

# Nature and Universe-An Expansion of our own self: A Critical Study of Tagore's Gitanjali

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## ABSTRACT

Tagore has introduced a novel and potent kind of poetry. Into the flow of world poetry, an outflow that the world had not seen in a long time and that, although having a distinct national identity, also possessed universal qualities. Although he hasn't left us with a philosophical framework, he has almost entirely left us with his ideas, which illuminate our hearts and brains. In his early teens, Tagore begins his poetic career. Before turning eighteen, he had composed roughly 7000 lines of poetry. He began writing poetry under the pseudonym Bhanu Singh Thakur. The pinnacle of Tagore's poetic career is the Gitanjali Period. A great poet has a very clear sense of a huge chance in their heart. During this time, Tagore rose to prominence as a poet throughout the world, becoming known outside of Bengal and becoming a respected member of the literary world. Gitanjali, Tagore's seminal opus that swept through England and earned him the Nobel Prize Gitanjali was written by him between 1906 and 1910. He translated it into English himself in 1912. November 15, 1913, saw the renowned Nobel Prize in Literature handed to him 103 Poems in English Gitanjali. Some foreign critics believe that the Bible had an impact on Gitanjali, including Edward Thompson, Dr. A. Aaronson, and George Sampson. Tagore recognizes in man and nature a harmony and consonance. The poet claimed that nature elevates and cleanses on soul. According to Tagore, nature is not hostile to the individual. He notes that both the divine spirit and man are disclosures of it. Nature is not a hostile force that torments humans; rather, it helps to lessen our suffering and brings us joy in the spiritual world of the Divine Being. Tagore discovers peace and camaraderie between nature and man. Upanishadic thoughts plagued Tagore's mind throughout this time. To him, God is impersonal, although with a purpose. God takes on various shapes in the creative process. These ideas abound throughout Tagore's poetry.

Keywords- (nature, spiritual, fragrance, melancholy, blossomed heavenly, tremendous)

## Introduction:

Tagore recognises in man and nature a harmony and consonance. The poet claimed that nature elevates and cleanses on soul. According to Tagore, nature is not hostile to the individual. He notes that the holy energy has revealed itself to both nature and humans. Nature is not a hostile force that torments human beings rather, it helps to lessen our suffering and brings us joy in the spiritual world of the Divine Being.

The poems frequently personify nature, giving it a spiritual importance and implying a close kinship between the human and natural realms. Tagore's vivid depictions of natural landscapes, seasons, and components generate a sense of amazement and veneration for the natural world. In Song No. 5, Tagore uses personification in the depiction.

To-day the summer has come at my window with its sighs and murmurs; and the bees are  
plying their minstrelsy at the court of the flowering grove.

Now it is time to sit quiet, face to face with thee, and to sing dedication of life in this silent  
and overflowing leisure.<sup>1</sup>

In above lines, Tagore conveys the idea that he can feel a moment of happiness sitting with God he finds peace. The poet is attempting to capture the peacefulness that results from being in God's presence here. He has a lot of work to do but first he wants peace of mind by sitting near God, wants happiness and wants to purify the heart from within. The poet must finish, but he must first put his attention on inner peace and contentment. When the poet has finished this, he can start to feel happy. Here, the poet reveals how his lack of perception of God causes him to feel restless in his heart. Because everything is done there so quietly, he is unable to do it. No, the reason for this discomfort is that the poet lives there while working, as the poet explains in *How is the feeling of heat perceived?* The poet describes the summer season in these lines. He senses that summer has arrived because he hears the gentle sounds of nature, which could be bees buzzing near a grove where flowers have bloomed in a manner reminiscent of the king's ministerial singing. The poet also enjoys the lovely murmur of the bees as all the flowers bloom and describes their fragrance and sweetness of the flower attracts all the bees. Now that the poet knows when Nature is so happy, he thinks that this is the time to see quite meditating and with whom he has to see.

In Song Number 18, the poet uses nature as an illustration of what happens when he waits for God. According to Tagore, the day has grown gloomier as a result of the accumulation of heavy clouds above one another. At this point, he begs God to explain why He was waiting at the entrance by himself. He claims that although he was with other people during the day when everyone was preoccupied with their jobs, the night is lonely and dark, and he was desperately hoping that he would arrive. He continues by saying that he would not have known how to go through the lengthy, lonely, and sad days of the rainy season if God had not shown him His face or had left him all alone. The poet then describes how, in his desire for God, he cannot stop staring at the sky His heart cries like the wind, blending with the sound of the wind in the pitch-black, melancholy sky.

CLOUDS heap upon clouds and it darkens. Ah, love, why dost thou let me wait outside at the door all alone?

In the busy moments of the noontide work I am with the crowd, but on this dark lonely day it is only for thee that I hope.<sup>2</sup>

In song No. 20, the poet uses nature as an illustration of what he felt like while waiting for God. He describes feeling the summer wind and the breeze from the south, as well as the emotions he experienced there. Here, the poet describes how, one day, he comes to understand that the God he has been seeking and longing to see is already within of him. The poet was picking flowers, but on the day the lotus blossomed, he was not conscious of it because his thoughts were elsewhere. As a result, he failed to pluck it, leaving his basket empty. However, the poet was grieving, and when he abruptly awoke from his dream, he noticed something off about the south breeze. The poet's heart was affected by this subtle, intangible sweetness, which made him yearn for it so much that it hurt, and he thought it might be the summer breeze. Then he understands that the pure sweetness was blossoming from within his own heart and that the breeze was truly his own.

That vague sweetness made my heart ache with longing and it seemed to me that it was the eager breath of the summer seeking for its completion.

I knew not then that it was so near, that it was mine, and that this perfect sweetness had blossomed in the depth of my own heart.<sup>3</sup>

By drawing a connection between his life path and nature, Tagore presents it in song number 21. He laments not being able to embark on his journey right now. The poet goes on to declare that spring has arrived, blossomed, and vanished. The poet is no longer young. And he waits with his old worthless body, and he lives on uselessly even while he is heading towards death and ultimately a union with God, like a man laden with withered flowers that cannot be offered in prayer. The yellow autumn leaves are dropping to the ground, and the waves are calling out to him with their relentless cries. The poet then chastises himself for staring at nothing and doing nothing, asking himself if he isn't experiencing the excitement of the music beckoning him from the other side.

The spring has done its flowering and taken leave. And now with the burden of faded futile flowers I wait and linger.

The waves have become clamorous, and upon the bank in the shady lane the yellow leaves flutter and fall.<sup>4</sup>

In song 22 he describes and compare his love with giving examples of nature. Again, this poem expresses a deep yearning for unity with God. It is an earnest request to God to provide him the blessing of being in his home.

According to the poet, God strolls the desolate streets on a rainy July day when the clouds create ominous shadows, soundlessly as silent as the night and in a way that prevents anyone from spotting him. Everything is black today because the morning has grown gloomy, the strong east wind isn't able to chase the clouds away, and a heavy layer of ominous clouds has covered the blue sky. As a result, no one is singing in the woods, and everyone has closed their doors at home. The only person on the desolate, dark street is God. The poet then begs God to stay in his house, saying that He is his sole and most valued friend, and that his doors are wide open. He also begs God to stop passing by like a dream.

Once more, Tagore conveys his desire for heavenly ownership in terms of the beloved and the lover. As the poet waits for God, the lover, to visit his home, he is the one who is loved. The poet is a great lover of God, and he has been waiting impatiently for God to visit his home in this wet July, just as a beloved would on a gloomy, rainy night for her adored. The birds have stopped singing, the morning has darkened, all of the people have locked their doors, and the streets are empty. Thus, the timing is right for God to arrive, and he humbly asks God to come into his home. Once more, an erotic connection is drawn between the image and the idea of a lady waiting for her partner to arrive, fantasising of their union while listening to his footsteps in the pitch-black darkness of the night with the doors open.

IN the deep shadows of the rainy July, with secret steps, thou walkest, silent as night, eluding  
all watchers.

To-day the morning has closed its eyes, heedless of the insistent calls of the loud east wind,  
and a thick veil has been drawn over the ever-wakeful blue sky.<sup>5</sup>

In song 38 also has aspects of pantheism because he expresses his religious thoughts through Nature and her elements. Once more, Tagore describes his longing for union with God in terms of the lover and the beloved. He keeps telling himself that he should continually hear in his heart that he wants to be with God. Furthermore, he asserts that all of his worldly attachments and desires, which divert him from loving and serving God, are worthless, hollow, and completely pointless. Just as the night keeps its longings for light buried in its obscurity, so too do his prayers and his appeal to God for a union remain deep within his heart, hidden and unnoticed. And while the rain and storm appear to whip and upset the atmosphere's tranquilly with their strength and ferocity but ultimately leaves it serene, lovely, and full of peace, much as the poet's disobedience to God and his love conceals his deep yearning for God's love and oneness with God.

This poem has echoes of sensual Indian sacred poetry once more. The poem also has elements of pantheism, as he uses Nature and her elements to communicate his religious ideas. As a beloved, the poet declares that all earthly relationships are meaningless and untrue and pleads for unity with God. His heart continually proclaims that being one with God is his sole real yearning. He uses images from nature to illustrate this need, stating that just as the darkness conceals its craving for light, so too does his heart's deep-seated yearning for God, love, and unity with God.

Then, using the example of a violent storm that truly brings about peace, he compares his rebellious desire to the coming about of oneness with God and, consequently, of love and peace.

As the night keeps hidden in its gloom the petition for light, even thus in the depth of me  
unconsciousness rings the cry – I want thee, only thee.<sup>6</sup>

In song 41, Tagore uses the semi-erotic metaphor of a beggar maid waiting for her prince and lover to take her away to express his spiritual yearning for God once more. The poet speaks to God, the lover, and asks why He remained in the background and concealed Himself. He is shoved aside, ignored, and taken for granted. As the beloved waits through the exhausting hours, her offerings to God all laid out in front of her. One by one, people passing by took away all of her flowers, leaving her basket empty.

In this way, the afternoon and morning have gone by, and the nighttime has arrived. And the beloved feels sleepy in the waning light of the evening. The poet or beloved feels ashamed when people who are passing by him while he is sitting on the side of the road grin at him. The poet continues by comparing his sitting position to that of a girl beggar who covers her face with her garment. The poet closes his eyes and is unable to respond when asked what he wants from these folks. He acts in this way because he is unable to inform them that he was waiting on God because God had promised to visit him. And the poet clings to this pride in the deepest recesses of his heart, even though he has nothing to offer God but his poverty.

The poet imagines God appearing to him in all of his majesty and grandeur as he rests on the grass and looks up at the sky. He will arrive with his golden flags flying above this chariot and lights blazing. Everyone will watch in astonishment and wonder when God descends from his chariot seat and raises the poet from the ground. And the poet writes that when God sets him beside himself, he will shake like a creeper in the summer breeze, only this time, instead of shaking with pride and guilt at the tremendous grandeur bestowed upon him.

However, time moves slowly, and God's chariot is not making any noise as it approaches. Numerous processions adorned in pomp, grandeur, and loud noises pass past. Finally, the poet wonders if He would continue to hide in the shadows and weeps if he were the only one left to wait for Him, weeping bitterly and hoping in vain for God's darshan.

I sit on the grass and gaze upon the sky and dream of the sudden splendour of thy coming –  
all the lights ablaze, golden pennons flying over thy car, and they at the roadside standing  
agape, when they see thee come down from thy seat to raise me from the dust, and set at thy  
side this ragged beggar girl a-tremble<sup>1</sup> with shame and pride, like a creeper in a summer  
breeze.<sup>7</sup>

In song 45 Tagore extols the virtue of constancy. He queries whether other people have sensed God approaching them in silence. God is constantly present; he shows up at all times, day or night, and in all age groups. The poet claims that every song he has ever performed, tailored to the various moods in his mind, has heralded the arrival of God. God has been appearing in the beautiful, fragrant days of April along the forest's pathways.

He has also begun showing up on the dark, rainy July evenings with thunder. God has been showing himself to him in his delight and gladness and to console him in his sorrows.

This lovely poem's lyric expresses the highly spiritual notion that God is always present. In this case, he believes that God is constantly coming, not just when it's convenient. God's arrival and his ongoing gift of humanity are not limited to a single instance. The only problem is that not everyone can hear God approaching since he moves in quiet steps. Through the many songs he has sung in his many moods, Tagore praises God's arrival in different seasons and times. God never stops showing up; he never fails to show up. Both the perfumed days of sunny April and the dreary evenings of July are when he visits. In his darkest hours and in his greatest moments of joy.

Many a song have I sung in many a mood of mind, but all their notes have always  
proclaimed, "He comes, comes, ever comes."

In the fragrant days of sunny April through the forest path he comes, comes, and ever comes.  
In the rainy gloom of July nights on the thundering chariot of clouds he comes, comes, ever  
comes.<sup>8</sup>

In song 48 one sentence captures the poet's major thought in the poem: "The Almighty, Omnipotent God resides in Nature." You get closer to God's heavenly grandeur when you have love for nature. Human life is far too busy. His goal dominates everyone. Some people have busy schedules because they desire to make money. While some people are occupied with worldly pleasures, others are on the lookout for spiritual delights. Man is distracted from the beauty of nature by his ambitions. They pay no attention to the gorgeous morning, the musical bird calls, or the vibrant, joyful flowers on the side of the road. The poet claims that his pals ignore the dispersed gold seen through the cloud gap because they are too preoccupied pursuing their goals to notice the aesthetic beauty of the golden sun. They are searching for God without realizing that He is already present in nature. They are lost in thought, hurrying to meet Him at the expense of nature, which is a manifestation of the majesty and beauty of God. The poet is traveling with his companions. They take the search very seriously. They don't want to relocate to a rural life or waste their time listening to happy songs. The poet and his companions accelerated their pace as the time ran out because they didn't want to unwind, waste any time on worldly pleasures, or take in the pure beauty of nature. The sun is at its hottest, and the temperature is rising. The birds are using their nest as a haven. The withered leaves are dancing as the hot air blows. In the comforting shade of the banyan tree, the shepherd lad dozed off and dreamed. When the poet sees them, he wants to unwind and stretch his legs, but his buddies aren't the slightest bit interested; instead, they want to get moving. The poet is lying in the shade, but his pals are staring at him mockingly and with contempt, raising their heads in mockery as they walk away. Despite being embarrassed by their derision; the poet chooses to ignore it and remains content with his choice. He lies down in a state of joy, admiring their courage and steadfastness, and soon after, his buddies disappear into the hills and meadows. His heart is quickly taken over by the serene, lovely dark green location. He quickly loses track of his journey's goal and gives in to lulling music and darkness. He is overcome by the

wonderful sleep, and when he awakens, he sees our creator, the Almighty, standing next him. His smile filled his soul with light. He used to worry that the journey to His heavenly home would be too difficult, drawn out, and tiresome, but now He is at his side effortlessly.

This poem by Tagore is an accurate portrayal of the world. He has captured the beauty of nature and the rustic way of life. One of the main characteristics of his poetry is the way it combines this uniqueness with a broad human interest. This poem presents a moral in the form of a tale. The poet sets out on a journey to meet God with his buddies. They lose sight of their destination because they are so consumed by the topic of their aim. Beside them, in the beauty, innocence, and glory of nature, lies the core of their search. They disregard everything, viewing these worldly pleasures as a roadblock to their ultimate spiritual goal. They are unaware that God manifests himself in nature. Some components are embodied in nature actually a portion of God. They rejected the idea that the creator is the one who made all of creation and that He is present in it. Though his friends are unaware of it, the poet senses Him in the singing of birds, joyful flowers, and the strewn light of the golden sun. His friends' asceticism has led them to give up their material lives in order to achieve spiritual joy. However, the poet acknowledges that God is present in all of creation and that you will sense His presence if you give yourself over to it. The eloquence and style of Tagore's writing are truly remarkable. He writes down his ideas on the fly in a very straightforward manner. There is no denying the diction's simplicity and efficiency. His poem has no unusually pompous words. He has a distinct writing style that is unmatched, and his versification is both amazing and straightforward.

The sun rose to the mid sky and doves cooed in the shade. Withered leaves danced  
and whirled in the hot air of noon. The shepherd boy drowsed and dreamed in the  
shadow of the banyan tree, and I laid myself down by the water and stretched my tired  
limbs on the grass.<sup>9</sup>

## CONCLUSION:

Tagore is an earthly and human poet. He feels as though he belongs on Earth. According to Tagore, the earth is both a place where humanity attempts to live a greater existence and a devoted mother who keeps an eye on his search for a deeper meaning in every experience. Tagore's depiction of the world is correct. He has successfully conveyed the rural way of life and the splendour of nature. The way his poetry blends this individuality with a wide range of human interest is one of its key features. Love for nature brings one closer to the sublime magnificence of God. Tagore had an all-encompassing personality. He was both an internationalist and a nationalist. He saw the world through the eyes of a poet who aspired to world peace among all people. According to Tagore, there are two sides of the Absolute: Man, and Nature. The holy spirit is revealed in both nature and humankind. As a result, rather than being hostile to one another, they are the expression of the same heavenly energy. Tagore is an ardent admirer of nature; we may fully identify man with nature in his poetry.

"It is clear that his ultimate place will be not simply among Indian poets, but among those of  
the world"<sup>10</sup>

I would like to end with these quotes from W. B. Yeats, who expressed his appreciation for Tagore's poetry and offered him the respect he deserved:

"We write long books where no page perhaps has any quality to make writing a pleasure, being confident in some general design, just as we fight and make money and fill our heads with politics - all dull things in the doing - while Mr. Tagore, like the Indian civilization itself, has been content to discover the soul and surrender himself to its spontaneity" 11

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