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PREFACE

The present work draws attention to the importance of Tagore's poetry in the English transcriptions by Ketaki Kushari Dyson and by the poet himself. His poetry is essentially an epitome, a compendium of what is said in the scriptures. In almost all the theological works of Indian and Western thought one finds the immense importance given to Godhead and our relationship with Him, but none has been, to my view, as successful as Tagore in offering a set of mystical relationships with God ranging from God as Mother, God as Father to God as Master and God as Friend.

The philosophy of Tagore's poetry is a comprehensive one based on personal experiences. His poetry is the worship of the Reality in its aspect of beauty while his philosophy is the worship of the same in its aspect of truth. The poet worships God as the spirit of beauty while the philosopher pays his homage to God as the ideal of truth. The two are not opposed as "Truth is Beauty and Beauty Truth." It is only from his visions that Tagore receives the Divine revelations, which he pours out in simple, lucid poetry.
The pantheistic and absolutistic philosophers like Spinoza and Shankaracharya deny the reality of the finite souls and reduce everything to mere false appearances of the Infinite. But Tagore, on the other hand, conceives of the divine nature of the finite souls who come in communion with God and have their own existence and individuality. For Tagore, God is a personal deity. He is **Satyam, Shivam and Sundaram** (Truth, Auspiciousness and Bliss). Like the Vaishnava theists, Tagore conceives that God remains near to mankind ever interested in human actions and thoughts. There exists a personal relationship between God and man. Love, music and poetry are the means to come closer to God and thereby be in continuous communion with Him.

Tagore and his works have been the subjects of many studies by illustrious scholars. Some have conducted research on Tagore’s social, political and educational views, while others have been impressed by Tagore’s short stories and plays for their research. Yet only a few have thought about the **mystical** element in Tagore’s poetry, and compared him to some other mystical poets of other nations. In their enthusiasm, soon after the publication of **Gitanjali**, critics compared him to
Wordsworth, Shelley, T.S. Eliot, Walt Whitman and others. However, this study includes the substratum of the entire range of Indian philosophy and can finally be limited to the relationship between the Infinite and the finite, i.e., God and man.

Thus, my attempt in this research work is to explore the mysticism that is inherent in Tagore's poetry. And since religiousness - the concept of God and its true counterpart, the humanism forms part of a man's encounter with God, I choose also to analyse and categorise the translated poems along those lines too. Further, as the person of Tagore is very much a lively shadow, his spiritual vision and philosophy also find a relevant place in this treatise.