Emerson and Steinbeck

— *On the Oriental Concepts of Being* —

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INTRODUCTION

I am interested in the note of cosmic consciousness and the artist's capacity for receptive "emptiness" in the works of Emerson, Thoreau, and in the poetry of Whitman. I have found, to my surprise, the similarities between the concepts, the insights and the discipline of Emerson and the Oriental truth seekers like Zen priests or artists. The subject is one which is difficult to express in words, dealing as it does with the kind of experience which cannot be expressed in language of the concrete world or even in the language of abstraction. I note that the Oriental writers, like Emerson, rely on analogies from the concrete world. And as Emerson realized, analogy is still a very poor appropriation of the spiritual reality which is the subject. In the FIRST CHAPTER of this paper, I will treat this subject. Each of my quotations from the works of Emerson seems particularly revealing as a Western statement of something like the Satori experience. In the SECOND CHAPTER, I will discuss Emerson's influence upon Steinbeck. Peter Lisca suggests in his *The Wide World of John Steinbeck* that Steinbeck's social philosophy has three roots, quoting Frederick I. Carpenter's observation.

> "For the first time in history, *The Grapes of Wrath* brings together and makes real three skeins of American thought. It begins with the transcendental oversoul, Emerson's faith in the common man, and his Protestant self-reliance. To this it joins Whitman's religion of the love of all man and his mass democracy. And it combines

these mystical and poetic ideal with the realistic philosophy of pragmatism and its emphasis on effective action." Jim Casy "translates American philosophy into words of one syllable, and the Joads translates it into action." 1

Lisca also gives us an interesting comment on Steinbeck's interest in Oriental concepts.

> While he was working on ***The Pearl,*** he wrote to Pascal Covici about ***the Arabian Nights,*** "strange how you can find the roots of practically all western stories there." (JS-PC, 1/15/45) In his letters and fiction there are occasional references to the ***Bhagavad-Gita,*** Buddhism, and Oriental concepts of Being.[2]

I hope my analysis of Emerson's "Oversoul," "Beauty," and Steinbeck's faith in spiritual reality is illuminated by my presentation of the Oriental background.

FIRST CHAPTER

Emerson says, "I feel the eternity of man,"[3] or "We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole ; the wise silence ; the universal beauty, to which every part and article is equally related, the eternal One."[4] The first and the most essential question raised here is what Emerson meant by "eternity". Generally, "present" is thought to be a quickly passing moment and just a very small point. "Past" and "future" are regarded as a line extending to the left and to the right from the point of "present." Therefore, "eternity" is regarded as the infinite extension of this line. This abstract conception of time does not trully convey what Emerson meant. His "eternity" indicates the state of mind at present which absorbs the whole time of "present," "past" and "future." Time exists in our mortal life. But we don't notice this great truth, but keep the abstract idea that we exist in time. In this sense, "present" must be not only a moment but eternity.

Emerson describes this as "the present which is infinite."[5] This conception of Emerson's is comparable to Zen Buddhists' idea of "nirvana." The term "zen" is the transliterated form of the Sanskrit "dhyāna," but it is far from emphasizing "dhyāna." Its pivotal teachings are rather to be found in "bodhi" and "prajñā" and "anābhogacaryā." "Dhyāna" is generally translated as "meditation," or "a concentrated state of consciousness," whereas what zen proposes is not to make us realize this, but to bring about the awakening of a higher spiritual power so as to come directly in contact with reality itself. This power, called "prajñā" in Sanskrit and transcribed in Chinese as "pan-jou" and in Japanese as "hannya," is the highest form of intuition we human are in possession of. By the exercise of "prajñā"-intuition, we attain what is known as "bodhi" in Sanskrit, "puti" in Chinese, "bodai" in Japanese. "Bodai" is the supreme enlightenment which was attained by Gautama when he was sitting cross-legged under the bodhi-tree by the river Nairañjanā in the northern part of India, about twenty-five centuries ago. After this, Gautama, son of Śuddhodana, came to be known as Buddha, the Enlightened One. It is for this reason that Buddhism is now known as a religion of enlightenment, based on the personal experience of the Buddha. This experience of an enlightenment is above the concatenation of causes and effects, that is, beyond the cosmic net of karmic relationship. Therefore, Buddhism is also said to be a religion of emancipation and freedom. A life of emancipation which results from the experience of enlightenment means that one is free from the bondage of karmic causation, or that one has crossed the stream of birth-and-death to the other side, to "nirvana." Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, who was the world's greatest authority on Zen, says;

> Nirvana is a state of mind or consciousness when we actually transcend relativity - the world of birth-and-death.
>
> Therefore, nirvana is not a special world set above this world of opposites. If it is so we are creating a new pair of opposites, with nirvana on one side and birth-and-death on the other. There would then be no transcendence. Nirvana is birth-and-death and

birth-and-death is nirvana. When this identification is reached there is a transcendence.[6]

However, it is very difficult for us to realize this "eternity" at the present time. Emerson says:

> He (Man) does not live in the present, but with reverted eye laments the past, or, heedless of the riches that surround him, stands on tiptoe to foresee the future. He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with nature in the present, above time.[7]

Thus, man is not spending the present time in its strict sense. His consciousness is always swaying upward or downward, forward or backward. It is not until man succeeds in unifying his dissolved consciousness that he can enjoy "the present which is infinite." In order to do this successfully, we must first know man shows two aspects, namely the essential Self and the superficial ego.[8] To wipe away the latter and to realize the former are essential for man's realization of "the present which is infinite." Mr. Shoei Ando says, "The superficial ego is continually stirred up and disturbed by worldly thoughts; it sticks to such thoughts that are produced on the surface of pure consciousness by what we see or hear, by the outside phenomena, like waves which are generated on the flat surface of the sea by instantaneous gusts of wind. Like such waves which leave no trace after the wind subsides, worldly thoughts are, in a sense, unsubstantial. In clinging to such unsubstantial thoughts we become angry, greedy or foolish, and thereby lose our mental liberty. We are liable to live by this superficial ego, even though our essential Self is pure, serene and complete, comparable to a mirror on which images do not remain once the objects have been removed."[9]

This essential Self is what Emerson calls "the soul of the whole", "the eternal One", or "nirvana" in Zen Buddhism.

Jinshū (Shên-haiu, ?-706), who was the foremost disciple of Gunin (Hungjên, 602-75) known as the fifth patriarch of Zen in China, comments on his standpoint:

The body is the Bodhi-tree,
The Mind is like a bright mirror.
Keep it clean all the time,
And let not dust accumulate.[10]

Jinshū thought that the Mind was to be kept free from the dust of the defiling passions so that the ultimate reality would be reflected on it in the way a brightly-shining mirror will truthfully reflect images of all things brought before it. The Mind-mirror, that is, man's essential Self, according to Jinshū, was something which was liable to be stained by external objects and had to be guarded jealously against this possibility.

Therefore, in order to keep this essential Self, Emerson and Zen Buddhists seek for solitude and live in silence. Emerson says:

> In silence, in steadiness, in severe abstinence, let him hold by himself, add observation to observation, patient of neglect, patient of reproach, and bide his own time,-happy enough if he can satisfy himself alone that this day he has seen something truly.[11]

However, this solitude does not simply mean the spacial separation as Emerson says:

> But your isolation must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be elevation.[12]

It conceives man's realization of essential Self as the result of purifying himself and unifying his dissolved consciousness by all means at his disposal. Man's own selfishness, his superficial ego, however, puts obstacles in the way of his self-purification, hinders his own emancipation and stops the manifestation of his essential Self. To avoid this, Emerson insists:

> Free should the scholar be,-free and brave. Free even to the definition of freedom, "without any hindrance that does not arise out of his own constitution."[13]

Furthermore, Emerson regards, several types of mischief, pain and

sorrow, as factors giving man the good chance to return to his essential Self. The next comment of Emerson reflects his strong point of view based upon his own sorrowful experience in poverty, pain, fear and disease.

> And yet the compensations of calamity are made apparent to the understanding also, after long intervals of time. A fever, a mutilation, a cruel disappointment, a loss of wealth, a loss of friends, seems at the moment unpaid loss, and unpayable. But the sure years reveal the deep remedial force that underlies all facts. The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius; for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life, terminates an epoch of infancy or of youth which was waiting to be closed, breaks up a wonted occupation, or a household, or style of living, and allows the formation of new ones more friendly to the growth of character.[14]

Thus, mishap contributes to man's awakening of his essential Self. But he who incessantly seeks for his perfect freedom should not wait for the coming of this mishap. He should willingly dare to meet it and annihilate his superficial ego. The more he rejects his ego, the more he can regain his true greatness, his essential Self.

"Tongo" or "satori" is generally translated as "enlightenment", but "awakening" may be a better term. It is both noetic and affective. It is in fact to make an opening to our most fundamental mental activity - the activity which has not yet differenciated itself into anything to be definitively called this or that. When "satori" is experienced, something far more basic than either intellect or feeling is brought forward into the field of consciousness, though not in its relative sense.

But as long as "satori" explores and reveals the deepest and darkest recesses of consciousness which have hitherto escaped our ordinary inspections or introspection, it is enlightenment. The reason why "awakening" is more appropriate than "enlightenment" to describe the nature of "satori"-experience is that while enlightenment is a static state of consciousness, awakening is a process which instantly brightens up the field of

consciousness like a flash of lightening, though this does not mean that the consciousness thus once illuminated goes back its former drabness. If this is the case it will be like the door which closes as soon as it opens. The "satori"-experience is not of this kind. The door once opened remains open. The vista once revealed to the person will not vanish away. But as it does not belong in the category of relativity, it is not at all communicable in any ordinary logical way.

"Satori" is no doubt incommunicable, but it is not any sort of transport. If it is, it will be a mere psychological phenomenon and cannot have any deeper import. But it really is what stands at the basis of every philosophical system. It thus has a metaphysical connotation. "Satoru", which is the verbal form of "satori", is synonymous with "sameru", which means "to wake" from a sleep or torpor. "Satori" in this sense is the act of awakening itself and not the state of consciousness "satori" makes one acquainted with. As to incommunicableness, nothing that enters into the very constitution of our being can be transmitted to others-which means that what is at all communicable is the result of intellection or conceptualization. We human all aspire to perfect communication, but every form of communication implies some kind of medium. And as soon as we appeal to a medium the original experience is lost or at least loses its personal value. The retention of this value, which makes up the reality or vitality or intimacy of the experience, is possible only where the recipient himself has the same experience. In fact, whatever communication at all effective takes place only between minds that share the same experience. "Satori" is not a feeling, but it has the quality of incommunicableness in the sense that where there is no mentality there is no understanding. Sir Chrles Eliot says: "One gathers that "satori" is not a mystery or secret or anyting intellectual which can be imparted. It is a new life and of the universe which must be felt."[15] This principle of Zen corresponds to Thoreau's point of view who is against theory and earnestly insists on the importance of personal experience.

I mean that they should not "play" life, or "study" it merely, while the community supports them at this expensive game, but earnestly "live" it from beginning to end. How could youths better learn to live than by at once trying the experiment of living? Methinks this would exercise their minds as much as mathematics. If I wished a boy to know something about the arts and sciences, for instance, I would not pursue the common course, which is merely to send him into the neighborhood of some professor, where anything is professed and practised but the art of life ; - to survey the world through a telescope or a microscope, and never with his natural eye ; to study chemistry, and not learn how his bread is made, ...[16]

The following four lines are generally considered as summing up the essence of Zen Buddhism :

A special transmission outside the doctrinal teaching:
No dependence on letters or words,
Pointing directly at the Mind in every one of us,
And seeing into one's Nature, whereby one attains Buddhahood.[17]

So far we have found the paradoxical truth that man lives through death and reaches a great affirmation through negation. Only by following this step of self-denial, we can touch and realize the deep inner life, the essential Self which promisses eternity. Emerson's comment : "Man is a stream whose source is hidden,"[18] or "The deeper he dives into his privatest, secretest presentiment, to his wonder he finds this is the most acceptable, most public, and universally true,"[19] suggests the world of man's deep inner life. This is the world where the inside and the outside, mortality and immortality, individuality and sociality, one and the many are combined and exist together. In short, this is the free world of the many in one or one in the many. This inner life is the very man's essential Self or what Emerson calls the "oversoul". Emerson's statement: "I feel the eternity of man," which I have quoted early in this chapter, must be understood through such a world of inner life. He explains this soul in man further in detail :

> All goes to show that the soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs; is not a function, like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison, - but uses these as hands and feet; is not a faculty, but a light; is not the intellect or the wlll, but the master of the intellect and the will;- is the vast background of our being, in which they lie, - an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed.[20]

From this comment, what Emerson calls "the soul in man" is an intuition based upon the self-realization of eternity which forms the foundation of all the human lives and controls these. Therefore, this intuition is not the sensitive intuition usually conceived, but the divine nature which exists in man's body but transcends the body or sensitivity, that is, the intuition looking directly at the world of Platonic "idea" to which Emerson dedicated.

To annihilate man's superficial ego and go deep into his inner world leads to the increase of love for everyone else. Emerson's idea has this purpose. He says:

> The life of man is a self-evolving circle, which, from a ring imperceptively small, rushes on all sides outwards to new and larger circles, and that without end. The extent to which this generation of circles, wheel without wheel, will go, depends on the force of truth of the individual soul.[21]

Therefore, this world is the place where such several size of self-evolving circles exist together and effect one another. In order to keep an order among these circles, each must annihilate its ego and make incessant efforts for the harmony of the whole. Otherwise, such circle will be isolated and compelled to be antagonistic to one another. Their union depends upon the expansion of each circle. To do this exercise always goes with severe hardships. But it is the mainspring of development. For, to expand outward is to go deep inward, and its reverse is also true. Emerson comments on this:

By every throe of growth the man expands there where he works, passing, at each pulsation, of men. With each divine impulse the mind rends the thin rinds of the visible and finite, and comes out into eternity, and inspires and expires its air.[22]

Thus, by keeping perfect humility, we go deep into inner life, touch the eternal thing, and at the same time we expand outward, can draw a circle with infinite radius and without circumference. At this time, our world can be coextensive and become one with the world which has an infinitely great circle such as St. Augustine explains: "a circle whose center is everywhere and its circumference nowhere."[23]

Then, we absorb every other thing into our own and can enjoy a true love or a perfect freedom based upon our belief in "the many in one" or "one in the many." Emerson's statement: "Hich your wagon to a star,"[24] suggests the world of infinitely great circle, the instant eternity (Nature), that is, the extensive development of eternal world. And it also suggests that our soul should become the universal soul or spirit, or what Emerson calls "the over-soul".

Chuang-tzu, one of the greatest Taoist philosophers as well as Zen, advises us to practice "non-action" or "no-mind-ness" or "no-thought-ness." He thus makes the Yellow Emperor say: "By having no thoughts, no contrivances, one knows what Tao is; by having no abode, no clothing, one is at peace with Tao; by having nothing to depend upon, no way (tao) for guidance, one has Tao."[25]

This point is well illustrated by the story of a fighting cock.

Chi Hsing-tzu was training a fighting cock for the prince. When ten days passed, the prince asked, "Is it ready for fighting?" Chi answered, "Not yet, sir, he is still vain and full of fighting spirit." Another ten days passed and the prince asked again, "Not ready yet?" Chi answered, "He listens to the crow of another cock and pursues its shadow." After another ten days the same question was asked, and Chi said, "No, sir, not yet. He is still excitable and

> exuberant with spirit." When ten more days elapsed, Chi said, "He is almost ready. Though another cock crows, he remains unmoved. When he is looked at, he resembles one made of wood. His virtue is perfect. No cocks are his match, they will hastily run away from him."[26]

Mr. Suzuki says that to train a fighting cock like one made of wood is the Taoist way, which is reflected in the Zen teaching of purposelessness, of not leaving any track or footsteps, of a circle whose circumference is infinite with a center everywhere.[27] According to Chuang-tsu, who has so much of Zen, the heavenliness of Heaven consists in making the horse or the oxe go four-legged, while it is humanliness to control the horse with a halter or to put a string through the bull's nose. All these dicta come, psychologically speaking, from the state of selfishness, and, metaphysically, from the notion of Emptiness. Chuang-tzu's "Heaven," or non-action, corresponds to this, and Nature symbolizes it. Man's humanliness or his crafty intelligence tries to tamper with Nature or Heaven. When he succeeded in making the atomic bomb he imagined he had conquered Nature to his service. However, he is at a loss just now as to how to avoid annihilating the whole of humanity. And when he faces death, he is given up to fears and does not know what to do with the nothingness which he thinks comes after death or after general slaughtering.

Oriental artists in explaining their works make frequent reference to such philosophical terms as "Heaven" (ten), "spirit" (rei), "superhuman" (shin), "energy" (ki), "sincerity or integrity" (makoto), "truth" (shin), "reason" (ri), "the nature" (rei), etc. We often hear Japanese Zen artists say: "Is it done by Heaven (ten)? Or is it man's doing? My doing is what Heaven makes me do. My movements are Heaven's. When a man has no selfish motivation and keeps his mind entirely empty, it becomes one with Heaven. Let him do his utmost in all sincerity, and he will be liable to reach his nature (rei). Nature and spirit (rei), human and superhuman, becoming one, great works of art are created."

What they call "Heaven" (ten) is attained by means of the "satori" —

awakening. While the awakening in itself is not creative, it breaks into a treasure-house behind the consciousness where all sorts of potentialities have been kept in imprisonment. The "satori" would now release them and give them chances for free play. This is where "Heaven" revealing itself directs the human hand with the brush to work on paper or canvas. From the human point of view it is Emptiness or the spirit of Emptiness which has never been obscured.

When we remove the superficial ego, which is the natural enemy, not only of artistic activity but of every human activity that is worthy to be called truly human, we have what Oriental philosophy terms "Emptiness" or "Heaven" or "superpersonal energy" (ki) - a kind of universal creative energy or spirit which fills "heaven and earth," and from which all beings are formed, what Emerson calls "the over-soul." "Mind" is personal and conscious whereas "Energy" is superpersonal and belongs to the realm of what Mr. Suzuki calls "the cosmic unconscious."[28] It is by means of this "Emptiness" or "Heaven" or "superpersonal energy" that everything of creative art is accomplished. The "satori" - awakening is no other than "creative intuition," which in terms of Buddhism is prajña-intuition.

Zen Buddhists, thus, insist that an artist should become nothing (Empty) or an eyeball, that is, a mirror which reflects all things as they are. When he succeeds in this, he can not only see Beauty in everything but have universal creative energy and become one with the source of Beauty itself - what Emerson calls "the universal beauty" or "the eternal One" or "the oversoul."

Emerson comments on this:

> Standing on the bare ground, - my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space, - all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulates through me; I am part or parcel of God. The name of the nearest friend sounds then foreign and accidental: to be brothers, to be acquaintances, - master or servant, is then a trifle and a disturbance. I am the lover of uncontained

and immortal beauty.[29]

I am very much impressed by this vivid experience of Emerson's and feel great familiality with it. Except by this approach, an artist cannot enter the world where subject and object are one, nor realise what Emerson calls "the universal beauty". Usually, we see Nature separately from our mind. But such Nature is not a true one, but an abstract one, that is, just a shadow of true Nature. Emerson, furthermore, comments on this:

> Yet it is certain that the power to produce this delight does not reside in nature, but in man, or in a harmony of both.[30]

Therefore, Beauty, which seems to be inherent in one thing, must symbolize the perfect whole and suggest the universal beauty as Emerson suggested in his essay and the next poem.

> All are needed by each one;
> Nothing is fair or good alone.
> I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,
> Singing at dawn on the alder bough;
> I brought him home, in his nest, at even;
> He sings the song, but it cheers not now,
> For I did not bring home the river and sky;
> He sang to my ear - they sang to my eye.[31]

We are more impressed by his comment on this harmony in his diary.

> I remember when I was a boy going upon the beach and being charmed with the colors and forms of the shells. I picked up many and put them in my pocket. When I got home I could find nothing that I gathered - nothing but some dry, ugly mussel and snail shells. Thence I learned that composition was more important than the beauty of individual forms to effect. On the shore they lay wet and social by the sea and under the sky.[32]

In this sense, it is truly accepted that Dante and other Italians define Beauty as "the many in one."[33] As long as a single thing has cosmic quality, it

is Beauty.

Strictly speaking, an artist is the servant of Nature, in the sense that he must annihilate his superficial ego and keep himself a pure vessel in which objects flow freely. On the other hand, he is the master of Nature, in the sense that he creates a harmonious whole and reveals the secret of "super-personal energy." Therefore, the Art created in this way does not simply reveal the surface of objects but imply the essential Self of the artist who is one with objects. Emerson says on this point:

> The best of beauty is a finer charm than skill in surfaces, in outlines, or rules of art can never teach, namely a radiation from the work of art, of human character, - a wonderful expression through stone, or canvas, or musical sound, of the deepest and simplest attributes of our nature, and therefore most intelligible at last to those souls which have these attributes.[34]

SECOND CHAPTER

Peter Lisca suggests that Jim Casy in *the Grapes of Wrath,* like Emerson, discovers the Oversoul through intuition and rejects his congregation in order to preach to the whole.

The scene of the reunion of Tom Joad and Jim Casy seems to be significant. The itinerant preacher Jim Casy is sitting on the ground, leaning against the trunk of a willow tree, with his legs crossed and one bare foot extended nearly as high as his head. His posture reminds me of a Zen priest traveling in pursuit of enlightenment or doing the exercise of "zazen" in order to free himself from social temptations and enable him to move down deeply toward the bottom of the heart, the essential Self. He confesses to Tom his guilt; over-excited from his evangelistic revivals, he was in the habit of taking one or another of the girls of his audience to lie in the grass. Casy actually perceives the incongruity of this behavior. That's why he went into the wilderness, where he perceived an Emersonian philos-

ophy. Now he renounces his Bible-belt evangelism for a species of social humanism.

> 'I figgered about the Holy Sperit and the Jesus road. I figgered: "Why do we got to hand it on God or Jesus? Maybe," I figgered, "maybe it's all men an' all women we love; maybe that's the Holy Sperit - the human sperit - the whole shebang. Maybe all men got one big soul ever' body's a part of." Now I sat there thinkin' it, an' all of a sudden - I knew it. I knew it so deep down that it was true, and I still know it.'[35]

In a sense, Jim Casy has been spiritually enlightened or has experienced a great awakening by his annihilation of selfish proclivities in the wilderness. The following remarks also signify his perception of Emerson's "Over-Soul" or "the many in one" which I have discussed in the FIRST CHAPTER.

> 'I ain't sayin' I'm like Jesus,' the preacher went on. 'But I got tired like Him, an' I got mixed up like Him, an' I went into the wilderness like Him, without no campin' stuff. Night-time I'd lay on my back an' look up at the stars ; morning I'd set an' watch the sun come up ; midday I'd look out from a hill at the rollin' dry country ; evenin' I'd foller the sun down. Sometimes I'd pray like I always done. On'y I couldn' figure what I was prayin' to or for. There was the hills, an' there was me, an' we wasn't separate no more. We was one thing. An' that one thing was holy. .....
>
> 'An' I got thinkin,' on'y it wasn't thinkin,' it was deeper down than thinkin.' I got thinkin' how we was holy when we was one thing, an' mankin' was holy when it was one thing. An' it only got unholy when one mis' able little fella got the bit in his teeth an' run off his own way, kickin' an' draggin'an' fightin.' Fella like that bust the holiness. But when they're all workin' together, not one fella for another fella, but one fella kind of harnessed to the whole shebang-that's right, that's holy.'[36]

It is only Ma among the Joads who perceives Jim Casy's metamorphosis: "She watched him as though he were suddenly a spirit, not human

any more, a voice out of the ground."[37]

As Peter Lisca suggests, this story is a kind of initiation story. Jim Casy is given a role of a mentor and Tom is his pupil. At the scene of their reunion, Tom cannot understand Jim's agony nor his great enlightenment. Tom's attitude is selfish. He is looking out for his superficial ego.

> Joad carefully drew the torso of a woman in the dirt, breasts, hips, pelvis. 'I wasn't never a preacher,' he said. 'I never let nothin' get by when I could catch it. An' I never had no idears about it except I was goddamn glad when I got one.'[38]

Casy's education and Tom's conversion are fulfilled only when Tom has time to think of Casy and his message after revenging his mentor and hiding out in the cave. In his last meeting with Ma, he remembers Casy's words and asserts his spiritual unity with all men. It is evident that he has moved from material and egocentric resentment to ethical indignation.

> 'Lookie, Ma. I been all day an' all night hidin' alone. Guess who I been thinkin' about? Casy! He talked a lot. Used ta bother me. But now I been thinkin' what he said, an' I can rememder - all of it. Says one time he went out in the wilderness to find his own soul, an' he foun' he didn' have no soul that was his'n. Says he foun' he jus' got a little piece of a great big soul. Says a wilderness ain't no good 'cause his little piece of a soul wasn't no good 'less it was with the rest, an' was whole. Funny how I remember. Didn' think I was even listenin.' But I know now a fella ain't no good alone....'
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> 'Goes, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow, but woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up." That's part of her.' .....
>
> ..... 'Then I'll be all aroun' in the dark. I'll be ever' where-wherever you look. Wherever they's a fight so hungry people can eat, I'll be there. Wherever they's a cop beatin' up a guy, I'll be there. If Casy knowed, why, I'll be in the way guys yell when tkey're mad an' I'll be in the way kids laugh when they're hungry an' they know supper's ready. An' when our folks eat the stuff they raise an' live in the houses they build - why, I'll be there. See? God, I'm

talkin' like Casy. Comes of thinkin' about him so much. Seems like I can see him sometimes.' [39]

It is apparent that Tom is now enlightened. Now he has perceived his master's philosophy. Peter Lisca suggests that the conditions under which the last meeting between mother and son takes place is reminiscent of the prenatal state: The entrance to the cave is covered wtth black vines, and the interior is damp and completely dark, so that the contact of mother and son is actually physical rather than visual; she gives him food. When Tom comes out of the cave after announcing his conversion, it is as though he were reborn.[40]

The Pearl, another fine story by Steinbeck, is considered a sort of a parable, and it also includes some aspects of Emerson's philosophy on "the Over-Soul," "Beauty," and so on. In his introductory remarks to *The Pearl*, the author says, "If this story is a parable, perhaps everyone takes his own meaning from it and reads his own life into it." [41] The action is simple, but, as in all parables, suggestive of underlying planes of meaning. We are urged to look beyond the physical events of the surface story into their spiritual significance. The first and most important question is what the Pearl represents. Its symbolic nature cannot be overlooked. When Kino first finds the Pearl, it is described as "the greatest pearl in the world," and then as "the Pearl of the world." This phrase is often repeated. There is a lot of allusion to the pearl in the parables of the Western World. But the most appropriate is found, I think, in the Bible. In Matthew 13 : 45-46, we read:

> Again the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls: And having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

As long as the pearl lies far deep in the sea, it is eternally good, beautiful and innocent like a little child without cunning. Its existence in the sea urges us to perceive the Providence, or the cosmic soul, or the "universal beauty" as Emerson called. However, when it is picked up out

of the sea to satisfy man's greed, it causes to destroy the whole structure, the cosmic harmony and beauty. It is of no value now just as the beautiful shells Emerson brought home was nothing but some dry, ugly mussel and snail shells. As long as a single thing has comsic quality, it is Beauty. (cf. Quotations 31, 32 and 33) As those shells needed the sea and the sky, so the Pearl should be laid far deep in the sea.

After the first attack on Kino by unknown assailants, Juana, Kino's wife, says of the Pearl :

> "This thing is evil," she cried harshly. "This pearl is like a sin! It will destroy us," and her voice rose shrilly. "Throw it away, Kino. Let us break it between stones. Let us bury it and forget the place. Let us throw it back into the sea. It has brought evil. Kino, my husband, it will destroy us."[42]

Kino didn't have to pick up the Pearl and raise the money for the doctor's fee by selling it, because the poison of the scorpion was already going out of the baby's body. This is definately shown in the paragraph at the end of the second chapter.

> He looked past his pearl, and he saw that the swelling was going out of the baby's shoulder, the poison was receding from its body. Then Kino's fist closed over the pearl and his emotion broke over him. He put back his head and howled. His eyes rolled up and his body was rigid. The men in the other canoes looked up, startled and then they dug their puddles into the sea and raced towards Kino's canoe.[43]

For Kino, the Pearl is now to provide not the doctor's fee but the chance for their marriage in the church, a Winchester carbine, and an education for their baby Coyotito.

> But Kino's face shone with prophecy. "My son will read and open the books, and my son will write and will know writing. And my son will make numbers, and these things will make us free because he will know-he will know and through him we will know." And in the pearl Kino saw himself and Juana squatting by the little fire in

> the brush hut while Coyotito read from a great book. "This is what the pearl will do," said Kino.[44]

He wanted to be one of "the townspeople" through an education for Coyotito. According to Steinbeck, this is not an act of evil but that of defiance against the cosmic harmony. Just as in case of Emerson's shells and the Pearl, Kino's desire for leaving his station will incur the danger of undermining the cosmic order, harmony or beauty. Kino's brother Juan Tomas points out Kino is not engaged in a private struggle and he is not defying just tke pearl buyers but the whole structure, the whole way of life.[45] The next passage is very significant.

> "I have heard our father tell of it. It was a good idea, but it was against religion, and the Father made that very clear. The loss of the pearl was a punishment visited on those who tried to leave their station. And the Father made it clear that each man and woman is like a soldier sent by God to guard some part of the Universe. And some are in the ramparts and some far deep in the darkness of the walls. But each one must remain faithful to his post and must not go running about, else the castle is in danger from the assaults of Hell."[46]

The Pearl is at last returned to the sea, but not before it has brought strife between husband and wife, destroyed their home, and caused the violent death of their child Coyotito.

NOTES

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5. *Ibid.*, p. 201
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9. *Ibid.*, p. 6
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11. Emerson: *The American Scholar, Major Writers of America 1,* p. 506
12. Emerson: *Self-Reliance, Major Writers of America 1,* p. 516
13. Emerson: *The American Scholar, Major Writers of America 1,* p. 507
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16. Henry David Thoreau: *Walden,* Introduction by Norman Holmes Pearson, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1966, p. 41
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21. Emerson: *Circles, Essays by R. W. Emerson,* p. 214
22. Emerson: *The Over-Soul, Essays by R. W. Emerson,* p. 194
23. Emerson: *Circles, Essays by R. W. Emerson,* p. 212
24. Emerson: *Civilization, Essays by R. W. Emerson,* p. 280
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26. *Ibid.,* p. 58
27. *Ibid.,* pp. 58–9
28. *Ibid.,* p. 53
29. Emerson: *Nature, Major Writers of America 1,* p. 491
30. *Ibid.,* p. 492
31. Emerson: *Each and All, Major Writers of America 1,* pp. 570–1
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36. *Ibid.,* pp. 75–6
37. *Ibid.,* p. 76
38. *Ibid.,* p. 22
39. *Ibid.,* pp. 383–5
40. Lisca: *The Wide World of John Steinbeck,* p. 174
41. Steinbeck: *The Pearl,* Edited by U. Miyagi, with Notes by S. Kumashiro, Sekkei-Shobo, Tokyo, 1971, Introduction
42. *Ibid.,* p. 48
43. *Ibid.,* pp. 24–5
44. *Ibid.,* p. 32
45. *Ibid.,* p. 66
46. *Ibid.,* p. 56

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