresence’ in Sufism and in transcendentalism of Emerson also. One of the most vital and salient attributes of God is His Omnipresence. Emerson, being religious and a close friend of God, has the same idea and he writes in his essay ‘Circle’: 
"Omnipresence is a higher fact. Not through subtle subterranean channels need friend and fact be drawn to their counterpart, but, rightly considered, these things proceed from the eternal generation of the soul. Cause and effect are two sides of one fact."\(^{27}\)

Further in his ‘Compensation’ he states:

“The true doctrine of omnipresence is that God reappears with all his parts in every moss and cobweb.”\(^{28}\)

Chapter two elucidated the idea of the **perfect man** and why a Sufi at last can be an *ensan-al-kamel* – perfect man. Emerson at a time when Puritanism had strongly dominated the society bravely opposed the rules and believed in the divinity of man and even declared that God is in every man but incomplete one.

While the Calvinistic theology of the Puritans harped on the natural depravity of man, Emerson believed in the immanence of God and the divinity of man. He asserted that “the highest revelation is that God is in every man.” He realized, of course, that man is not “God complete but God impure,”\(^{29}\) and needs to purify and perfect himself before his mind can become a channel through which heaven would flow. Emerson’s faith in man’s inherent divinity is clearly a rejection of the Calvinistic stress on natural depravity. His view is that Nature as a symbol of Law is a better source of divine revelation than the Bible. Thus he opposes one of the fundamental tents of Puritan theology.

Most of those people who are familiar with Persian literature and Sufism, have heard about the story of *Joseph and Zoleykha*. In this story as Joseph was a handsome enough, then Zoleykha as the queen of Egypt falls in love with him and tries to seduce him, but Joseph as the prophet of God denies her love and he keeps the principles of God. He **prefers God** and not his own passions. Emerson refers to this story and in ‘Self-reliance’ says:
In your metaphysics you have denied personality to the Deity, yet when the devout motions of the soul come, yield to them heart and life, though they should clothe God with shape and color. Leave your theory, as Joseph his coat in the hand of the harlot, and flee."\(^{30}\)

One possesses the Spirit of All-merciful — the Soul. If any one polishes and varnishes this power in itself, one can be whatever one wants or desires. Though for sweetness there is bitterness, by purification of Soul one can taste only sweetness and also one can be a great man — Perfect man. In his ‘Cmpensation’ Emerson has similar ideas:

The soul strives amain to live and work through all things. It would be the only fact. All things shall be added unto it, — power, pleasure, knowledge, and beauty. The particular man aims to be somebody; to set up for himself; to truck and higgle for a private good; and, in particulars, to ride that may ride; to dress that he may be dressed; to eat that he may eat; and to govern that, that he be seen. Men seek to be great; they would have offices, wealth, power, and fame. They think that to be great is to possess one side of nature, -- the sweet, without the other side, the bitter.\(^{31}\)

Those who are familiar with Sufism may have heard about the Meraj — that glorious night when Prophet Mohammad soared towards God to meet Him. Then, all angels were surprised “how is it possible for a man to be such a Perfect One?”

*Rasad adami be jae ke be joz khoda nabinad.*

A man can get a position to see God and nothing else.
Both Sufism, as chapter two mentioned, and Emerson opine that a man can be a **perfect one** and can transcend himself to get the Ultimate. In his ‘Immortality’, Emerson, elucidates how a man can be close to God as Christ did it. He says,

"He is rising to greater heights, but also rising to realities; the outer relations and circumstance dying out, the entering deeper into God, God into him, until the last garment of egotism falls, and he is with God, - shares the will and the immensity of the First Cause."\(^32\)

Emerson also describes the characteristics of a **royal man** as below in his essay ‘Nature’:

"He who knows the most; he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments,--is the rich and royal man."\(^33\)

“The price of experience” a proverb says “is very costly and sometimes leads to death”. Nature never gives you anything at a cheap price and one has try and try to get things of nature. A Sufi always strives and never **complains about hardships**, because he knows that he should lose something to obtain other thing. And Emerson explains the matter in his ‘Compensation’ as follows:

*Human labour, through all its forms, from the sharpening of a stake to the construction of a city or an epic, is one immense illustration of the perfect compensation of the universe. The absolute balance of Give and Take, the doctrine that every thing has its price, -- and if that price is not paid, not that thing but something else is obtained, and that it is impossible to get any thing without its price, --is not less sublime in the columns of a leger than in the budgets of states, in the laws of nature.*\(^34\)
A Sufi is never afraid of calamities and defeats and all his **shortcomings** **are signs of triumph in future**, because he believes that some disadvantages some times will be advantages for him. Emerson also has similar opinion:

The good are befriended even by weakness and defect. As no man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him, so no man had ever a defect that was not somewhere made useful to him. The stag in the fable admired his horns and blamed his feet, but when the hunter came, his feet saved him, and afterwards, caught in the thicket, his horns destroyed him. Every man in his lifetime needs to thank his faults. As no man thoroughly understands a truth until he has contended against it, so no man has a thorough acquaintance with the hindrances or talents of men until he has suffered from the one and seen the triumph of the other over his own want of the same. Has he a defect of temper that unfits him to live in society? Thereby he is driven to entertain himself alone and acquire habits of self-help; and thus, like the wounded oyster, he mends his shell with pearl.³⁵

Further Emerson elucidates in his essay ‘Compensation’:

Our strength grows out of our weakness. The indignation which arms itself with secret forces does not awaken until we are pricked and stung and sorely assailed. A great man is always willing to be little. Whilst he sits on the cushion of advantages, he goes to sleep. When he is pushed, tormented, defeated, he has a chance to learn something; he has been put on his wits, on his manhood; he has gained facts; learns his ignorance; is cured of the insanity of conceit; has got moderation and real skill. The wise man throws himself on the side of his assailants. It is more his interest than it is theirs to find his weak point. The wound cicatrices and falls off from him like a dead skin and when they would triumph, lo! He has passed on invulnerable. Blame is safer than praise. I hate to be defended is a newspaper. As long as all that is said is said against me, I feel
a certain assurance of success. But as soon as honeyed words of praise are spoken for me I feel as one that lies unprotected before his enemies. In general, every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor.  

**Death is an inevitable matter** and as Persians say, “it is a camel which stays in front of everybody’s door”. Chapter two has shown this Sufi doctrine, but here it is noteworthy to reveal the opinion of Emerson the leader of Transcendentalism.

The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius; for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life, terminates an epoch of infancy or of youth which was waiting to be closed, breaks up a wonted occupation, or a household, or style of living, and allows the formation of new ones more friendly to the growth of character.

A Sufi is never afraid of death as it is a bridge to guide him to the Beloved. Donne said ‘death be not proud’ and Emerson also says that death is not terrible.

“Death is seen as natural event, and is met with firmness. A wise man in our time caused to be written on his tomb, ‘hink on living’:

the name of death was never terrible
to him that knew to live.

Autumn or fall is the season of leaves’ falling and in Sufism it symbolizes the fall or end of everybody’s life. It seems that every activity of humans leads him/her towards the end and at last after some predestined time for everything, the fall and finish is there for everything. In our childhood we sleep in the yard
and till sleeping time we watch the sky. Sometimes we see some lights which come towards the earth rapidly, but suddenly they disappear. As curious children, we ask our mother what these lights are. With an attractive voice she explains: “they are stars of some bodies whose lifetime expired and they passed away now.” Emerson also talks about the fall of everything which symbolizes death in his essay ‘Spiritual Laws’:

Let us draw a lesson from nature, which always works by short ways. When the fruit is ripe, it falls. When the fruit is dispatched, the leaf falls. The circuit of the waters is mere falling. The walking of man and all animals is a falling forward. All our manual labour and works of strength, as praying, splitting, digging, rowing and so forth, are done by dint of continual falling, and the globe, earth, moon, comet, sun, star, fall for ever and ever.39

Only believe the Reality and existence of God. Then one will enjoy life, otherwise one has to struggle always with nature and its creatures. Again and again the men of God have told that Soul of God is in the nature and in man, then why do people deny It? Those who deny it damage themselves and not somebody else and the only way is the way of believing on the Almighty and Emerson advises us to accept the only way in his ‘Spiritual Laws’.

Belief and love,—a believing love will relieve us of a vast load of care. O my brothers, God exists. There is a soul at the centre of nature and over the will of every man, so that none of us can wrong the universe. It has so infused its strong enchantment into nature that we prosper when we accept its advice, and when we struggle to wound its creatures our hands are glued to our sides, or they beat our own breasts.40
Only believe God and not persons, and then see what happens.

Let a man believe in God, and not in names and places and persons. Let the great soul incarnated in some woman's form, poor and sad and single, in some Dolly or Joan, go out to service, and sweep chambers and scour floors, and its effulgent day-beams cannot be muffled or hid, but to sweep and scour will instantly appear supreme and beautiful actions, the top and radiance of human life, and all people will get mops and brooms; until, lo! Suddenly the great soul has enshrined itself in some other form and done some other deed, and that is now the flower and head of all living nature.41

A king and his courtiers were passing by a small village. An old lady in front of her tiny shanty was turning her small wooden spinning machine with her hand. “Wait for a while” the king said to his courtiers. “How can you confirm the existence of God?” the king asked the lady. She looked up with her tired eyes and ceased spinning. “Why has the spinning machine stopped?” she asked meaningfully and replied “Yes your majesty! It stopped because my hand does not turn it now, and is it possible to say that nobody is there to run this complex machine – nature and the world?” “I have not learned such a wonderful lesson yet” the king said and they went away ponderingly. As chapter two stated, the Holy Koran also has mentioned that every particle of the world can give us a lesson and can increase our faith and belief. Emerson also has the same idea in his ‘Spiritual Laws’.

"The whole course of things goes to teach us faith. We need only obey. There is guidance for each of us, and by lowly listening we shall hear the right word."42
In ‘Immortality’ Emerson says about the existence of God:
“All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen. Whatever it be which the great Providence prepares for us, it must be something large and generous, and in the great style of His works”\textsuperscript{43}

Further,

In short, all our intellectual action not promises but bestows a feeling of absolute existence. We are taken out of time and breathe a purer air. I know not whence we draw the assurance of prolonged life, of a life which shoots that gulf we call death and takes hold of what is real and abiding, by so many claims as from our intellectual history. Salt is a good preserver, cold is: but a truth cures the taint of morality better, and “preserves from harm until another period,” a sort of absoluteness attends all perception of truth, - no smell of age, no hint of corruption. It is self-sufficing, sound, and entire.\textsuperscript{44}

Be a swimmer of \textbf{Truth Ocean} and then you can swim in this ocean even in stormy times. If so, you will be the measure of all goodness as the writer of ‘spiritual laws’ said.

"Place yourself in the middle of the stream of power and wisdom, which animates all whom it floats, and you are without effort impelled to truth, to right and a perfect contentment. Then you put all gainsayers in the wrong. Then you are the world, the measure of right, of truth, of beauty."\textsuperscript{45}

Sufism asserted that \textbf{Soul and Heart} are the most important commanders of the body which always are right, but ego also is there in our body. Lucky is he who obeys the Soul and not the ego.

"What your heart thinks great is great. The soul's emphasis is always right."\textsuperscript{46}

The Soul is very plain and always right. Such a Soul can lead us towards the Truth and not false one.
But the soul that ascends to worship the great God is plain and true; has no rose-color, no fine friends, no chivalry, no adventures; does not want admiration; dwells in the hour that now is, in the earnest experience of the common day,—by reason of the present moment and the mere trifle having become porous to thought and bibulous of the sea of light.  

Soul never accepts flattery. Only Real Soul can be praiseworthy and eminent. Emerson in his ‘the over Soul’ says:

Souls like these make us feel that sincerity is more excellent than flattery. Deal so plainly with man and woman as to constrain the utmost sincerity and destroy all hope of trifling with you. It is the highest compliment you can pay. Their "highest praising," Said Milton, "is not flattery, and their plainest advice is a kind of praising."  

Osho told that the eyes of a Sufi always shine like sun, because he is the man of truth and see how the hero of transcendentalism explains the eyes of the false and the true man in his ‘Spiritual Laws’

"When a man speaks the truth in the spirit of truth, his eye is as clear as the heavens. When he has base ends and speaks falsely, the eye is muddy and sometimes asquint."  

After so many days of wandering here and there vainly, Mowlavi stopped and thought, “why should I wander to find Shams while I can be another Shams?” then he stopped chasing of Shams and from that day he started to write *Divan of Shams-e-Tabriz*. **One should be proud of his own acts not of others.** One can be a great Sufi, if he does heed greats. Emerson thinks of the matter in the same way as Mowlavi.
Let us, if we must have great actions, make our own so. All action is of an infinite elasticity, and the least admits of being inflated with the celestial air until it eclipses the sun and moon. Let us seek one peace by fidelity. Let me heed my duties. Why need I go gadding into the scenes and philosophy of Greek and Italian history before I have justified myself to my benefactors? How dare I read Washington's campaigns when I have not answered the letters of my own correspondents? Is not that a just objection to much of our reading? It is a pusillanimous desertion of our work to gaze after our neighbors. It is peeping. Byron says of Jack Bunting,--

"He knew not what to say, and so he swore."\(^{50}\)

Poverty, poverty, poverty, our religious leaders, our great prophet Mohammad, our *Holy Koran*, great Sufis and mystics, and other Holy Scriptures have repeated it several times and really it is the ornament of great Souls. Let us to see Emerson’s opinion in his essay entitled ‘Heroism’.

"The heroic soul does not sell its justice and its nobleness. It does not ask to dine nicely and to sleep warm. The essence of greatness is the perception that virtue is enough. Poverty is its ornament. It does not need plenty, and can very well abide its loss."\(^{51}\)

"I am nearer than your jugular to you," said God and hence, there is no hindrance between man and God. Emerson in his ‘Over-soul’ gives his opinion about man and God:

We know that all spiritual being is in man. A wise old proverb says, "God comes to see us without bell;" that is, as there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so is there no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away. We lie open on one side to the deeps of spiritual nature, to the attributes of God. Justice we see and know Love, Freedom, Power. These natures no man ever got
above, but they tower over us, and most in the moment when our interests tempt us to wound them."\(^52\)

Many men "make their religion an historical religion,"\(^53\) Emerson said, "They see God in Judea and in Egypt, in Moses and in Jesus, but not around them. We want a living religion. As the faith was alive in the hearts of Abraham and Paul, so I would have it in mine. I want a religion not recorded in a book but flowing from all things."\(^54\)

What kind of necessities does the **Soul** require? How can we transcend the soul? What kind of prescription a Sufi Master should prescribe for the one who wants to put his step in the path of Sufism and **Soul polishing**? It seems that Emerson can solve these problems by his prescription in his essay ‘Over-soul’.

The soul requires purity, but purity is not it; requires justice, but justice is not that; requires beneficence, but is somewhat better; so that there is a kind of descent and accommodation felt when we leave speaking of moral nature to urge a virtue which it enjoins. To the well-born child all the virtues are natural, and not painfully acquired. Speak to his heart, and the man becomes suddenly virtuous.\(^55\)

**Whatever soul says it is the truth** and one should accept it and let others to say their pagan words.

"The soul is the perceiver and revealer of truth. We know truth when we see it, let skeptic and scoffer say what they choose."\(^56\)

Chapter two discussed the **Union** and the ideas of various Sufis on it. But Emerson could not find any suitable and effable words to write about such a great moment between lover and Beloved and perforce he writes:
"Ineffable is the union of man and God in every act of the soul."\textsuperscript{57} Further he says,

"Those who are capable of humility, of justice, of love, of aspiration, stand already on a platform that commands the sciences and arts, speech and poetry, action and grace."\textsuperscript{58}

And he sees the Soul as an optimist and not a pessimist. As Sufis believe, there is no limitation for Soul, because it is from God and there is no limitation for God. Man should purify his soul to fly towards its Origin.

“The soul refuses limits, and always affirms Optimism, never Pessimism.”\textsuperscript{59}

Who knows how this circle started and where its last point and ending is? Khayyam in his quatrains complains about the matter and asks constantly \textbf{who am I? Where have I come from? Where do I go? And is there any beginning and end to the life circle?}

So many surveys were done on the secrets of nature, but most of them still are secrets. Sufism claims that the secrets and mysteries of this world are infinite. The \textit{Holy Koran} also again and again has mentioned it especially in the chapters ‘Honey Bees’ and ‘Ant’ which are the most mysterious creatures of God. Khayyam says:

\begin{verbatim}
Dar pardeye asrar kasi ra rah nist 
Zin tabiye jane hich kas aghah nist 
Joz dar dele khak hich manzelghah nist 
Mey khor ke chenin fesaneha kotah nist.\textsuperscript{60}
\end{verbatim}

No body allows entering into the place of secrets
Nobody knows the plans of that
There is no place for resting except the beneath of soil
Drink wine! Such fictions are not short.
Emerson also echoes the same idea in his ‘Art’. "Nature transcends all our moods of thought, and its secret we do not yet find."\(^6\)

Like Khayyam, Emerson also could not find beginning and end of this circle and in his essay ‘Circle’ ha says:

Another analogy we shall now trace, that every action admits of being-outdone. Our life is an apprenticeship to the truth that around every circle another can be drawn; that there is no end in nature, but every end is a beginning; that there is always another dawn risen on mid-moon and under every deep a lower deep opens.\(^6\)

Therefore, nature and its elements never sleep, and there is no death for them, but they always renew by other powers. "Thus there is no sleep, no pause, no preservation, but all things renew, germinate and spring."\(^6\)

And nature is always fresh and new and though time is passing like the sand between our fingers and every moment of nature is a new thing and it shows new entertainments for people to keep them busy in this strange circle. Emerson in his ‘Circle’ explains:

In nature every moment is new; the past is always swallowed and forgotten; the coming only is sacred. Nothing is secure but life, transition, and the energizing spirit. No love can be bound by oath or covenant to secure it against a higher love. No truth so sublime but it may be trivial tomorrow in the light of new thoughts. People wish to be settled; only as far as they are unsettled is there any hope for them.\(^6\)
We know nothing of this complex universe. Whoever learns more, knows less. Khayyam says:

\[
\begin{align*}
&Kas\ moshkele\ asrare\ ajal\ ra\ nagshad \\
&Kas\ yek\ ghadam\ az\ dayere\ biron\ nanhad \\
&Man\ minegharam\ ze\ mobtadi\ ta\ ostad \\
&Ajz\ ast\ be\ daste\ harke\ az\ madar\ zad.\textsuperscript{65}
\end{align*}
\]

Nobody could solve the problems of fate
Nobody could put one step out the circle
I am watching neither disciple nor master
Only disability is there for anyone after birth.

Emerson believes that when we say we know it means that, in fact, we do not know as Sufis say, “after knowing all possible things, I really found that I do not know anything still.” In his ‘Experience’ Emerson says:

If any of us knew what we were doing, or where we are going, then when we think we best know! We do not know to-day whether we are busy or idle. In times when we thought ourselves indolent, we have afterwards discovered that much was accomplished, and much was begun in us.\textsuperscript{66}

Emerson defines life as a train or a string of beads in his ‘Experience’:

"Life is a train of moods like a string of beads, and as we pass through them they prove to be many-colored lenses, which paint the world their own hue, and each shows only what lies in its focus."\textsuperscript{67}

Life or circle of living contains all events and fates which are predestined for all. A Sufi as a pure and perfect man always chooses those elements of life which are moral and perfect, but the imperfect ones are only imitators and
they can not distinguish the moral things of the circle. In his essay ‘Character’ Emerson says:

"Impure men consider life as it is reflected in opinions, events, and persons. They cannot see the action until it is done. Yet its moral element preexisted in the actor and its quality as right or wrong it was easy to predict."\(^6^8\)

*Hijab or veil* is there for man as chapter two discussed. Hafiz says:

\begin{quote}
*Hejabe chehreye jan mishavad ghobare tanam*

*Khosha dami kea az iin chehre parde bar fekanam.*

The dust of my body serves as a veil for the face of the soul,

Blessed be the moment when I drop that veil from the face.\(^6^9\)
\end{quote}

Emerson being best follower of Hafiz writes in his ‘Experience’:

\begin{quote}
God delights to isolate us every day, and hide from us the past and the future. We would look about us, but with grand politeness he draws down before us an impenetrable screen of purest sky, and another behind us of purest sky. 'You will not remember,' he seems to say, 'and you will not expect.' All good conversation, manners, and action, come from a spontaneity which forgets usages and makes the moment great.\(^7^0\)
\end{quote}

A *Sufi is a child of time*; otherwise, he loses all his energy for yesterday and tomorrow. He never thinks of past and future, and that is why he enjoys the *present* and he prays God any moment, instead of being upset about the past and future. Hence, it is better to be happy with the mysteries of life which are hidden in nature and life as Emerson says:

\begin{quote}
Life is a series of surprises. We do not guess to-day the mood, the pleasure, the
power of to-morrow, when we are building up our being. Of lower states, of 
acts of routine and sense, we can tell somewhat; but the masterpieces of God, 
the total growths and universal movements of the soul, he hideth; they are 
incalculable.\textsuperscript{71}

Also he says:

"Whenever a mind is simple and receives a divine wisdom, old things pass 
away,--means, teachers, texts, temples fall; it lives now, and absorbs past and 
future into the present hour."\textsuperscript{72}

Again Emerson claims:

"But man postpones or remembers; he does not live in the present, but with 
reverted eye laments the past, or, heedless of the riches that surround him, 
stands on tiptoe to foresee the future. He cannot be happy and strong until he 
too lives with nature in the present, above time."\textsuperscript{73}

Sufism believes that \textbf{one can not see God directly}, because no one can 
bear such a trenchant light. One day Moses asked God to show Himself. As he 
was a prophet of God, God accepted, but asked him whether he could endure 
or not. Then a thunder-like light came from the sky and Moses fainted. After 
he regained consciousness a voice told him, “It was only a spark of my light.”

As chapter two mentioned, one can see God only by the mind’s eye. The man 
of God, Emerson, has also similar ideas in his ‘Intellect’:

"No man can see God face to face and live."\textsuperscript{74}

“One can not possess both God and date”. This is a proverb in the Persian 
Sufi literature. It means that one should keep one way in one’s life. Between 
truth and repose one must choose only one. And in Emerson’s opinion lucky is 
he who \textbf{chooses the truth} and shuts the door of repose.
God offers to every mind its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please,--you can never have both. Between these, as a pendulum, man oscillates. He in whom the love of repose predominates will accept the first creed, the first philosophy, the first political party he meets,--most likely his father's. He gets rest, commodity, and reputation; but he shuts the door of truth. He in whom the love of truth predominates will keep himself aloof from all moorings, and afloat. He will abstain from dogmatism, and recognize all the opposite negations between which, as walls, his being is swung. He submits to the inconvenience of suspense and imperfect opinion, but he is a candidate for truth, as the other is not, and respects the highest law of his being.  

“Besme Allah-e-al rahmane-e-al rahim,” – In the name of Allah who is all-merciful and all compassionate. A man of God always and especially at the beginning of any activity repeats this verse of the *Holy Koran* to remember the bounteouness of God. All things are from Him and one should thank Him because of them. Whenever one of our friends gives us only one cheap gift immediately we bow and thank him/her. Then, is it not fair to do that to the Giver of all these expensive presents? Emerson knows that all things are from God even those words which an author arranges them to create sentences and in his ‘Experience’ writes:

All writing comes by the grace of God, and all doing and having. I would gladly be moral and keep due metes and bounds, which I dearly love, and allow the most to the will of man; but I have set my heart on honesty in this chapter, and I can see nothing at last, in success or failure, than more or less of vital force supplied from the Eternal.  

Ralph Waldo Emerson was a real devotee of intellectual customs. As Reginald L. Cook asserts, “Emerson stood out in his time as a witness-bearer
to the idealistic truth of transcendental ethic which gave mind a creative, primary, and active role, while the rationalistic Lockeian philosophy of 18th century has given mind a dependant, secondary and passive role”77. As a contemplative moralist, the essence of his views was the moral nature of man. As a devotee of mysticism, he cited in scriptural prose the immortal flight of the alone to the alone. Emerson, in fact, is a familiar man of reality whose finding is the act of moral law through the cosmos. His perpetual profession is like Newton; his vocation is confirmatory in spirit.

**Purification of Soul** is the unflagging practice of Sufis and without a neat and pure Soul – which has its origin in Almighty, one, can not be a friend of God. Emerson also as an ardent follower of God explained the Soul as a power beyond the world and at last, he wrote an article which is called ‘Over-Soul’.

Emerson called himself an experimenter, “an endless seeker with no past at my back.” But the core of his prophetic myth—“the large, controlling image”—is the Over-Soul—“the flying perfect.” Beneath fluxional and transitive experience, whose spontaneity, fluidity, and movement he stresses is fixity and oneness—the Over-Soul. This noble image of great symbolic spiritual significance is what Robert Frost would call ‘a gatherer,’ or unifying force, as Reginald L. Cook believes.

The *soul* is the universal mind closely correlated with the Emersonian doctrines of the Flowing of nature, the Symbolism of nature, and the beauty of the moral law, unfolded and demonstrated by analogy, allusion, illustration, and metaphor in his writings. In fact, Emerson is validating the divinity of the human soul by describing the effects of the same divinity in the apparent universe. He believes that the procession of facts that is called the world or nature really flows from “an invisible unsounded centre” in the self. Besides,
in his constant emphasis on the self, Emerson was reacting to the social tyranny of the American crowd. He perused the ideal of destroying the mob through bringing to each of its members a sense of himself as a separate person. When he called each man “an infinitely repellent orb,” he is expressing a hope: ideally, each of human beings can develop a sense of self that resists grouping if he follows his reason rather than his understanding. As Ziff believes, “where others gazed upon a church congregation or political gathering and saw a mass unified by a purpose or a prejudice, Emerson saw individuals, each with his own integrity, an integrity that was being destroyed by the preacher or party boss who encouraged them to think of themselves as a collectivity.”

Emanation is one of the elements of Sufism which is found in Emerson also.

The origins of ‘emanation’ have to be searched in Hindu and Old Persian philosophical thought. Emerson, Persian mystics, Sufis, Neo-Platonists, and Aristotle, use the same terminology to convey the idea of “Man as microcosm.” Emerson composed a poem based upon Aristotle’s concept of “man as a microcosm”; it first appeared in the Journal for 1830. On the other hand, in Persian literature, Rumi speaks in quite a similar vein; he has a poem entitled ‘Man the microcosm’:

From the pure star-bright souls replenishment is
ever coming to the stars of heaven
Outwardly we are ruled by these stars, but our inward
nature has become the ruler of the skies.
Therefore, while in form thou art the microcosm,
in reality thou art is the macrocosm.
Externally the branch is the origin of the fruit,
intrinsically the brunch came in to existence for the sake of the fruit.
This poem presents a general picture of Rumi’s view of “emanation” and microcosm. In ‘The Method of Nature’ Emerson speaks about the concepts of ‘microcosm’ and ‘emanation’ thus:

We can never surprise nature in a corner; never find the end of a thread; never tell where to set the first stone. The bird hastens to lay her egg: the egg hastens to be a bird. The wholeness we admire in order of the world is the result of infinite distribution. Every natural fact is an emanation and that from which it emanates is an emanation also, and from every emanation is a new emanation.  

And what is ‘elevation’? Emerson gives a definition of it.
"Royalty makes its own estimate of, and a royal mind will. To make habitually a new estimate,--that is elevation." 

As Mansure Ekhtiar states Emerson believed in “evolution” and at the same time in “emanation”. His evolution is pre-Darwinism in more than a merely chronological sense. In fact, Emerson’s universe is not based or grown on evolution, but that his universe is the universe of levels.
The Hierarchic Degree of Man’s Closeness to the Over-Soul is another matter of Sufism and Emerson also.

In the Islamic belief, the hierarchic concept of the eight paradises and the idea of the five worlds or the seven heavens of Sufis are similar to the concept of the degree of closeness to the Divine that Emerson proposes and illustrates in the relation of man to the Over-Soul. In a passage called ‘The Seven Heavens of the Sufis’, Shams of Tabriz declares:

Are not the “seven heavens” below the empyrean?
Beyond the empyrean is our revolution.
According to an interpretation of the **hierarchic stages of Sufis**, there are ‘five distinct stages’, in the total experience, which are: self- knowledge, intuition, illumination, purgation and union.

Emerson in his ‘Experience’ asserts about various stages that:

> We wake and find ourselves on a stair. There are “stairs” below us, which we seem to have ascended; there are stairs above us, many a one, which go upward and out of sight. But the Genius, which according to the old belief stands at the door by which we enter, and gives us the Lethe to drink, that we may tell no tales, mixed the cup too strongly, and we cannot shake off the lethargy now at noonday.\(^{83}\)

Thus, it is possible to see a systematic spiritual discipline in the Sufism of the Orient and in Emerson’s Transcendentalism.

Carl Strauch in *American Literary Masters* finds that Emerson recaptured a sense of wholeness. He locates Emerson’s service in the greatest psychological need in modern times; he thinks it is in the face of destructive analysis to recapture a sense of wholeness. He also finds Emerson proclaimed a religion that directly responds to God within: “God is, not was.”\(^{84}\)

What does **Absolute Unity** Mean? ‘Light’ as a symbol of Unity and Oneness, which is symbolized in Persian literature by Sufi and mystic writers, can be seen in most of Persian prose and poetry. According to Emerson man can never reach it; but some Oriental Sufis like Mansur-e-Hallaj believed that there are moments of intoxication in which man may be assimilated into the ‘absolute unity’.\(^{85}\)

Hallaj said that, “I am God”. Emerson believed that full truth flashes upon man, that he is not only God but also nature, and that God and nature are but
aspects of the individual soul. He was convinced that man’s soul may become a pure projection of the Over-Soul, but man’s body does not have and will never have any connection with the Divine, as the soul is a celestial thing and has come from God only, but the body is made of clay. In other words, man is composed of matter and soul, but the Divine is pure soul; therefore, man is not able to be the absolute soul. Man, Emerson asserts, is never God but is ruined God.\(^{86}\)

In *Emerson and Mysticism* Patrick F. Quinn has described the concept of unity of man with the Over-Soul in the moment of intoxication. He asserts, “the typical mystic may be described in the famous phrase associated with Spinoza: he is a God-intoxicated man.”\(^{87}\)

In Sufism heavenly light, which exists in human being, guides man in life. Therefore, a look at Transcendentalist’s views on same light will be instructive. This in fact is the **Inner Light**.

Transcendentalists believe that men carry the image of God within themselves in their moral and intellectual powers. This image is called ‘**Inner Light**’ and since everyone has the inner light, he is great. Emerson states that every man can become Christ when illuminated by his own inner light. That is why Emerson felt a need to be free from all churches. As the **labour is the essence of man** in Sufism, in his ‘Immortality’ Emerson claimed about it,

Courage comes naturally to those who have the habit of facing labour and danger, and who therefore know the power of their arms and bodies: and courage or confidence in the mind comes to those who know by use its wonderful forces and inspirations and returns belief in its future is a reward kept only for those who use it. “To me” said Goethe, “the eternal existence of
my soul is proved from my idea of activity. If I work incessantly till my death, Nature is bound to give me another form of existence, when the present can no longer sustain my spirit.” 88

About **immortality of man** he chants beautifully in his essay ‘Immortality’:

My idea of heaven is that there is no melodrama in it at all; that it is wholly real. Here is the emphasis of conscience and experience; this is no speculation, but the most practical of doctrines. Do you think that the eternal chain of cause and effect which pervades Nature, which threads the globes as beads on a string, leaves this out of its circuit, - leaves out this desire of God and men as a waif and caprice, altogether cheap and common, and falling without reason or merit? We live by desire to live; we live by choice; by will, by thought, by virtue, by the vivacity of the laws which we obey, and obeying share their life, - or we die by sloth, by disobedience, by losing hold of life, which ebbs out of us. But whilst I find the signatures, the hints and suggestions, noble and wholesome, - whilst I find that all the ways of virtuous living lead upward and not downward, - yet it is not my duty to prove myself the immortality of the soul. That knowledge is hidden very cunningly. Perhaps the archangels cannot see itself; - but, ending, to live whilst I live. 89

Again he says:

"The immortality of man is as legitimately preached from the intellections as from the moral volitions." 90

Emerson in his ‘Immortality’ refers to the opinion of Montesquieu:

If the immortality of the soul were an error, I should be sorry not to believe it. I avow that I am not so humble as the atheist: I know not how they think, but for me, I do not wish to exchange the idea of immortality against that of the beatitude of one day. I delight in believing myself as immortal as God himself.
Independently of revealed ideas, metaphysical ideas leave me a vigorous hope of my eternal well-being, which I would never renounce.91

Persian poets like Khayyam and Mowlavi wonder about questions of the states of soul, but there were no satisfactory answers to them. Emerson also was amazed by this matter. It is noteworthy to mention a wonderful story from his ‘Immortality’ about the soul.

Yama, the Lord of Death, promised Nachiketas, the son of Gautama, to grant him three boons of his own choice. Nachiketa, knowing that his father Gautama was offended with him, said, "O Death! Let Gautama be appeased in mind, and forget his anger against me: this I choose for the first boon." Yama said, "Through my favour, Gautama will remember thee with love as before." For the second boon, Nachiketa asks for fire by which Yama also allows, and says, "Choose the third boon, O Nachiketas!" Nachiketas said there is this inquiry. Some say the soul exists after the death of man; others say it does not exist. This I should like to know, instructed by thee. Such is the third of the boons. Yama said, "For this question, it was inquired of old, even by gods; for it is not easy to understand it. Subtle is its nature. Choose another boon, O Nichiketa! Do not compel me to this." Nachiketa said, "Even by the gods was it inquired. And as to what thou sayst, O Death, that it is not easy to understand, there is no other speaker to be found like thee. There is no other boon like this." Yama said, "Choose sons and grandsons who may live a hundred years; choose herds of cattle; choose elephants and gold and horses; choose the wide expanded earth, and live thyself many years as thou listesh. Or, if thou knowest a boon like this, choose it, together with wealth and far-extending life. Be a king, O Nachiketas! On the wide earth I will make thee the enjoyer of all desires. All those desires that are difficult to gain in the world of mortals, all those ask thou at thy pleasure; - those fair nymphs of heaven with their chariots, with their musical instruments; for the like of them are not to be gained by men. I will
Nachiketas said, "All those enjoyments are of yesterday. With thee remain thy horses and elephants, with thee the dance and song. If we should obtain wealth, we live only as long as thou pleasest. The boon which I choose I have said." Yama said, "One thing is good, another is pleasant. Blessed is he who takes the good, but he who chooses the pleasant loses the object of man. But thou, considering the objects of desire, hast abandoned them. These two, ignorance (whose object is what is pleasant) and knowledge (whose object is what is good), are known to be far asunder, and to lead to different goals. Believing this world exists, and not the other, the careless youth is subject to my sway. That knowledge for which thou hast asked is not to be obtained by argument. I know worldly happiness is transient, for that firm one is not to be obtained by what is not firm. The wise, by means of the union of the intellect with the soul, thinking him whom it is hard to behold, leaves both grief and joy. Thee, O Nachiketas! I believe a house whose door is open to Brahma the supreme, whoever knows him obtains whatever he whishes. The soul is not born; it does not die; it was not produced from any one. Nor was any produced from it. Unborn, eternal, it is not slain, though the body is slain; subtler than what is subtle, greater than what is great, sitting it goes far, sleeping it goes everywhere. Thinking the soul as unbodily among bodies, firm among fleeting things, the wise man casts off all grief. The soul cannot be gained by knowledge, not by understanding, not by manifold science. It can be obtained by the soul by which it is desired. It reveals its own truths.92

Emerson calls universal soul 'reason'. Reason belongs to every man, because within every man flows a portion of divine being.

"Man is conscious," says Emerson, "of a universal soul within or behind his universal life, wherein, as in a firmament, the nature of Justice, Truth, Love, Freedom, arise and shine. This universal soul he calls reason. It is not mine, or thine, or his, but we are its; we are its property and men."93
We are from heaven and it was the place of man. Now, there is a big desire in us to go back into the same place. The Sufi is always searching for the lost home and tries to possess that at any cost. Hafiz, as a great Sufi poet, in most of his ghazals claims such a glorious place:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Man malak bodam Ferdose barain Jayam bod} \\
\text{Adam avard dar in deyre kharab abadam} \\
\text{I was an angel and my dwelling was sublime paradise,} \\
\text{But Adam brought me into this seemingly flourished but ruined cloister.} \quad \text{94}
\end{align*}
\]

Or

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Chenin ghafas na sazaye cho man khosh elhanist} \\
\text{Ravam be rozeye rezvan ke morghe a\text{n} chamanam.} \\
\text{Such a cage is not fitting for such a sweet-voiced as me} \\
\text{I will proceed to the heavenly garden, for; I am a bird of that lawn.} \quad \text{95}
\end{align*}
\]

Emerson also has his own impression about the place which Sufi calls jannat.

"Heaven is the name we give to the True State, the world of Reason, not of understanding; of the Real not the apparent …. It is, as Coleridge said, another world, but not to come. The world I describe is that where only the laws of the mind are known; the only economy of time is saying and doing nothing untrue to self."\text{96}

Emerson saw that \textbf{God incarnates himself in man}, and ever more goes forth anew to take possession of his world. As Mansour Hillaj the great Sufi said "I am God", Emerson also said, "I am divine. Through me God acts, through me, speaks"\text{97}

Imam Ali states:

\[
\text{“\textit{man Aaraf nafsahoo faghad aarafa rabbahoo}”}
\]
It means one **who knows himself, can know God also.** A Sufi must know himself first; otherwise, it is impossible to know One who is beyond thought and vision. Emerson had delivered various speeches on the subject and exhorted men to believe in themselves.

Emerson in one of his early sermons entitled ‘Trust Yourself,’ asserts:

> Great calamity under which all men are considering after all the preaching of Christianity is in their distrust of themselves. They do not know, because they have not tried, the spiritual force that belongs to them.\(^9^8\) This Jesus did know. He recognized the word, the truth within himself. And this all men can know.

Here again is the centre of Emerson’s gospel – its religious centre. If each man will trust himself and recognize the avenue toward truth within himself, he also may know God, and he can reincarnate – give body, substance, form to the word, even as Jesus did. According to Sufism also, one can know God, if only one knows oneself deeply. Emerson again claims,

> "Let man fully trust his own share of God's goodness, that if used to the uppermost, it will lead him unto a perfection which has no type yet in the universe, save only in the Divine Mind."\(^9^9\) Moreover he speaks of, "The spirit of prophecy which is innate in every man."\(^1^0^0\)

> “**Nature is the best teacher**” and one should go into it and be intimate with it. We should respect it as all elements of Nature are the creatures of the Greater One. Even the sounds of the tree leaves while wind is blowing on through them are a prayer and every particle of pure waters of the cataracts carries the name and attribute of the All-compassionate. As there are so many recommendations on reverence and attention to the nature’s elements,
Emerson also, as a devotee of nature has his own ideas on Nature and furthermore, he has an essay on the subject entitled ‘Nature’.

His first major work, *Nature*, is also the first comprehensive expression of American transcendentalism. It provides a fresh and lyrical intimation of many of leading ideas that Emerson developed in various later essays and poems. He says, “Nature is but an image or imitation of wisdom, the last thing of the soul; Nature is a thing which does only do, but not know.” According to American transcendentalism, man must trust the perfection of the creation so far as to believe that whatever curiosity the order of things has awakened in his mind, the order of things can satisfy. Emerson in his work, *Nature*, elucidates that the beauty of nature can reveal to man the perennial presence of God:

“If the stars should appear one night in a thousand year, how would men believe and adore; and preserve for many generations the remembrance of the city of God which had been shown! But every night come out these envoys of beauty, and light the universe with their admonishing smile.”101

About *Nature* of Emerson one can say that nature's characteristics are directly linked to man. The woods are not the only minister of health. Nature in her entirety is “medicinal and restorative” and can “purge man's eyes’ like a physician. As a comforter and guide, she ‘satisfies the soul’, allowing one to "find himself and become a man again." She desires our freedom and conspires with the Spirit ‘to emancipate us’ from the slavery of the understanding. At all times, she is man's provider, being "made to serve". Sa’di chants like this about the providers:

*Abro bado maho khorsido falak dar karand*

*Ta to nani be kaf ariyyo be ghaflat nakhori.*102
The cloud, the wind, the moon, the sun, and the circle are working
To give you bread and you should not eat it in ignorance.

Emerson in his Nature chants as Persians and calls nature a provider.
"The wind sows seeds, the sun evaporates the sea, the wind blows vapor, rain
feeds plants, and plants feed animals." ¹⁰³

This provider, however, "suberves to man" and "receives man's dominion
as meekly as the ass the savior rode." Man may "mould Nature's raw
materials" to fit his needs. As a mother, nature has the obligation of "nursing"
and "feeding man so that he may work." She provides a "nest", "a lodging
where man is harbored." He is her "darling child", she is the "beautiful
mother", "who stretches out her arms to embrace man". Finally, the most
important aspect is that of teacher. Nature instructs symbolically, her outward
manifestations pointing to the Spirit. She is "a sea of forms", "a constantly
changing picture…which speaks of the passage of time through birds and
insects". Her stars are "preachers" which she spiritually interprets. Yet she is
also a disciplinarian. "What good heed nature forms in us! She pardons no
mistakes. Her yea is yea, and her nay, nay". Man, nature's "immortal pupil", at
last benefits from her ethical character, for she….Teaches the lesson of
worship" and "hints or thunders to man laws of right and wrong" echoing the
Ten Commandments. ¹⁰⁴

Nature is now a mother with open arms, who will decorate her child with
all her beautiful attributes. The resulting style, which encompasses both facts
and figurative language, is distinct from traditional philosophic discussion.
Emerson does not hesitate to appeal to his reader's emotions to emphasize his
points: "…good writing and brilliant discourse are perpetual allegories." ¹⁰⁵
**East and Emerson:**

The first chapter discussed some previous works on the East and Emerson. Especially so many works were done from Indian point of view. Here, it is noteworthy, to reveal some views of Emerson about Orient as evidences for ardent readers.

There is no doubt that Emerson had read many books of Orient especially, Hindu Scriptures and Persian Literature. The proof can be seen in his poems and translations and also essays. His poem ‘Brahma’ and ‘Sa’di’, and his essay ‘Persian poetry’ confirm our claim. Here, the chapter tries to elucidate some sentences of Emerson on Orient lifestyle.

Emerson was familiar with the oriental system of life through his reading of, at least, Indian scriptures and Persian poems. He, intellectually, had found the life of eastern people so simple and easy in comparison with the life of westerners. Being an ardent devotee of simplicity, he chants like a simple Sufi man as below:

“So in looking at *Manu*, and Sa’di and *Bhagavat Gita*, life seems in the East a simpler affair, — only a tent, and a little rice, and ass’s milk; and not as with us, what commerce has made it, a feast whose dishes come from the equator and both poles.”

Emerson differentiated between two mental types, saying:

“Some men have the perception of different predominant, and are conversant with surfaces and trifles; these are the men of talent… And other men abide by the perception of Identity; these are the Orientals, the philosophers, the men of faith and divinity, the men of genius.”

Also Emerson states that the Oriental world is full of art and poetry.
Thus the diamond and the pearl, which are only accidental and secondary in their use and value to us, are proper to the Oriental world. The diver dives a beggar, and rises with the price of kingdom in his hand…The Orientals excel in costly arts, in the cutting of precious stones, in working in gold, in viewing on hand-loom costly stuffs from silk and wool, in spices, in dyes and drugs….elephants and camels,— things which are the poetry and superlative of commerce.\textsuperscript{108}

In all his works lies the explanation of Emerson’s love for the Orient, with its genius for poetry and speculation. Its poetry uses absolute freedom of fancy, expressing everything in extreme terms. Its very stock of images, coming directly from its life, is colourful and poetic. Its philosophy deals only with the larger aspects of Nature. In thought he uses the superlative as well as in poetry. Emerson generalized this largeness of imagination to explain the attractive quality of Oriental literature to all Occidentals.

“The Northern genius finds itself singularly refreshed and stimulated by the breadth and luxuriance of Eastern imagery and modes of thinking… there is no writing which has more electric power to unbind and animate the torpid intellect than the bold astern muse.”\textsuperscript{109}

This chapter examined the mentioned Sufi features in Prose of Emerson. This empathy with the Orientals is not restricted to the prose works of Emerson but extends to his poetry, which is the concern of the next chapter.
Notes and References:

2 . Ibid. P. 146-47
3 . Ibid. P. 150
4 . Ibid. 302
7 . Lewis. P. 95
8 . Brooks. P. 263
9 . Lewis. P. 98
10 . Brooks. P. 185
11 . This is a most famous poem by Sa’di which is inscribed on the top of entrance door of the UNO.
12 . Brooks. P. 159
13 . Arberry. P. 48
15 . Ibid
16 . Ibid. P. 168
17 . Ibid. P. 173
18 . Ibid. P. 183
20 . Deshmukh. P. 26
22. Ibid. P. 185
23. Ibid. P. 186
24. Ibid. P. 187
25. Ibid. P. 245
27. Ibid. P. 286
28. Ibid. P. 175
30. Brooks. P. 152
31. Ibid. P. 176
32. Emerson. pp 348-49
33. Brooks. P.p. 408-409
34. Ibid. P. 182
35. Ibid. Pp. 183-84
36. Ibid. P. 184
37. Ibid. P. 188
40. Ibid. P. 194
41. Ibid. P. 209
42. Ibid. P. 194
43. Emerson. P. 338
44. Ibid. P. 340
45. Brooks. P. 195
46. Ibid. P. 197
47. Ibid. P. 274
48. Ibid. P. 275
49. Ibid. P. 204
50. Ibid. P. 208
51. Ibid. P. 255
52. Ibid. P. 264
53. Lewis. P. 96
54. Ibid
55. Brooks. P. 266
56. Ibid. P. 268
57. Ibid. P. 275
58. Lewis. p103
59. Brooks. P. 186
60. Khayyam. *Quatrains*, p. 34
61. Brooks. P. 312
62. Ibid. p. 279
63. Ibid. P. 289
64. Ibid. P. 289
65. Khayyam. *Quatrains*. P. 86
66. Brooks. P. 343
67. Ibid. P. 345
68. Ibid. P. 369
69. Pazargadi. P. 428
70. Brooks. P. 354
71. Ibid. Pp. 289-290
72. Ibid. P. 156
73. Ibid. P. 157
74. Ibid. P. 295
75. Ibid. 301
76. Brooks. p. 355
80. Ibid. P. 64
81. Brooks P. 197
82. Mansour Ekhtiar. p. 99
83. Brooks. P. 342
84. Cook. p. 4
85. Mansour Ekhtiar, p. 80
86. Ibid. p. 81
87. Ibid, p. 82
88. Emerson. P.342
89. Ibid. pp. 344-45
90. Brooks. P. 296
91. Emerson. p. 330
92. Ibid. Pp. 349-52
93. Lewis p. 51
94. Pazargadi, p. 395
95. Ibid. P. 428
96. Lewis. P. 51
97. Ibid. P. 100
98. Ibid. Pp 100-01
99. Ibid. P. 101
100. Ibid. P. 105
101. Brooks. P. 5
103. Brooks. P. 8
105. Ibid. P. 11
107. Ibid. p. 32
108. Ibid. P. 34
109. Ibid. P. 35