

## LAW OF NATURE AND SPIRITUAL IDEA IN EMERSON'S WRITINGS

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### Abstract

Emerson, the American prophet and one of the great writers of English literature, is known all over the world. His essays are read with great zeal and enthusiasm because of his transcendental philosophy and optimistic vision. His writing reflects his belief about the inter relation of man and nature. According to the transcendental ideas; we can perceive the inner mystery and the underlying meaning of nature only when our soul is in with its soul. Nature has had an important role to play in literature all over the world. Generally, however, it is seen that it is poets who are obviously inspired by nature. But the influence of nature upon the other genres is not so obvious, especially in non – fiction prose. This is where Emerson stands out from other essayists in literature. Nature is not a dead relic for Emerson; rather it is a source of living power, which is endowed with a soul. For him, there is an unbreakable link between man and nature, a relation that is mutually conscious and mystical. It is the power of nature that penetrates into human life and sets a communicative link between him and the divine. When the communication between the soul of nature and soul of man takes place, it becomes an unfolding expression of the divine, because God is present in both the souls. The presence of God in nature and in man makes possible the restoration of harmony between these two souls.

Emerson's Essays, First Series (1841) is most popular and widely read works. Because he was a Transcendentalist, most of his essays are related to God, man and nature. The Spiritual Laws is the fourth essay in the first series. It describes the moral laws of the conscience, or the "spirit". It attacks the old puritan emphasis on the conscious will. According to the puritans human beings are depraved after the Fall; they have no divinity. Adam's sin is inevitably visited on his progeny. According to Emerson this concept was the greatest deterrent as far as the upliftment of personality was concerned.

The puritans who had left England and settled upon the soil of New England were very rigid in their religious views. Emerson believed that the Calvinist dogmatism of these puritans would not sustain the integrity of the soul. These Calvinists escaped to New England from their persecution in England; but they themselves persecuted Quakers and other whose beliefs did not exactly coincide with theirs, even to the extent of burning and flogging them.

Emerson exhorts his countrymen to become 'Original' men by breaking away from the bondage of the Church. (191) Because it was clergymen, who imparted most of the education, he feels that under the pressure of religious authority the younger generation is overpowered by

the sense of guilt, therefore they believe themselves to be the original sinners .Emerson's says, "Our young people are diseased with the theological problems of original sin, origin of evil, predestination and the like"( emerson 191).Continuing the metaphor, he says :

These are the soul's mumps, and measles and whooping coughs, and those who have not caught them can not describe their health or prescribe the cure. ( Emerson 191)

During Emerson's time attendance at Sunday- School was a must for every Christian child. Most of the teaching in those schools discouraged original thinking and filled the young minds with outdated vision of Heaven and Hell. Emerson realized that this kind of teaching would be hurdle in the inward march of the soul towards perfection. In other words, this would retard both the intellectual and the spiritual development of a youth:

Our Sunday- School and churches and pauper-societies are yokes to the neck. We Pain ourselves to please nobody .there are natural ways of arriving at the same ends At which these aim, but do not arrive.

( Emerson 193)

Emerson firmly believes that law and nature are not opponents, but expression of each other. To him, law is not laid on the world as a punishment but is the necessary idea from which creation in all its beauty and balance originates." Law is simply the nature of a thing, and the law of a self is the nature or character of that self" ( qtd . in porte and Morris 110).Spiritual Laws, therefore are not hidden , but are natural.

Emerson's doctrine of self reliance is repeatedly echoed in "Spiritual Law". Again and again, he tries to motivate the young;

Each man has his own vocation. The talent is the call. There is one direction in which all space is open to him. He has faculties silently inviting him thither to endless exertion.

( Emerson 195)

Thus the "Spiritual Laws" is a guidebook to the practical problem of living .In this essay Emerson advises his readers to accept Nature, and above all their own character, which is also a spiritual law.( 193)in this essay Emerson connect nature with law , according to him nature always teaches us we should follow the rules of nature law because these laws are made by divine god and the beauty of nature is also given by divine power. This divine power always remind us the natural concept of law, from the contemplation of Nature, man's insight perceives the law of the soul. While all men have soul, the vision of spirituality comes to them by intuition. Hence; there is no need of outside instruction to realize the law of the soul.

Nature for Emerson is practical guide to an ethical life (spiritual law). It is also a starting point of his philosophy. His rejection of conventional Christianity, which he believed was based on false rituals, was a protest not against religion, but on behalf of true religion (Divinity school Address); and by true religion Emerson means "concrete and personal religious feelings or experience" ( qtd in porte and morris).As a matter of fact , Emerson's response to nature is rooted in his rejection of both the Calvinist doctrine of human depravity and the Unitarian dogma of pure reason. The central point of Emerson's understanding of Nature is his conception of all encompassing relationship that exists between Nature and the infinite variety of man's nature. These aspects of nature teaches us .The laws of nature and these laws of nature are the basic root of human salvation.

## Work cited

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