

## **Influence of Yōmeigaku and Emerson on Meiji Intelligentsia: With Special Reference to Kitamura Tōkoku**

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**Abstract :** Wang Yang-ming introduced a revolutionary dimension to Japanese thought through his philosophy on intuitive moral consciousness. Post-Meiji Restoration, Emerson struck a chord with the Japanese due to the striking similarities his theories on transcendentalism had with doctrines of Wang Yang-ming's school of thought (Yōmeigaku), as pointed out by Homei Iwano (1873-1920). Wang's philosophy, chiefly anchored in the idea of the fundamental unity of thought and action, resembles the non-dualistic aspect of Brahman, a subject of Emerson's deep interest. Kitamura Tōkoku's (1868-1894) ardent reading of Emerson corroborated what he had learned in Wang Yang-ming's philosophy. This essay shall begin with a discussion on Emerson's discoveries of Vedanta that later, on a parallel ground with Yōmeigaku, significantly influenced Tōkoku. This essay will then demonstrate how Tōkoku transforms these philosophies to portray the advent of modern consciousness in Japan in his magnum opus "Naibuseimeiron." In his attempt to undo the blindfold of past feudalism, Tōkoku repeatedly championed the mental process of a self-reliant individual in his essays which showcase the metamorphosis of Japanese individualism in the final decades of the Meiji Period. In seeking to express Japan's budding intellectual enterprise, Tōkoku asserts securing one's vantage point in the world through an awakened consciousness. In his desire to articulate this, Tōkoku becomes, as argued in this paper's penultimate and final sections, a fascinating merging point of the philosophical doctrines of Vedanta, Yōmeigaku, and Emerson, a rare depiction in the existing scholarship.

**Keywords :** meiji intelligentsia, yomeigaku, vedanta, modern consciousness

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