

TAGORE ON MAN'S NATURE: AN ANALYSIS

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Introduction

Thomas Hobbes famously described the natural state of man, in the chapter XIII entitled 'Of the natural condition of mankind as concerning their felicity and misery' of his *Leviathan*, unless controlled by a political authority, as poor, solitary, short and nasty brutish; way back in 1651. Almost a century later, Jean-Jacques Rousseau countered it; by saying that man's nature is fundamentally good. Human beings could have lived a better life outside the clutch of the modern state. A comparable claim of essential goodness, in the human beings, can possibly be inferred from the Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad; where man has been addressed as "sons of the immortal"¹—*śṛṅvantu viśve amṛtasya putrāḥ*. But Tagore does not resort to any of these extreme views and opts for a middle path similar to Buddha's *madhyamā pratipat* or Aristotle's golden means. According to Tagore, religion is to have trust in Man – the Eternal, and it comprises of efforts to cultivate the qualities inherent in His nature. He observes, "If these qualities were absolutely natural in individuals, religion could have no purpose."² Man's historical journey begins with his animal nature's prompting to fulfil the immediate but essential needs. But in the deeper layers of man, in terms of tendencies, the living flow of universal humanity runs in virtually an opposite direction. Religion becomes instrumental in reconciling this incongruity, by subordinating the animal-tendencies to what is considered "as the truth of Man."³ The deepening of our conviction upon the Eternal-Man, who has been addressed and imagined by different names and images, facilitates this process. These two natures are so strongly opposed that man has willingly given up his fundamental needs and, even at times, made supreme sacrifice for expressing his *dharma*. Here *dharma* stands for the truth of the 'Supreme Man'. Thus, Tagore neither declares absolute perfection of man nor ascribes him complete brutality; he rather pronounces man as an amalgamation of both in the natural state.

Mapping the Issue: Tagore begins his essay entitled 'Man's Nature' by claiming that man became cognizant of a mystifying 'spirit of unity', which expressed itself in the social order through him only; as soon as he actually became aware of his own self. It exists for itself, bereft of any other purpose, acting as a medium of association

among the creatures; representing a value for living. Man has, by one way or the other, understood that this spirit is Divine by nature; which could claim everything that he possesses individually. It represents the best liberty and is the abode of his highest meaning which transcends the limited being. Tagore further maintains that man has expressed his allegiance to this spirit in his religion, symbolizing it in the names of the deities he venerates. This could explain how the primitive gods became tribal gods and why the same tribe owned the deities worshipped by the subsumed communities. He notes, “With the extension of the consciousness of human unity his God became revealed to him as one and universal, proving that the truth of human unity is the truth of Man’s God.”⁴

Tagore notes, “The vision of the Supreme Man is realized by our imagination, but not created by our minds.”⁵ His transcendental and permeating personality, being more real than the individual beings, goes beyond each one of us. The march of His ideas, pursuing His grand purpose, is continuously moving on the way to perfected truth; overcoming confronted obstructions. We, in spite of having our space in His composition, may not necessarily be in conformity with His plan. In fact, we might be acting in the contrary way leading ourselves towards doom. But true religion is gained by us only when we willfully contribute to His purpose; where, sacrifice and suffering turns to the tools for our joy. In simpler words, His plan may not suit our plan. Therefore acting His plan out might not be a comfortable course for us. Yet we must find joy in those so called painful acts, which we perform as a part of His will, since that is the true religion and the real purpose of our existence. Through this love for the Supreme Spirit, *Mahātmā* in Tagore’s terminology, the awareness of the love that radiates from Him grows in us.

For Tagore, *dharma* is the counterpart of religion in Sanskrit language. The former, in the technical sense, refers to the essential property of any given thing; heat in the case of fire for instance. Etymologically *dharma* “implies the principle of relationship that holds us firm.”⁶ Tagore quotes Lao-tze saying, “One who may die, but will not perish, has life everlasting.”⁷ It implies that he exists in the Existence of the immortal Being. The aspiration for this Life- Eternal induces man to engage in a struggle for true existence. Tagore quotes the scriptures warning, “Through *adharmā* (the negation of *dharma*) man prospers, gains what appears desirable, conquers

enemies, but he perishes at the root.”⁸ It suggests existence of a life, truer than the transitory physical life of the human beings. Tagore observes, “Our life gains what is called ‘value’ in those of its aspects which represent eternal humanity in knowledge, in sympathy, in deeds, in character and creative works.”⁹ Therefore, from the primitive stage itself man is seeking, sacrificing everything at most of the times, not just success but the value for our existence. In other words, man is aspiring to realize the immortal Man in himself so that he does not perish even after death. It is echoed in the upaniṣadic utterance which goes as, “*Tam vedyam puruṣam veda, yatha mā vo mṛtyuḥ parivyathāḥ* – Realize the person so that thou mayst not suffer from death”¹⁰(*Praśna* 6.1.6)

The possibility, in fact, presents a paradox; our sense-organs or reasoning fails to judge its truth-value. Yet, Tagore notices, man has dissociated himself from all forms of fear and greed and defied all the natural instincts; in order to preserve and acknowledge the life belonging to the Eternal Person. According to him, there have also been such people who followed this path in spite of not believing in that Reality. This ideal reality is termed as ‘spiritual’ by Tagore, though he admits the nomenclature as vague. However, by means of the obscure knowledge that has reached man, penetrating the obstructions of physical existence, individuals have somehow developed stronger faith in the spiritual Being. According to Tagore, possibly from the beginning itself, man has not treated the physical as the final; envisaging his welfare in a perfect relationship with some greater Reality beyond the physical, which opens vista of a more profound existence. Man ascribes more value to that life than to the mechanical prolonging of the material life.

Tagore notes, “Our physical body has its comprehensive reality in the physical world, which may be truly called our universal body, without which our individual body would miss its function. Our physical life realizes its growing meaning through a widening freedom in its relationship with the physical world, and this gives it a greater happiness than the mere pleasure of satisfied needs.”¹¹ For him, man awakes to a deeper meaning of his own self with the awareness of some paradigm of perfection. This beautiful ideal leads to an internal sense of completeness, heightening man’s individual reality. Such a sense deepens his conviction upon the ideal through an understanding of human world. In the words of

Tagore, “But whatever may be the name and nature of his religious creed”;¹² man’s ideal of perfection is based on a bond of unanimity which, penetrating the individuals, culminates in the supreme Man who corresponds to the Eternal in human beings. In the civilized world, perfect expression of the ideal generates an array of truths which is meant for revealing the Eternal Man and not merely for attaining some ephemeral success. Thus, when this *dharma* – the creative ideal gives room for some other superficial element, it constructs the funeral pyre for itself; just like the star which blasts out of boisterous brilliancy. Tagore quotes Lao-tze, referring to a good individual, who remarks, “He quickens but owns not. He acts but claims not. Merit he accomplishes but dwells not in it. Since he does not dwell in it, it will never leave him.”¹³ We can do business only with the external objects that we possess and not with the intrinsic values of our self. This comprehensive absorption of truth is part of “the paradise of perfection.”¹⁴ It does not belong to the purgatory of the self. It marks maturing of a prolonged progression of civilization.

From the exposition presented above, one thing becomes amply clear that Tagore is primarily reliant on the Upaniṣads for constructing his views; thus aspiration for the higher life in the individuals is explained based on Brahman – the genesis. But how does he deal with the issue of imperfection in human beings and the subsequent problem of evil? What is his stand regarding the exercise of freewill by the individuals? Does he take both dualist and non – dualist stands into account? But, what picture does the solution reveal about Tagore’s own position? Does he, as an elucidator of the Upaniṣads, interpret like a dualist or a non – dualist? Does his stand have broader implications in understanding the nature of man and his moral practices like *dharma* and *adharma*? Since, we already know that values and Metaphysics get intertwined in any discourse of Ethics. It should be further noted that, Tagore takes a theistic stand in order to give the exposition on man’s nature and to create his discourse on ‘values’. Since evil presents a serious challenge to theism, therefore the next question would be – What kind of theism is he presenting in his exposition? Is it compatible with the stand he takes to deal with the problem of evil? Does his theism contribute, in any way, to make man’s nature more intelligible? Next two sections will deal with these few questions.

Tagore's Treatment of Evil and Freewill: In the light of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja:

As it has already been mentioned, Tagore accepts imperfection as a part of this world. Man, being a part of this world, is also a subject of the same. He does not entertain the position that man's nature is essentially bad or that the existence itself is an evil. For him, complete pessimism is a kind of "mental dipsomania."¹⁵ Tagore expresses his optimism as, "I shall look forward to a turning in history after this cataclysm is over and the sky is again unburdened and passionless. Perhaps the new dawn will come from this horizon, from the East where the sun rises; and then, unvanquished man will retrace his path of conquest, despite all barriers, to win back his lost heritage."¹⁶

If we compare Tagore's position with the traditional vedāntins like Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, a more vivid picture of his stand emerges in this regard. Unlike Rāmānuja, he does not maintain that complete freedom from evil or pain resulting from it is not possible during one's existence in this world; it comes only with the death of a seeker of Truth. While commenting on the *Bhagavadgītā* (5.23), which reads, "He who is able, even here, before he is released from the body, to bear the impulse generated by desire and wrath, he is a Yogin (competent for self-realisation); he is the happy man";¹⁷ where it talks about the possibility of *jivanamukti*, Rāmānuja maintains, "...he is released 'here itself from the body', i.e. even during the state when he is practising the means for release, he gains the capacity for experiencing the self. But he becomes blessed by the experience and gets immersed in the bliss of the self only after the fall of the body."¹⁸ On the contrary for Tagore, in fact, error is not permanent by its inherent nature.

Though, Tagore does not explain the exact reason behind the existence of imperfection;¹⁹ yet he makes it a point to affirm that it is only *provisional truth*. Man realizes that anything which is limited is not actually "imprisoned within its limits."²⁰ It continuously moves in order to get rid of the finitude. In fact, finitude is not denial of the infinite, nor imperfection of perfection. As a matter of fact, for Tagore, they are "completeness manifested in parts."²¹ Evil tendencies are like errors in our intellectual life. It is transitory and therefore cannot replace the truth. Thus Rabindranath notes, "Error, by its nature cannot be stationary; it cannot remain with truth; like a tramp, it must quit its lodging as soon as it fails to pay its score to the full."²²

If evil is comparable, as Tagore maintains, to the errors made in our intellectual life; it would be like mistaking a rope to be snake on a certain occasion. Defects in the eye of the perceiver or lack of sufficient light or any such causal condition might be responsible for the incident. This is primarily case of lack of true knowledge (*pramā*) of the perceiver. Śāṅkara, in his introduction to the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* observes, “This behaviour has for its material cause an unreal nescience and man resorts to it by mixing up reality with unreality as a result of superimposing the things themselves or their attributes on each other.”²³ The mistakenly perceived snake is not called as *asat* but *mithyā* by *Advaita* Vedāntins. *Asat* is an absolutely non – existent entity like hare’s horn; but, *mithyā* is that which is negated with a different knowledge. Here, the snake is *mithyā* since it is negated as soon the knowledge of the rope dawns. It can be termed as ‘partial truth’, since it is not like hare’s horn. The ignorant man responds to it as real, till the ignorance persists. For Tagore, evil is also such a *provisional truth*. It is nothing but just a by-product of ignorance, right understanding eradicates such tendencies.

The task of human intellect is to capture the truth through error, i.e. to get rid of the “untruth.” The goal of personality is to attain emancipation by overcoming evil. Therefore man is actually marching from evil to good. Therefore Tagore notes, “Evil cannot altogether arrest the course of life on the highway and rob it off its possessions. For the evil has to pass on, it has to grow into good; it cannot stand and give battle to the all.”²⁴ For him, even immorality has its basis in the morality only. He notes, “The life of a man can be immoral, but that only means that it must have a moral basis. What is immoral is imperfectly moral, just as what is false is true to a small extent, or it cannot even be false.”²⁵ Thus, Tagore considers the notions truth and error in terms of their degrees. In the *Advaita Vedānta* tradition, three steps viz. *śravanam*, *mananam* and *nididhyāsanam* has been prescribed to train the intellect in order to capture the truth. *Śravanam* refers to listening about the Truth, *mananam* is reflection on the Truth and *nididhyāsanam* means meditation upon the Truth. By means of these methods ‘untruth’ has to be removed so that Truth is revealed. Just like Tagore, degree of Truth and error was entertained by the post- Śāṅkara *Advaita* Vedāntins. They talked about dream-like erroneous experiences as *prātibhasika sattā* (illusory truth), the waking state of consciousness as the *vyvahārika sattā* (practical

truth) and the state of *samādhi* or *turīya* as *pāramārthikasattā* (Absolute Truth). The first layer is negated by the second and the second one by the third.²⁶

The confusion in man occurs because he is not able to identify the universal law, though Tagore treats the law as ever-present, with the ordinary instruments of understanding; at least in the primitive stage. He notes, “Then we have our minds; and mind seeks its own food. Mind has its necessity also. It must find out reason in things. It is faced with a multiplicity of facts; and it is bewildered when it cannot find one unifying principle which simplifies the heterogeneity of things.”²⁷ But, according to Tagore, man overcomes this confusion by eliminating the perplexity himself. Thus he adds, “Man, as a knower, is not fully himself – his mere information does not reveal him. But, as a person, he is the organic man, who has the inherent power to select things from his surroundings.”²⁸ Consequently, for Tagore, the whole issue of exercising freewill is resolved based on the knowledge of the Truth or the Cosmic Reality. As soon as man recognizes the “spirit of unity”, with the removal of ignorance about the universal law, the dichotomy of individual and universal will dissolve; leading to perfect harmony between man’s nature and nature-in-general. He notes, “The universal power which is manifested in the universal law is one with our own power. It will thwart us where we are small, where we are against the current things, but it will help us where we are great, where we are in unison with the all.”²⁹ Therefore, according to Tagore, breaking the limited barrier of individual ego becomes the sole instrument to experience infinite joy. He observes, “In the heart of all man is constantly working the urge of evolution. Man in human society is all the while striving to realize himself in the world-man by breaking through the shell of his ego. In fact, it is in this process that the whole cosmic universe seeks its own truth, the supreme truth of ever-growing, ever-becoming Humanity.”³⁰ When the universe is in synchronization with us, we realize it as truth and enjoy it as beauty.

Tagore conceives freedom in two forms – negative and positive. Negative freedom is the ego-centred freedom which is a subject of *avidyā*, *karma* and *kāma*. One who exercises that kind of freedom is actually not aware of the Reality. On the contrary, one who can distinguish between eternal and the ephemeral can only practice positive freedom. In order to practice positive freedom, one has to attain considerable measure of liberty from being a subject of ignorance. Tagore notes,

“Our will can be free not towards the limitations of our self, not where it is *māyā* and negation, but towards the unlimited, where is truth and love. Our freedom cannot go against its own principle of freedom and yet be free; it cannot commit suicide and yet live. We cannot say that we should have infinite freedom to fetter ourselves, for the fettering ends the freedom.”³¹ Therefore, error is eliminated with the awareness of the higher Self. There is no other reason for the existence of evil as well. Thus Tagore observes, “When we are conscious of our soul, we perceive the inner being that transcends our ego and has its deeper affinity with the All”³² Thus, one can say that Tagore makes a distinction between soul and ego. But the most noteworthy point, in this case, is that the individual does not know the soul as something separate from him; but as his Real Being only.

Responding to whether, according to his belief, the Divine is isolated from the universe; Tagore says, “Not isolated. The infinite personality of Man comprehends the Universe. There cannot be anything that cannot be subsumed by the human personality, and this proves that the truth of the Universe is human truth. I have taken a scientific fact to illustrate this – matter is composed of protons and electrons, with gaps between them; but matter may seem to be solid. Similarly humanity is composed of individuals, yet they have their interconnections of human relationship, which gives living solidarity to man’s world. The entire universe is linked up with us in a similar manner, it is a human universe. I have pursued this through art literature and religious consciousness of man.”³³ In a nutshell, just like Absolutist, Tagore declares evil tendencies as synonyms of ignorance. Therefore he notes, “This is the reason why separateness of our self has been described by our philosophers as *māyā*, as an illusion, because it has no intrinsic reality of its own.”³⁴ He further adds, “In its finite aspect, the self is conscious of its separateness, and there it is ruthless in its attempt to have more distinction than all others. But in the infinite aspect its wish is to gain that harmony which leads to its perfection and not its mere aggrandizement.”³⁵ To my mind, with the backdrop of the Upaniṣads, Tagore gives a sufficiently comprehensive and convincing explanation of evil; along with an appreciable solution. By reading him carefully, we can see that he establishes a relation between the Absolute and the evil tendencies. Since each individual is connected to the whole cosmos at the substratum level; in other words, since the true

existence of a man is all-pervading, he aspires to regain his Primal Being by acquiring the worldly riches. The attempt to gain the non-dual gets expressed in fragments in the dualistic paradigm. Any evil tendency, greed for instance, can be clearly explained on this basis. Moreover, Tagore has not overlooked the issues of blame and responsibility while treating evil as error. He, by admitting existence of ego and the subsequently introducing the notion of negative freedom, has clearly placed responsibility on the lower self. One can easily infer that Tagore will not treat ego as an absolute non-existent entity like barren woman's son. It will persist and will remain real, so long as ignorance of Man-the Eternal persists.

Theism and Man's Nature in Tagore: in the light of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja:

During a discussion with Albert Einstein, on 14th July in 1930, regarding whether the Universe is a unity which depends on humanity, Tagore replies, "Yes, one eternal entity. We have to realize it through our emotions and activities. We realize the Supreme Man who has no individual limitations through our limitations. Science is concerned with that which is not confined to individuals; it is the impersonal human world of truths. Religion realizes these truths and links them up with our deeper needs; our individual consciousness of truth gains universal significance. Religion applies values to truth, and we know truth as good through our own harmony with it."³⁶ Tagore virtually avoids the universal conflict between theism and the problem of evil, by almost resorting to Absolutism; while dealing with the issue of imperfection. But he is not an Absolutist like Śaṅkara, when it comes to theism. Moreover, he entertains actions and emotions as a tool for the highest realization; which Śaṅkara does not do. Knowledge is the only means for liberation according to Śaṅkara. Action is just a tool for purification of mind for him. The seeker having such a pure mind is fit for the discipline of knowledge.

While commenting on the *śloka* of the Bhagavadgītā which reads, "Through the performance of his works as worship man wins *perfection* – worshipping Him from whom all beings have proceeded and by whom all this has been pervaded";³⁷ Śaṅkara maintains, "That inner controller, God, from whom all living beings have originated and by whom all the world has been pervaded – by merely worshipping Him through the performance of each man's works according to his class; man wins perfection consisting in the eligibility for the discipline of knowledge."³⁸ So, action

has a very limited function in Śaṅkara's scheme. As far as devotion is concerned, Śaṅkara makes a distinction between *saguṇa* and *nirguṇabhakti*. The role of *saguṇabhakti* is same as that of *karma*; it is meant only for *sattva śuddhi* or mental purification. *Nirguṇa bhakti*, called as *akṣaropāsana* by Śaṅkara, is a tool for the emancipation of the seeker of truth. But this form of *bhakti* no more remains compatible with the practice of *karmayoga*. Śaṅkara notes, "In (*Bhagavadgītā*) 12.11 it is suggested that the worshipper of the imperishable (*akṣaropāsaka*), who perceives no difference, cannot reasonably perform *karmayoga*, as this is an offspring of nescience. Similarly the Lord shows the impropriety of a *karmayogī* betaking himself to the worship of the Imperishable. In the verse 12.4 (they reach Me alone) states that the worshippers of the Imperishable freely attain 'Aloneness' while 12.7 (I am their deliverer) shows the dependence of others on the Lord. If the worshippers of the Imperishable have been assimilated to the Lord – have become His very Self since they see no difference whatsoever – it will be improper to suggest that they are the objects of an act of deliverance."³⁹ Due to the necessity of a dualistic paradigm to sustain *karma* and *bhakti*, Śaṅkara places them in a unique way to suit his purpose; which is not the case in Tagore.

Tagore believes in a God who is not completely impersonal like the *nirguṇa* Brahman of *Advaita Vedānta*. But, at the same time, it is not like Rāmānuja's *saguṇa* Brahman; who resides in *vaikuntha*, in the form of Lord *Viṣṇu* along with His consort *Laxmī*. Tagore's God is personal and impersonal at the same time. His God, in the form of Man – the eternal, is known as a part of the seeker only. He rejects any objection pertaining to the anthropomorphic dimension of his faith; arguing that, as a matter of fact, it is a human limitation. For Tagore, a follower of the upaniṣadic tradition, realization of God is the experience of infinity in the finite i.e. "the giver in the gifts."⁴⁰ Thus he notes, "He is the infinite deal of perfection. But we are not what we truly are; we are ever to become true ever to become *Brahma*. There is eternal play of love in the relation between this being and the becoming; and in the depth of this mystery is the source of all truth and beauty that sustains the endless march of creation."⁴¹ Thus one can note that *emotion* comes to play a very important role the scheme of Tagore. Truth has twin dimensions of freedom and restraint. Tagore maintains that on one side, everything moves fearing Him (Lord);⁴² possibly with

reference to the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* which reads, “From the fear of Him fire burns, from fear shines the Sun; from the fear run Indra and Air and Death, the fifth.”⁴³ On the other side, *Taittirīya* passage suggests that everything is born out of out of joy. The exact text goes as, “(He) knew bliss as Brahman; for from Bliss, indeed, all these beings originate; having been born, they are sustained by Bliss; they move towards and merge in Bliss.”⁴⁴

If only restraint is focussed, it is injustice to the possibilities in Brahman; as indicated in the scriptures. True respect to the notion of Brahman is given only when both the facets are positively explored. Therefore Tagore proclaims, “This world which takes its form in the mould of man’s perception, still remains only as the partial world of senses and mind. It is like a guest and like a kinsman. It becomes completely our own when it comes within the range of our emotions.”⁴⁵ Therefore emotions become an indispensable element to explore the Ultimate Reality in its comprehensiveness. Tagore notes, “Our emotions are the gastric juices which transform this world of appearance into the more intimate world of sentiments. On the other hand, this outer world has its own juices, having their various qualities which excite our emotional activities. This is called in our Sanskrit rhetoric *rasa*, which signifies outer juices having their response in the inner juices of our emotions.”⁴⁶ And adds, “By constant human associations sentiments gather around our things of use and invite the help of art to reveal themselves.”⁴⁷ For Tagore, finite and infinite are dependent on each other. In fact, *Brahma* is dependent on *jiva* for the completion of His love. He observes, “In our country the *Vaiṣṇavas* have realized this truth and boldly asserted it by saying that God had to rely on human souls for the fulfilment of His love.”⁴⁸ In this way he highlights that vital aspect of man’s nature which the so called rational, logical or thinking mind often tends to overlook; that dimension of Brahman which has been described as *rasa (raso vai saḥ)* in the *Upaniṣad*. The text goes as,

“*asadvā idamagra āsīt/ tato vai sadajāyata/ tadātmānam svayamkuruta/
tasmātattasukṛtamucyata iti/ yadvai tat sukṛtam/ raso vai saḥ*” (*Taittirīya* II.7.1)

Though the existence of negative emotions can also be explained on the same ground as that of the negative values, establishing a relation between emotions and

the problem of evil, Tagore does not directly attempt to do so. But, he surely claims emotion as a tool for the highest realization; thereby establishing a connection between emotion and the Ultimate Reality, where the former is a means to know the latter. But the later set of emotions, identified as a tool, is positive and pure emotions signifying Universal Love. Even if we do not consider Tagore as a radical interpreter of the Upaniṣads, one perhaps should not blame him of not subscribing to any of the classical models exhaustively; for the simple reason that Upaniṣads themselves do not subscribe thoroughly to any such model. They also present, to borrow a term from Gadamer, ‘a fusion of horizon’; where varieties of ideas appear to merge into one another, without necessarily trying to create any consistency in the classical sense of the term. Therefore Tagore’s middle path, creating an amalgamation, comfortably fits into the larger Upaniṣadic framework.

Conclusion:

In the conclusion, it can probably be said that Tagore, oscillates in between Absolutism and theism; and presents, more or less, a holistic picture of human propensities in his ‘Man’s Nature’. His highlighting of the *rasa* aspect of Brahman – the Ultimate Reality, who is nothing but his Eternal Man present in all, and the nature of man’s interplay with Him, reveals why man is not only a rational animal but also equally an emotional being. The essay makes it clear that due to the very nature of his Being, man aspires to love and desires to be loved. This aspect of human life needs nurturing, sensitization and care, at par with the training given to the intellect. Tagore suggests different art-forms like music, dance and painting as tools; in order to meet with this end. Though he could not solve the problem of evil in the light of his theism, as we have already noted that his solution resorts to the Absolutist model; his attempt of explaining the situation, with the help of the notion of Eternal Man, has lots of implications in the domain of morality. By the very description of his Being; man, by means of the Eternal Manhood present in him, is connected to the whole Universe. For that reason, injustice done to any other being is bound to come back to the agent; since every other being is a part of his own Being only. Similarly, one’s helping others also means helping oneself only in this paradigm; since that is also bound to return following the principle of non – dualism.

Therefore, there is an intrinsic justification for the claim, which Tagore makes with reference to the scriptures in his essay; that though by means of injustice man may acquire pleasurable things in this world, it destroys him in the root. Tagore's criticism of negative freedom as a self – slayer can also be justified on the same ground. As a whole, we get a very comprehensive account of human character in this reading. Of course, Tagore has placed them all with the background of the *Upaniṣads*; otherwise these would have called for many more set of justifications. But, given the human experience, his hypothesis floated with the help of scriptures seems to explain it well. The claim of comprehensiveness of Tagore is justified, since almost all the vital aspects of human nature has been addressed by him; though one may argue that he is not consistent with the selection of any specific model, be it dualistic or non-dualistic. But the argument is not valid since the applied synthesis is Tagore's own model, which could be treated as his unique contribution; and *Upaniṣads*, as such, do not support any specific classical model. On the same ground, Tagore's solution of the problem of evil from Absolutism and prescriptions for a healthy emotion-culture from a theistic viewpoint is equally justified.

Notes and References:

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2. Tagore, R.N., *The Religion of Man*, Visva - Bharati Kolkata 2015, 'Man's Nature', p.81
3. *Ibid.*, p.81
4. *Ibid.*, p.81
5. *Ibid.*, p.82
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7. *Ibid.*, p.82
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15. Tagore, R.N., *Sadhana*, McMillan & Co. Ltd. London 1964, p.53
16. Tagore, R. N., *Towards Universal Man*, Asia Publishing House Bombay 1962, (As quoted by Humayun Kabir in the introduction) p.35
17. Adidevananda, Swami, (Trans.) *Śrī Rāmānuja Gītā Bhāṣya*, SRK Math Madras 2007, p.206
18. *Ibid.*, p.207
19. Neither Śāṅkara nor Rāmānuja has given an unambiguous explanation of its beginning. Rāmānuja maintains that this causal series is beginningless and *avidyā*, the root cause of the series, is *anādi* according to Śāṅkara.
20. Tagore, R.N., *Sadhana*, McMillan & Co. Ltd. London 1964, p.48

21. Ibid., p.48
22. Ibid., p.48
23. Gambhirananda, Swami, (Trans.) *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya* Advaita Ashrama Calcutta 1998 p.1
24. Tagore, R.N., *Sadhana*, McMillan & Co. Ltd. London 1964, p.52
25. Ibid., p.56
26. In the *Nyāya* epistemology, *pramā* (valid knowledge) is subsumed within *jñāna* (knowledge). *Jñāna* also includes *bhramajñāna* or illusory knowledge. This position is also accepted by the vedāntins.
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28. Ibid., p.13
29. Ibid., p.61
30. Tagore R.N., *Man (Lectures delivered at Andhra University)*, Huxley Press Madras 1937, p.58
31. Ibid., p.84-85
32. Tagore R.N., *Sadhana*, McMillan & Co. Ltd. London 1964, p.27
33. Tagore, R.N., *The Religion of Man*, Visva- Bharati Kolkata 'Note on the Nature of Reality' (Appendix II) 2015, p.126
34. Tagore, R.N., *Sadhana*, McMillan & Co. Ltd. London 1964, p.79
35. Ibid., p.83
36. Ibid., p.126
37. Warrier, A.G.K., (Trans.) *The Bhagavad Gītā Bhāṣya of Śaṅkarācārya*, SRK Math Chennai 2000, p.590
38. Ibid., p.590
39. Ibid., p.395
40. Tagore, R.N., *Sadhana*, McMillan & Co. Ltd. London 1964, p.148
41. Ibid., p.155
42. Thakur, Rabindranath, *Rabindra Rachanavali* (In Bengali) Pashchim Banga Bangla Academy Kolkata 2015, Vol.16 *Karmajog*, p.695
43. Gambhirananda, Swami, *Eight Upaniṣads with the Commentary of Śaṅkarācārya*, Advaita Ashrama Kolkata 1998, Vol.1, p.217
44. Ibid., p.398
45. Tagore, R.N., *Personality* Mcmillan & Co. Ltd. London 1959, p.14
46. Ibid., pp.14-15
47. Ibid., p.17
48. Ibid., p.102