

Spiritual Humanistic Views in Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali*

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Abstract: *Gitanjali* is the concept of soul's liberation a tale of soul's wait to meet her eternal bridegroom, the divine Lord. The main theme is the consciousness of the divine through self purification and examination to humankind. Tagore's spiritual humanism is concept of interpersonal relationship. Tagore says that Patriotism cannot be our final spiritual shelter; his refuge is humanity. Tagore's spiritual philosophy, *Gitanjali* discusses how to reach God through the path of love and devotion. Tagore advocates the leading men into the realm of God through *Gitanjali*.

Index Terms- Humanism, Spiritual, God, Soul, Relation, Love, Beauty, and Dignity

Introduction: Tagore is the most outstanding name in Bengali Literature, and he is one writer who first gained for modern India a place on the world literary scene. The award of the Nobel Prize for literature to him was but the beginning of a drama of recognition on a scale to which there cannot be many parallel in literary history. He was poet and great man, and he has left behind him great institution the Visvabharati wrote at Shantiniketan. His achievement as poet, novelist, short story writer, thinker and philosopher has won for him the title 'Gurudev', the great teacher. This great celebrity attained recognition during his own life time: recognition, not only national but International. His works or parts of them are familiar to the most readers in Europe, Asia and America. Tagore was a poet of nature and humanity. He got genuine appreciation in all quarters of the world. There were certain factors responsible for his poetic career. During the pre-*Gitanjali* period, Tagore studied man in relation to nature, while in the *Gitanjali* period; he took Man and God to spiritual realism and international humanism.

His poem in this selection has been taken from his English '*Gitanjali*'. Tagore had a very deep religious caste of mind and profound humanism. He was both a patriot and an internationalist. In the poem, '*Where the Mind is Without Fear*', Tagore sketches a moving picture of the nation he would like India to be, where everyone within the fold of the brotherhood is free to hold up one's head high and one's voice to be heard without having any tension of fear of oppression or forced compulsion; where the knowledge is not restricted by narrow ideas and loyalties. The British rule had robbed India of its pride and dignity by reducing it to a subject nation.

Tagore's humanism is based upon a deep devotion to human interests without any consideration of caste and creed. His idea of humanism covers every aspect of human life. He was concerned with Indian life first, but after the *Gitanjali*; he showed deep consideration for the entire humanity. His poems in the post-*Gitanjali* period show that he had realized the importance of international humanism. His poem '*The awakening of water fall*' proclaimed the message of love and friendship. He heard the song of the birds carrying the message of outside world. The call of the mighty ocean, the barrier of the age old custom had divided the humanity into sections. He crossed the prison house of isolation and sought for the realization of humanity. The poem marks the note of unity and human brotherhood. His poem '*Life*' opens thus:

"I do not want to die in this beautiful world;
I want to live in the midst of men" (Krishna Bagachi p, 82)

Tagore shared the tears and laughter of humanity. He felt the joys and sorrows of the people. He realized the beauty and dignity of human life. The humanist of Tagore is seen in two Bengali poems of *Gitanjali* '*Bharat-Tirtha*' and '*Apamanita*'. Tagore considers India a meeting place of different nations, a confluence of different civilizations and a sea shore of humanity. He says:

“And when man bursts his mortal
Bound is not the boundless
Revealed that moment” (Krishna Bagachi 23)

Tagore wrote his poems with the spirit of internationalism. He preached for the unity of mankind. He had good hopes in the glorious future of humanity. He gives good instances of universal brotherhood. He announces the birth of a new humanity. His humanism is free from the narrow bonds of nationalism. He represents the joys and sorrows of the common people in different walks of life

The humanism of Tagore is seen in many poems of '*Gitanjali*'. Tagore considered confluence of different nations in the poem '*Bharat Tirtha*' Tagore thinks that Indian is the meeting ground of different nations of the world. He observes the unity of civilization in the soil of India. This poem gives the idea of internationalism unity. In the poem '*Apamanita*', Tagore condemns the evils of untouchability. He feels sorry for the state of untouchables who are denied human rights. In the poem of '*Balaka*' Tagore speaks in the spirit of Internationalism on the bases of unity of mankind. He gives a message of cheer and hope in the glorious future of humanity.

“Shall the value of the Martyr’s blood
And mother’s tears be utterly last
In the dust of the earth, not buying
Heaven with their piece?” (Krishna Bagachi, 21)

The poem of post- *Gitanjali* period shows the social outlook of Tagore. He believed in the progress of humanity from age to age. He speaks as a messenger of peace and friendship and uses poetry as the forceful organ to convey his message. His poetic inspiration draws its substance from the love of humanity. His poem stood as the banner of new age based on realism, peace and friendship.

Tagore believed in the inner transformation of man to solve problems of the modern world. Tagore says: “in the modern civilization, for which an enormous number of men are used as materials, and human relationship has in a large measure become utilitarian. Man is imperfectly revealed. For man’s revelation does not lie in the fact he is a power, but that he is a spirit” (Edward Thompson, 62)

Tagore’s philosophy revolves round humanity. In the pre-*Gitanjali* period, he has presented Man and Nature in the *Gitanjali* period. He observes man in relation to God. In the post- *Gitanjali* period, he studies Man in relation to Man. In the poem '*Balaka*', Tagore shows his new philosophy. The first Great War produced a deep impression on his mind. He had accepted life with all its suffering. He showed deep faith in the future of humanity. He condemned those who violated the moral laws of the world in the name of nationalism. He says:

“The sin has been yours and ours,
The heat growing in the heart of God for ages
The cowardice of the weak, arrogance of strong
The greed of fat prosperity, the rancor of wronged,
Pride of race, and insult to man,
Has burst God’s peace; raging storm.” (Krishna Bagachi p, 23)

Some poems of '*Balaka*' give a fine blend of scientific thought and poetic imagination. The poem 36 of this collection gives philosophy of speed and restlessness. Edward Thomson says: “The stream of being as it many fitly be called; in the greatest poem in the book- a magnificent psalm of life” (Edward Thomson, 68) Tagore maintained the ideal of peace and human brotherhood in his poetry. He believed that the ruin of old civilization would mark the beginning of a new social order. In '*Gitanjali*' Tagore came at the conviction that it is useless to seek God in a secluded corner. It is necessary to worship God through the service of humanity. In the post- *Gitanjali* period Tagore became fully conscious of human interest. He not only emphasized the value of dignity, but gave stress upon human divinity.

The theme of the post-*Gitanjali* period of Tagore’s poetry is based on peace, love of humanity and realism. His poems etched the future of humanity. The poems in “*Balaka*” accept life with all its bitterness. The war has been symbolized to the dawn of new age. To him evil is unreal. He says:

“And we die with faith that peace is true, and
God is true, and true is the eternal one!” (Edward Thomson, 66)

His poetry gave touches of realism and humanism in this period. His reaction to the evil end was like notions came in the form of 'Balaka'. He inspired the people of different countries to unite on the basis of common brotherhood. He has shown the child psychology in 'crescent moon'

Tagore had described the whole experience of his life in the last poems. The tendencies of realism and humanism are seen more developed in them. There is seen peace, goodness and unity animating his last poetry. The poet gives prominence to the themes of love, affection, and humanism. He has described the life of a mischievous boy, a common girl, a disappointed lover. Some poems of the book "Parascha" deal with the theme of 'untouchability'. The real purity can be obtained by showing true love to the low and poor people in society.

He stood for a bold acceptance of life as reality, and like other modern poets sang the song of humanity. Many factors had contributed to form the psychological background of his last poetry. He has grieved of powerful nations endangering the lot of humanity. His long-cherished ideals of peace and human brotherhood were disturbed by the tendencies of big powers. The poet says that human mind fearlessly aspires for high ideals. His head is held high to see his achievement. A man may acquire into fragment.

The India of Tagore's dream is a country where her people hold their heads high with their pride in knowledge and strength born of that knowledge where all countrymen must come out the age-old world of people who have lost the vision of humanity by the narrow loyalties of caste creed and religion. Prejudice and superstitious which narrow the mind and divide people would be a thing of the past. Where the words of truth come out from the depths of the heart and are spoken out courageously in the open for the world to hear. People would work for perfections in the clear light of reason leaving aside all superstitious rituals. N. K. Gupta opines: "Tagore is in direct line with those bards who sang of the spirit, the falsehood and ugliness of a merely mundane life and lived in the underlying delights and beauties of a diviner consciousness." (Naloni Kant Gupta, 63)

Where everyone is free to toil and work hard for anything they desire either for their own or for the good of the nation, is encouraged to strive tirelessly till they attain full satisfaction in reaching his/her goals and perfection. Blind superstitious habits of thought and action have not put out the light of reason. Where people's mind should not dwell in the mistakes of the past nor be possessed by it. On the other hand they should be led by the power of reasoning to be focused on the future by applying scientific thought and action. Tagore's only prayer to the Supreme Ultimate is leading the nation to such an ideal state of heaven. It is only by the universality of outlook and an abiding passion for the realization of great human ideals that India will achieve her true freedom. This way alone she will realize her destiny.

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Conclusion: Tagore believed in the inner transformation of man to solve problems of the modern world. The modern civilization, for which an enormous number of men are used as materials, and human relationship has in a large measure become utilitarian, Man is imperfectly revealed. For man's revelation does not lie in the fact he is a power, but that he is a spirit. The paper imbibed a good deal of wisdom and holy thoughts with a vision to refine the strength with honesty, truthfulness and reality which is the exclusive feature of Tagore's poetry.

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