**English II Honors – Transcendentalism: Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Emerson**

From the *Changodya Upanishad, Ch. 6
(This chapter tells the story of a boy, Svetaketu who is sent off to study the “Vedas,” ancient books of Hindu rituals chanted by members of the Brahmin caste. When he comes home, he thinks he’s an expert on all things spiritual, but his father shows him that he only has “book smarts,” not true understanding of Being. So he instructs him in the Oneness of all things with “Brahman.”)*"Just as from a single lump of clay, dear boy, one would know about everything made from clay, the difference being a mere verbal distinction, a name, the reality is only `clay.'
 Just as from one lump of copper, dear boy, one would know about everything made from copper, the difference being a mere verbal distinction, a name, the reality is only `copper.'
As from a single nail-scissor, dear boy, one would know about all iron objects, the difference being a mere verbal distinction, a name, the reality is only `iron,' this is that teaching, dear boy."

"As bees, dear boy, produce honey by gathering together the nectars from the flowering trees in every direction, those nectars become one single honey. And just as those nectars do not get the idea `I am the nectar of this tree, I am the nectar of that tree,' indeed in the very same way, dear boy, all these beings, having sprung from Being, do not know `We have sprung from Being.'
Whatever they are in this world--tiger, lion, wolf, bear, worm, flying insect, biting insect, or mosquito--that they become.
That which is the finest essence, the whole universe has That as its soul. That is Reality, That is the Self, and That is you, Svetaketu!"

"As these rivers flow, dear boy, the eastern ones to the east, the western ones to the west, they go from the sea to the sea alone, they become the sea itself. Just as there they do not know `I am this one, I am that one...' In the same way, dear boy, all these beings, although they have come from Being, do not know `We have come from Being.' [Whatever] they are in this world--tiger, lion, wolf, bear, worm, flying insect, biting insect, or mosquito--that they become. That which is the finest essence, the whole universe has That as its soul. That is Reality, That is the Self, and That is you, Svetaketu!"

 *From the Isha Upanishad (Mahatma Gandhi’s favorite religious text, the “summit of human wisdom”)*

 The Self is one. Ever still, the Self is swifter than thought, swifter than the senses.
Though motionless, he outruns all pursuit. Without the Self, never could life exist.

The Self seems to move, but is ever still.
He seems far away, but is ever near.
He is within all, and he transcends all.

Those who see all creatures in themselves and themselves in all creatures know no fear.
Those who see all creatures in themselves and themselves in all creatures know no grief.
How can the multiplicity of life delude the one who sees its unity?

The Self is everywhere. Bright is the Self, indivisible, untouched by sin, wise,
Immanent and Transcendent. He it is Who holds the cosmos together.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 **Emerson – “Brahma”**
(*Note: The Earliest translations of the Upanishads available in 1800’s America mistranslated “Brahman.”)*

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
 They know not well the subtle ways
 I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;

Shadow and sunlight are the same;

The vanished gods to me appear;

And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;

When me they fly, I am the wings;

I am the doubter and the doubt,

I am the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,

And pine in vain the sacred Seven;

But thou, meek lover of the good!

Find me, and turn thy back on heave

**English II Honors – Transcendentalism: Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Emerson

The Four Noble Truths of the Buddha (*a philosophy of happy living, developed after a long, grueling search for understanding)*
I. All life is essentially unsatisfactory because it is transient.
 *IOW, everything is temporary, always changing, and no satisfaction lasts. We are endlessly chasing pleasure and happiness.*

II. The root of our dissatisfaction is our clinging to transient things.
 *IOW, we foolishly desire the impossible – permanent happiness/wealth/life, etc. – and thus, we suffer and dislike our lives.*

III. It is possible to achieve freedom from dissatisfaction and find happiness.
 *IOW, Buddha is an optimistic guy in the end. Suffering exists, but so does salvation from suffering while living.*

IV. This happiness is achieved through following the Buddha’s “eightfold path.”
 *IOW, meditate, practice selfless compassion, and learn to let go and accept change. Live in harmony with the present.****Tao Te Ching – Verse 8:*
The highest good is like water.

Water gives life to the ten thousand things and does not strive.

It flows in places men reject and so is like the Tao.

In dwelling, be close to the land.

In meditation, go deep in the heart.

In dealing with others, be gentle and kind.

In speech, be true.

In ruling, be just.

In business, be competent.

In action, watch the timing.
When you do not strive with others, none will find fault with you. **“Before we were born we had no feeling; we were one with the universe. This is called ‘mind-only,’ or ‘essence of mind’ or ‘big mind.’ After we are separated by birth from this oneness, as the water falling from the waterfall is separated by the wind and rocks, then we have feeling…You attach to the feeling you have without knowing just how this kind of feeling is created. When you do not realize that you are one with the river, or one with the universe, you have fear. Whether it is separated into drops or not, water is water. Our life and death are the same thing. When we realize this fact we have no fear of death anymore, and we have no actual difficulty in our life.When the water returns to its original oneness with the river, it no longer has any individual feeling to it; it resumes its own nature, and finds composure.” –Zen Buddhist “Roshi” Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*
 **Emerson – “The Rhodora” (A.k.a. rhododendron flower)
 *On being asked, (from where) comes the flower?***

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals fallen in the pool
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that, if eyes were made for seeing,
Then beauty is its own excuse for Being;
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask; I never knew;
But in my simple ignorance suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there, brought you.