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Exploring the Portrayal of Love in Paulo Coelho's "Eleven Minutes" and "By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept" through the Lens of Transcendentalism

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Abstract: *Through the prism of transcendentalist philosophy, this paper seeks to unearth the underlying theme of transcendental love, expressed by renowned Brazilian author Paulo Coelho. The early 19th-century philosophical movement known as Transcendentalism placed a strong emphasis on the value of following one's own intuition, the search for a higher spiritual truth beyond the material world, and the intrinsic goodness of both people and the natural world. The main theory for this dissertation is Ralph Waldo Emerson, a prominent figure in Transcendentalism. Some of Coelho's best-known pieces, including *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept* and *Eleven Minutes*, feature protagonists going on adventures against social mores and expectations. They get a better knowledge of who they are and where they fit in the world as a result of their experiences. The pursuit of true love, spiritual enlightenment, and individual truth by these characters is consistent with the core ideas of Transcendentalism. This paper explores how Ralph Waldo Emerson's transcendentalist ideas are reflected in Coelho's works, focusing on heroes who overcome social barriers to attain self-awareness and spiritual enlightenment. References to sacred scriptures, a review of pertinent literature, and an interpretive technique are all integrated into the analysis.*

Key Words: True love, Spiritual Enlightenment, Emerson, Transcendentalism, Coelho

Introduction

The main goal of transcendentalists was to discover the ultimate reality of life. Their worldview revolved around the ideas of intuition and inner understanding. The founders maintained that by adhering to these ideals, people might transcend the ordinary experiences of daily life and get closer to spiritual satisfaction. Leading transcendentalist Ralph Emerson highlights the significance of listening to one's inner wisdom in order to arrive at this delightful condition. He argues that everyone is good at heart and promotes loving oneself from the inside out. "People abhor consistency, seeing it as infernal," Emerson famously said (Emerson, 1841). In a similar vein, he says, "Trust yourself; every heart vibrates to that iron string" (Emerson, 1841). Accept the circumstances that divine providence has placed you in, the company of your peers, and the course of events as they are developing.

Great historical figures have always depended on the creativity of their day, operating with a naive trust in the inner guidance that permeates their actions and governs their very being. As mature, responsible individuals, it is our responsibility to recognize that we all have a common transcendent destiny within the global consciousness. Instead of cowering like helpless kids or fleeing from hardships like cowards, we stand as guides, guardians, and benefactors in accordance with the will of God and welcome chaos as well as order. Novelist and essayist Elif Shafak, a Turkish-British, said, "Travel to the Truth requires work from the heart, not the brain." Prioritize your heart over your mind while making decisions. To face, test, and ultimately overcome your fears, use your emotions "(Shafak, 2009. p. 528)." This implies that learning the truth requires more than simply cerebral study and reason. Rather, it suggests that to truly understand and cherish truth, one must make a sincere emotional commitment. It highlights the importance of empathy, intuition, and firsthand experience in comprehending profound

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realities. "Setting your heart" here refers to prioritizing sincerity and love over just rational or cerebral approaches. It suggests that one should rely on one's feelings and intuition to grasp reality rather than only using reason to make sense of it. "Nafs" is the Islamic term for ego or base tendencies that could hinder spiritual growth and cloud judgment. The quote encourages using emotions as a tool for introspection and self-improvement.

By confronting and evaluating their feelings, people can get over their ego-driven impulses and biases and develop a deeper understanding of reality. In the end, the statement advocates for a comprehensive method of finding the truth that combines cognitive inquiry, passionate honesty, and self-worth. It means that deep understanding or enlightenment can be attained by starting on a journey of self-discovery and spiritual growth.

Additionally Indeed, as the (Quran 50:16) states, "We are closer to man than his jugular vein, and We know whatever thoughts his inner self develops." We created him. This Quranic verse, found in Surah Qaf (50:16), emphasizes Allah's closeness to and intimate knowledge of humanity. It highlights the divine understanding of people's innermost thoughts and feelings. In addition to demonstrating the depth of divine understanding, the statement "We know whatever thoughts his inner self develops" suggests that Allah is aware of all the nuances of human awareness, including intents, feelings, and thoughts. The phrase "closer to him than (his) jugular vein" refers to the intimate relationship that Allah has with each and every individual. The image of Allah is that of something even closer and more intricately interwoven with human life, like the jugular vein, which is essential to life and intimately connected to the body. This passage basically reminds us of Allah's omniscience and omnipresence, highlighting the intimate bond between the Creator and His creation. It conveys the idea that Allah is always there for mankind, offering them kindness, support, and direction. Additionally, Allah is fully aware of every aspect of human life, even the most personal ideas and feelings.

The ultimate judge of past and present mistakes and the only one who can tell us what is needed is the obvious truth that goes against all of our smart plans and skills and forces people to speak from their true selves instead of what they say. The beautiful natural world, where we find comfort like the earth tucked into the soft hug of the atmosphere, stands for Unity, the Over-soul, where each person's unique existence is embraced and joined with all others. We are made up of separate parts, pieces, sections, and particles. During this time, humanity has the timeless and all-encompassing essence, the universal aesthetic that all parts and particles are linked to equally, the enlightened tranquility, and the essence of the whole (Emerson, 1841). Ralph Waldo Emerson held the transcendentalist belief that everything is connected and that everyone has a divine, universal nature. Emerson refers to this universal essence as "that great nature" or "the Over-soul," which serves as both the final arbiter of wrongdoings from the past and present and the precursor of what must eventually occur. Its essence is supposed to be all-encompassing, cradling the Earth as the atmosphere does. The oneness that unites all animals also connects each individual's uniqueness to the community as a whole. The "common heart" that was mentioned symbolizes the shared nature that supports authentic human communication and moral behavior. It is the source of authenticity and sincerity in words and deeds, motivating others to behave and talk more in line with their inner selves than with what society expects of them. Emerson contrasts the broken part of human existence, which is characterized by division and separation, with the oneness and wholeness that each person's soul possesses. This soul is referred to as "the soul of the whole," embodying universal wisdom and beauty. It is the still, wise core that transcends individuality and binds all the components and parts of life together. Knowledge, virtue, strength, and beauty, according to Emerson, are the results of realizing this universal nature inside ourselves. Acknowledging our intrinsic connection to the divine and yielding to its wisdom might help us transcend the limitations of individualism and strive toward a life that is more serene and satisfying. In his essay on spirituality, Emerson emphasizes the existence of God.

"Anyone who lives near nature can lead a happy and easy life.

Pseudo-theologians who constantly discuss the beginning of sin mislead or confound our children; if they concentrate on the here and now, they will undoubtedly find the answers to all of their problems (Emerson, 1841). Therefore, everyone's ability to reach their spiritual destination depends on their ability to think independently and without the burden of institutional conformity. Because God resides inside each

and every person and can guide them on the right path, one should focus on their inner light rather than following institutional authority, which can land them in jail or captivity. In our day-to-day existence, a hero for one society can be a transgressor for another. Our children will focus on humanity and spreading love in society if they think that souls are connected to an oversoul. This is because they will understand that God is closer to them, and they don't require outside instruction. Furthermore, gaining wisdom is not limited to reading well-known and respected writers; while these writers can teach us valuable lessons, the true path to kindness is inside us and can only be found through connecting with our higher selves, which can also enrich our lives. "This master is brave; give it wings: Complete adherence, unwavering hope: High and lofty. With wordless goals and unspent wings, it plunges toward midday; nevertheless, it is a god cognizant of its own path and the sky's exits. It requires enormous courage and was never intended for the weak. Unwavering bravery and unquestioning spirits shall be repaid (Emerson 1841). In this passage, Emerson expresses his transcendental conviction in love. He seeks to persuade the reader that love is a powerful emotion that transcends all boundaries—both celestial and terrestrial—as well as all mathematical formulas. Love is capable of things that are only known to God. Love doesn't require a torchbearer since it already knows the proper path. One will undoubtedly arrive at one's target if one walks the path of love. However, Emerson highlighted that only the brave—those with the guts to confront life's ups and downs and its harsh realities—would be rewarded. Because love is difficult to repay and frequently encounters social injustice.

Literature Review

Nahar (2021) observes that the novel *Eleven Minutes* offers a fresh take on prostitution. We learn about Maria's journey toward self-actualization through a mimetic-thematic dimension of the story. Feminist theory states that a woman's body is the key to her own freedom. The feminist viewpoint on the prostitution industry and the expressivism of the book urge us to reassess classic dichotomies in life, such as sacred and profane love. Maria's expressive subjectivism contrasts with the binary pairings. In the novel *Eleven Minutes*, prostitution is equated with divinity and love. Maria sets out on a quest for self-transcendence in order to find her inner light. The face of psychological literature is Paulo Coelho (Sultana, 2022). A psychological phenomenon known as self-transcendence occurs when a person surpasses their own boundaries and faces either favorable or unfavorable outcomes. It encompasses pursuits aimed at enhancing one's well-being. Maria's journey is a shining example of self-transcendence; it affects her well-being through a variety of relational aspects, including intrapersonal (her journaling and introspective investigation), transpersonal (her spirituality and relationship with God), and family and friends. The study finds that Maria's self-transcendence has both beneficial and detrimental effects on her well-being. Her relationship dynamics have a big impact on her experiences. In "Eleven Minutes," Maria's autobiographical narrative sheds light on the realities of prostitution and offers an intimate glimpse into her journey toward self-actualization.

This novel's feminist perspective on prostitution and expressivism encourages us to rethink traditional notions of sacred and profane love, among other conventional dichotomies. Maria's expressive subjectivism contrasts the binary pairs.

Prostitution is elevated to the status of love and divinity in the book *Eleven Minutes*. Maria travels the path of self-transcendence in order to investigate an inner light. She radiates an inner light that enhances the beauty of the contrasting elements of the physical and spiritual, sensuality and spirituality, destiny and free will, prostitution and marriage, and divine love and earthly love. Maria and Ralf engage in sexual intercourse and spend time together for a duration of eleven minutes. *Eleven Minutes* portrays the narrative of a sex worker who receives forgiveness from Jesus, a significant aspect of Western religious beliefs. Coelho uses sex—a forbidden subject—as the novel's central theme. Here, Maria and the Virgin Mary are compared in this book. This tainting of the symbol of virginity and purity by the juxtaposition of a prostitute with a sacred female figure. As a result, the binary antagonism between purity and impurity is broken by this relationship. Additionally, this analogy suggests that Maria's religion originated from a religious female role model, strengthening the bond among women. Maria's feminist perspective on prostitution reexamines her soul in order to dismantle all notions of body and soul as binary oppositions Lestari (2014).



In a similar vein, Paulo Coelho combined the search for absolute and transcendental love in *By the River Piedra. I sat down and wept* in 1994. At the end of the novel, the protagonist makes it to the religious stage. “The aesthetic stage came first, followed by the ethical stage. However, all of these accomplishments came about after great effort and suffering. After a lot of upheaval, she gained confidence” (Mugrib, N. C., & Zulfah, Z. (2016)). Paulo Coelho's "By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept" follows the protagonist as she explores transcendental love and searches for the unchangeable truth. The narrative unfolds in stages that mirror the protagonist's progression through multiple periods of metamorphosis and introspection. The first stage, called aesthetic, is likely a period of weak faith and superficial love, characterized by a focus on fleeting pleasures and external appearances. This stage may be characterized by a shallow sense of love and a lack of deeper spiritual awareness. The ethic stage—which indicates a higher degree of engagement with moral and ethical concepts—shows the protagonist's growing awareness of the importance of morality, compassion, and ethical behavior in both love and life. However, in the religious stage, the protagonist's journey comes to a conclusion as she develops a deeper understanding of the divine and has a profound spiritual awakening. This stage illustrates the protagonist's achievement of transcendental love and the absolute truth and indicates a degree of spiritual fulfillment and enlightenment.

The book's protagonist faces a number of challenges and setbacks that serve as catalysts for her personal growth and transformation. These setbacks help her develop resilience, self-assurance, and inner strength. Despite obstacles in her path, her perseverance ultimately leads her to a state of self-awareness and spiritual fulfillment.

Therefore, Along the River Piedra, The protagonist of I Sat Down and Wept travels through various stages of moral, religious, and creative development before experiencing a profound spiritual awakening and realizing transcendental love.

After facing too many obstacles, Piler developed into a powerful woman. She used to be scared to take chances, but after meeting her childhood friend, she gained the confidence to do so. As her relationship with God grew deeper, she also developed into a powerful woman. Kurniawati (2008). According to Emerson's *Oversoul* (1841), the closer you go to the soul of the cosmos, the more powerful you will become, and the more society will break you.

God is presumed to be a man, even though our society is frequently patriarchal. However, Coelho illustrates the feminine aspect of God in this story through the concept of complete submission to a lover and the hero's marriage to a top virgin. It demonstrates that God loves His creations, just like a mother would. Furthermore, their anguish is a result of their sublimity rather than their viciousness. (Meirawati, 2013).

Mott(2010) states that transcendentalism is the state of mind and soul that cannot be achieved through any logical debate, but the only source is direct encouragement from God, as His innate presence in the spiritual world can guide us to ultimate happiness. Emerson (2018)" Whenever he stands on the ground, he feels the presence of God, and he is not troubled by blowing wind and all the selfishness perished away, and he became a translucent oculus, and he can see the whole. According to Ellis, transcendentalism is a state of mind and spirit that cannot be attained by rational argumentation alone. Rather, it proposes that the ultimate source of direction and enjoyment is a direct relationship with God, whose inherent presence in the spiritual realm is the source of true transcendence. This point of view is consistent with Transcendentalist views of the significance of spiritual insight, intuition, and the innate divinity present in every person. It implies that one may rise above everyday worries and comprehend life on a deeper level by connecting with this heavenly presence. Transcendentalism entails a deep spiritual awakening marked by an intimate relationship with God. Transcendentalism emphasizes the significance of overcoming the constraints of the material world in order to get a deeper knowledge of reality and gain spiritual fulfillment, whether by intuition. According to Plato, all knowledge is innate, and the soul already knew the forms before it was born into the material world. This theory holds that learning is really just the soul remembering what it already knows. (Plochmann,1981). These forms, which represent the essence of ideas like beauty, justice, kindness, and so on, are the genuine world. The soul existed in this world of Forms and had direct awareness of them before taking on a corporeal form. The physical body's limitations and

the material world's sensory experiences encumber the soul when it enters the material realm at birth. According to Plato's theory of the Forms, perfect and eternal Forms, or Ideas, exist behind the imperfect and ever-changing world of physical reality (Lorenz, 2008). Consequently, the soul loses its memory of the knowledge it had while living in the world of the Forms. Still, remnants of this inner wisdom lie dormant in the soul, just waiting to be reawakened. Plato defined learning as the act of recalling or recollecting the facts that the soul already knows. People can access and discover this buried information in their souls through education, philosophical investigation, and dialectical reasoning. Through a process of intellectual exploration, people eventually come to understand the timeless truths that underpin the material universe.

Research Methodology

This paper is qualitative and analytical in nature, which can drive us towards our findings via textual analysis techniques. Deeper understanding and exploration of real-world issues are provided by qualitative research. Qualitative research contributes to the generation of hypotheses and the further investigation and understanding of quantitative data, as opposed to gathering numerical data points, interfering, or offering manipulations as in quantitative research. (Tenny et al. 2017). The qualitative method is applied to comprehend people's views, experiences, attitudes, behaviors, and interactions. Creates data that is not numeric. Study across all disciplines is becoming more interested in the study strategy of integrating qualitative research into intervention studies. (Pathak et al., 2013). Transcendentalism is the research framework selected for the current study, which is not only a philosophical movement but a movement deeply influenced by romanticism. Therefore, this paper will not only focus on Ralf Waldo Emerson's philosophy but also unveil some of the aspects of romanticism.. similarly, it is already known that transcendentalism transcends worldly experiences and knowledge and has deep prestige for intuition and nature; therefore, holy books of different religions have been studied by the researcher to get the deep insight what does Emerson want to convey and how we can be able to interpret it in Paulo Coelho's work.

It attempts to find the different aspects of the theoretical framework, which is a complex phenomenon and cannot be limited to the text only, but it has surrounded many movements of that age. The primary sources are the texts written by Paulo Coelho, along with the series of essays written by Ralf Waldo Emerson. Moreover, e-books are concerned with the understanding of transcendentalism, such as the *Oxford Handbook of Transcendentalism* (Myerson et al., 2010). *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept* (1994) and *Eleven Minutes* (2003) are analyzed very carefully against the backdrop of Transcendentalism. Ralf Waldo Emerson is the chief theorist of the movement, and here in this research, his philosophy of oversoul will be explored in the novels of Paulo Coelho. Emerson's philosophy about divine love and its implication on worldly love will be analyzed in texts.

Findings/Discussion

According to this study, love is the cure-all for all of our problems, whether they be psychological, spiritual, or bodily. This magnificent gift of love from mighty God and for mighty God must unquestionably push individuals in the direction of love for humanity in today's society, where people are solely concerned with making ends meet. In the chosen literature, it is discovered that love is the greatest consolidator of all broken hearts. "Love is the only thing that makes one wise. And the only reason the stupid are stupid is that they believe they comprehend love (Coelho, 1994, p. 21). Furthermore, Coelho states that "love starts to seek us the moment we begin to seek it." & to keep us safe (Coelho, 1994, p. 42). Furthermore, love is not bound by social conventions or laws. It cannot be understood with the intelligence of this world since it has its own laws. Love is a spirit-born emotion that the spirit (Soul) can only comprehend once it has attained self-realization. "Love is a language that can be felt and understood in hearts" (Coelho, 1994, p. 86). Furthermore, when someone loves without conditions, they see marvels in everything and eventually discover the connection between their soul and the oversoul, which will enable them to comprehend the language of the universe. All souls are eventually connected to the Over-Soul through this universal language. Anyone, anywhere, can acquire this language of the world and the language of the soul; it doesn't require a particular method. This idea of the language of the soul is reflected in the characters of Maria in *Eleven Minutes* (2003) and in Pilar in *by the River Piedra I sat down and wept* (1994). Since there are countless religions and beliefs in the world, it is unethical for one person to claim that the rest of the world is wrong



and that he is correct. This phenomenon was explained in Paulo Coelho's works. Furthermore, God is portrayed as a strict and authoritative being, and His loving face is purposefully concealed from the view of the general public. Therefore, people are taught that in order to find God, they must adhere to certain laws and regulations; otherwise, they will suffer eternal damnation. However, this information was not conveyed to them, and Coelho emphasized the feminine aspect of God, which refers to a compassionate and gentle creator who always desires the success and well-being of His creation and demands that it be treated with kindness and gentleness. God is aware of His children's frailty (Coelho, [1994](#), p. 49).

Emerson states that God desires to show Himself to every one of His children on the earth in the first few sentences of his essay on love (1841). Furthermore, the language of love is the only one that the entire universe speaks. In love, there can be neither gain nor loss; complete surrender is necessary. "By climbing this ladder of created souls, the lover ascends to the ultimate beauty, the love and knowledge of the Divinity." (Page 192, Emerson, [1841](#)).

Paulo Coelho underlined the relationship between love and self-realization in four different examples. When a person reaches a point in his life where he is experiencing love and unites with the universe's spirit, they can attain self-realization. At that point, they know that everything in this world is only the Great Spirit's incarnation. "The relation of the soul to the divine spirit is so pure that it is profane to seek to interpose helps," wrote Emerson in [1841](#). (page 70). However, in Pilar's instance, by the river Piedra, I sat down and sobbed (1994). Through the love of man, the love of God is understood, and the soul's connection is discovered. But first, the protagonist strives to discover the inner spark of love inside her, and her beloved only performs the role of catalyst and a source for her spiritual sublimity. Similarly, Raf Hart in *Eleven Minutes* (2003) depicted the protagonist Maria, who carries a spiritual spark of love that has no link with her being a prostitute, but being a sincere seeker of love, she is endowed with that spiritual light. "What is that to you if I love you? "We say so because we sense that what we love is not in your will but above it. It's your brilliance, not you. It is something which you are unable to know for yourself and are unaware of." (Page 194, Emerson, [1841](#)).

In a similar vein, it was the difference between individuation and preserving her individuality. Emerson also addressed the idea that if one wishes to establish a relationship with God and to the sublimity of character, one should focus on one's own task and never care about what other people think. "I actually am and do not need any secondary testimony for my own assurance or the assurance of my fellows," Emerson stated (Emerson, [1841](#), p.72). Consequently, the previous discussion makes clear that love is the spiritual spark that makes it possible to comprehend life's purpose.

We've discovered that traveling is required to achieve sublimity. The best path is to look within oneself. It's noteworthy to note that the voyage is raved in the opposite direction rather than moving forward or upward. Entering the interior and turning around, delving deeply into the unknown. "Thy lot or portion of life," said Caliphate Ali, "is seeking after thee; therefore be at rest from seeking after it," is a phrase that Emerson uses from his essay on self-reliance (1841) (p.96). Emerson considers it foolish if traveling is simply for materialistic rewards or pleasure-centered. Traveling is a fool's paradise, according to Emerson. Our initial travels reveal to us the apathy of locations (Emerson, [1841](#), p. 92). Emerson, therefore, places a strong emphasis on the inward search for the Absolute Truth. With more awareness, the heroes in the chosen text all avoid pleasure-seeking and instead make every effort to discover the Absolute Truth via the love of others.

Maria survives numerous failures but never quits, and though she is at the point of quitting, her lover saves her and tells her that she is special and she has to uncover the true meaning of self. She claims that she has found herself after enduring a great deal of psychological pain and that "when I had nothing to lose, I had everything." I discovered who I was when I stopped being who I am (Coelho, [2003](#), p. 160). Through a few relationship aspects, including transpersonal (related to her spiritual connection with God), intrapersonal (related to her thinking, as she used to journal to examine her feelings), and interpersonal (related to her family, friends, and romance), Maria's self-transcendence increases her well-being. The results of the study show that Maria transcends her identity as a creator and a destroyer while simultaneously doing so to improve her well-being. Certain features of her relationships influence her to improve them. A different viewpoint on prostitution is provided in the novel *Eleven Minutes*. The mimetic-

thematic aspect of the narrative reveals Maria's journey toward self-actualization. Feminist ideology states that a woman's body is the key to her own freedom. The novel's feminist take on expressivism and prostitution challenges us to reconsider conventional ideas of sacred and profane love, among other binary concepts. Maria's expressive subjectivism contrasts with the binary pairings. In the book *Eleven Minutes*, prostitution is glorified as love and divinity. Maria seeks an inner light by walking the path of self-transcendence. Her inner light bestows a novel grandeur on the binary relationships between body and soul, sensuality and spirituality, prostitution, and marriage, fate and will, and sacred and profane love. Only about eleven minutes pass during Maria and Ralf's real sexual performance. The myths surrounding the story of a prostitute whose misdeeds were pardoned by Jesus, a tale strongly embedded in Western faith, are declared in eleven minutes. Coelho makes sex—a taboo topic—the main focus of the book. In this book, Maria and the Virgin Mary are contrasted. This distorts the virginity and purity emblem by placing a prostitute next to a revered feminine figure. This relationship, therefore, breaks the binary opposition between purity and impurity. This parallel also implies that Maria's religion was inspired by a devout woman, thereby reinforcing the female relationship. This study analyzed how Maria's feminist viewpoint on prostitution reexamines her soul in order to undermine the concepts of body and soul as opposites.

Moreover, Pilar in *Piedra by the River* illustrates to us that God never leaves His children in the abyss; she discovers her true self via her lost love and regains it via her childhood friend (1994). Pilar discovers who she is and her faith in God through the love of her beloved. She understands that if one loves with all of one's heart, one will undoubtedly discover one's actual self and the purpose of life. "We will say to the mountain, move, and it will move if our faith is the size of a mustard seed" (Coelho, 1994, p.89).

It is concluded that no one can determine the sublimity and loftiness of a person's soul and that transcendental love, spiritual uprightness, faith, and belief in God are all autonomous things for every individual. Moreover, the universe is nothing more than the total Soul's manifestation. In his 1841 essay on love, Emerson writes, "I was as a gem concealed; Me my burning ray revealed." (Page 185, Emerson, 1841).

All that we see and witness is connected to the one and only ONE; it possesses no unique qualities. "The Buddhists were right, the Hindus were right, the Muslims were right, and so were the Jews. An individual can become one with God and work miracles whenever they genuinely walk the road of faith (Coelho, 1994, p.48).

Furthermore, because they are the chosen ones and will undoubtedly receive assistance from the creator, those who are closer to the original source have the power to bend the entire universe to their will. Conversely, if one is further away from the original source, they can never reach great heights because they will lack a connection to the Absolute and the world's Soul, encounter dread of the unknown, and lose courage and resolve.

Islamic Philosophy's Impacts on Transcendental Love

It is evident that Emerson understood transcendental love to be God's love. In order to illustrate how valuable love is, he used the examples of a jewel and a "burning ray," as well as light, which has special qualities. Light enlightens things and has no boundaries; one can experience it. Since the moon lacks natural light, its illumination comes from the sun's reflection. Emerson wishes to make it clear that all of the love we experience in society is essentially a mirror of the love that God has bestowed onto all of His creations. Similar to this, Coelho states in *Eleven Minutes* (2003) that "when we meet someone and fall in love, we have a sense that the whole universe is on our side" (Coelho 2003, p. 14). This is expressed by the protagonist, Maria. The question of why one feels that way naturally arises, and it seems that God is the source of all love. Loving someone is essentially the expression of the pure emotion that God Almighty bestows upon us. In a similar vein, Coelho asserts that "a person is manifesting the love of God if he is able to love his partner unconditionally and without conditions." God will love his neighbor if his love is made visible. He will love himself if he loves his neighbor. If he is in love with himself, then everything falls into place. History is not static. (Coelho, 2003, p.113). This leads us to investigate the message that Coelho wishes to get through. He emphasizes unconditional love, which is transcendental, and he wants to preach about it since it provides us with energy and has a global language that everyone can understand. The relationship



between the body and soul was disclosed by the protagonist, Maria, in *Eleven Minutes* (2003). Her goal is to comprehend how the body and soul are interconnected. "I see that those who touched my heart failed to arouse my body and that those who aroused my body failed to touch my heart," she says (Coelho 2003, p. 23), even if her goal is to comprehend love. She also suffers when she thinks of the people to whom she dedicated her heart.

In the sentence above, Coelho is trying to say that love is a spiritual journey and that it cannot be defined as merely a biological bond between two bodies. However, he also wants to highlight that people are naturally curious and yearn for things to exist physically. According to the Holy Quran, Moses said, "O my Sustainer!" when his Sustainer spoke to him when he arrived at Mount Sinai at the appointed hour. Please reveal yourself to me so that I can see you! God said, "Never will thou be able to see Me" (Quran 7:143). Similarly, it says, "And remember, when you said, "O Moses! " in another place. Until we see God with our own eyes, we will never believe you (Quran, 2:55). It indicates that people are constantly trying to grasp things that are outside the scope of their five senses and asking questions that are both incomprehensible and beyond their comprehension. The same is true of love. According to Coelho, it is difficult to comprehend love because God is its original source. It emphasizes that love is a language that is difficult to understand and requires a level of respect, endurance, and unmatched purity of heart. Since God is the source of all love and provides for all of His children's needs, love itself requires an unselfish, pure heart that is solely concerned with the happiness of the beloved and has no expectations of the beloved. Because expectations destroy all of the pure feelings in one's heart, and this is pure feeling.

Since the heart is the center of emotion, having a pure heart is necessary to comprehend love. And the Lord's presence is perceptible to those with pure hearts. "There is a piece of flesh in the body; if it becomes good (reformed), the whole body becomes good; if it gets spoiled, the whole body gets spoiled, and that is the heart," the Islamic prophet asserts (Bukhari, Babul Aiman). It implies that the entire body functions correctly if the heart is beating in the proper direction. However, we must be aware of the correct path because it is the path that leads to ultimate love and spiritual love. Who is the wellspring of love originally? In saying that "the more we love, the closer we come to spiritual experience," Coelho made this argument. True enlightened people, whose souls are ignited by love, have conquered the inhibitions and stereotypes associated with their time. They have shared "the madness of saintliness," as Saint Paul put it, and they have been able to dance, laugh, and pray aloud. They have been happy because people who are in love conquer the world and don't fear losing everything. "Total surrender is an act of true love" (Coelho, 1994, p. 6).

What a wonderful way for Coelho to put it! "Total surrender" refers to a man forgetting all of his emotions and concentrating only on the needs and desires of his girlfriend. In order to please their beloved, he or she is always willing to put up with all the hurt and suffering. Any lover's inner self is consumed by a single, unwavering desire: to see their beloved happy. Similar to this, on a spiritual path or in transcendental love, a lover becomes so engrossed in obeying the Lord's precepts that he loses track of earthly conventions and laws. The person's love for their beloved is their entire goal and destination. "Indeed, God has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties (in exchange) for they will have paradise," the Quran states in the Muslim sacred text. (Quran, 9:111). Comparably, the phrase "remember Me; Will remember you" appears in another passage of the Quran (Quran, 2:152).

In a similar vein, God stated to the Islamic prophet Muhammad, "My servant keeps drawing near to Me with supererogatory works so that I shall love him." I am his hand that strikes, his foot that walks, his hearing with which he hears, and his seeing with which he sees when I love him (Bukhari). It implies that God fulfills a person's labor as His Own when they give their entire being to His love. The prophet Abraham did not hesitate to be thrown into the flames, and by God's instruction, the fire embraced him without hurting him.

James 2:20–24 uses Abraham as an example of how having faith should lead to doing good deeds. From now on, Coelho expounds on the idea of this unwavering and unparalleled love by stating, "Whatever the heart decides, that's all that truly matters." (Page 6 of Coelho, 1994).

When the heart makes a decision, it doesn't care about the outcome or ramifications. In his poem *Bange Dara* (1924), Pakistan's national poet Dr. Iqbal (1877–1938) wrote, "Love fearlessly jumped into the fire of

Nimrud; intellect is absorbed in the spectacle from roof-top still." It implies that a person in true love is prepared for all kinds of pain and sorrow. The intelligent are wise simply because they love, according to Coelho. Furthermore, ignorant people are merely foolish because they believe they comprehend love (Coelho, 1994, p. 21)." When we meet someone who represents our perfect companion, I think we can go through first-sight love. We might fight this innate sensation despite any logical objections we could have, fervently wishing that it would not win. But there comes a time when we give our will to love as we realize it is a way to establish a divine nature inside another person," says the protagonist Pilar in another location, *Piedra I sat down and wept* (1994), as she was beginning the journey to find her lover. (Page 6 of Coelho, 1994).

Pain and Suffering in Love

Paulo Coelho is of the opinion that suffering and distress are directly related to the feeling of love. as he says in *Eleven Minutes* (2003), he gives the example of a soldier who is fighting for his nation only because of his love for his dear homeland. This patriotism compels a soldier to bear all the hurdles and scars and be ready to sacrifice his/her life in love for the country. Similarly, in the institution of marriage, the spouses endure all the hardships for one another. Likewise, children make sacrifices in love for their parents and vice versa. Hence, true love never asks for a reward. Whenever the messengers of God asked people to recognize God, they always emphasized that they did not want reward as said, "And I do not ask for it any payment . My payment is only from the Lord of the world"(Quran,26:109).

"Does a soldier go to war in order to kill the enemy? No, he goes in order to die for his country. Does a wife want to show her husband how happy she is? No, she wants him to see how devoted she is and how she suffers in order to make him happy. Does the husband go to work thinking he will find personal fulfillment there? No, he is giving his sweat and tears for the good of the family. And so it goes on: sons give up their dreams to please their parents, parents give up their lives in order to please their children; pain and suffering are used to justify the one thing that should bring only joy: love." (Coelho 2003, p.171).

Furthermore, in sports and all walks of life, achievement is impossible without pain. In the Holy book of Muslims, it is said, "And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient, who when faced with disaster, say, Surely to God we belong and to Him we all return"(Quran 2:155-156). Coelho says, "Anyone who practices sport knows this: if you want to achieve your objectives, you have to be prepared for a daily dose of pain or discomfort. At first, it's unpleasant and demotivating, but in time, you come to realize that it's part of the process of feeling good, and the moment arrives when, if you don't feel pain, you have a sense that the exercises don't have the desired effect." (Coelho 2003, p.145)

It means that in the beginning, there is distress and hopelessness, but with the passage of time, one is transformed and gets a position where one can endure all the hurdles for the sake of love. Transformation comes after continual practice and commitment. All the prophets, saints, and lovers endured the ups and downs of society and, in the end, got spiritual salvation and the Love of God. If somebody loves nature, it is actually the love of God because we know that all creatures are mere manifestations of God. "Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding, while remembering God while sitting or lying on their sides and give thought to the creation of heavens and earth, saying, "our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly, exalted are You above such things; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire"(Quran,3:190-191).

As such, God's image is present in the love of nature. Emerson is of the opinion that souls are always in search of their lost destination and flee hither and thither to find their original source. But when confronted with the natural bodies, he goes to the realm of ecstasy and enjoys the company of nature, just like the company of his beloved. "The passion of love rebuilds the world for youth. It makes all things alive and significant." (Emerson, 2018, p,215). Emerson uses the word 'rebuild' to mean that whenever one has the feeling of love, he or she looks around from a different perspective and observes things with a different perception. "The lover sees no resemblance except to summer evenings and diamond mornings, to rainbows and the song of birds." (Emerson,1993. Now, what is this transformation? Simply because of love. The feeling of love gives an unparalleled sophistication and delicacy to one's personality, and a person who



is rude and harsh becomes soft and minded. As an Indian lyricist Javid Akhtar(1945-) says, “After having met you, I have changed somewhat; I have started reading poetry, humming to myself; first I was well-known for my seriousness now every time I am seen smiling.”

Similarly, Coelho says that it is only love that can change the direction of thinking, and anyone can be transformed into a different personality. “A writer once said that it is not time that changes man, nor knowledge; the only thing that can change someone’s mind is love. (Coelho 2003, p. 50). Additionally, Coelho says, “Perhaps love really could transform someone, but despair did the job more quickly. (Coelho 2003, p.51). Coelho mentions despair as the opposite of love. It is known that the opposite word is hate, but Coelho deliberately used the word despair; he wants to show his reader that if you love wholeheartedly, then be aware of despair and hopelessness because this can devastate the edifice of love more quickly. It is a known fact that when one is disappointed with anyone, even God, then he can never participate in the daily activities of life. As said in the Holy book of Muslims, “Say: O servants who have transgressed against themselves, do not despair of the Mercy of God. Indeed, God forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the forgiving, the Merciful(Quran,39:53).

No one owns Anything.

Coelho is of the opinion that love should not be based on give-and-take rules and should be unconditional, and he strongly rejects possessiveness in love. Maria—the protagonist in *Eleven Minutes* (2003), told us, “It hurt when I lost each of the various men I fell in love with. Now, though, I am convinced that no one loses anyone because no one owns anyone”(Coelho 2003,p.79). She further says, “That is the true experience of freedom: having the most important thing in the world without owning it. (Coelho 2003, p.80). Coelho wants to convey to his reader that all the promises in this world are mere illusions and that reality is something else. He further adds that for the accomplishment of love, one should be faithful to oneself and must think about the meaning of one’s existence. This type of love will give birth to self-realization, which is the primary aim of transcendental love. When one realizes one becomes a humble creature of God, one recognizes oneself and one’s fellow beings. Ultimately, when he falls in love with his fellow beings, he sees the image of God in them. Coelho elaborates on the idea as such, “I have to be faithful to myself before I can be faithful to someone or something else. I have to get the substandard love out of my system before I can hunt for true love. My limited life experience has taught me that everyone is a victim of their surroundings and that this holds true for both worldly and spiritual possessions. Anyone who has lost something they believed they would always have (as has happened often enough to me already) finally comes to realize that nothing really belongs to them. (Coelho 2003,p,32). Coelho highlights such materialistic people who do not care for love and only focus on worldly gains. These gold-diggers have no sympathy with the feelings of the heart. As the protagonist -Maria’s Mother in *Eleven Minutes*(2003) says, “Love isn’t that important. I didn’t love your father at first, but money buys everything, even true love. And look at your father, he’s not even rich! (Coelho 2003, p,38). In the beginning, the Protagonist-Maria in *Eleven Minutes* (2003), has the same feeling that love is only a waste of time and energy because she is not aware of true love. As she said, “After a long time, she came to the conclusion that men brought only pain, frustration, suffering, and a sense of time dragging. (Coelho 2003, p.18).” Further, she was very much concerned about her studies and thought that love could jeopardize her career. Similarly, the protagonist, Maria, considers these words of love to be devoid of meaning. I love you, though, were three words she had often heard during her twenty-two years, and it seemed to her that they were now completely devoid of meaning because they had never turned into anything serious or deep, never translated into a lasting relationship. (Coelho 2003, p,42).In pursuit of her ambition, she became focused on her goal. “She concentrated still more on her studies and, for a while, forgot about that marvelous, murderous thing called Love. (Coelho 2003, p,19)

Similarly, it needs a courageous heart to reveal love without the fear of society and social chains. Social conformity in most conservative societies demands that one not express love. On the other hand, if someone wants to reach absolute love, he or she is considered outdated and fundamentalist or extremist. Extremism has no relation with love. Love is limitless and timeless, and anyone can love it anytime. According to Emerson, “This is a fire that begins as tiny embers in a private bosom, ignited by a stray spark from another private heart. It grows and brightens until it warms and illuminates countless

individuals the heart of everyone, and ultimately illuminates the entire world and all of nature with its bountiful flames. Therefore, it makes no difference if we try to capture the desire when we are twenty, thirty, or eighty years old. Painter at the beginning will lose some of its later characteristics, while painter at the end will lose some of its earlier characteristics.” (Emerson, 2023, p.206).

Coelho adds, “I knew how easily love could set fire to the heart” (Coelho 1994, p.56). Therefore, love is a continuous process; it is not time- or space-bound, and man has been searching continuously since the early ages. The heart is the center of love, and any heart full of courage can pass through the process of love successfully. “Love can only be found through the act of loving” (Coelho, 1994, p.59). It is noteworthy that the gain or accomplishment of a task is not necessary; many people die during the process of love, but we cannot say that they fail. At any level of love during the process, one can get more beyond his/her expectation as the source is original; therefore, we cannot say that love failed. According to Emerson, one who pursues true love, “He is a new man, with new perceptions, new and keener purposes, and a religious solemnity of character and aims. He is no longer appertain to his family and society; he is somewhat; he is a person; he is a soul.” (Emerson, 1997, p.216). Similarly, Coelho says, “However, love is never old. Whether we fall in love once, twice, or a dozen times in our lifetime, we are never in the same place twice. Love always leads someplace, whether it's to paradise or damnation. It is what keeps us alive, so we have to learn to live with it. Rejecting it results in hunger since we lack the bravery to reach out and pick fruit from the tree of life's branches. Even if it means experiencing hours, days, or weeks of disappointment and misery, we must accept love when we find it. Love finds us the moment we start looking for it. And to keep us safe”. (Coelho 1994, p.42) Here, in this line, Coelho indicates that it is obligatory for us to search for love without any hesitation. And, during this search for love, there are possibilities. We may achieve it or may lose it. Coelho says that this search can plunge us into heaven or hell, which means that results can be good or bad. The main thing is the process of love. If one is killed or finished during this pursuit, it does not mean that he/she has failed because, in that situation, their name will remain forever. Jesus Christ endured all the soreness at the hands of non-believers. Prophet Muhammad endured the pain but never gave up. Similarly, Abraham was plunged into fire, and prophet Zakriya was martyred, but this does not mean that they failed. Still, their names exist, and people count them in good books. Similarly, Saint Valentine sacrificed his life for love, and the whole world pays tribute to him on February 14 across the globe each year. This means that success in love does not mean achievement. Actually, it is the process that matters. In the end, our efforts and intentions will be counted, not the result of that effort.

Conclusion

According to this study, love is the cure-all for all of our problems, whether they be psychological, spiritual, or bodily. It is evident that Emerson understood transcendental love to be God's love. In order to illustrate how valuable love is, he used the examples of a jewel and a "burning ray," as well as light, which has special qualities. Paulo Coelho is of the opinion that suffering and distress are directly related to the feeling of love. Coelho is of the opinion that love should not be based on give-and-take rules and should be unconditional, and he strongly rejects possessiveness in love.

It is concluded that no one can determine the sublimity and loftiness of a person's soul and that transcendental love, spiritual uprightness, faith, and belief in God are all autonomous things for every individual. Moreover, the universe is nothing more than the total Soul's manifestation.

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