

Rediscovering Self with Tagore's Gitanjali

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Abstract - The collection of poems by Rabindranath Tagore known as *Gitanjali* is arguably his most well-known work. In 1913, Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature for this anthology. The collection of 103 poems began as a compilation of Bengali poetry in 1910. A few of the poems are even more personal; some are directed to God, while others are to a loved one on Earth. Without a doubt, poetry have highly uniform tones and meanings. whoever is addressed, reinforcing the firm conviction that love both human and eternal should be viewed equally. The majority of the poems are quite short and easily readable, making them suitable for almost anyone to read. When it comes to his creative career, he is well-known for his work in nearly all genres, including drama, stage plays, prose, novels, novellas, essays, and poetry. He thinks that developing a person's love for people will result in their spiritual change, and this can be accomplished by acquiring spiritual knowledge.

Keywords- Rediscovering, Spiritual, Emotions instrument, Excitement, Responsibilities

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INTRODUCTION

Tagore's works are a reflection of his life philosophy and the importance of the Absolute to him. *Gitanjali*'s songs, also known as Song Offerings (1912), specifically outline the poet's relationship with the Eternal. Every poem captures a fleeting moment of communion with the Almighty while celebrating humanity, the natural world, and earthly beings. Tagore realised that life is about affirming rather than dismissing the existence of life on earth, and he held the belief that God finds himself in his creation. The communion of the free soul with the everlasting love of God, which is shown in and through the genuine encounters of our daily existence. All living things derive their existence from this invisible, universal life force. This universal life force can also be seen as the energy that propels all life and serves as a conduit for all forms of expression. You should immerse yourself fully in one word if you are serious about spiritual development. It's another word meaning "energy." At its most basic, life is nothing more than energy. Some names for the energy or life force are Chi, Prana, Kundalini, and Vital Energy. This energy is referred to by the University of Spirituality as "God," "the Holy Spirit," "Spirit," "Love," or "Light." [1]

MAIN TEXT

The poems in Rabindranath Tagore's "*Gitanjali*" (Song Offerings) cover a wide range of intellectual and spiritual subjects. Finding personal significance and connection through "*Gitanjali*" necessitates a close reading of its verses. Tagore's poems often reflect a meditative state. Approach each poem with a calm and

open mind, allowing the words to resonate with your inner thoughts and emotions. For instance, in one of the poems, he writes:

"THOU hast made me endless, such is thy
pleasure. This frail vessel thou emptiest

again and again, and fillest it ever with fresh life.

This little flute of a reed thou hast carried over
hills and dales, and hast breathed through

it melodies eternally new.

At the immortal touch of thy hands my little heart
loses its limits in joy and gives birth to

utterance ineffable.

Thy infinite gifts come to me only on these very
small hands of mine. Ages pass, and

still thou pourest, and still there is room to fill" [2]

The poet begins her description of God's grace for humans in the first stanza. God created man to be unbreakable and eternal because it pleased God to do so. The human body is a frail, breakable vessel that holds the life that God has given to it. God continuously bestows life upon it, making mortal man immortal in the process. God creates the poet from a simple reed, like a flute. He is the instrument with which God the composer travels over hills and valleys, creating fresh and beautiful tunes. When God touches a poet, his finite heart grows into an infinite space filled with ecstasy and joy. Out of this

unfathomable joy, poetry is formed. Man's limited hands accept God's boundless gifts. God keeps showering man with rewards beyond death. Tagore opens his "Song-Offering" with a lovely reflection on human existence. God intends for man to be everlasting even if his body is mortal and perishable. The human soul is eternal. His death is a myth. The truth is that even if the body may repeatedly die, God breathes his spirit into him, allowing him to live on forever. The ultimate creator, God, is the one who imbues the feeble human instrument with an enduring melody. Poetry is inspired by God because the human heart, which is constrained and limited, may expand into boundless delight. Even though man is a little, fragile vessel and a breakable entity, he is given the gift of an unending, eternal life as God.

Every poetry has the potential to provoke introspection. The poet cannot express the quality of God. A poet's heart is touched by God in every way, and this causes him to feel so happy that he cannot contain his excitement.

"PLUCK this little flower and take it, delay not! I
fear lest it droop and drop into the dust.

It may not find a place in thy garland, but honour it
with a touch of pain from thy hand

and pluck it. I fear lest the day end before I am
aware, and the time of offering go by.

Though its colour be not deep and its smell be
faint, use this flower in thy service and
pluck it while there is time."[3]

The poet is afraid that either his love will fade or that he will get old, wither, and die, blending with the dust. For this reason, the poet begs God to take him and His love to him immediately in this verse. The poet asks that even if he does not end up in God's bosom as a garland, he will at least be honoured that God has called him to his presence. If death is an honour and comes from God's hand, then it is worth the suffering. The poet is afraid that he would pass away or that his love might fade before he realises it, which would mean that he would miss the opportunity to love and pray to God. Even though he might not be deserving of God's presence, he humbly begs that God still call him to Himself while the poet still has time to serve Him.

"HERE is thy footstool and there rest thy feet
where live the poorest, and lowliest...

My heart can never find its way to where thou
keepest company with the companionless among
the poorest, the lowliest, and the lost."[4]

The poet expresses his admiration for God in the first few words. God is with the poorest, the lowest, and the lost, according to Tagore. Where are you and what is your duty, the poet asks? I'm going to drop on your footstool and offer my life at this point. Poet lives in the regular people's company and sees God there. It's possible that the poet is attempting to convey that the

poorest, lowest, and lost people can lead us to God. God will undoubtedly assist them but won't abandon them. Poets tell us that God lays his feet among the poor men, just as a king would rest his feet on a footstool. Tagore describes in the second verse how deeply ingrained God's bond is with the poorest of people. The poet's attempts to bow down before the God fall short of reaching the place where God's feet rest amid the forgotten people. God's influence on the average person is that much more profound. Egoists are incapable of approaching God. The God who has assumed the garments of humility is among the lost, destitute, and needy. A poet's duty is to give his life to God; unlike other people, poets do not want to suffer; they all want to live happy, quiet lives. Just get rid of your ego, purify yourself, and approach God. He has never loved conceited men. Poet cannot relax in his life; he is always on the lookout. He needs God to be with him constantly, since else his life would have no purpose. This final stanza expresses the poet's confusion. He is unable to find a means to approach God as God is among the poorest people. This fills him with fear because he believes he cannot live a meaningful life without Him.

Tagore frequently explores themes of love, longing, and heavenly connection in his poetry. One common topic, for example, is the feeling of longing for a higher purpose or the divine:

"I AM only waiting for love to give myself up at
last into his hands. That is why it is so late

and why I have been guilty of such omissions.

They come with their laws and their codes to
bind me fast; but I evade them ever, for I

am only waiting for love to give myself up at last
into his hands.

People blame me and call me heedless; I doubt
not they are right in their blame.

The market day is over and work is all done for
the busy. Those who came to call me in
vain have gone back in anger. I am only waiting
for love to give myself up at last into his
hands."[5]

Tagore speaks in the voice of a beloved in this poem as she waits for her lover. In order for them to ultimately be united, he is waiting for God the lover to arrive. He has been running behind schedule in his earthly responsibilities because he is waiting for God. According to Tagore, individuals constrained by societal norms and customs approach him in an attempt to bind him to their own set of guidelines, but he has been dodging them. His main aim is to be connected with God, and that is what he is waiting for, thus he doesn't wish to be bound by these earthly responsibilities. As a result, he feels that those who accuse him of being careless and irresponsible are correct. The poet then ends by stating that everyone who was working has

completed their task and that the market day has come to a close. And because they were unable to locate him, everyone who came in the hopes of doing so left. The poet isn't too concerned about their ensuing rage. All he is waiting for is God, his true love, to surrender to him

In keeping with the conventional Indian tradition of devotional poetry, Tagore develops the poem. Similar to Meera Bai's songs, Tagore imagines himself in the role of the beloved, yearning for his lover, God, and seeking union with him. The majority of Indian and other oriental cultures adhered to this custom. Tagore describes his readiness to give himself over and submit to God, as well as his hope for God to arrive. He is totally engrossed in his pursuit of oneness with God, and much like a woman who waits for her lover and muses over when to give up, he never stops thinking about God and ignores everything else. He doesn't care that these people are correct to be pleading with him to appear and holding him accountable for not showing up to fulfil his earthly responsibilities. It is implied that the poet is motivated solely by his love of God and his spiritual desires. He is blind to all other factors because of his love for God.

Nature is a common metaphor used by Tagore to represent the deity and the self. Work with these organic visuals to expand your self-awareness:

"LIGHT, oh where is the light? Kindle it with the
burning fire of desire!

There is the lamp but never a flicker of a flame, –
is such thy fate, my heart! Ah, death

were better by far for thee!

Misery knocks at thy door, and her message is that
thy lord is wakeful, and he calls thee

to thy love-tryst through the darkness of night.

The sky is overcast with clouds and the rain is
ceaseless. I know not what this is that

stirs in me, – I know not its meaning.

A moment's flash of lightning drags down a deeper
gloom on my sight, and my heart

gropes for the path to where the music of the night
calls me.

Light, oh where is the light! Kindle it with the
burning fire of desire! It thunders and the

wind rushes screaming through the void. The night
is black as a black stone. Let not

the hours pass by in the dark. Kindle the lamp of
love with thy life." [6]

The hazards and challenges encountered on the spiritualist road are represented by the term's clouds, darkness, rain, and thunder in this poetry. However,

they can be surmounted by a true devotee who is able to see his path clearly and unmistakably through all the ignorance that stands in his way. This poem implies that the torch of divine love must be lit and that worldly, aesthetical wants must be extinguished. As in many of Tagore's writings, the imagery of fire and water is utilised here to represent pleasure and thirst.

we can Use Tagore's poems as inspiration for own creative endeavours. This creative process can help you explore and articulate your sense of self.

"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 clear stream of reason has not lost its
way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

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." [7]

The poet begs the All-Powerful God in this poem that his fellow countrymen should not dread submission or be driven by an overwhelming impulse. He wants everyone in his nation to live with dignity and with their heads held high. To put it another way, he believed that everyone should be brave and possess both self-respect and self-esteem in a country that is truly free. The poet expresses his ideas in the next line, where he imagines a society in which everyone has access to free education and is not just privileged enough to have access to higher education. It is also underlined that kids should be allowed to learn freely from the natural world and their surroundings. Additionally, it was kept in mind that students shouldn't be made to memorise any courses that already existed. Since Tagore generally favoured this conception of schooling.

The poet also highlights the solidarity of all people, not just those who live in his own country. According to him, there should be no distinctions made between people because of their caste, creed, race, or any other illogical beliefs. Stated differently, people shouldn't be split up into groups and their oneness should not be shattered by assumptions and blind views. The poet, too, longs for an honest country. They should speak from the bottom of their souls and not be only surface-level. "These ties build youths' confidence, inspire their beliefs in a happy future, and push them to take meaningful measures towards their destiny [8]".

Many of Tagore's poems are spiritual inquiries into the nature of God and the soul. Images of the endless dance of light and shadow beneath the constant changing of the seasons beneath the Indian sky abound in Tagore's artwork. Tagore suddenly assumes a profoundly spiritual perspective. Tagore uses the month of Saavan to convey his feelings. Tagore was an eminent writer. His poetry stands out for its exquisite word melody, sentimental harmony, and harmony of ideas. He picked words from a rich resource that were both appropriate and quite emotive. 'Gitanjali's' words are straightforward, basic, and incredibly expressive. His writing is filled with slang terms. His choice of appropriate and straightforward language conveys a depth of feeling. The key elements of his style are simplicity and beauty of expression. In the opening line of "Gitanjali," the poet compares the ups and downs of life to the melodies performed by Lord Krishna, while also highlighting the immortality of the human spirit through imagery of the Hindu deity playing the flute. 'Gitanjali's' ideas and creativity are Indian. Tagore's lyrical poetry is characterised by its spirituality, love of both nature and humanity, and portrayal of the earth's beauty and grandeur. The lyrical poetry of Tagore inspires them all. Tagore has greatly benefited Indian English-language writing. He demonstrated how Indian sentiment, ideas, and creativity can be effectively expressed in English. You may apply what Shakespeare wrote about Cleopatra to 'Gitanjali'. Tagore's poems interpretations and insights can provide new perspectives and deepen our understanding. Engaging in discussions about "Gitanjali" can also foster a sense of community and shared exploration.

The poet wishes to express his readiness to meet the eternal force, which is only achievable at one's passing. Since Tagore has always wanted to meet his soul mate, he is extremely happy about the death and wishes to demonstrate that he has accomplished all in life and is prepared to pass away in order to meet his bride.

"IN desperate hope I go and search for her in all
the corners of my room; I find her not.

My house is small and what once has gone from it
can never be regained. But infinite is

thy mansion, my lord, and seeking her I have
come to thy door. I stand under the golden

canopy of thine evening sky and I lift my eager
eyes to thy face.

I have come to the brink of eternity from which
nothing can vanish – no hope, no

happiness, no vision of a face seen through tears."

Oh, dip my emptied life into that ocean, plunge it
into the deepest fullness.

Let me for once feel that lost sweet touch in the
allness of the universe.[9]

The poet travels to the sea of eternity in quest of his beloved or his other self, where he begs to be united for the realisation of his wholeness. The poet sees himself as being made up of two personalities, and he is searching for one of them, or perhaps he is searching for his true love. He is looking for her in the corners of his tiny room, full of desperation. The house is situated here in contrast to the soil, where something that is lost is lost forever. He cannot find his beloved, who he has lost. He feels that she will be waiting for him in God's countless abode. He stands beneath the azure zenith, gazing up at the stars. All wishes and hopes, joy and the faces of all the loved ones lost in this world are to be met with the everlasting above. He therefore asks God to fill his empty life to the brim with the ocean of eternity, so that he can once more experience the sweetness of his beloved's touch and gaze upon her lovely face. In Vedanta, He is God, the Guru, or the Absolute Self. They are identical. He is beyond the mind and the senses, hence it is impossible to know Him. He holds a key role. There is no other path but absolute commitment, total surrender, and unflinching faith.

Through the prism of Rabindranath Tagore's poignant poetry, "Rediscovering Self with Tagore's Gitanjali" provides an in-depth exploration of the domains of spirituality and self-discovery. Utilising Tagore's "Gitanjali" to rediscover who you are is a very intimate and life-changing experience. we can set off on a path of self-discovery and enlightenment inspired by Tagore's ageless poetry by meditating on the verses, reflecting on our own life, resonating with the emotions, connecting with nature, expressing creativity, asking spiritual questions, and sharing with others. Man can solve all problems because reactions to natural stimuli are in perfect balance with the environment. It is advisable to redirect this aroused feeling of happiness into channels that are fairly constructive. Today's youth can get a wealth of philosophical and spiritual understanding from Gitanjali. The poems address themes of oneness, divine connection, and the essence of the self, providing readers with a rich canvas on which to weave together their own existential and spiritual enquiries. Gitanjali's themes—meaning, inner calm, and the yearning for connection—are universal even though they are anchored in the unique cultural setting of early 20th-century Bengal. Because of the work's universality, readers from a variety of backgrounds can relate to it on a personal level and find resonance with their own self-discovery experiences.

Conclusion: Rabindranath Tagore's poetry has the power to profoundly inspire reflection and self-discovery; A vast tapestry of intellectual and spiritual insights that cut over cultural and chronological barriers can be found in Tagore's Gitanjali. In addition to giving man its resources, nature allows him to experience sensations. It offers lovely scenery that everyone can appreciate. In fact, nature increases man's ability to enjoy himself. Both the mind and the eyes are inspired to fully appreciate the

brehtaking vistas and sceneries found in nature. A sound mind and sight are able to see and take in the surroundings.

Gitanjali, in short, offers a special and potent tool for people who want to delve into and rediscover their own inner landscapes. Its capacity to captivate individuals on a profoundly intimate level and foster a genuine conversation between the book and the self-accounts for its ongoing popularity. As a result, Tagore's Gitanjali continues to be an essential and motivating manual for the continuous investigation of the human identity and spiritual development.

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