Chapter – 1
Comparative Study of Literature: Its Relevance and Importance

Great modernist writer T. S. Eliot is of the opinion that the best way to understand and evaluate a work of art is to compare it with other works of art. According to him, comparison and contrast are the two tools of study. Comparative study of literature is very helpful in this regard. Comparative literature plays a vital role in our academic life. It bridges the gap between writers and readers and critics. All the same, comparative literature bridges the gap between intellectual exercises amongst different literatures. Comparative study is not initiated just for its own sake but it is there for the sake of studying literatures. What we must do is to see how we can reorganize the whole literatures for the sake of comparing. Yet comparative study must be directed to our timely needs and requirements. The study of our own literature is not enough for our fuller developments. Nor can the study of national literature be sufficient either. Sisir Kumar Das, in his article “Muses in Isolation” says that,

No national literature, howsoever powerful, is sufficient to counteract the innate provincialism of man: no national literature, no single literature, howsoever rich, is rich enough to present the highest literary achievements of man. The study of literature, then, has to be directed towards these two goals, one depended on the other, namely, an enlargement of taste and an inheritance of the total achievements of literature.¹

The answer to the question what must be the criterion of comparative literature is of two-fold. Some scholars argue that language must be a
criterion of comparative literature. For example, India has many languages and comparison of literature of one language with another language must be undertaken. For instance, a novel written in Kannada say on freedom struggle must be compared with a novel of the same theme in Tamil or French, as every nation has its own culture. Though the same language is spoken in the breadth and length of the country, its literature will be different in its nature and presentation. For example, English literature is not similar to American literature though both are in English. Nor is the Indian literature comparable with British. This is because of the reason that nationalities are different everywhere. Therefore, Sisir Kumar Das argues that comparative literature has to be both nationalistic and interlinguistic. Literature is born in a language yet it goes beyond it. It is said smaller the language smaller the knowledge. Truly it is nourished by a culture. Therefore we have to do comparative study of literature as our literatures are multilingual and they cover the whole world.

There was a time when people either were unaware of the wisdom of other races, nations, religions, and cultures or they did not feel to study it. The problem of illiteracy and lack of tolerance was a major reason for this. Once upon a time, people did not feel the need of reading other literatures. No ancient Greek felt the need to read the literatures produced in other countries. Socrates' speech or Sopocles' plays were not read by any ancient Indians though Alexander the Great ruled a part of North India. This is also applicable to other countries. Indeed, the problem of inaccessibility of literature of the other lands and cultures was the dominant reason for this. Only in modern times as and when there have been industrial revolutions and expansion of transportation and computer, the world has become a smaller place to live in. Colonialization was there too. This is nothing but the
impact of science, technology and globalization. As a result, human existence has become more interactive with different nationalists either for physical needs or for spiritual betterments. Mostly in this background a great writer like Goethe made a fervent plea for the creation of world literature. It was Rabindranath Tagore first in India who aspired for the same when he spoke of 'Jatia Literature.'

However, the majority of readers in the past had been indifferent to the alien cultures and literatures. Only after the process of globalization began, most readers started reading literatures written in other languages. This is also done through translations. An added dimension of this phenomenon is the prevailing bilingual situations. Colonialism, continuous migrations of people from one region to another, business expansions and global trade are the reasons that have led people to turn polyglots. The newer situation, in turn has helped people in acquainting with others' cultures and literatures. The mass media and the art of cinema have helped the process of multi-culturalism. Accordingly translation and adaptations have made the world literatures converge towards each other. In this connection, comparative study of literature helped us by correcting readers' taste, liberalizing their interests and expanding their intellectual horizon. It adds most to the stock of our knowledge. Therefore, our universities must reorganize their departments to include comparative studies, which will help them in more than one way. Sisir Kumar Das says,

'I think comparative literature which is not different from the study of single literature so far as the critical methodology is concerned but differs only in matter and attitude can play a vital role in the reorganization of literature faculties and in the teaching of literature.'

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A mere confinement to one language, one-culture and one-nation in studies will not make man a noble and knowledgeable being. This is greatly boring. People with conservative attitude cannot respond to all that is great and noble in other literatures. For this reason, the departments of English in Indian universities must be reorganized to that an extent that they can cater to the needs of students for relating the literatures to their own and understanding it better than never before. Comparative study of literature involves some lumping together of two texts or more which are understood to have significant similarities in terms of theme, characterization and style. This will enable the researcher to probe into critic’s artistic intentions. Although comparative study involves a lot of difficulties especially about cultural understanding of different ethos, it yields a wide range of fruitful results. A Hardy’s novel, say studied with Tolstoyan may provide us various comparative viewpoints about agrarian economy or pastoral activities. This may reveal the hitherto unexplored areas of different socio-economic contexts of the two societies.

Comparative study encompasses many variants of comparative criticism of literatures. Moving through different writers’ individualities, philosophic preconditionings and genre-oriented limitations comparative study can record the evolution of author’s craft and themes. The researchers can analyze the whole human articulations of sensibility. In M. K. Bhatnagar’s view,

The scope of comparative studies is vast and not precisely outlined or defined. It is only through that of formulation it can be floated and projected as theory . . . Comparative studies of English literature can be made to yield insights not merely into texts but also disparate cultures, societies, ideologies and concerns.
Perhaps the origin of comparative literature in modern times can be attributed to Matthew Arnold’s remark. Once he said: “Every critic should try and possess one great literature, at least, besides his own and the unlike his own the better.”

It seems, writers and critics in ancient times, did not indulge either in comparing or contrasting their literatures with other literatures. They were helpless and complacent. But the trend of comparative approach started in the first century BC when Latin and Greek literatures interacted with each other. This was possible because of the rise of Romans. Those early writers looked for the treatment of subject, style, choice of selection and arrangement of material. For example, Plutarch (66 AD) followed comparative method in his Parallel Lives and Terence (3rd century AD) resorted to comparative studies. Longinus looked for certain universal features in literature and made one of them the matter of his investigation. Afterwards when Romans conquered Greeks, they had to do comparative study of Greek life as they had to understand their subjects.

Comparative study of literature first began in France. It seems Van Tieghem did a pioneering work on comparative study in France. French school of comparative study centers on the problematics of methodology revealing the complexities and richness of the sphere of comparative literature studies. But unfortunately Van Tieghem defined comparative literature narrowly as the study of the mutual relation between the literatures of two countries. Maybe the French comparatists thought that comparative literature records the merits of a culture. But later Rene Wellek, the famous American scholar hit at these viewpoints in his critical essay The Crisis of Comparative Literature. He gave a root for comparative study in France. Of course, his formalistic ideas came to be attacked during the symposiums on

Many scholarly books were written in this regard. Rene Etiemble's book *The Crisis in Comparative Literature* was published in America in 1966. Etiemble thinks comparative literature as a form of humanism considering all national literatures as a common spiritual wealth of mankind and an interdependent entity. For this French scholar, comparative study of literature was a weapon for promoting usual understanding between people and foster unity and progress of mankind. He thinks comparative literature contributes to the contemporary literature. Because of Etiemble and others' efforts the comparative study of literature registered its first stage of growth in France. Certainly, we lack comparative studies of the stature of the work of Empson or Leavis on English literature: and one must guard against throwing into relief the dearth of comparative studies in English by pointing to their abundance in French and German, since so many of these are unrewarding.

Comparative literature is a genre of literary research without any boundaries of language, ethics and politics. Accordingly, comparative literature can help us for establishing a global history of literature and global study of literature. In his view the methods used in comparison are not only comparison, but also description, portrayal of characteristics, interpretations, narration, explanation and evaluation. Haskell M. Block thinks doing of comparative study of literature is equal to specialization in international literature. Comparative literature can arouse a greater interest than any other branch of literature. Comparative literature embracing several disciplines is
like a frontier science and its features lie in its frontier nature. Comparative study of literature registered its second stage of growth in America.

All this furthered comparative study of literature. The Canadian debate on comparative literature is essentially a reflection of a multilingual situation, which is unique in its own way. Famous Canadian comparatists who, by way of working on comparative study of supporting departments of comparative studies in Canadian universities, have contributed a lot include Northrop Frye, Eugene Joliat, Victor Graham, Paul Zumthor, D. M. Hayne, D. G. Jones, Ronald Sutherland, Philip Stratford, M. V. Dimic, E. D. Blodge and the Quebec critic Clement Moisan. Even the university of Alberta has a journal called Canadian Review of Comparative Literature, which is nourishing Canadian comparative studies.

V. M. Zhirmunsky from Russia drives home a significant point when he says only a comparative study of literature can help us to derive the universal nature of all great literatures. Wellek believed that literature is one, as art and humanity are one; and in this conception lies the future of historical literary studies. Comparative study of literature can create the corpse of global history as literature. Mostly because of comparative study of literature today we have categorization of oriental and occidental or western literary systems. Comparative study is pluralistic, cosmopolitan and it is based on universal truths.

The Eastern countries like China, India and Japan also developed comparative studies. This was in consonance with the diasporic literature. Most of the expatriates followed this tradition. Comparative study of literature in China is coming up. Andrew Plake’s studies of the art of narrative in Chinese fiction is a point in case. J. Y. Liu (Liu Ruoyu) of Stansford University worked on literary theories in China. Etiemble has a
high regard for the development of comparative literature in China in the 1980’s. The third stage of growth of comparative study of literature, Etiemble says is seen in China. When I. A. Richards, being the Head of the Dept of English at Cambridge taught at Qunghua University in Beijing from 1929 to 1931, there were great comparatists in China such as Zongdai, Dai Wangshu, Wen Yidue, Qian Zhongshu and Zhu Guangjian. Qian Zhongshu’s important work *Partial View* sums up comparative study as a ‘frontier science,’ which transcends national boundaries and links different periods and connects different disciples. The contribution of this book lies in the panorama of the past and present that it offers important laws of literature. Qian Zhongshu said, “Comparative literature represents studies that transcend the scope of the literature of a particular nation.”

The recent pioneers of comparative literature in China are Zong Baihua, Ji Xianlin, Yang Zhouhau and Wang Yuanhau. Chinese comparative study reveals that comparison is frequently used in criticism and literary history. It cannot be used to distinguish a single discipline. Comparative literature marks the use of a large number of methods like induction, deduction, description, interpretation, synthesis and counter evidence.

In England when there arose a controversy of superiority of ancient knowledge over the modern, comparative study had its relative origin to begin with. Mostly the phase of Renaissance furthered it. First there was a comparative study of medieval texts with the ancient, followed by interlingual. Renaissance gave a boost to it. The process of colonization too played an important role in accentuating comparative studies in art, literature and philosophy. For example, the English translation of *Geeta* by Charles Wilkins, and Kalidas’ *Sakuntala* (Fatal Ring) by William Jones made English writers compare them with their own classics and men like John
Beame wrote *A Comparative Grammar of the Modern Languages of India.* Industrialization also gave a support to the idea of comparison.

However, comparative literature in India, in spite of its great literary traditions, did not make any headway until modern times. Because India was under the British rule for long. Although Sanskrit and Tamil literatures flourished side by side, no worth mentioning comparative studies of these two literatures are done. Mostly lack of historiography is the main reason. Comparative literature proper is started in India only when the British interacted with us in the 19th and 20th centuries. Scholars such as Charles E. Grover, F. W. Ellis and G. V. Pope did some comparative studies. Charles Bover studied the poetry written in Dravidian languages, while G. V. Pope made a comparative study of Christianity and Bhakti cult. G. V. Pope's historic statement ‘No literature can stand alone’ is very significant. The work the European indologists did on Sanskrit literature furthered western comparative studies with Indian literature. No doubt, this made westerners establish Sanskrit departments at Paris (1914), Bon (1918), Oxford (1932) and Yale (1940) to mention only a few. In a sense the Bengal writers promoted the business of comparative studies. Michael Madhusudhan Dutt (1824-1873), Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar and Bankimchandra Chattopadyaya (1838-1894) wrote first in imitation of the western works. M. M. Dutt pleaded for a unified world of letters in which the poets of Europe and India would work together. In a letter he writes,

‘Do you dislike Moore’s poetry because it is full of orientalism? Byron’s poetry for its Asiatic air, Carlyle’s prose for its Germanism . . . In matters literary I am too proud to stand before the world in borrowed clothes.’
The pioneer of comparative literature in India is Bankimchandra Chatterjee. He studied Shakuntala, Miranda and Desdemona comparatively in 1873. This was a fine achievement.

However, the first major Indian writer to set up an intellectual environment for comparative study of literature is Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore in his essay "Visva Sahitya" (World Literature, 1947) spoke for comparative literature. He pleaded for an international approach to literature. He wanted to distinguish the universal literature from the parochial. In an essay "An Eastern University," he observes:

‘Let me say clearly that I have no distrust of any culture because of its character. On the contrary, I believe the book of such extraneous forces is necessary for the viability of our intellectual nature. It is admitted that much of the spirit of Christianity runs counter not only to the classical culture of Europe, but to the European temperament altogether. And yet this alien movement of ideas, constantly running against the natural mental current of Europe has been an important factor in strengthening and enriching her civilization, on account of the sharp antagonism of its intellectual direction. In fact, the European vernaculars first work up to life and fruitful vigour when they felt the impact of this foreign thought-power with all its oriental forms and affinities. The same is happening in India. The European culture has become of no use, not only with its knowledge, but also with its velocity.'

So the increasing cross-cultural literary interactions due to scientific inventions and discoveries, felicitated comparative studies of art, literature and philosophy. Matthew Arnold observes aptly that “no literature can evolve itself fully nor be appreciated in isolation. According to him . . .
everywhere there is connection, everywhere there is illustration, no single event, no single literature is adequately comprehended except in its relation to other events, to other literatures. Betima Baumer, an Austrian scholar at Indian Institute of Advanced Studies once said, 'everything is connected with everything.' Comparative literature deals with certain common aspects of the texts studied. These themes are rather universal dominating human mind everywhere. Apart from aesthetic elements, a study of comparison and evaluation of themes such as love, nature, usurpation, ambition, fate, God etc can be done. Comparative study in the field of literature has to focus upon common genres like epic, drama, poetry, novel, and short story that are written in all languages. Comparative literature studies are very good to broaden man's existential makeup. In the words of Harry Levin 'it can counteract one's innate provinciality.' It helps to arrive at a view of the world literature, which would remove ambiguities in our approach to literature. This, in turn, can remove the north-south or east-west divide. Wellek and Austin observe:

'...the study of comparative literature will make high demands on the linguistic proficiencies of our scholars. It asks for widening of perspectives, a suppression of local and provincial sentiments not easy to achieve. Yet literature is one, as art and humanity are one.'

The early practitioners of comparative literature held a rather narrow view of it. Van Tieghem, for example, remarked that the object of comparative literature is essentially the study of diverse literatures in their relations with one another. Guyard called it 'the history of international literary relations.' Anna Saitta Revignas had even a narrower concept of comparative literature. She spoke of it as 'a modern science which centres on research into the problems connected with the influences exercised
reciprocally by various literatures.’ Fernand Baldensperger, the recognized leader of the French school of comparative literature, claimed to have had no use for comparisons which did not involve a real encounter that had created a dependence. Comparative literature has, however, moved since from the straight path that its early exponents wanted it to take.

Does India have a literature of its own? Indian literature, many critics tell us, does not exist. Tamil literature exists. Marathi literature exists, Urdu literature exists, even Dogri literature exists, but Indian literature – no, that does not exist. How far can one really speak of the Indian literature? Do writers in Malayalam recognize writers in Assamese or Gujerati as their colleagues – not in the meaningless rhetorical sense of the word, but in the sense that both toil in the same vineyard and both having had to share a common past going much further back in time than divisions of language and social structures?

It was precisely hundred and ten years ago Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya talked of Indian literature. Probably he meant Sanskrit literature and the nascent Bengali literature which owed its modern forms no less to his own pioneering contribution. Bankimchandra assumes all phenomena to be law-governed, literature being no different. The structure of literature, he argues, is yet to be explored. Nevertheless literature is nothing but the reflection of the national situation and national character.

It may not be out of place to refer in this connection to Nirad C. Chaudhuri who developed this argument of Bankim into almost a philosophy of history in his successive books.

Rabindranath Tagore trained his sights on wider horizons. Like Goethe, he talked of world literature. For obvious reasons Goethe did not take every literature into account. So his world literature remained more or
less an abstraction from the two classical literatures of Europe and certain climactic periods of the more prominent European literatures. Goethe, one fears, failed to radically end the prevailing Euro-centric viewpoint. Implicit in Tagore's plea for world literature was the recognition of comparative literature as the tool which was expected to defeat the insularity of colonial India, and widen the horizons of a people gearing up to find their right place in the comity of nations.

**Lingayatism and Basavanna:**

Lingayatism or Veerashaivism is a Shaivite sect. The sect was founded in the twelfth century by Basavanna in the region of Karnataka, and it developed as a reaction against Brahmana dominance and discrimination. Lingayats rejected the sanctity of the Vedas and the authority of Brahmanas, and pilgrimages. Certain Vedic principles were accepted but were reinterpreted with Shaivite terminology. Thus Shiva was recognized as the eternal principle, self-existent and beyond all attributes. Shiva's divine symbol was the Linga, and no other image worship was allowed. The lingayats are called *lingam-carriers*, the meaning of their name, because each person is supposed to carry a small phallic symbol in a tube fastened around the neck or to the arm, and this is virtually the sole ikon in their faith. It is useless to go on pilgrimage or worship in temples or perform any other ritual actions, and for the major part of life the sole practice enjoyed by Basavanna was the reverencing of the *lingam*, symbol of Shiva, twice a day. Some other rites and the use of holy water, ashes, rosaries, and so on also came into Lingayata practice, which concentrates in other respects on the paying of homage to Shiva, through the formula *Namah Sivaya*, and the
inner recollection of the God. The *Shunya Sampadane*, written by the Sharanas throws more light on their practices.

Six forms of the linga were recognized, corresponding to six progressive stages of worship of the *anga* or body. Briefly, the first stage consists of simple Bhakti; the second of Nishthe, or discipline, enduring temptations and ordeals; in the third, Avadhana Bhakti, the devotee recognizes that the lord is everywhere and ‘receives’ or acknowledges Shiva’s presence in the world. The fourth stage is Anubhava Bhakti, in which the devotee sees Shiva within himself and others and is filled with compassion. The fifth stage is one of Ananda or bliss, when the devotee is united with Shiva as a lover. However, at this stage separation from the divine, can still take place. In the sixth stage there is Samarasa, when the devotee and Shiva are one, and all worship is ended. Later writers subdivided these stages into several more, though different aspects of each can be present at the same time. Apart from Basavanna and Allamaprabhu, other notable saints included Ekantada Ramayya, Siddharama, Machideva, Bomayya, Akkamahadevi, and Devara Dasimayya. These saints composed vachanas of love and devotion to Shiva, many of which are preserved. A religious centre (the Anubhava Mantapa) was set up, where the saints of the new sect met and exchanged ideas.

Lingayats are still a practicing sect, but caste distinctions gradually reappeared, and the sect itself became a caste, located mainly in Karnataka. Jangamas, or hereditary priests became a part of the sect.

Lingayats have five main Mathas or religious centres at Kedarnath, Srisailam, Balehonnur, Ujjain and Varanasi. All members are attached to one of these centres and initiated by a guru. Each carries a small linga and wears a white dot on the forehead. The dead are buried instead of being
cremated. Certain daily rites, such as worship of the linga, and some Samskaras, such as initiation of male children, are practiced. Their philosophy is described as Shaktivishistadvaita, similar to Ramanuja’s Vishishtadvaita, though that is a Vaishnava philosophy.

The literature of the sect is in Kannada and Telugu. Some Shaiva Agamas contain aspects of the philosophy, but the most important literature is in Kannada.

It is said, “Striking features of Lingayatism are its rejection of the caste system, its condemnation of child marriage, and its proclamation of the equality of the sexes. Though it has a hereditary priesthood of its own, it avoids all the rituals of the Brahmin’s and in some respects seems a protest against Brahmin domination. Though it rejected caste at the outset, the inevitable of course happened: it itself was treated by the other castes as a caste. There is little escaping the embracing arms of the system in Hindu India. Its ethics are those of equality and humility, as befits those who follow the great God. Honesty and hard work in one’s daily occupation were deemed important; and in some ways the group seems like a Hindu counterpart of Protestant Christianity.10

The Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle thinks history is made by a few great men. The 12th century South India had Basavanna, one such great man, who created an epoch after himself. He appears to be as great as the Buddha, Mahavir, Gandhi and Ambedkar in Indian history.

The Chalukyas of Kalyan who were ruling this part of the country from 972 A.D. were responsible for its many sided development. Rulers like Vikramaditya VI who flourished during this period gave the country its
highest reputation. Kalyan, the capital of Chalukyas, was described as a city. Reminders of Vikramaditya’s great era are still with us. Art, literature, sculpture, all received generous patronage during his rule. The heroism of the Calukyas of Kalyan has been celebrated in a large number of inscriptions belonging to this period. But the fate of a country like that of an individual has its own ebbs and tides. The Chalukyan dynasty which gave rise to a king like Vikramaditya VI also produced a weak ruler like Taila III who came to the throne in 1151 A.D. The Chalukya empire had many feudatories such as Kalacuris of Tardawadi, Silaharas of Darahataka, Sinduhas of Yalambarge, Kadambas of Goa, Cholas of Nidugal, Pandyas of Ucchangi. Even the Hoysalas were one of the feudatories of this expansive empire. Of these, the Kalacuris of Tardawadi played an important role in the political activities of the empire. The Kalachuris were related to the Chalukyas of Kalyan by ties of blood for over three generations. Of the several Kalacuri families that migrated from the North (Kalanjara Pura), that of Tardawadi had kings with vaulting ambitions like Permadi and Bijjala.

Bijjala was the Mahamandalesvar of Tardawadi since 1136 A.D. When young and weak Taila III ascended the throne in 1151, he had manipulated in order to be the Mahapradhana at Kalyan.

When Prola of Varangal, one of the feudatories, declared his independence in 1155 A.D. Bijjala did not take any action, and so, Taila himself marched against him, only to be defeated and made a captive.

To his great good fortune Bijjala as well as all the people discovered no less a divine person than Basavanna as available.

The social and religious conditions that prevailed in the country at that time also cried out for a great reformer like Basavanna. Shaivism which was a dominant religion of India had begun to proliferate into sects. Some of
them were following heinous and horrible practices which were repugnant. The Kapalikas and some other Shaiva sects were of this kind. These Shaiva sects had deviated considerably from the bounds of real bhakti.

The Vedic religion with all its sub-sects was deeply engrossed in the Karma Marga. Religion had ceased to have any relevance to day-to-day living. The futile discourses at the philosophic level and the meaningless hold of Karma and fatalism at the religious level could lead the followers nowhere.

Jainism and Buddhism had come to Karnataka preaching a new message of salvation to people. The religious were pacific in their outlook and upheld non-violence as against the violent sacrifice of the Vedic religion. They were really successful at the beginning and had attracted a large number of followers all over the country. Buddhism came to Karnataka, as it went elsewhere, and left its impact on the life of the people. King Ashok’s rock-cut edicts are found in the heart of Karnataka even today in places like Koppal, Siddapura and Maski. But the history of Buddhism clearly indicates that it had passed its nadir and fallen into decadence in the medieval period.

Jainism had stepped into the heart of Karnataka around 3rd century B.C. It proved a fruitful source for enriching the Kannada language, literature and culture. For centuries Jainism was the most predominant religion in Karnataka. Religion to be true should be free from all kinds of contentions and strifs for the good of mankind. But when kings and queens and royal dynasties intrude into its domain even the great religions become corrupt by human cupiditeis and meet their downfall. This happened to Buddhism as well as to Jainism.
What then was the total impact of all these religions on the life of the common man? Society, it appears, was divided into almost as many sects as there were individuals. The innumerable sects were following their own codes of conduct which was congenial neither to the progress of the individual soul nor to the advancement of society.

The Chalukyan empire was vast in its size, Tardawadi being almost as its centre. Like the political upheavals, the socio-religious awakening also rose from the same source, Tardawadi. It appears that orthodoxy had reached its zenith at the time, in the area. To quote a few instances, it was in Tarwadi some of the noted agraharas were in existence. Bagawadi, Muttage, Ingalesvara, Manigavalli were within the radius of about ten miles and were the abodes of the learned Brahmins belongings to various Shaiva faiths.

Basavanna, was born in Ingalesvara Bagawadi, now in the Bijapur district, midway between Manigavalli (Managuli) and Muttage. Madiraja and Madalambe were the parents of Basavanna. Madiraja was the chief of Bagawadi. The family of Basavanna appears to enjoy great reputation and prestige in all respects-father was the chief of Bagawadi, mother a religious devotee, brother a saintly person, and sister a seeker of a new religion.

It was in such a family that Basavanna was born around the year 1131 A.D. In a traditional Brahmin family like Basavanna’s all the ritual must have been performed meticulously. As a child, Basavanna might have been curious about these rituals. All such rituals must have impressed his enlightened mind as meaningless.

It may be guessed that Basavanna’s mother came from Ingalesvara near Bagawadi for Baladeva, her brother, has been described in one of the works of fairly historical significance as having hailed from Ingalesvara.

Ingalesvara then appears to have been under the strong impact of
Revanasiddhesvara. The cave of Revanasiddhesvara is still to be found there.

Basavanna by birth was a genuine devotee and a seeker after truth. As if to indicate this, it is said that a great Shaiva saint by name Jatavedamuni came from Kudalasangama to Bagawadi to bless the child Basavanna as soon as he was born.

The boy Basavanna was eight years old. Preparations for his thread ceremony were made. Basavanna could not agree to the ceremony at all.

One fact remains clear, however, that Basavanna left his home for Kudalasangama. But he appears to have spent some time at the Mahamane (Great House) in Ingalesvara Bagawadi, where the Bhaktas welcomed him as soon as he left his home for good. The first soul that gave him the courage of conviction and moral support, was his sister Nagalambe.

The distance between Bagawadi and Kudalasangama by present routes is about 40 miles. It was Kudalasangama that Basavanna’s inner self reached realization fully. The reason why Basavanna left home was that he was already invested with Linga.

At Kudalasangama Basavanna used to get up early in the morning everyday to collect sacred leaves and flowers.

Kudalasangama was a noted centre of learning. Veda, Agama, Kavya, Purana, Sastra and other lores pertaining to Bhakti might have been studied there. One of the four inscriptions found at Kudalasangma, dated 1160 A.D., describes Kudalasangama as Kappadisangama, a reputed Brahmapuri a centre of learned Brahmins. The Mahajanas of Sangama were noted for their learning and scholarly pursuits. Isanya Guru was said to be the Sthanapati, or the Chancellor of this Centre of learning. It was this Isanya Guru who might have initiated Basavanna in the study of the knowledge.
Basavanna must have studied the Vedic lore only to be convinced that it could not lead him to eternal peace. The lore of the Shaiva Saints like Jedara Dasimayya, Sankara Dasimayya, Revanasiddhesvara, Sakalesa Madarasa and Kondaguli Kesiraja might have appealed to his mind very much. Also the 63 Puratanas i.e., Nayanars of Tamilnad seem to have impressed the mind of Basavanna considerably.

Basavanna was born to link this world with the other in spirit. At no stage in his life would he forget either. While the spiritual pursuits were going on at Kudalasangama, the worldly activities also seem to have happened side by side there. Baladeva, his maternal uncle, was a minister at Mangalawada. He had seen spiritual awakening in Basavanna and seemed to have approved of his discarding the thread ceremony in favor of the Linga worship. He gave his daughter Gangambike in marriage to Basavanna. This marriage is said to have taken place at Kalyan by Palkurke Somanatha.

As if to heighten the spiritual power of Basavanna, another source of divine power was born to Nagalambe and Shivadeva at Kudalasangam. This was Channabasavesvara holding his spiritual discourse with various Shaiva Saints who were flocking around him at Kudalasangama.

It was no wonder that child Channabaseswara was knowledge incarnate when still a young boy. This was certainly due to the presence of Shivasaranas.

Suddenly there was a call for Basavanna to leave Kudalasangama. He heard that divine call when he was asleep. This was almost piercing through his heart. Sangamesvara directed him to go to Mangalawada where Bijjala was ruling.

Basavanna had left Kudalasangama around the year 1152 A.D. as seen above. Bijjala was then ruling directly over Tardawadi at Mangalawada.
Basavanna might have first gone to Mangalawda, as Harihara puts it, and stayed there for a couple of years and rose to prominence by dint of his own ability.

Basavanna first joins Bijjala’s office as a clerk. His sharp intellect very soon drew the attention of the higher officers like Soddala Bacarasa and Bhandari Siddharas at Mangalawada. It is said when the senior accountants committed a grave mistake in the accounts, Basavanna would point out the same to the great joy and surprise of Bhandari Siddharasa who took him to Bijjala and got him appointed as a clerk on a salary of 101 honnes per year. Not long after Siddharasa’s position as Bhandari was also offered to Basavannna as Siddharasa died without an heir, and Basavanna was found to be the most appropriate choice.

Political situation at Kalyan changed. Taila III who succeeded Jagadekamalla in 1151 was rather a weak ruler. Bijjal became the Mahapradhana to Taila III in 1154 A.D. after displacing Bommarasa and Kasapayya in about a year or two. As he was a staunch Shaivite his sympathies were always with Basavanna who was an ardent devotee of God Shiva. He had his full faith in him and was also impressed by his abilities and divine personality. So, as soon as he went to Kalyan as Mahapradhana, he might have invited Basavanna as a Bhandari. After the death of Baladeva Basavanna became Minister to Bijjala in 1162 A.D. when the latter became the emperor.

Political situation at Kalyan was changing ever since Taila III became the Chalukyan emperor. Bijjala was maneuvering things in such a way that no sudden change could take place in respect of the throne. He however proved himself to be very able in managing the affairs of the kingdom for over ten years; also as Mahamandalesvara and Mahapradhana he had won a
number of battles. He had put down a number of enemies who rose against the empire.

It appears that people did not suspect that Bijjala would rise against the Chalukya emperor, who was near relative. When Bijjala usurped the empire, in 1161 A.D. he himself might have felt that he had hurt the feelings of the people who were devoted to the Chalukya kings. In such a situation he wanted a capable and divine person like Basavanna to be his minister in order to gain the confidence and good will of his subjects. It was in this way that Basavanna became the Minister to King Bijjala in 1162.

Basavanna's life at Kalyan since 1154 was most eventful. The dreams he dreamt at Kudalasangama were being realized one by one at Kalyan. He wanted to establish a new religion which would elevate the people to heavenly felicity here and in this world itself. He was almost successful in this by bringing about great reforms in Shaiva religion. His Bhakti movement was unique in as much as it attracted great saints from all over India. He condemned all barriers of caste, creed, sex, etc, and found a society on the basis of equality and fraternity.

The Shivanubhava Gosthis, or the spiritual discourses, that were being held in Kudalasangama and Mangalawada, took the shape of Sivanubhavamantapa, in his Mahamane (Great House) at Kalyan. Fundamental principles of religion, philosophy and society were discussed and the great Vachana literature took its final shape. Arrangements were made to spread the new thoughts in the contemporary society far and wide.

Basavanna describes Siddharasa as the father of Nilaocane. It may be surmised, therefore, that Mayidevi was identical with Nilalocane, and Gangadevi and Nilalocane were the daughters of Baladeva and Siddharas
respectively. Basavanna had a son named Balasangayya. He is referred to as Chikkasangayya in vachana literature.

Kalyan was like heaven on earth. Basavanna had established the Sunya pitha of his Mahamane, in the Anubhava Mantap as a symbol of the new religion that was being advocated by the Sharanas in 1154 A.D. Allamaprabhu, a supreme Shivayogi ascended this pitha in 1162 A.D. In fact Basavanna was waiting longingly for a number of years, for the arrival of Allamaprabhu who had visited with Siddharama the Anubhava Mantapa at Kalyan when it was just started.

It was then that the secret of Istalinga and Shivayoga were preached by Allamaprabhu to the Sharanas, gathering up the various paths into one faith. One of the historical events at the Sivanubhava Mantapa, at Kalyan, was that of bringing Siddharama into the fold of Shivayoga and Istalinga. Allamaprabhu as a true Jangama moved from place to place meeting a number of mystics like Muktayi, Goggayya, Goraksa etc. His divine presence would transform them, and his discourse would bring them to his own religious fold of Istalinga and Shivayoga.

It was Channabasavanna who systematized the metaphysics of the Veerashaiva system. The Satsthala, which is the cardinal principle of Veerashaiva philosophy, was organized and systematized at the great Mahamane. Channaasavanna was, therefore, called ‘Satsthala Chakravarti.’

The social revolution, however, is the hall-mark of this great movement. The cardinal principles for which Basavanna stood were of equality, liberty and fraternity. This reminds us the French Revolution of 1789. He would never accept any hierarchy in society. To him all were equal irrespective of caste, creed, occupation etc. His life-long struggle was to eradicate the deep rooted Varnasrama system. Basavanna being the maha-
pradhana would take his meals with Shivanagmayya who formerly was an untouchable. Such incidents must have created a sensation in the traditional society. The orthodox of the older traditions and other vicious people like Kondiya Manchanna who were jealous of Basavanna’s great achievements, carried tales to Bijjala now and then to malign him. They also accused Basavanna of misappropriation in the treasury for maintaining the innumerable saints and followers at Kalyan. To add fuel to the fire, a historical marriage ceremony took place at Kalyan between the children of Madhuvarasa, who was formerly a Brahmin, and Haralayya, an untouchable. But these were now Sharanas.

This was considered by traditional people as pratiloma marriage never permitted in the traditional society and which, therefore, infuriated them. Bijjala could feel the pulse of resentment of the masses. At the pressure of such people Bijjala had to punish severely the innocent Sharanas, Haralayya and Madhuvarasa.

This was an unbearable shock to the sensitive mind of Basavanna. Violence in any form was against his grain and principle. He began to feel that his mission in Kalyan came to an end. He took upon himself the blame that he could not convince the king and thus prevent this tragedy; and hence with great sorrow in his heart he left Kalyan for Kudalasangama.

The Sharanas however were very much distressed. The people who were disgruntled at the action of Bijjala in usurping the Chalukyan throne seem now to have taken advantage of the situation to express their growing resentment. A chaotic condition began to prevail in Kalyan in which Bijjala was murdered by Jagadeva, Mallideva and Bommanna. Unfortunately the royal family suspected the Sharanas for the crime and they were chased by
Rayamurari Sovideva, the son of King Bijjala. The Sharanas chapter in the annals of Kalyan thus came to a sad end.

Basavanna who had left Kalyan three months before the tragic incidents, attained union with Kudalasangamesvara in 1167 A.D.

Worship of Ishtalinga constitutes the kernel of Veerashaivism. The new faith is a departure from the labyrinth of mechanical ritualism of the Vedic traditions in essentials. In this faith there is no place for the scared fire and the sacrificial rituals. And social gradation such as Brahmana, Sudra, and the four fold asrama scheme of life are not accepted. The sacraments and rituals are reduced to the minimum, the most essential being only three, initiation, marriage and funeral. The soul, being pure, is free from physical pollutions. The goal of human life is the union of the individual soul with the Supreme. This can be achieved by the rules of Ashtavaranas, the eight-fold covering or spiritual aids, which is the means for developing one’s individuality; the Panchacharas or the five-fold conduct which elevates the individual in his social environment; and Shatsthalas, the six-fold stage which leads him on the path of spiritual progress and perfection. Among the Ashtavarana, the triad, the Guru (the spiritual guide), the Linga (the mystic emblem of the Supreme) and the Jangama (the itinerant minister of religion and morality) occupy a prominent place. Thus, this religion is free from the shortcomings like the rituals, superstitions and distinctions based on caste, creed and six.

K. B. Basavaraja observes, “Basavanna ranks high among religious teachers who pursued bhakti-marga (the path of devotion) in their daily life. The vachanas and the noble deeds of Basavanna gave mighty impetus to the bhakti movement and caused it to take deep roots in the soil and thus set an example to another school, Haridasas, devotees of Visnu who came to the
front at a much later date in the 16th century. The Veerashaiva movement was free from orthodox fetters and influenced common people and gave them a direction. In this respect institutions like the Anubhava Mantapa founded by Basavanna rendered immense service to the cause of Veerashaivism by their idealism, literary works and social activities.

Ralph Waldo Emerson:

Emerson was an American essayist, philosopher and poet. He is also called the father of American literature. It was in his age, American literature reached its golden age. His reading of essay “The American Scholar” at Harvard declared the independence of American literature in 1837. This was attested by Lowell and Holmes. So in Robert Spiller’s view, he became the spokesman for his time and country. It is said,

He preeminence has caused our literary historians some embarrassment. America was ready for a Shakespeare, a Dante, or a Dostoevski to give literary voice to her achieved majority. She was given an apologist – an Aristotle, a Paul, a Bacon. In the wise and temperate Emerson, the heat became radiant light. It was he who brought into its first sharp focus the full meaning of two centuries of life on the Atlantic seaboard of this continent; of the economic and spiritual revolutions which had unsettled the Old World and settled the New; of the experiment in democracy which was to make a Holy Commonwealth into a world power.

Emerson achieved this marked greatness by consolidating an individual’s revolt against authority; and by bringing a compromise between the religionist Jonathan Edwards and the practicalist Benjamin Franklin.
The central twenty years of his struggling life left an impression of a man who always stood firm on moral ground and admonished his fellows to turn their eyes from evil, to have faith in themselves and in one another, and to seek God through Nature. But the Emersonian confidence and calm were not achieved, nor were they maintained, without struggle, doubt, and self-examination.

This chronicle of Emerson's preparation may be reconstructed from letters and journals. The romantic pattern of introspection, doubt, and psychological crisis found in a Carlyle or a Goethe was his as well, marked by the familiar circumstances of poverty, loneliness, illness, idealized love, and the discovery of death.

Poverty was the lot of his childhood. The second of four boys, he was only eight years old when his father died in 1811 and the congregation of the 'Old Brick' Church in Boston granted the 'pious and amiable' widow home and subsistence for a few years. Fortunately his aunt Mary Moody Emerson guided him. Her life, writes her nephew 'marked the precise time when the power of the old creed yielded to the influence of modern science and humanity.' The zeal and consecration of Puritan ancestor was mingled in the latter day sibyl with shrewd common sense and an insatiable intellectual curiosity. Mary Moody Emerson lived this life in preparation for the next, but she lived it with gusto. For Aunt Mary was both mystic and critic, Calvinist and skeptic; Ralph could laugh at her because he profoundly respected her.

Emerson had both poverty, and a series of deaths in the family. He lost two of younger brothers Edward and Charles, the latter the friend and companion for years. Love too came to him in somber garb. He fell in love with Ellen Tucker, of his age, and both suffered from illness. This lady woke
in him the protective manhood, spurred ambition and inspired poetic tribute. The marriage lasted a little over a year, and her death left a 'miserable apathy' rather than the morbid depression of adolescent sorrow. As pastor of the Second Church of Boston, he had meanwhile become a man. Yet Ellen remained the one great romance of his life.

Emerson who was brought up in a literary tradition sought refuge in books. Emerson, through aunt Mary discovered Milton, Bacon, Shakespeare and Burke and a host others to follow. For the formal Harvard curriculum he had little use, and he was content to remain in the middle of his class rather than seek academic distinction. A good sermon from W. E. Channing, or an oration from Everett or Webster gave him more pleasure than the rhetorical instruction of Edward Channing or the cold rationalism of Locke. The influence of the Scottish rationalist Dugald Stewart can be traced in his later writing; but, at the time, the *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind* seemed all cottages and shops after entering the gate of splendor and promise. Doubt knocked at his door in the form of Pyrrhonism, the current undergraduate fashion. Slowly, as he took over his own education, he added Plato, Montaigne, Newton, Swedenborg, and Plutarch to his list of imperatives. More commonly he turned to histories, anthologies, and translations as shortcuts to usable ideas: Gerando, Schlegel, Stael, Cousin, Hammer's translations of Persian poetry into German, and Taylor's translations of the Neo-Platonists. Newton's *Principia* and Lyell's *Geology* opened his mind to both the old and the new science. He also learned French and German. Robert Spiller says,

'In all of this reading two trends are clearly marked. He hoped to learn from the skeptics, the rationalists, and the scientists a common-sense basis for moral truth; and he hoped to meet in the mystics and
romantics a validation immediate, instinctive, and final. The one brought him closer to experience, the other to God.\textsuperscript{13}

Emerson retired from his ministry soon in 1832. Because he loved independence of mind. 'Whoso would be a man,' he wrote later, 'must be a non-conformist . . . Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.' He wrote further in his journal: 'I am beginning my professional studies. In a month I shall be legally a man. And I deliberately dedicate my time, my talents, and my hopes to the Church. Man is an animal that looks before and after . . . and this page must be witness to the latest year of my life whether I have good grounds to warrant my determination.\textsuperscript{14}

Then Emerson taught in a school, and did something else, believing that he would regenerate his mind, manners, inward and outward estate. Three points emerge from this inventory, which are central to an understanding of the later Emerson: his faith in the moral imagination rather than the intellect, his lack of self-confidence, and his choice of eloquence as his natural medium of expression.

Emerson's rebellion, when it finally came, was twofold: against the last vestiges of ecclesiastical authority over the spiritual life of the individual, and against the eighteenth century rationalism which had killed spirituality, he thought, when it denied revelation. The first pointed to a final schism in which each man becomes his own church; the second sought to provide the rules for a new and personal orthodoxy.

Emerson's people in New England were Unitarians, having gradually neglected Calvinism. Both his father William Emerson and William Ellery Channing tried to teach the doctrine of truth discoverable by the mind rather than by the heart. Emerson developed his own version of a new revelation as it is explicit in \textit{Nature}. This is also seen in his letters and poems.
The inner drama of Emerson’s struggle is written between the lines of more than 160 sermons preached between 1822 and 1832, a selection of which has been published as Young Emerson Speaks. In these sermons, we find most of his later and characteristic doctrines expressed in a voice straining for conviction and leaning upon logic and authority where uncertainties still cling. In his first sermon, “Pray Without Ceasing” (1826), man is declared ‘the architect of his own fortunes’; conscience, the predecessor of the ‘moral sentiment’ of the later essays, is ‘God’s vicegerent’; ‘the preexistent harmony between thought and things anticipates the later convictions of correspondence between moral and natural law; and nature ‘helps the purposes of man.’

Another tragedy took place, disturbing the jobless young writer. Emerson’s wife Ellen Tucker died within a year and half of her marriage, leaving him in sorrow. In his first personal talk to his congregation he announced that he would not ‘be so much afraid of innovation as to scruple about introducing new forms of address, new modes of illustration, and varied allusions from the pulpit.’ The desire of his hearers for sanctity in style and solemnity in illustration would not deter him from the study of secular as well as scriptural wisdom and its use in his ministry. Gradually, as personal conviction grew, a new form and a new style asserted themselves. As his personal and theological difficulties became more pressing, his heart seemed to awaken. The need for self-justification in the lonely path which was inevitably opening before him brought an emotional power to his discourse which no evangelical technique could supply. His farewell sermon on the Lord’s Supper (1832) was his last effort to rest a case upon the principles of logical analysis. His real farewell came a month later in his final sermon to his congregation on “The Genuine Man” who ‘parts with his
individuality, leaves all thought of private stake, personal feeling, and in compensation he has in some sort the strength of the whole. In “The Miracle of Our Being” (1834) the form of all his later work is declared. From ‘the fitness of man to the earth’ this sermon rises by swift ascent to ‘an infinite and perfect life.’ He retired to Ethan Crawford’s field in New Hampshire where ‘life was reconsidered.’

At his age thirty in 1833, he made a year-long trip to Europe. Now he was jobless and widower also. He felt disgusted of his failures in life. He traveled yet for confronting new people and things, as much as himself. He was happy for he was a man, and an American.

Emerson’s quest ended with a pledge, ‘if health and opportunity be granted me, to demonstrate that all necessary truth is its own evidence; that no doctrine of God need appeal to a book; that Christianity is wrongly received by all such as take it as a system of doctrines, - its stress being upon moral truth; it is a rule of life, not a rule of faith.’

What matters is that Europe as Old World did not fascinate him. The great cities Paris and London, not to speak of Rome did not attract him; nor the Romantics Wordsworth and Coleridge. Carlyle alone pleased him and both became friends. These two met and talked through the night because they were exploring the same caverns, not because they had come out into the same sunlight. When it appeared finally that Carlyle preferred to remain a struggler in the darkness, the sympathy waned, and Emerson emerged alone into the affirmation of his middle years.

Emerson did this tour to Europe in 1833, and published his book of essays, Essays, First Series in 1841, the book based on his 75 lectures, and sermons. He had written essays based on his communion with Carlyle,
Thoreau and Margaret Fuller. A few poems and essays found print in the *Dial*, the *Western Messenger*, the *Massachusetts Quarterly*, and later the *Atlantic*, and there only to help his friends and the cause of enlightenment which they shared with him. He had found his new profession. His was to be the living message, the spoken voice. The town hall was his new church, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge his sect.

With this rededication Emerson discovered a new way of life. Within three years after his return from Europe all his major decisions had been made, his life put in order. In the winter of 1833-1834 he began his lectures; that summer he made Concord his home; the next year he married Lydia Jackson of Plymouth, bought the Old Coolidge house on the Cambridge Turnpike — regrettably in a meadow rather than on a hill — and delivered to his townsfolk an “Historical Discourse” on the occasion of their second centennial. In 1836 he published *Nature* and his son Waldo was born. He had home, wife, family, career, friends, and associates. ‘The lonely wayfaring man,’ as Carlyle was later to call him, was once more a citizen of this world.

Emerson tried to study what we can call ‘The first Principle’; or God. He studied Bacon, the Quakers, the Swedenborgians, the Methodists, Neo-Platonism and Oriental insights.

Emerson avoided logic as ‘a foolish consistency.’ The similarity of Emerson’s thought to that of Kant, Hegel, Schleiermacher, and Schelling is deceptive; such influences usually came to him at one or more removes.

Emerson’s *Nature* (1836) is the gospel of the new faith rather than, like Thoreau’s *Walden*, a record of an experience of earth. Lifted by the excitement of recognition to the plane of prose-poetry, it is nevertheless a concise statement of Emerson’s ‘First Philosophy.’
Emerson delivered a remarkable lecture on the American scholar at the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Harvard on 31-8-1837. This was an annual address. He spoke for the sake of a national literature with freshness of vigour.

Yet when the address was concluded Lowell declared it 'an event without any former parallel in our literary annals,' and Holmes pronounced it 'our Intellectual Declaration of Independence.'

Emerson went on lecturing more for the sake of heralding a revolution in man's way of life than for his survival. He said,

'Amidst a planet peopled with conservatives, one reformer may yet be born.' To the scholar he said 'Translate, collate, distil all the systems, it steads you nothing; for truth will not be compelled in any mechanical manner.' And again, 'Man Thinking must not be subdued by his instruments. Books are for the scholar's idle times. When he can read God directly, the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their readings.' To the writer: 'All literature is yet to be written. Poetry has scarce chanted its first song.'

He spoke on the diversity of things. The new literature must be neither Classic nor Romantic: 'I embrace the common, I explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low. Give me insight into to-day, and you may have the antique and future worlds.' He believed in originality, and freshness of thought. His many essays of the time are "Biography," "English Literature," "The Philosophy of History," "Human Culture," "Human Life," "The Present Age," "The Times," and "New England." With the journals, these lectures bear the relationship to the Essays that an artist's sketch does to his finished painting.
Emerson's family life ran smooth. He was happy with Lydia. Son Waldo was born in 1836. Emerson had two daughters Edith and Ellen and another son Edward. Now he had settled down in Concord.

The Thoreaus, Hoars, and Ripleys were native citizens, but Alcott, Ellery Channing, and Hawthorne were late comers; Margaret Fuller, Elizabeth Peabody, the mystic Jones Very, and many others of the transcendental set were never more than visitors. The Social Circle which met frequently at the Emerson home on Tuesday evenings consisted of 'twenty-five of citizens: doctor, lawyer, farmer, trader, miller, mechanic; solidest men, who yield the solidest gossip.'

All these people had a 'Transcendental Club.' But all these people were not great enough with marked thoughts. Bronson Alcott was the Orphic philosopher, in an ethereal sphere which he shared with Plato; Thoreau came fresh from the woods and fields; Emerson from his study; Parker, 'the Savoncarola,' and Brownson from their churches, the one a Unitarian, the other inclining toward Rome. Margaret Fuller and occasionally Hawthorne's sister-in-law Elizabeth Peabody shot bolts of aggressive femininity.

They started the journal Dial; and George Ripley began a community experiment at Brook Farm. They started the Concord School of Philosophy in 1879. So Concord became a centre of intellectual studies for decades.

Emerson produced his second volume of Essays in 1844. His first one was issued in 1841. The new form which Emerson developed is neither wholly essay nor wholly lecture. Its unit is the carefully wrought sentence, 'pure, genuine Saxon'; as Carlyle immediately recognized, 'strong and simple; of a clearness, of a beauty.'

Emerson continued to write further. The 'new art' of Emerson is contained in five volumes – all, except some of the poems, written within the
decade 1844-1854, none published immediately. They are *Poems* (1847), *Representative Men* (1850), *English Traits* (1856), *The Conduct of Life* (1860), and *May-Day* (1867). That in this period he passed from a state of romantic tension to one of 'classic' or organic restraint more suitable to the New England disposition. His poetry was written in his own study, the product of walks in the Concord fields or to his 'garden,' the woodlot on Walden Pond which he allowed Thoreau to use for his cabin. The prose was a reworking of lectures delivered in England (1847-1848) and in the 'West' from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati, to St. Louis and Chicago (1850-1853).

Emerson's poetry is prosaic, and philosophical, but original. He did not follow the predecessors Bryant, Halleck, and Freneau. Like Whitman and Poe, he had his own originality and experiment. Critics think Poe and Emerson supplement each other. Poe sought an aesthetic base for the art; and Emerson a moral. If Poe used rhythm, Emerson used symbol. They directed the course of American poetry, of course both Whitman and Dickinson contributing theirs own. Emerson speaks of the poet as a seer.

According to Emerson, the prose writer is also a visionary. His prose as well as poetry has similar kind of maturity. His later books of prose *Representative Men*, *English Traits*, and *The Conduct of Life* speak of this succinctly. These books speak of great men, the values of modern civilization and the principles of individual action. The wise Emerson speaks on his own ground now. For *Representative Men*, Emerson chose his cases carefully, each to represent a way of thinking and acting: Plato, the philosopher; Swedenborg, the mystic; Montaigne, the skeptic; Shakespeare, the poet; Napoleon, the man of the world; Goethe, the writer. All of these ways he had to some degree tried. They were tests for himself and for his hearers rather than essays in criticism. The first four, 'Plato,' 'Swedenborg,'
'Montaigne,' and 'Shakespeare,' were written from the heart. These men had given Emerson personal aid as he emerged from the doubts and uncertainties of youth into the calm confidence of his later years. Each he had finally found lacking, incomplete for his purposes, because there is no such thing as a wholly great man.

Emerson's book *English Traits* drew ideas from his journals and lectures. This is also true of his succeeding book *The Conduct of Life*, based on his lectures delivered in the west.

Emerson delivered innumerable lectures for decades. He lectured not only in America, but also in Europe. In England he was a guest of honor at the Grand Soiree of the Manchester Athenaeum, where he addressed several thousand people, among them such notables as Cobden, Bright, Cruikshank, and Blackwood. A few years later he faced in Cincinnati a 'vast assembly which sat for two mortal hours . . . lecture hungry,' in anticipation. He met the great now on their own level: among them Dickens, Tennyson, and Carlyle again. But the real and enduring profit of these journeys lay in his two ripest and roundest books, *English Traits* and *The Conduct of Life*. If he had written nothing else, by these two he would deserve to be called our most representative man. His *English Traits* opens with accounts of his first visit and of his voyage, and concludes with his trip to Stonehenge, his personal reception, and his speech at Manchester. The intervening chapters constitute an analysis of contemporary British civilization against a background of history. 'If there be one test of national genius universally accepted,' he writes, 'it is success; and if there be one successful country in the universe for the last millennium, that country is England.' His curiosity is piqued and he seeks the answer in geography, ethnology, moral philosophy, economics, politics, education, religion, and literature.
The famous American Civil War broke in the year *The Conduct of Life* appeared. Now Emerson, having finished his great career, calmed down, unable to be dragged by the war.

Never up to the moment of his death in 1882 did he equal the achievement of *The Conduct of Life*. He gathered together one more collection of his essays, *Society and Solitude* (1870), but a second, *Letters and Social Aims* (1875), was too much for him after the shock of the burning of his home in 1872. His friend James Elliot Cabot took over the task and completed it under Emerson’s wandering supervision. Cabot culled two more volumes from the stock pile of shuffled manuscripts, and Edward Emerson a third after their author’s death.

**The Philosophy of Transcendentalism:**

Philosophy is a rational critical thinking about the conduct of life, and world. Still the philosophy of life is subject to change and differences. The discipline of philosophy is vast and varied.

The Greeks were the first to think of philosophy. Mathematics was the first distinct style of rational thinking to establish its independence. By the 17th century natural science was free. The social sciences detached themselves in the 18th century; psychology in the 19th. They called philosophy as the theory of knowledge (now it being called epistemology based on the root episteme).

The Greek philosophers who followed Aristotle had the habit of dividing philosophy into three parts: logic, physics, and ethics.

It is reasonable that philosophy, if concerned with conduct, should go on to take an interest in the nature of the world and in the justification of belief.
To start with, it makes an important difference whether the world is the creation of a God who takes an interest in us or not. To go on from that: in order for our conception of the nature of the world to be well founded we have to work out how to decide whether beliefs, formed by us or thrust on us by others, deserve to be believed.

Most people’s rules of conduct are unreflective, habits of action or of impulse to action, first acquired through parental or other training and then codified by experience in various ways, such as imitating an admired example or responding to changes in fashion. Most people have some general conception of the world and of human nature, absorbed from all sorts of sources, and they may connect this to their assumptions about right conduct. Many people, from time to time and without being aware of the fact, are philosophers, or at least think philosophically, even if in a rudimentary way.

Epistemology, Logic, and Metaphysics

We may now reverse the order of the three main ingredients of philosophy so as to put the most logically fundamental – epistemology – first and the perhaps most humanly interesting – ethics – last.

Epistemology is needed here to justify the authority the metaphysician ascribes to the elemental beliefs he starts from: for example, that we notice recurrence in our experience, that we depend on our senses for knowledge of matters of fact, that our knowledge of our private mental states is more certain than our knowledge of material things.

Metaphysics also proceeds at times in a more direct way, seeking to arrive at truths about the world in general by demonstrative argument along, arguments that aims to show, by purely logical means, that any other
conclusion that the one the metaphysician is putting forward is impossible. Examples of demonstrative metaphysical reasoning of this kind are the ontological proof of the existence of God, Spinoza's proof that the world as a whole is a single substance, and McTaggart's argument for the thesis that time is unreal.

A god who exists, as the argument would have it, is greater than something, otherwise identical, that does not exist. So God, defined as the greatest conceivable thing, must exist.

Demonstrative metaphysics began, so far as we know, with Parmenides in the 6th century B.C. He tried to prove the impossibility of empty space, of motion, and of a plurality of distinct things. The single, motionless reality, according to him fills all of space.

Plato, Saint Augustine, Spinoza, and Leibniz are the most celebrated practitioners of demonstrative metaphysics. Other philosophers have criticized it, notably Hume and Kant. Kant, in fact, argued penetratingly against two types of metaphysics: first, the transcendent metaphysics that is the philosophical ally of religion and claims to give us information about a world beyond space and time, beyond the natural world that is the field of possible observation, and, second, the metaphysics that claims to give us information about the natural world as a whole, about its infinite extent and divisibility, for example, or about the conformity of all events in it to laws of nature.

We have been considering epistemology so far in its role as a critic of metaphysics or of the pieces or bodies of supposed knowledge that metaphysicians take as their points of departure. That seems historically correct. It is the metaphysical urge to arrive at a conception of the general nature of the world that ordinarily gives rise to epistemology. Descartes is
generally agreed to be the philosopher who put philosophy on its characteristic modern, postmedieval path by making epistemology its central ingredient. Descartes’ intentions, however, were metaphysical. His most important book alludes to metaphysics in its main title — Meditations on First Philosophy (‘first philosophy’ being Aristotle’s name for metaphysics).

Descartes’ direct successors, Spinoza and Leibniz, went on, in the spirit of that conviction, to construct large systems of demonstrative metaphysics. In them they tried to overcome the problem of understanding how mind and body are related, a problem that was bequeathed by Descartes’ very sharp distinction between the two entities. In Kant’s attempt to bring these two traditions together, epistemology triumphed over metaphysics, ratifying Descartes’ achievements as an epistemologist over his intentions as a metaphysician.

Possibly the most significant example of the service of epistemology to metaphysics is Plato’s doctrine of ideas or forms. That is the doctrine, already mentioned, that there are universals, abstract entities in a timeless world of their own, to which the intellect has access much as the senses have access to ordinary physical things in space and time. Plato argued that the best and most secure knowledge we have is mathematical knowledge — in his epoch, geometry above all. Genuine knowledge, he concluded, is only of that which is abstract. We can have no more than unreliable opinion about concrete physical things. He then went on to argue that only what can be truly known really exists, so that the world in its true nature is abstract, a timeless realm accessible to the intellect. On the other hand, the world of the senses is a half-illusion, a kind of waking dream.

Plato wrote, very penetratingly, on epistemology, notably in his dialogue the Theaetetus. But his main interest was in metaphysics and in the
consequences of metaphysics. His distinction between the real world of abstract ideas and the half-real world of bodily things readily developed into a view of human beings as compounds of reason and desire; of virtue as the domination of reason over desire; and of a well-run state as one in which a rational elite – the philosopher-kings – rule over the masses.

Descartes, nearly 2,000 years later, gave epistemology a prominence in philosophy it had never had before by the seriousness with which he confronted skepticism. The only survivor of this purge was ‘I think, therefore I am.’ Descartes went on to use that example of absolute indubitability as a touchstone. The kind of radical skepticism that Descartes used as a purifying device to expel all questionable belief in an attempt to put knowledge on more secure foundations had been an important aspect of Greek philosophy. From the time of Pyrrho of Elis, a younger contemporary of Aristotle, the school of skepticism persisted until the 3rd century A.D. Its views were expounded by Cicero and criticized by Saint Augustine.

That style of thought had no place in the official scheme of Christian philosophy that was dominant in various forms from the time of Augustine to the Reformation. The Greek skeptics had very different aims from Descartes. Descartes saw doubt as a means to the improvement of knowledge. Whereas the Greek skeptics used it to decry the pursuit of knowledge and proclaimed that peace of mind – the chief ethical goal of an unhopeful age – is assisted by recognizing the inevitability of our ignorance.

Skepticism revived in the Renaissance, but it was directed principally against the dogmas of religion rather than the whole range of human beliefs. Descartes grew up in an atmosphere of fashionable skepticism. His generalization of it put all beliefs in question. Hume resorted to it, in the manner of Descartes’ predecessors, to undermine the dogmatic pretensions
of religion. Hume's contemporary critic Thomas Reid maintained that the basic commonsense assumptions about the independent existence of material things, of other minds, and of the historical past are older and of more authority than all the arguments of philosophy. That thesis has been repeated in the 20th century laboriously but persuasively by G. E. Moore. But some modern epistemologists take skepticism seriously, notably Bertrand Russell, who said that he had one constant preoccupation: I have throughout been anxious to discover how much we can be said to know and with what degree of certainty or doubtfulness.

It has been pointed out that most of the specific problems of epistemology share a characteristic form. At least four broad types of epistemological attitudes can be defined in terms of possible reactions to these gaps. Skeptics say that we have no right to draw the conclusions we do on the basis of the evidence we have. Intuitionists deny that our evidence is as limited as the doctrine of a gap supposes; we have direct access to material things or past events or other minds. Reductionists say that there is really no gap; the conclusions are really no more than ways of saying very complicated things about what we have direct access to - to talk of material things is just to talk of what John Stuart Mill called 'permanent possibilities of sensation.'

Perhaps the fundamental problem of epistemology is that of defining knowledge itself. It has engaged the attention of philosophers at intervals ever since Plato's brilliant attack on the problem in his Theaetetus, in which he argued persuasively that it cannot be defined as true belief. True belief is knowledge only if it is acquired in the right way. Just what that is remains a topic of lively disagreement. Ordinarily two major, overlapping distinctions are drawn between varieties of knowledge or rational belief. The other
large distinction is between empirical belief about matters of fact, which are or are inferred from the promptings of perception, introspection, or memories of them, and a \textit{a priori} belief that we can see, or prove, to be true independently of experience. The distinction on which foundationalism rests is challenged by coherence theorists for whom the belief it is reasonable to hold constitute a kind of mutual substantiation society. One feature of our beliefs has been strangely neglected by epistemologists. Most of what we know or truly believe, we do so on the credit of others: teachers, the people we talk with, the writers of everything from encyclopedias to newspapers. As believers we are afloat in a sea of testimony and can check only a little of it by our individual inquiries.

In the last section an argument was considered for the existence of \textit{a priori} knowledge. Logic does indeed begin with something like empirical observation. The logician observes his own and other people's reasonings. Aristotle was the first to present logic at all systematically. His predecessors had prepared the way for him by explicitly stating particular logical laws or truths.

As has been seen, epistemology is concerned with the inferences we make from one kind of belief to another.

A few years ago there was a fashion for calling philosophy 'informal logic.' There is, however, a truly philosophical successor subject: philosophical logic, which is sometimes known, after a part of itself, as theory of meaning or again as philosophy of language.

Formal logicians discuss beliefs and their expressions: propositions, statements, sentences. All of these interconnected topics – proposition and term, meaning and reference, truth and necessity – define a distant field of
inquiry that must be explored by any epistemology that seeks to secure its own foundations.

Traditionally, metaphysics has argued for the independent, and even superior reality of ideas, in two senses of that word, as compared with the reality of common material things in space and time. The first sort of ideas are logical ideas. The second sort are mental ideas, the private states of mind or mental events, which Descartes held that we have infallible introspective knowledge of.

Platonism and Cartesian dualism are both transcendent metaphysics in that they argue for the existence, even the superior existence, of things beyond experience and beyond the ordinary natural, material world: in Plato’s case the forms, in Descartes’ God and immortal souls. God exists as a pure spirit, that the soul continues to exist after the dissolution of its body, and that there is an immaterial realm where finite spirits enjoy the contemplation of God. Religion seems to presuppose a dualism of mind and body. But many dualists do not have positive religious beliefs.

The Neoplatonists of the Hellenistic world, whose version of Plato provided early Christianity with a philosophical bone structure, took something like this position as, nearer our own time did Hegel.

Materialism is the metaphysical position most friendly to science. Materialism has had a long history and some distinguished exponents—Democritus, Hobbes, and after a fashion, Marx. But until recently it has been something of a philosophical outlaw.

There are two main kinds of immanent metaphysics, apart from materialism, that deny the independent or superior existence of things transcending the common spatiotemporal world. The first of them is the
metaphysics of Aristotle, in which there is no ontological class distinction between the contents of the one world.

Christian philosophy was Platonic in its early period but in the form given to it by Saint Thomas Aquinas it is the philosophy of the Roman Catholic Church today,

A second, more rarefied, kind of metaphysics has no generally recognized name. It is the common, sometimes inadvertent, ontology of Hume, John Stuart Mill, Ernest Mach, William James, Bertrand Russell, and many of the logical positivists of the period between the two world wars. Metaphysics, then, is concerned with the existence of matter, minds and their states, God, and the abstract entities treated in logic and mathematics.

Ethics, and Minor Departments of Philosophy

Once upon a time—which in philosophy means in ancient Greece—ethics concerned itself with the conduct of life in general. In life as a whole people pursue many different kinds of ends; the general good, their own individual good; efficiency, health, wealth, and so on. Morality is just one, if a very important one, of the codes of conduct directed toward these varied ends.

As it turned out, the business of inquiry into the good life for human beings generally, into the conditions of human happiness or peace of mind, has narrowed down in postclassical times to a study of morality alone. The main reason for this is no doubt religious enthusiasm.

Morality, strictly so called, is only one of the aspects of conduct or action. To be comprehensive, therefore, ethics should be a theory of value in general. The main opposing view to intuitionism of these two varieties is the utilitarian theory, which disagrees with it on two main issues. First, the
utilitarian is what is called a naturalist, in denying that the moral characteristics of actions and agents are unique and independent of all natural, straightforwardly discoverable facts about the world. Second, utilitarianism is consequentialist in holding that actions are not right or wrong in themselves, but only in the light of the goodness or badness of the consequences to which they give rise.

For all their differences, intuitionists and utilitarians agree that there are objective moral truths and falsehoods. G.E. Moore proclaimed that no moral judgment is identical in meaning to any statement of natural fact.

Political philosophy is an extension of ethics into the domain of organized social institutions. Its fundamental problem is the nature of the moral obligation of the citizen to obey the state and its laws, which, viewed from the other end, is the problem of the right of the state to compel the citizen to obey it.

A form of value, apparently distinct from the moral, which has an established philosophical discipline to itself is the aesthetic. The philosophies of politics and of art are not the only minor department of philosophy that are assigned to particular forms of intelligent human thought and action.

Science and history are, unlike politics and art, no more than pursuits of knowledge. Attempts have been made to establish even more narrowly defined departmental philosophies. The philosophies of history and social science justify their claim to independence of each other on the ground that the methods followed in the primary disciplines studied are, or are seriously thought to be, peculiar to them.
In the Western world, philosophy has its earliest traceable source among the Greeks in Asia Minor in the 6th century B.C. Philosophy, as it emerges from myth and poetry, begins as speculation on the ultimate stuff of which everything is composed must be air. Anaximander opened the way to the later notion of matter, by suggesting that there must be some imperishable and unperceived substance that underlies all phenomena. These cosmological speculations are the center of philosophy before the appearance of Socrates in the 5th century, and some knowledge of Heraclitus and Parmenides, the two greatest of the pre-Socratic philosophers, is essential to the understanding of Plato.

Heraclitus, who lived in the 6th-5th centuries B.C., in epigrams at once brilliant and obscure, remarked that everything in the universe is subject to change, comes to be, and passes away in a perpetual process. In some mystical phrases he suggested that there must be order, justice, and reason in the perceptual transformations of qualities and things in the world.

Parmenides, writing about 470 B.C. in Elea in Sicily, was the first great mystical metaphysician and directly inspired Plato. He introduced the contrast between the One and the Many, between the single unchanging Reality and the manifold of Appearances that constitutes the perceptible world. All our ordinary claims to knowledge, referring to the world of perceptible things, are illusory.

The last pre-Socratic influence that formed Plato’s philosophy was the Pythagorean doctrine of numbers. Pythagoras of Samos founded in Sicily and southern Italy in the 6th century B.C. a school of thinkers who studied the theory of numbers. They derived from their study the doctrine that numbers, and the relations between them, are the ultimate reality.
Toward the end of the 5th century B.C. in Athens, Socrates turned philosophy away from high cosmological speculations and concentrated attention on man and his moral problems. He founded the theory of knowledge and moral philosophy. He introduced into philosophy the method of argument, of question and answer. His most celebrated paradox was that virtue is knowledge, and that it is by ignorance of the true nature of virtue that men are misled.

Plato was not only the greatest literary artist among philosophers, he was also one of the two or three most fertile and profound philosophers who have ever lived. Outstanding among his doctrines are the following; (1) there is a fundamental distinction between appearance and reality: the world of particular things perceived by the sense constitutes appearance only, not reality; reality consists of the unchanging ideas or forms that are not perceived by pure intellect; (2) about particular things we can have opinion only, and not certain knowledge; (3) mathematics provides the model of true knowledge, since it is concerned with the unchanging properties of supersensible entities as apprehended by pure intellect. The true philosopher is trained in mathematics and is absorbed in the contemplation of abstractions. There will be no well-ordered and stable society except where such philosophers are kings; for virtue and justice depend on the rule of true knowledge.

The philosopher Aristotle, who lived in the 4th century B.C. was Plato's pupil. Although he derived inspiration from Plato, his thought developed in a contrary direction. He was a marvelous naturalist and at the same time the founder of formal logic. Upto the end of the 19th century or later, the logic taught in all the schools and universities of Europe throughout the centuries was mainly Aristotle's. He distinguished between the form and content of
statements and showed how patterns of deductive inference depend on the
formal expression in language—such as 'all' and the linking verb 'is.' He
classified statements into types by reference to the part they play in formal
inference. For centuries his doctrine of the syllogism generally was accepted
as the pattern of deductive argument.

Aristotle rejected Plato's theory of ideas; by the observation of nature
and of human nature, and with rational insight, we could arrive at true
knowledge of the necessary scheme of things. He wrote treatises on physics,
biology, ethics, politics, and poetry, in addition to metaphysics and logic.

Later Greek and Roman philosophers, conspicuously the stoics and
Epicureans, were concerned in part to recommend ways of life and systems
of morality and in part with speculations about the structure of the universe.

Christian theology was first formulated against this background. From
the beginning of the Christian period until the Renaissance, the relation
between faith and reason was naturally the first problem of philosophy.
Reason itself was largely identified with the distinctions of Greek
philosophy, particularly with the methods of Aristotle. Christian theology
was elaborated in Aristotelian terms and used his distinctions of substance
and attribute, intuition and deduction, form and matter.

The three great and contrasting philosophers of the Middle Ages were
St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and William of Ockham. Saint Augustine
was born and lived in North Africa in the last half of the 4th century and the
early part of the 5th. He was not a clear and systematic philosopher, but he
was a writer of genius, essentially modern in spirit, trying to find the
philosophical foundations of a personal faith in an analysis of his own
consciousness. He did not approach Christian theology through formal
and a priori proofs of the existence of God. Instead he looked for the basis
of belief in the nature of human consciousness and experience and in our awareness of our own weakness and uncertainty. The Confessions is the most enduring of his writings, full of paradox and psychological insight.

The 13th century philosopher Thomas Aquinas, whose two great works are the Summa Theological and the Summa Contra Gentiles, constructed a system of Christian Aristotelianism. Following Aristotle, he regarded the natural world as a hierarchy of essentially different kind, species, and genera. At the summit of the hierarchy is human reason, which he exalted at the expense of blind faith or mere revelation. His whole philosophy and theology hinge on the Aristotelian distinction between the essence of a thing and its existence and between its form and its matter.

Anselm was a realist and so was able to maintain his unqualified confidence in purely formal and abstract reasoning. Peter Abelard, who lived at the end of the 11th and the beginning of the 12th centuries, was the greatest of the conceptualists. His maintained that there must be universals that are neither actual things nor mere words; they are rather conceptions of the mind, based on actual similarities between individual substances.

Ockham, who lived more than a century later, was a great nominalist, and in his logic and theory of knowledge he anticipated the main outlines of modern empiricism. Nominalism is the doctrine that universals and general ideas are nothing but the names or signs that we use to stand for many different things. Ockham therefore denied that rational theology of any kind can have any validity; religion is the sphere of faith and revelation. Ockham, together with the 13th century thinker Roger Bacon, opened the way to the systematic study of nature and experimental methods, without theological presuppositions.
The great age of modern philosophy opens in the late 16th century with Galileo Galilei and Francis Bacon and with the beginnings of mathematical physics. Galileo, in his dialogue on the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems, distinguished between the measurable and the unmeasurable features of reality. He did not approve some of Aristotle’s views.

The decisive challenge came from Rene Descartes, who has a better claim than Bacon to be considered the first modern philosopher. Bacon had insisted only that science must rest on careful induction and experiment; he had not fully understood the application of mathematics and measurement to the description of the physical world. Descartes was a distinguished mathematician and envisaged the material world as a single system of mathematical relationships. No genuine knowledge is possible, he argued, unless it is built on firm and unquestionable foundations. He at first found only one proposition that could not without absurdity be doubted, namely the proposition *cogito, ergo sum* (I think, hence I exist).

Descartes dominated the philosophy of his century. The greatest of those who later built on the foundations he had laid was Baruch Spinoza. His metaphysical system was set out in a form imitated from Euclid’s geometry in his posthumously published *Ethics* (1677). It is more than a version of Cartesianism. Spinoza was a Jew and was influenced by Jewish philosophy. His metaphysics was the foundation of a distinctive view of morality and of the salvation of man. He tried to prove that there could be no distinction between the Creator and his creation and that there could be only one Substance, God or Nature, conceived as an infinite, all-exclusive, self-determining system. A person is no more than a finite mode of Nature and is only one link in the infinite chain of causes in Nature. His mind and his body
are not two distinct things but two inseparable aspects of his personality. Every mental change is also a physical change and vice versa. Spinoza was an uncompromising determinist, maintaining that everything in Nature must be explicable in terms of its causes, and the actions and decisions of a person are no less the effects of causes than anything else. Our belief in the freedom of will is only a sign of our relative ignorance of causes. The true salvation of man, his happiness and the only freedom possible, is to acquire an insight into the whole order of causes in Nature and to understand, and to acquiesce in, his own place in the natural order. The free man is the scientific philosopher who has an intellectual love of God and who is thereby detached from ordinary drives and interests. Spinoza's philosophy is unqualified rationalism, and it allows no appeal to faith, revelation, or supernatural causes. For this reason Spinoza was widely denounced as an atheist by his contemporaries and for nearly a hundred years after his death.

Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz, the last of the three great rationalists, tried to make Christian theology compatible with the claim that everything in Nature is susceptible of scientific explanation. Spinoza had denied that anything in Nature could possibly be different from what it is; the actual world is the only possible world, and therefore there is no place for the free act of a Creator. Leibniz allowed a place for God as choosing to create the best of all possible worlds; and the best of all possible worlds is presumably that in which the greatest possible range of effects follows from the fewest possible principles. Leibniz, like Spinoza, started from the notion of substance; but, instead of conceiving of the universe as a single self-determining substance, he thought of a multiplicity of self-determining substance, called monads, as underlying all natural phenomena. In this manner Leibniz prescribed the proper methods of science while preserving a
Christian theology. He himself tried to design a universal language that would be free from ambiguity and would be a perfect instrument of reasoning.

The English school of natural philosophy, based on Sir Isaac Newton, was moving in a different direction and laid greater emphasis on experiment and less emphasis on *a priori* deduction. The philosopher who formulated its theory of knowledge and its metaphysics was John Locke. Locke’s great *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) is a survey of the powers of the human mind and of the types and units of human knowledge. Locke argued against Descartes and the rationalist philosophers, that all our ideas must be derived, directly or indirectly, from our experience; there are no innate ideas altogether independent of experience. Locke, like Descartes, distinguished between those ideas that reflect the real qualities of the physical world, and those that are merely the effect of physical reality on our bodies and minds and that correspond to nothing in the real world.

Locke’s new view of ideas became the orthodoxy of advanced thought in the 18th century, both in France and Britain, as Cartesianism had been the orthodoxy of the 17th century.

In 1710, Locke’s account of the origin of ideas and the workings of the mind was devastatingly attacked by Bishop George Berkeley in *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*. Berkeley in this way tried to upset the Cartesian atheism and deism that based itself on a misunderstanding of Newtonian science. Berkeley’s criticism of Locke’s abstract idea of matter opened the way to David Hume’s thorough going skepticism. The whole content of our experience is no more than a succession of impressions and ideas.
Philosophy can be no more than a description of how our mind actually works and how our beliefs are formed. A new revolution in Western philosophy occurred when the German philosopher Immanuel Kant was 'roused from his dogmatic slumber' by reading Hume. Kant looked for some new foundations for a priori reasoning and for philosophy itself. His *The Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) begins with the question 'How are synthetic a priori propositions possible?' and its method, called by Kant the transcendental method of critical philosophy, is to show certain categories and forms of experience as necessarily presupposed in all our discourse. Equally significant in Kant's work were the new foundations of moral philosophy that he laid and the new meaning that he gave to the concept of the freedom of the will.

**History of Philosophy since Kant:**

In the history of philosophy since Kant, three broad currents may be discerned. The central current flowed from the tradition of classical modern philosophy from Bacon and Descartes to Hume and Kant. Another current branched off from Kant by way of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, whose thought had a highly speculative character and yet took a strongly social and historical turn. The third has been even more diverse. It has consisted of certain reactions focusing on certain basic aspects of life that have non-rational, extra-social character, and that seem to defy analysis in terms of the kinds of models favored by philosophers of classical modern or Hegelian lineage.

The first of these currents was initially expressed, in the first half of the 19th century, in a number of developments representing survivals or
revivals of pre-Kantian ways of thinking. In Britain and the United States the Scottish philosophy of common sense enjoyed considerable popularity. It found later echoes in the thought of G. E. Moore in Britain and the ‘new realists in America in the early 20th century. The positivistic philosophy of Auguste Comte attracted considerable attention in France, where a strong materialist tradition was conducive to its reception. In Britain it influenced John Stuart Mill in his development of a more scientifically oriented ‘experimentalist’ descendant of classical British empiricism. A similar development occurred in Germany, as Ludwig Feuerbach and others championed varieties of materialism and positivism, culminating in that of Ernst Mach, whose views attracted considerable attention in Britain as well.

The resulting ‘Neo-Kantian’ movement achieved considerable prominence not only in Germany (centering in the ‘Marburg School’), but also in France through Leon Brunschvicg’s influence. Through the efforts of philosophers as diverse as Augustus De Morgan, Franz Brentano, Alexius Meinong, and Gottlob Frege, the stage was set for the emergence of logic as a major philosophical concern and area of endeavor, in which spectacular strides have been made in the 20th century. In the thought of Bertrand Russell and Edmund Husserl – both of whom wrote major early works on mathematics and logic.

Husserl sought to renew and radicalize the Cartesian enterprise, in a manner that would endow philosophy with a rigor in no way inferior to that of the scientific and mathematical disciplines. Phenomenology as he conceived of it was intended to provide an analysis of all types of experience and the kinds of objects and mental processes figuring in them. Under Martin Heidegger’s influence the phenomenological movement subsequently took a different course. But the analytical movement launched
by Russell and G. E. Moore — which came to dominate first British and then also American philosophy during much of the 20th century — has remained largely within this central current.

Both Moore and Russell held, however, that the main task of philosophy consists in the analysis of our basic concepts, with the analysis of language as its points of departure, and the use of language to state facts as its focus.

In the decades between World War I and World War II, analytic philosophy came to be oriented more to the sciences, as Russell shifted in this direction and the influence of central European positivists grew. The result was the advent and temporary triumph of ‘logical positivism,’ given classical expression by A. J. Ayer in his manifesto *Language, Truth and Logic*.

Analytic philosophy soon moved away from this new dogmatism, however, under the influence of the later work of Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose earlier thought had partly inspired it. Wittgenstein attempted to expose the errors and pseudoproblems with which philosophers thereby burdened themselves. Philosophy in Britain and America (and in West Germany as well) in the decades following World War II has tended largely to follow Wittgenstein’s lead.

The British philosophers like John Austin, Gilbert Ryle, Peter Strawson, and Elizabeth Anscombe, Americans like W. V. O. Quine and Donald Davidson, and Germans like Wolfgang Stegmüller and Ernest Tugendhat have differed markedly among themselves on many particular issues and approaches to them. This is also true of leading moral philosophers in all three counties, such as R. M. Hare, John Rawls, and Jurgen Habermas.
Following the lead of Hume and Kant, they have turned away from metaphysics as it was traditionally understood, concentrating instead on the theory of knowledge and subsequently also on the philosophy of language.

The current of philosophical thought associated with Hegel and his influence took a different direction, reflecting the emergence of markedly differing interests. Hegel's point of departure was Kant's conception of the mind's fundamental rationality and active role in the structuring of experience. However, Hegel rejected Kant's notion of a world of things-in-themselves that transcended the world of experience and the possibility of knowledge. He broadened the conception of rationality and took mind and world alike to have the same essential rational structure. Hegel's philosophy found wide favor in central Europe in the second quarter of the 19th century and has remained a looming presence there ever since. It also became extremely influential in Britain and America in the second half of the century, inspiring the idealist philosophies of F. H. Bradley, John McTaggart, Josiah Royce, and others and establishing the philosophical climate in which they flourished.

Moreover, although Karl Marx rejected Hegel's idealism, Marx may be reckoned as one of Hegel's heirs, and his thought may be situated in the Hegelian current of modern philosophy. Marx drew heavily on Hegel's dialectical conception of historical development and his social interpretation of human life. Marx departed from him primarily in his naturalistic recasting of Hegel's understanding of our fundamental nature, and in his accordance of decisive importance to economic and other 'material' factors in the course of human events.
More sophisticated versions of this type of Marxism have been elaborated by Louis Althusser and others. It was the reinterpretation of Marx’s thought by philosophers such as Georg Lukacs and Ernst Bloch.

Neo-Marxist philosophy has developed in a number of different directions, as it has been leavened by admixtures of Freudian, existential, Kantian, and social-scientific as well as Hegelian thought. The ‘critical social theory’ of Max Horkheimer, Theodore Adorno, and others associated with the ‘Frankfurt School’ is one case in point. The existential Marxism of the later Jean-Paul Sartre and others in France and the humanistic Marxisms of various Eastern European philosophers such as Leszek Kolakowski and Gajo Petrovic are further examples.

In America, George Herbert Mead and John Dewey elaborated somewhat similar socially oriented and naturalistically recast forms of Hegelianism. In the thought of the later Wittgenstein, British philosophy at length took a like turn, preparing the way for the entertainment of rather Hegelian alternatives to previously reigning positivistic and neo-Kantian approaches to matters as diverse as language, science and ethics.

In France, under the influence of Alexandre Kojeve, this same aspect of Hegel had a considerable impact on Sartre and others, increasing as they turned toward Marxist philosophy. The ‘structuralism’ associated with the work of writers like Claude Levi-Strauss emerged and flourished in the context thus created. Even the thought of French ‘post-structuralist’ philosophers such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida may be linked to this persisting current, representing variations of Hegelian themes relativized and radicalized in ways deriving from Nietzsche and Heidegger.

This current has run most strongly in central Europe, although it also has made significant appearances elsewhere. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, and
Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, for example, were in some respects transitional between Kant and Hegel. But they differed from both Kant and Hegel by seizing on principles they took to be prior to all forms of rationality but central to the nature of life.

Arthur Schopenhauer likewise focused on what he took to be the basic character of human life and all life and proceeded to interpret the whole of reality – from the ‘material’ to the ‘spiritual’ – in terms of it. Taking Schopenhauer as his point of departure, Friedrich Nietzsche developed a somewhat similar interpretation of life and the world, in terms of what he called ‘will to power.’

This preoccupation with the nature of life, conceived for the most part along fundamentally biological lines, rivaled developments in the other main currents of philosophical thought in the late 19th and 20th centuries outside of central Europe as well. In Britain it was manifested in the great interest taken in Charles Darwin’s theories, to which Oswald Spengler gave an influential philosophical turn and expression. In France it was given strong impetus by Henri Bergson, in whose writings it issued in a subtler and more original treatment of the essential character and manner of the development of life.

In Germany, after World War I, this preoccupation persisted in the somewhat modified form. Philosophers like Max Scheler, Helmut Plessner, and Arnold Gehlen gave it in their inception of a ‘philosophical anthropology.’

This characterization is also applicable to the thought of such American philosophers as George Santayana, John Dewey, and even Alfred North Whitehead, each of whom took as his point of departure a general conception of life with a strongly biological cast.
The pragmatist movement, beginning with such thinkers as C. S. Peirce and William James, may be regarded as another variant of this third current in the history of modern philosophy.

This turn also characterized the thought of Soren Kierkegaard, who departed even more radically than the pragmatists from a biological orientation in the interpretation of human life. Kierkegaard interpreted what it means to exist as a human being in terms of a ‘subjectivity’ transcending all biological, material, rational, social, and cultural conditions and processes.

Kierkegaard’s thinking along these lines figures importantly in the development of existential philosophy in the 20th century, through its impact on philosophers like Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers, who were largely responsible for the emergence of the existential movement in Germany between the two world wars. Heidegger was more radical, posing the question of ‘the meaning of Being,’ but rejecting the understanding of ‘Being’ as a transcendent reality. Like Jaspers, he too made much of the difference between authentic and inauthentic existence.

Sartre carried Heidegger’s radicalization and secularization of Kierkegaard’s understanding of human existence a step further. He recognized no ‘Being’ other than that of things and ourselves and insisted on our essential indeterminateness, freedom, and responsibility for what we make of ourselves.

The relation between philosophy, language, and literature also has come to be of interest in its own right, as in Hans-Georg Gadamer’s ‘hermeneutic’ philosophy, and in Ernst Cassirer’s philosophy of symbolic forms.’ Here the interpretation of forms of human expression is taken to be the key to the understanding of human life. It has long been common to
contrast ‘Anglo-American’ or ‘English-language’ philosophy with ‘Continental’ or ‘European’ philosophy in the post-Kantian era. Philosophy has become quite diversified in another way, while the traditional central areas of philosophical inquiry – such as metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics – have hardly been neglected, and such well-established companion areas as logic and the philosophy of mind have continued to receive a great deal of attention.

These new areas include social and political philosophy and the philosophy of language, of science, of mathematics, of law, of art, and of religion.

Transcendentalism:

Transcendentalism is a 19th century American philosophical trend that had its active discussion from 1840 to 1860. Transcendentalism is a belief in the superiority of intuitive to sensory knowledge. It is an intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual ferment. James Freeman Clarke said facetiously, but not without reason, ‘We are called the like-minded because no two of us think alike.’ Thus it is impossible to assign a specific set of doctrinal beliefs as common to the whole group. But the anonymous pamphlet (probably written by Charles Mayo Ellis, 1818-1878), *An Essay on Transcendentalism* (1842), states the most commonly held principles of the group: ‘Transcendentalism . . . maintains that man has ideas, or the powers of reasoning; but these are either the result of direct revelation from God, his immediate inspiration, or his immanent presence in the spiritual world,’ and ‘it asserts that man has something besides the body of flesh, a spiritual body, with senses to perceive what is true, and right and beautiful, and a natural
love for these, as the body for its food. This spiritual body is called conscience, or oversoul, or inner light as the Quakers called it.

The European Unitarianism based on John Locke insisted only that knowledge which could be demonstrated to the senses was valid. Emerson did not agree with this. He thought that this destroyed the validity of man’s conscience. Emerson and his friends – it is significant that most of the early transcendentalists were young Unitarian ministers – were ripe for a philosophy that had a broader moral and aesthetic appeal. They found it in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and the German transcendentalists of the late 18th century, which was brought to America through the writings and translations of Thomas Carlyle and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The Americans were basically eclectic in their philosophy and borrowed ideas from their amazingly widespread reading in such esoteric sources as the religious books of the Orient (particularly the Bhagavad Gita of Hinduism and the Sayings of Confucius), the writings of the French authors Madame de Stael, Victor Cousin, and Francois and those of the Cambridge Platonists and the 17th century metaphysical writers of England.

In the fall of 1836, Emerson, Ripley, Hedge, and some of their friends, attending the bicentennial celebration of their alma mater, Harvard College, found their own discussions of the new philosophy more interesting than the official ceremonies, so they adjourned to the parlors of the Willard Hotel in Boston for further talk. This session proved so stimulating that they agreed to hold more such conversations. Since these meetings, held for the most part in private homes, were usually arranged to coincide with Hedge’s visits to Boston from his pastorate in Bangor, Me., they called their contemporaries, however, noting the frequency with which they used such Kantian terms as ‘transcendent knowledge,’ named them, derisively, the
used. But Hedge Club was informal without an office or a constitution. It started the magazine Dial in 1840. The editors Margaret Fuller or Emerson later, published just 16 issues, but its influence was enormous. Later, individuals in the group sponsored the publication of two short-lived periodicals, the Massachusetts Quarterly Review and the Aesthetic Papers.

Although transcendentalism places its greatest emphasis on individual reform rather than social action, some of the group became interested in communitarian experimentation. The most outstanding example was George Ripley, who in 1841 founded Brook Farm in West Roxbury, a suburb of Boston. His hope was that, by banding together, artists in every field - writing, painting, music, sculpture - could create an intellectual atmosphere and a financial security more conducive to creative endeavor than the workaday would.

Although the transcendentalists are often associated with the town of Concord, Mass, about 20 miles northwest of Boston, Thoreau was the only member of the group who was a native of that town. Emerson settled there in 1834, partly because it was the home of his ancestors; then others - such as Alcott, Ellery Channing, and Sanborn - moved there to be near Emerson.

The major literary works of the movement are Emerson’s Nature (1836), Self-Reliance (1841), The American Scholar (1837), Compensation (1841), The Poet (1844), his ‘Divinity School Address’ (1839), and his Poems (1846); Thoreau’s Walden (1854), A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers (1849), Civil Disobedience (1849), and Life without Principle (1863); Jones Very’s Essays and Poems (1839), particularly his sonnets; William Ellery Channing’s Poems of Sixty-five Years (1902); Margaret Fuller’s Woman in the Nineteenth Century (1845); Bronson
Alcott's *Record of a School* (1835, edited by Elizabeth Peabody); and the anonymous *Essay on Transcendentalism*, discussed above. Virtually the only work of fiction is *Margaret* (1845), a lengthy local-color novel by Sylvester Judd (1813-1853). Many of the transcendentalists kept voluminous daily journals of their thoughts and observations. Those of Emerson and Thoreau have been published virtually in their entirety and offer an unsurpassed opportunity to study the intellectual development of these men and of their time. Selections have also been published from the journals of Alcott, Higginson, and Margaret Fuller.

Many of the transcendentalists were active in the lyceum movement, finding that it not only offered a source of income, but, more important, a means of offering their views to the general public. Emerson delivered 100 lectures in Concord and many more in towns and cities across the country from Maine to California, as well as in England. Virtually all his major writings were tried out on the lecture platform before they were committed to print. Thoreau, too, made frequent use of the lecture platform, though he never attained Emerson’s popularity. Margaret Fuller and Bronson Alcott preferred to conduct ‘Conversations,’ which were directed discussions of transcendentalist doctrines.

Despite their belief that all true reform must come from within the individual, most of the transcendentalists participated in the many social reform movements of the day, such as temperance, peace, universal suffrage, and antisabbatarianism. They were particularly active in the antislavery movement. Thoreau’s *Civil Disobedience, Slavery in Massachusetts* (1854), and *A Plea for Captain John Brown* (1860) are classics in the literature of that movement. Many, including Thoreau, participated actively in the Underground Railroad.

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The transcendentalist movement flourished, at times reaching almost the proportions of a grass root movement, until the Civil War. Then, with the death of Thoreau, the intellectual retirement of Emerson, and the increasing materialism of what Mark Twain has called ‘the Gilded Age,’ the impetus of the movement was dissipated. There was a brief revival of it in the Middle West in the 1870’s, led by the St. Louis Hegelians under William Torrey Harris (1835-1909), and another in Concord itself with the establishment of Concord School of Philosophy in 1879. But both of these revivals proved abortive.

Transcendentalism has had an influence far out of proportion to its size as a movement. Walt Whitman testified that it was transcendentalism that led him to the writing of *Leaves of Grass*, and Emily Dickinson could well have said the same for her own poetry. Nathaniel Hawthorne never accepted fully the principles of the movement, but deeply felt its influence. Charles William Eliot traced the inspiration for his elective system in collegiate education to Emerson, as did John Dewey for progressive education. Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, was strongly influenced by Bronson Alcott. The early leaders of the British Labour Party were well acquainted with the philosophy of Thoreau; and Mohandas K. Gandhi, the leaders of the anti-Nazi resistance movement in continental Europe during World War II, and Martin Luther King in the United States in the 1960’s have all acknowledged the debt that their civil disobedience campaigns owed to Thoreau’s essay on that subject.
References:


