

Preface

The question concerning Man and the Universe is very important in the history of philosophy. Actually 'man' occupies a unique position in the mind of the philosophers. In spite of differences in their metaphysical outlook the Indian systems have an internal unity. Perhaps before Protagoras Philosophers had no interest on Man and he was the first who turned the mind of philosophers to Man and he declared "Man is the measure of all things". But in India, 'Man' was highly discussed from the Vedic period and still now. As an Indian, Tagore was influenced by the *Upanisads*, Buddhism and other scripture. He developed the concept of Man from the Upanisad, Buddhism, Bauls, Folk and mystic saints like Lalan, Kabir etc.

In the present era man suffers from deficiency though he has sufficient divine potency within himself. Tagore has discussed about the nature of man. In this dissertation an effort will be made to discuss about the concept of 'Man' with special reference to Rabindranath Tagore. A critical discussion has been done through over the dissertation.

After some introductory remarks the second chapter deals with Tagore's Concept of Man in the Light of Vedānta and Upanisad.

Tagore as a metaphysical poet was influenced by Indian Scripture like, *Upanisads and Vedānta*. Especially he frequently and spontaneously recited hymns from the *Śvetaśvatara* and *Īśa Upanisads*. That was happened because of his father Maharshi Devendranath Tagore. This influence lasts long till his death. It was not because he^{was} born in a hindu family but because the philosophy of those scripture shaped his own way

of life and reached him to the highest goal of human aspiration. Tagore's monism, his emphasis on the all-pervasive character of God, his assertion of the kinship between 'man and man' and between 'man and nature' all are taken from the *Upanisads*. He was also fully acquainted with the entire *Upanisadic* tradition and as such carried the stamp of some of the *vedantic* system in his thought. *Vaisnavism* sects of *vedanta*, made him to realise the necessity and importance of opening the ways of the heart for apprehending the one.

In chapter three Tagore's thought in the Light of Buddhism has been discussed. Buddhism also shaped Tagore's own metaphysical philosophy like the verses of *Upanisads*. Tagore said, "To me the verses of the *Upanisads* and the teachings of Buddha have ever been thing of the spirit. And therefore endowed with boundless vital growth as being instinct with individual meaning for me, as for others, and awaiting for their confirmation my own special testimony, which must have its value because of its individuality" (*Sādhanā* P. VIII). So, it is clear to us by his own words how he was influenced by Buddha.

Tagore's thought in the Light of *Baul*, Sufi Saints & Kabir is concentrated in chapter four. Tagore was impressed by *Baul* singers of Bengal, Kabir and other mystic Saints. The unsophisticated theology and the simple ways of the *Bauls* impressed Tagore very much. Besides the *Bauls*, the mystic Saints like Kabir and other saints always held special fascination for Tagore. Under those influence Tagore shaped his own religion – 'The religion of man' and created a lot of poems, songs, novels, painting etc. for us.

Tagore's concept of Man in the Light of education as a man making process. Tagore said about the complete man who belonged to the

surplusness. So to shape the personality and completeness of man making, he prescribed a system of education, which is totally different from the traditional system of education. He could realize that was not possible with-in the four wall of classroom. So, he introduced a special system of education and special way of teaching at his *Santiniketan*. Actually it was based on the classic ancient gurukula mixed with the modern Western scientific method with his own invented process. He thought in this way he could make 'the human being with ethics'. So, it can be said the man making process.

Man and Surplus in Man occupy a prominent place in Tagore's philosophy. To Tagore an individual realizes his own self more fully when he exceeds himself at large. A man has a feeling that he is ^{the} best represented in something that exceeds him. Human creativity is surplus in man because there alone takes place an incessant explosion of freedom. Man has a feeling that he is truly represented in something, which exceeds him. He is aware that he is not imperfect but incomplete.

Rabindranath had brought harmony between the Finite and the Infinite. To him such harmony remains within a man. An individual's ego wants to bind him in this worldly object while his soul longs for the Infinite, which is represented in the poem - *Dui Pakhi*. In an individual there is both *Viśva* (whole world) and *Viśesatva* (ego). Just as a string of the lyre remains in two poles a man while performing this worldly work is conjoined with the Infinite.

Rabindranath accepted good (*Śreya*) as moral value. Our life gains what is called *Śreya* in those of its aspects, which represent eternal humanity in knowledge, in sympathy, in deeds, in characters and creative works. When the 'surplus in man' is not revealed, he would not

be in a position, which exceeds him. Under this situation all will seem to be *Preya* (pleasant) to him, which is not at all desirable to Tagore.

Freedom, for Tagore, is a freedom from bondage created by alienation, which is essentially a freedom to. The action which is done out of need brings bondage while the action done from surplusness is called *Mukti* or salvation. He always wanted to have the taste of freedom amongst innumerable bondage but not through detachment in the sense of that which makes us away from the practical world. The so-called bondage may become the sources of unbound pleasure available in salvation.

In the concluding chapter an effort will be made to make A Critical and Conclusive remarks on Tagore's view. Though Rabindranath had drawn our attention to the unique concept of Man, many philosophical issues may be raised. What are the points of departure of Rabindranath from our ancient *Sāstras* need to be explored and examined. Is his philosophical thought related to our *Tāntrik* tradition? If the answer is in the positive, the specific points of his agreements and departure are also to be focussed.