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Intimacy Between God And Man Through Nature In The Poetry Of R. N. Tagore

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Abstract: Rabindranath Tagore's poetic range as a Nature poet is from romanticism to mysticism. It is Tagore who took Indo-Anglain romanticism to its zenith finding it brick from Toru Dutt and leaving it marble. He reminds us of Wordsworth and Keats in the sense of romanticism and mysticism. According to vedantic philosophy, Nature and God are Prakriti and Purush,, the two aspects of the absolute.

Key Words: Poetic range, Nature poet, romanticism to mysticism, Indo-Anglain romanticism, vedantic philosophy.

Tagore also follows the same aspects in respect of Nature poetry. Nature in Tagore is the very core of the spirit not an imposition. To Tagore Nature is part and parcel of God. He reaches God through Nature and according to him Nature is an aspect of God. So Tagore displays a great intimacy with God through Nature. Tagore has faith in God but his love for his creator is not one-sided. It is mutual. God is as keen as Tagore is. This reciprocity of love is also reflected through Nature:

"Art thou abroad on this stormy night on the journey
of love, my friend? The sky groans
like one in despaire.

By what dim shore of the ink-black
River, by what for edge of the frowning
Forest, through what mazy depth of
Gloom art thou threading thy course
To come to me, my friend"

'Gitanjali Song No. XXIII'

Tagore expresses his faith in the Magnanimity of his Lord in terms of the beauty of Nature:

"The morning will surely come, the
darkness will vanish, any thy voice
pour down in golden streams breaking
through the sky.

Then thy words will take wing in
Songs from every one of my birds' nests,
And thy melodies will break forth its
Flowers in all my forest groves."

'Gitanjali Song No. XIX'

Tagore's descriptions of intimacy of God with Nature have several forms. He has sketched God in Nature scenery in the form of all that relations that an ordinary men possesse. God is as keen to meet man as man is. As man pines and longs for God, God too hankers for man. The mutual desire is one of the chief characteristics of Tagore's mysticism:

"O thou Lord of Heavens, where would
Be thy love if I were not?"

'Gitanjali Song No. LVI'

With the help of natural surroundings Tagore presents God before his readers in the form of a child, a lover, a Beloved, a Master and a Friend.

Children that are known as a symbol of purity, simplicity and innocence and with these natural qualities they spread fragrance in their family as Nature does through its plants, flowers and fruits but Tagore not only gives the shape of this innocence in respect of Nature but also for God. Tagore has seen devine quality in the innocence of children. Innocence gives way to avarice and covetousness and man is drawn away from is Creator. Tagore finds in the innocence of children an inspiration and enlightenment and a means to understand the secrets and mysteries of God's creation. Tagore glorifies this innocence with natural surroundings in the following lines:

"When I bring to you coloured toys, my
child, I understand why there is such
a play of colours on clouds, on waters,
and why flowers are painted in tints....
When I sing to make you dance I



truly know why there is music in leaves,
and why send their colours of voices to
the heart of the listening earth.....

When I bring sweet things to your greedy
hands I know why there is honey in the cup
of the flower and why fruits are secretly
filled with sweet juice -

When I kiss your face to make you
smile, my darling, I surely understand
What pleasure streams from the sky
in morning light, and what delight
that is which the summer breeze
brings to my body - when I kiss you
to make you smile."

'Gitanjali Song No. LXII'

Tagore further sketches God as a lover and the concept of God as a lover is purely a Vaishnava ideal and the lover-beloved image is a fairly recurrent device in Indian folklore. According to Vaishnava mystics, God is eternal, man is eternal and love is also eternal. Tagore expresses this intimacy of God with Nature in the following lines:

"Where does thou stand behind them
all, my lover, hiding thyself in
the shadows? The push thee and pass
thee by one the dusty road, taking thee
for naught. I wait here weary hours
spreading my offerings for thee while
passersby came and take my flowers,
one by one, and my basket nearly
empty"

'Gitanjali Song No. LIX'

Tagore also sketches God as a singer and a master of this universe who as a Supreme Commander commands all the natural surroundings. God beautifies all the natural surroundings clothing it his singing pattern:

"I know not how thou singest, my master!
I ever listen in silent amazement.
The light of thy music illumines the
World. The life breath of the music runs from
Sky to sky. The holy stream of thy music
Breaks through all stony obstacles and rushes
on.

----- I would speak but
Speech breaks not into song, and I cry out
Baffled. Ah, thou hast made my heart captive
In the endless meshes of the music, my master!"

'Gitanjali Song No. III'

Tagore has displayed his friendship not only with Nature but also with God. Tagore's this relationship with God creates a great intimacy between man and God through Nature. Every now and then Tagore confesses that for the most part of his life he did not realize that his companion, his playmate had been none other than God Himself. He thinks that it is only God who gave him understanding about Nature and awakes him early in the morning and takes him to play the day round, sings to him. Tagore shows this companionship with God through Nature in the following lines:

"When my play was with thee I never
Questioned who thou wert. I knew nor
shyness nor fear, my life was poisterous.
In the early morning thou wouldst call
me from my sleep like my own comrade



**and lead me running from glade to galde.
On those days I never cared to know
the meaning of songs thou songest to me.
-----,"**

'Gitanjali Song No. XCVII'

To show a complete intimacy between God and Man Tagore presents God as Father and Mother. While Ruskin has displayed the natural surroundings as mother and father in which the mountain in the mother and the sea is the father:

**"This mountain is my mother
My father is the sea."**

'Night thought'

On the other hand Tagore has this concept for God and he conceives God as the father of the creation and also of his motherland. He is a patriot in the enlightened sense of the term and he wishes that his country and countrymen are also prosperous and enlightened. He, therefore, prays to the Father of the creation to make his country an ideal country so that it becomes the heaven of freedom where spirituality, enlightenment, truth, purity of thought and action, peace and love are the normal order of life. Tagore shows it in the following lines:

**"Where the mind is without fear and
the head is held high;
where knowledge is free;
where the world has not been broken up
into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of
Truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms
Towards perfection;
-----**

**Where the mind is led forward by thee
into ever-widening thought and action -
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father,
let my country awake."**

'Gitanjali Song No. XXXV'

Further Tagore displays God as Mother. He thinks that mother is the dearest thing in the world for a man because mother displays her affection on her son and wishes only her son's welfare and expects nothing in return. But as son feels so drawn to his mother because of her self-effacement that he hopes to express his gratitude because there is nothing in this world which he can call his own and present at the feet of his beloved mother as a token of love and gratitude and reverence except his sorrow. So Tagore made up his mind to make a necklace from the pearls of his personal sorrow to be worn round her mother's neck. Tagore has full faith that his mother will accept this gift from her son and will reward him :

**"Mother, I shall weave a chain of pearls
for the neck with my tears of sorrows,
Wealth and fame from thee and it is
for thee to give or to with hold them.
But this my sorrow is absolutely mine
own and when I bring it to thee as
my offering thou rewardest me with thy
grace."**

'Gitanjali Song No. LXXIII'

Magnanimity is another quality of the Almighty to create a great intimacy between God and man. As mother and father forgive all the errors and mistakes of their children, God also forgives all the errors of the human beings and displays Himself very benevolent before Man. That's why this proverbial sentence is very rampant in of God - 'To err is human, forgive divine', So God is not God if He is not Magnimous. In the same way man is not man if he does not err or falter. Tagore display God' Magnanimity in the following lines:

**"The day was when I did not keep myself
in readiness for thee; and entering my
heart unbidden even as one of the common**



**crowd, unknown to me, my king, thou didst
press the signet of eternity upon many
a fleeting moment of my life.**

**-----
Thou didst not turn in contempt from
my childish play among dust, and the steps
that I heard in my playroom are the
same that are echoing from star to star."**

'Gitanjali Song No. XLIII'

Whenever Man is sad at heart, he gets relief only in the feet of God. Tagore also seeks his God through the love and service of the suffering of humanity:

**"When I try to bow to thee, my obeisance
cannot reach down to the depth where
thy feet rest among the poorest, and
lowliest, and lost.**

**Pride can never approach to where thou
walkest in the clothes of the humble among
the poorest, and lowliest, and lost."**

'Gitanjali Song No. X'

Tagore speaks strongly against pride and vanity which breed discrimination and contempt among one section against the other. God loves and lives among the oppressed, the sufferers and unfortunate. God can be realized through the service and love of these beloved of God. Tagore is against the devotional display against the rituals, for he thinks that there are mockery of worship and love of God:

**"Leave this chanting and singing and
telling of beads! Whom dost thou worship
in this lonely dark corner of a temple with
doors all shut? Open thine eyes and
see thy God is not before thee!"**

'Gitanjali Song No. XI'

Tagore not only speaks against the hypocrisy of religious rituals he also advocates the divinity of labour. His spiritualism is not an escape from the mundane duties and commitments but blend with a healthy respect and actual participation in the humbler toil and labours; it is the surest prescription for the realization of the Divine:

**"He is there where the tiller is
Tilling the hard ground and where
The path maker is breaking
Stones. He is with them in sun
And in shower, and his garment is
Covered with dust. Put off thy holy
Mantle and even like him come
Down on the dusty soil!
Deliverance? Where is this deliverance
to be found? Our master himself has
joyfully taken upon him the
bonds of creation; he is bound with
us all for ever.**

'Gitanjali Song No. XI'

Further in the same song of Gitanjali Tagore gives advice to Man to obtain the desired result to create a high intimacy between God and Man :

**"Come out of thy meditation 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 in sweet of thy brow."**

'Gitanjali Song No. XI'



Tagore is fully aware of this fact that whenever Man is disappointed, he only knocks at the door of God because with God Man has existence. At the time death of his beloved wife, daughter, son and father, Tagore himself suffered from sever tragic blow.

He spiritualized his sorrow in the songs of Gitanjali. He subtly turned his grief into prayers and devotional songs to seek solace and comfort in the lap of God. He expresses the end of the journey of life in the following lines:

**"The evening star will come out when
my voyage is done and the plaintive notes
of the twilight melodies be struck up
from the King's gateway."**

'Gitanjali Song No. XCIV'

Tagore concludes the end of the life with association of God and the stoup acceptance of the approach of the end of life:

**"Death, the servant, is at my door.
He has crossed the unknown sea and
Brought thy call to my home.
The night is dark and my heart is fearful
- yet I will take up the lamp, open my
Gates and bow to him my welcome. It is
The messenger who stands at my door.
I will worship him with folded hands,
and with tears. I will worship him placing
at his feet the treasure of my heart."**

'Gitanjali Song No. LXXXVI'

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