

Divine Viewpoint of Rabindranath Tagore Development

Dr. Veena Radheshyam Ilame

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Anna Saheb Gundewar College Nagpur-440013, Maharashtra, India

Abstract— The research paper deals with the Divine viewpoint of Rabindranath Tagore who was Vaishnavite poet, Novelist, story writer, and thinker and philosopher, a versatile personality. Humanistic view saw its full development after the advent of Renaissance in the European nations, and all faiths somewhere propounded the notion of fraternity, equity and liberty, and most of the people still believe that Tagore's spiritual poetry as specified in the *Gitanjali* deals with Divine Element and mysticism demonstrating co-relationship between humanity, Divinity and the Universe, and Tagore's humanistic view is closely associated with his spiritualism, nevertheless, it brings humanity close to Divinity. God loves to see in me not his servant but himself who serves all. According to Tagore salvation is not complete absorption into God but absolute dedication to humanity through love, service and joy.

Keywords— Divine, God, humanity, joy love, poet, viewpoint, Tagore, Renaissance, spiritual, spiritualism, salvation, service.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is this that, though humanistic tradition is as old as Greek Philosophy, and Vedic literature, the term humanism as a philosophy, ideology and belief system has won a substantial ensuing merely subsequently the renaissance i.e. revival of the study of Latin and Greek literature.

Of course, it is believed that Greek Philosophy is not 'alone in having the humanistic thought, perhaps it was one of the earliest of which we have records of such comments – "Man is the measure of all things."¹

It is suggested that the basic principle of the dignity and freedom of the individual is common to all religious faiths. When we come to the advice of Greek Philosopher **Socrates** "Know yourself" – our Upanisadic sages also declared "Atmanam Viddhi".

It is this that "Greek Philosophy aims to make man wise and that of Chinese philosophy is to make him virtuous, Indian Philosophy aims to enable him to obtain salvation, which is communion with the supreme spirit or realization of the Atman"²

It shows that the wide reputation of Tagore's religious verses as specified in the *Gitanjali* expanded in the wake of award of the Nobel Prize, had led people to believe that he is fundamentally a writer of spirituality and mysticism and

not of man and the earth.³ Even though he points out that "deliverance is not for me in renunciation." 67

II. TAGORE'S HUMANISTIC POINT OF VIEW

It is impossible to deny that Tagore's humanism is connected with his spiritualism. Nevertheless, his spiritualism does not make him reluctant of world and man, but brings him nearest to man and sometimes above God too. Tagore remarks:

*The revelation of the infinite is... not seen in its perfection in the starry heavens but the soul of man.*⁴

This is well reflected in Tagore's humanism is against the background of religion, against the ancient spiritualistic idealism of renunciation, against the Advaitan conception of salvation, according to which salvation is man's complete absorption into Brahman losing his existence. Like a Buddhist, Tagore never asks for controlling senses, like Upanisadic sages, he never prays for making one's senses strong.

Tagore repeatedly says "I am not an ascetic" – I do not view myself as an ascetic for asceticism makes a man callous and heartless. It breaks the bondage of human affection to get communion with the infinite. Tagore says:

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“Salvation in hermit’s cave? No, not for me.

No, I shall never shut the doors of my senses. The delight of sight and hearing and touch will bear thy delight. Yes, all my illusions will burn into illumination of joy, and all my desires ripen into fruits of love.⁵

To practice austerity or meditate sitting in a corner is not the way to get salvation for Tagore. Tagore’s method of God’s realization is humanistic as he attributes humanity to God and divinity to man. In referring to the *Brahadaranyaka Upanishad* Tagore says:

A person who worships God as exterior to himself does not know him; he is like an animal belonging to the Gods 6

It shows this that Tagore sees Divine element in humanity as the notion propounded by his Vaishnavism faith.

III. ANGRY-REMONSTRANCE

It is suggested that the statement may rouse angry remonstrance, should a man then worship his self. Is it possible to offer oneself in self-devotion? The truth is the opposite. It is easy to place one’s God outside and worship him through traditional ceremonies, observance of injunctions and taboos but the difficulty comes when we have to realize and acknowledge the divine man in our thoughts and actions. According to Tagore, salvation is not in the renunciation of the world but in perfecting human personality, discovering our divinity.

However, the fact seems to indicate that Humanity and divinity according to Tagore do not belong to two different orders but are only the aspects of the same reality. Tagore is emphatic in asserting that the Divine is also in certain respects human. A God is revealed in the best way in man; sometimes man himself becomes God, the object of worship for Tagore. Tagore’s concept of man shows that he attributes the highest rank to human existence. While accepting P.T Raju’s concept of man as a material, social, psychological, moral being at a time, Tagore attributes individuality, divinity and universality to man. His concept of man is the universal man [visva manava]. His concept of the world is one world [Vasudika kutumbam]

It demonstrates that Tagore places operate above all human beings and sometimes-above God too. According to Tagore, to originate close to God, come close to man. To serve God, you serve to man. In every man rich and poor, high and low, we get the glimpse of God. Tagore says “My God is nowhere outside humanity.”⁷ In *Gitanjali* Tagore says

It is believed that He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path maker is, breaking stones

... Come out of thy meditations and leave aside thy flowers and incense! What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained? Meet him and stand by him in toil and the sweat of thy brow.⁸ **It is possible to argue that God may even dwell amidst the people** belonging to the lower cadre people. According to Tagore unless there is spiritual freedom there is no social freedom, unless there is social freedom there is no political freedom “So spiritual freedom is not freedom from the action but freedom in action”. It is not running away from the world but being in the world. So Tagore always rejected asceticism for it makes a man callous and hardhearted says:

*Nevertheless, the callousness of asceticism pitted against the callousness of luxury is merely fighting one evil with the help of another, inviting the pitiless demon of the desert in place of the indiscriminate demon of the jungle.*¹¹

. Man’s identity with Brahman or the truth of ‘So aham’ ‘I am He’ is revealed by action, “not by turning up one’s eyeballs and sitting with closed breath and staying far away from man to gain this truth”¹²

67

‘*Chaturanga*’ is a spiritual novel, in which Sachis’s God-oriented philosophy is just opposite to Sribilas’s man-oriented philosophy. Sachs in his exploration of divine truth rejects world, action and joy; he even rejects Damini who is desperate for his love. Perhaps his callous disregard for her feelings resulted from his commitment to asceticism.

Through the character of Damini, Tagore reveals his radical humanistic approach to spirituality. Damini is an unshaken woman. Neither her father’s nor her husband’s death nor Sachis’s rejection nor even Guruji disturbs her equanimity. She remarries Sribilas and again swings into humanitarian action. If Sachin’s God-oriented philosophy rejects a woman who loves him, whereas Sribilas man is oriented philosophy prompts him to give the widow a new life.

Through the character of Jagmohan, Tagore reveals the divine nature of man. If Harimohan’s sanctity in religion divides, the man from man, whereas JagaMohan the protagonist of secularism reveals that service to man is service to God. Tagore’s radical humanistic approach to spirituality distinguishes him from ancient Indian humanists. Through the character of JagaMohan, Sribilas and Damini, Tagore reveals that human values are greater than divine values. In this respect, *Chaturanga* coincides with *Gitanjali*, the religious verses in which glorify man over God.

*Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads!... what harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained? Meet him and stand by him in toil and the sweat of thy brow.*¹³

IV. TAGORE'S VIEW POINT OF FAITH:

It can be argued that Tagore believes that temples and mosques obstruct the path of realizing God. All rites, rituals and ceremonies are obstacles in realizing God's presence in man's heart. Tagore says 'Love' alone is the positive quality of the Infinite". Love is at the root of creation, and therefore man gets God only in love. However, true love, which is complete and perfect, is only in action. Therefore, service to humankind is the best way to express our gratitude towards God.

V. CONCLUSION

Eventually, People think that work is bondage, to become completely detached from this bondage and being inactive is termed by them as 'liberation'. Tagore says, "They call Brahman also inactive and neglect worldly affairs by calling them Maya"¹⁴ – But he says that our soul gets freedom in action. Therefore, the freedom of work lies in 'joy' and the freedom of joy is in 'work. 'So it is better to perform worldly affairs with infatuation than to be engaged in meditation and religious austerities for getting Brahman by leaving all works. Love for God is expressed in our work for humanity in which God is revealed. He says in '**Fireflies**'. *God loves to see in me not his servant but himself who serves all.*¹⁵ According to Tagore salvation is not complete absorption into God but absolute dedication to humanity through love, service and joy.

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