CHAPTER VI

TAGORE'S ACHIEVEMENT AS A MYSTIC

I

Rabindranath Tagore is definitely one of the greatest poets of the modern age. He carved for modern India a place in the world's literary scene. In his English transcriptions — "Gitanjali", "The Gardener", "The Crescent Moon", "Fruit-Gathering", "Stray Birds", "Lover's Gift", "Crossing" and "The Fugitive and Other Poems", Tagore emerges as a superb lyricist and devotional poet in Indo-English literature. His poetic achievement has left a permanent impression on great poets both in India and abroad.

Commenting on Tagore's influence, C. Paul Verghese writes:

"Tagore's mystical poetry has had a rather limiting influence on the themes and style of Indian poetry. The impact of Tagore's personality on poet's in India was so overwhelming that it tempted them to write mystical poetry in the manner and spirit of the master. This indirectly prevented them from being bold enough to try their hand at pure lyrical poetry. For instance, Harindranath Chattopadhyaya, inspite of his Marxism in politics, is mystical in his verse and constantly expresses a desire to remove his false self and to discover God. In the wake of Tagore's success as a mystic-poet, there has also been an impression among critics of Indian poetry that true Indian poetry is mystical." 1

Tagore thus has the rare distinction of being the inspirer and moulder of a nation's literature.

Tagore's mysticism also fascinated foreign poets, especially Hart Crane and Ezra Pound. It appears that song number six of the Gitanjali moved C.F. Andrews to the depths of the soul and as Brown Weber points out that this song must have inspired Hart Crane who:

"read the cadenced English translations of Tagore's Bengali poems and responded to the poet's conception of God's immanence, his imagery of infinite sky and bottomless depths to write his poem, 'The Bottom of the sea is cruel'."2

In Tagore's poem the image of children playing on the beach with

"'empty shells' and 'withered leaves' expands into a comprehensive vision of life. The children who are aware only that 'the sea surges up with laughter' fail to observe that 'the death-dealing waves sing meaningless ballads... like a mother while rocking her baby's cradle.' In Crane's poem too, the sea is an ambivalent force, alternately attracting and repelling with surges of material love and clutching death. The poet watches colourfully - dressed children playing on the shore."3


3. Ibid., p. 50.
Ezra Pound, a renowned American poet imbibed Tagore’s influence both in respect of theme and imagery. His poetry is suffused with spirituality and in respect of imagery, which he defines as "that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time", he is very much akin to Tagore whom he greatly admired. The Poetry, published by Pound "made much of the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore, who was the literary sensation of the day." There is a striking similarity between their conception of God and the child. Ezra Pound loves God "as a maid to man" in the "Ballad for Gloom":

I have loved my God as a child at heart
That seekest deep bosoms for rest,
I have loved my God as a maid to man —
But lo, this thing is best:
To love your God as a gallant foe —
that plays behind the veil;
To meet your God as the night winds
meet beyond Arcturus pale.

God in the poetry of both Tagore and Pound remains hidden behind the veil. Their idea is expressed thus, in the same poem:

Wherefore I made her a song and she went from me
As the moon doth from the sea.
But still came the leaf words, little brown elf words
Saying 'the soul sendeth us a song a song'
And in vain I cried unto them 'I have no song
For she I sang of hath gone from me.'

Going through the lyrics of Gitanjali, Pound writes:

"I waver where to begin ... We have discovered our new Greece. It seems like the sudden arrival of a serene peace in the midst of the hoax of machines. It looks bringing to Europe that equanimity of past ... It is not the flash of emotion nor the rashness to outpour words that make me tell so ... I speak after a month's mellowing ... There is the serenity of nature in him. These lyrics are not the result of a storm or fieriness; it's natural to him. He is one with nature ... When I leave Tagore I feel myself as nomad of the Paleolithic age."


Springing from intuitive experience, suffused with vision, these
lyrics appeal irresistibly to the depths of the spirit. Over the
sensitive soul they sweep like the winds over the lyre. K.R.

Srinivasa Iyengar aptly writes:

"The stillness is suddenly disturbed by a dance of rhythm,
the ear is charmed and enraptured, there is quick passage
through the doors of sensibility, and the chords reach the
soul's sanctuary at last."

A novel Laureate H. Laxness beautifully acknowledges the
profound impression of Gitanjali:

"This strange, distant and subtle voice at once found its
way to the very depths of my youthful spiritual ear; and
ever since, at given moments I feel its presence in the
innermost labyrinths of mind ... had the effect of a
wonderful flower we had never seen or heard of before."

As a mystic, Tagore's place is very high in modern literature.
He was able to inspire the suffering humanity through his poems

7 Iyengar, K.R.S.: Rabindranath Tagore: A Critical

8 Laxness, H.: Quoted by Iyengar, K.R.S.: Rabindranath Tagore
p. 15.
and was therefore called a prophet of the universal man - VISWAMANAB. Speaking for man beyond religion and politics, Tagore keeps the following three principles in mind:

i) The ultimateness of spiritual values to be obtained by inward honesty and cultivation of inner life.

ii) The futility of mere negation or renunciation and the need for a holy development of life; and

iii) The positive attitude of sympathy for all even the lowly and the lost.

And these were the principles that had fulfilled the purpose of his sojourn at earth. In the words of Nirad C. Chaudhuri:

"I would loudly proclaim that the status of Rabindranath as a literary man was higher than that of all the thirteen western writers who had received the Nobel Prize from 1901 to 1912."9

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S.B. Mukherjee, commenting on Tagore's place in literature, writes:

"With the Gitanjali trio ends a momentous phase of Tagore's poetry—a phase that had once made him a world poet. The sensational impact of the work on the war-ravaged West, the acclamation it aroused in the literary world was at once fortunate and unfortunate. Most unfortunate is this that it somehow labelled Tagore as primarily a mystic-religious poet of the East. The world never realized that he was quite a few things more; that the Gitanjali was by no means the masterpiece; that there were works before that had revealed facets markedly different: the poet of Beauty; the poet of man; the poet of Nature; the poet of grand passion, and of grand myths, absorbing the idea into sensuous embodiment of image and rhythm; the poet of Krsanika where sparkling wit and iridescent fancy, playful gaiety and rich wisdom combined to create a genre of poetry unique in literature—Tagore was all these poets and more before Gitanjali. Nevertheless, he had not yet earned a place among the greatest poets of the world, for the last and dizzying height yet remained to be usurped: the epic grandeur, the cosmic vision, the rugged austerity, the searing intensity of the sublime—the heights usurped for all time by a Dante, by a Shakespeare."

The English translation of Gitanjali, which was published in 1912 took the western world by storm. W.B. Yeats, the greatest English poet of the modern era, thus describes the impact made by the Gitanjali:

by these poems on his sensitive mind:

I have carried the manuscript of these translations about with me for days, reading it in railway trains, or on the top of omnibuses and in restaurants, and I have often had to close it lest some stranger would see how much it moved me. These lyrics— which are in the original, my Indians tell me, full of subtlety of rhythm, of untranslatable delicacies of colour, of metrical invention display in their thought, a world I have dreamed of all my life long.

This exquisite entry into the mysticism of *Gitanjali* leads the mind in quest of infinite possibilities of experiencing the thrilling voice of the poet who defies the transient objects of Nature to welcome and endear her poignance in affluence in human life and this is evident in manifold patterns of mystic subtleties everywhere in *Gitanjali*. As Yeats observes:

The work of a supreme culture, they yet appear as much the growth of the common soil as the grass and the rushes. A tradition, where poetry and religion are the same thing, has passed through the centuries, gathering from learned and unlearned metaphor and emotion, and carried back again to the multitude the thought of the scholar and of the noble. If the civilization of Bengal remains unbroken, if that common mind which—as one divine—runs through all, is not, as with us, broken into a dozen minds that know nothing of each other, something even of what is most subtle in these verses will have come, in a few generations to the beggar on the roads...
Yeats continues in the same strain:

...Rabindranath Tagore, like Chaucer's forerunners, writes music for his words, and one understands at every moment that he is so abundant, so spontaneous, so daring in his passion, so full of surprise, because he is doing something which has never seemed strange, unnatural, or in need of defence. These verses will not lie in little well-printed books upon ladies' tables, who turn the pages with indolent hands that may sigh over a life without meaning, which is yet all they can know of life, or be carried about by students at the university to be laid aside when the work of life begins, but as the generations pass, travellers will hum them on the highway and men rowing upon rivers. Lovers, while they await one another, shall find, in murmuring them, this love of God a magic gulf wherein their own more bitter passion may bathe and renew its youth. At every moment the heart of this poet flows outward to these without derogation or condescension, for it has known that they will understand; and it has filled itself with the circumstance of their lives. The traveller in the red-brown clothes that he wears that dust may not show upon him, the girl searching in her bed for the petals fallen from the wreath of her royal lover, the servant or the bride awaiting the master's home-coming in the empty house,
are images of the heart turning to God. Flowers and rivers, the blowing of conch shells, the heavy rain of the Indian July, or the parching heat, are images of the moods of that heart in union or in separation; and a man sitting in a boat upon a river playing upon a lute, like one of those figures full of mysterious meaning in a Chinese picture, is God Himself. A whole people, a whole civilization, immeasurably strange to us, seems to have been taken up into this imagination; and yet we are not moved because of its strangeness, but because we have met our own image, as though we had walked in Rossetti's willow wood, or heard, perhaps for the first time in literature, our voice as a dream."

The Times Literary Supplement first welcomed Gitanjali as a remarkable contribution immediately after its publication towards the end of November 1912, and Dr.Edmund Gosse was believed to have been responsible for this. Later, in reviewing

the year's literary output, it said,

"In poetry many will have found the richest of the year's sheaves to be the introduction through his own translations of the poems of the Indian mystic, Mr. Rabindranath Tagore." 12

Miss Evelyn Underhill, the authoress of *Mysticism* wrote to Mr. Rothenstein, with reference to her favourable review of *Gitanjali*.

"I felt it to be horribly inadequate, although I tried my best ... The book itself I look on as a priceless possession, and I am always turning to it." 13

Miss May Sinclair, the American novelist, writing to the New York *Evening Post* in May 1913, put Tagore higher than Shelley and Swinburne and remarked that *Gitanjali* was more melodious than Swinburne's poetry, and its message was more profound than the subjectivity, intensity and philosophic thought of Shelley. Milton, in her opinion, was too serious and solemn and


13. Ibid., p. 94.
Wordsworth often obscure and ponderous. No English lyric poet, in her view was comparable to Tagore. Ezra Pound wrote in his Poetry,

"The appearance of the poems of Rabindranath Tagore, translated by himself from Bengali into English, is an event in the history of English poetry and world poetry ... I speak with all gravity when I say that world fellowship is nearer for the visit of Rabindranath Tagore to London." 14

Prof. Eucken, the German philosopher, and himself a Nobel Prizeeman wrote to the poet.

"It is wonderful how you give from the all-embracing unity a vivid aspect of nature and human life religious as well as artistic; we have nothing in our modern literature that could compare with your songs." 15

In this chorus of praise which greeted the poet when the poems were first read out, the most significant and suggestive comment

14. Quoted by Bhattacharya, Dr. M. M. op. cit., p. 94.
15. Ibid., p. 94.
was made by the distinguished Shakespearian critic A.C. Bradley, who said,

"It looks as though we have a major poet amongst us again." 16

Truly Tagore's lyrics are universal in their appeal. They reveal emotions and feelings which are true to all ages and climates. Dr. Radhakrishnan rightly remarks,

"When our lords and leaders pass into oblivion, Tagore will continue to enchant us by his music and poetry; for though he is an Indian, the value of his work lies not in any tribal or national characteristics, but in those elements of universality which appeal to the whole world. He has added to the sweetness of life, to the stature of civilization." 17

S.B. Mukherjee similarly, commenting on the universality of appeal in _Sitanjali_, writes.

"Tagore's poetry, in its integrity, its totality of multitudinous facets, is a vast philosophical poem - a poem of felt thoughts communing with eternal realities 'emotionally intensified and made accessible to sensibility' with poetic immediacy, and bursting into 'the colours, music imaginative life and passion of poetry.' Its grand unity is the unity of a poet's vision of the universe: a vision actualised and made real in poetry which is often 'the poetic essence' itself, and in dramatic myths where the essence seeks incarnation."18

Thus one can see from the comments outlined above, that Rabindranath Tagore is definitely a poet par excellence. He himself said that he was a poet and nothing else. Even his short stories, novels, essays and speeches abound in poetry, and therefore there is no exaggeration in calling him a pure poet. He said,

"My religion essentially is a poet's religion. Its touch comes to me through the same unseen and trackless channels as does the inspiration of my music. My religious life has followed the same mysterious line of growth as has my poetical life."19

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Tagore had, in fact, taken liberty with the originals of Gitanjali and instead of attempting a literal translation rewrote or recreated them in English. In his own inimitable style he endeavoured his best to create something of the subtle sensibility and music of the original in his transcreations. His translated work is a new creation in itself, existing separately in its own right. In fact, all his English translations enjoy a privileged place in Indo-English literature and are remarkable for their lyrical quality and the expression of the poet's vision which ultimately made him a "world poet". Ezra Pound, C.F. Andrews, Hart Crane and W.B. Yeats were greatly influenced by him. Stopford Brooke read Tagore's lyrics:

"with more than admiration; with gratitude for their spiritual help, and for the joy they bring and confirm, and for the love of beauty which they deepen ..." 20.

II

Tagore enjoys such an abiding place in the temple of poetic fame by virtue of the following qualities:

i) Originality and Variety of Themes: Tagore was the most versatile poet of his time. His vast poetic output is characterised by a variety of themes and originality both in thought and expression. Sitanjali, the greatest contribution of Tagore to Indian poetry, is mainly a collection of lyrics of devotion in the great Indian tradition and the themes vary from his love of nature, love of humanity and the world to his love of the motherland. The Crescent Moon is based on the theme of the glorification of childhood, and in this respect Tagore is very much akin to the English romantics—Blake and Wordsworth. Dr. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar says,

"Like Wordsworth, like Walter de la Mare, Tagore too found in children a mystic quality. He found in them beauty, innocence, humour, charity and a kind of ancient wisdom—and these Tagore celebrated in song."21

The Gardener is the richest collection of love-lyrics in Indo-English poetry. Stray Birds is a collection of gem-like thoughts or musings. Fruit-Gathering, Lover's Gift, Crossing and The Fugitive have much in common with Gitanjali in thought and expression. In fact, in his two thousand odd songs he wrote on God, devotion, love, nature, childhood, motherland, beauty, truth, humanity, social evils, spiritualism, etc. His originality lies in creating a synthesis between modern European thought and traditional Indian philosophy.

ii) Mysticism and Romanticism: Although Tagore reminds us of Blake, Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats as a romanticist, yet his romanticism has a typical mystical flavour. S.B. Mukherjee aptly writes,

"For the romantic elements in his poetry his true inspiration stemmed not from any of the great Romantics of the West but from the multiform streams of Upanishadic and Vaishnavic thought of his own country." 22

His early poetry is characterised by dreams and yearnings, morbidity and sentimental effusions for the divine, which are

romantic in nature. Tagore's best work *Gitanjali* is a superb blend of mysticism and romanticism. His romanticism finds expression in his feeling of awe and wonder, love of God and nature, the glorification of childhood, condemnation of materialism, love of simplicity, intensity of feeling and emotion, and highly suggestive and picturesque imagery. In fact, his romanticism is closely related with his inherent mysticism. Mysticism, is basically an attitude of the mind, the essence of which lies in seeing the one Inseparable in the separate. The mighty world of "eye and ear" delights the poet with mystic joy and he endeavours to search the presence which lies behind the visible objects of nature and human life. To him God is no remote Absolute. He embodies Truth, Awareness and Bliss and the entire universe is a joyous expression of His play. In order to realise the Divine man should cultivate a close contact with nature and should rise above self-love and worldly attachments. *Gitanjali* and the poems following *Gitanjali* are a record of the finest expression of the poet's experience and have a place in the mystic literature of the world.
iii) Love of Nature: Tagore was also a poet of Nature. But his attitude towards Nature is purely mystical. The various objects of Nature as flowers, trees, honeybees, thorns, clouds, the dark night, the song of the birds, the filling of the pitcher at the fountain, the sounds and scents of nature fascinate the poet and intoxicate him with boundless joy. To Tagore Nature is alive and is animated by a soul which exists in all things. In fact, Nature is the manifestation of God. The whole universe is permeated by this one life, this one soul. Nature to Tagore is the poetic impersonation of an actual being, endowed with a personality and the objects and phenomena of Nature are endowed with human attributes. Most of the images in Tagore’s poetry are derived from Nature, thereby symbolising the yearning of the human soul to merge with the supreme.

iv) Humanism: The poems of Tagore are suffused with humanism. He is the champion of the suffering humanity and therefore vehemently condemns all religious rituals and fanaticism which divide man from man. The poet, in fact, rebelled against the orthodoxies surrounding him and traced India’s fall to the clash of castes and creeds. According to him man is the image of God.
There is nothing untouchable in the great body of God. the world of men. Dr. Radhakrishnan rightly remarks:

"Human relationships are the mainspring of spiritual life. God is not a sultan in the sky but is in all, through all ... We worship Him in all the true objects of our worship, love Him whenever our love is true. In the woman who is good, we feel Him, in the man who is true we know Him. Tagore's Hibbert Lectures on the Religion of Man ask us to realize the Supreme in the heart of us all."23

v) Lyricism: Tagore is primarily and pre-eminently a lyric poet. He wrote the largest number of lyrics ever attempted by any poet. The cardinal characteristic of Tagore's lyrics is their song-like quality. They are meditative and reflective, and are remarkable for their spiritual character. Edward Thompson says that,

"Tagore is essentially a lyricist and the beauty of his religious lyrics is adequately presented by the English Gitanjali - and that will stir men as long as the English language is read."24

Tagore composed lyrics on God, love, nature, children, love of the world and humanity. No other poet composed lyrics on such a vast variety of themes. His English lyrics are mainly prose poems in which he uses musical language and incantatory rhythm.

C. Paul Verghese writes:

"His greatest contribution is the importation of an incantatory rhythmic prose which he almost perfected as a medium for the rendering of his own poetry into English by which, though not consciously and deliberately, he demonstrated that the English language could be a suitable vehicle of Indian sentiment, thought and imagery."

vi) Diction, Style and Imagery: Rabindranath Tagore had a great command over English and he artistically used it for expressing his spiritual vision and deep mystical feelings in Gitanjali and other verse translations of his own Bengali poems.

Nirad C. Chaudhuri writes about his use of English:

"In his English writings he is not the Bengali poet in flesh and blood, but another personality in fancy dress with a mask on his face. For one thing, when he rendered his Bengali poems himself he selected for translation all that was most general and least concrete in his writings and those in which the Bengali element was not so dominant as to offer an obstacle to Western appreciation. Furthermore, partly through intention and partly through the limitations of his writing of English, he presented his Bengali poems in a kind of English which in its self-conscious simplicity of diction and syntax went very near preciosity."


Tagore's language is simple and is close to the everyday language of man. Simplicity and sublimity run together in his poetry. His poetic style is marked by felicity of expression, classical simplicity and austerity. C. Paul Verghese writes,

"His lyrics are noted for their simplicity and directness of expression. The poet's sincerity of feeling and vividness of imagery combine with the rhythmic flow of words and give the reader or the hearer the impression that the poet's mystic yearning is harmoniously fused with deep human passion and significance." 27

vii) Music: Tagore's lyrics in Gitanjali and other works have a music of their own. The repeated use of words with a vowel sound contributes to the music of his lyrics. The use of alliteration, onomatopoeia and liquid consonants enhances the musical effect of his poetry:

Away from the sight of thy face my heart knows no rest nor respite, and my work becomes an endless toil in a shoreless sea of toil.

... ... ... ...

Today the summer has come at my window with its signs and murmurs; and the bees plying their minstrelly at the court of the flowering grove. 28


Tagore uses "a fluent, measured, well modulated diction. He writes a chantable prose, the rhythm of which Ezra Pound refers to as a 'subtle underflow'." 29

Rameshwar Gupta writes,

"Words came to him singing and dancing and he wove them into a hundred bewitching tunes, a hundred rhythmic patterns... He even succeeded in catching the ears of the English readers by creating a unique kind of rhythm in the poetic prose of the English Gitanjali and other poetical works. Only Whitman had done so before him." 30

viii) Versification: Tagore tirelessly experimented in verse forms in Gitanjali, The Crescent Moon, The Gardener, etc and in the employment of prose-poems. Tagore writes,

"There is a weight and restraint in the language of poetry. That is what is called metre. Prose is not squeamish. It goes about everywhere with his head erect." 31

He compares the movement of a prose poem to the steps of a young woman, controlled by the natural desire for balance. He further writes,

"I can say this much that I have written a number of prose poems, the subject matter of which could not be expressed in any other than in that form. There is an easy everyday manner about them. Perhaps they do not have the usual trappings of poetry; they nevertheless have their beauty. For this reason I consider them as rightfully belonging to the family of poetry. It may be asked: What is a prose poem? I will say: I don't know what it is, nor how it is formed. I know this much — that it has beauty which cannot be demonstrated by argument."

32. Ibid., p. 48.

Tagore believed:

"in verse libre as a means for the international exchange of poetry because 'rhythmic prose is more generously hospitable to ideas of all complexions and characters'. That Tagore wrote some Bengali prose poems is additional proof of his faith in verse-libre."

33. Ibid., p. 48.
C. Paul Verghese still further adds to what Tagore has said:

"The essence of free verse consists in the heightened moment of poetic expression forging out a music of its own—not the music associated with verse forms based on the rhythm of metrical feet, but cadence which was bound to no counted syllables or even lines that rose and fell with the emotions and the flow of words. Free verse in other words is an attempt at aesthetic organization."34

T.S. Eliot says that great poetry "expresses in perfect language permanent human impulses" and thus it brings strange consolation to the human heart. *Gitanjali* fulfils Eliot's definition of poetry, as it is an expression of permanent and abiding human impulses.

34. Ibid., p. 48.
Rabindranath Tagore’s translation of a Hindu Song perhaps sums up, as well as they can be summed up, the most beautiful thoughts in his poems. At any rate it contains his longing and love for God, and his abandonment of worship. The radiant influence of these thoughts seen in his strength and courage, the detachment which shields his mind from evil, the invincible unshattering faith and unquenchable joy amidst troubles, is apparent in almost all his poems, so one cannot do better than close on this note:

I had travelled all day and was tired, then I bowed my head towards Thy kindly court still far away. The night deepened, a longing burnt in my heart; whatever the words I sang, pain cried through them, for even my songs thirsted, O my lover, my Beloved, my best in all the world! Ah, Who is this whose arms enfold me? Whatever I have to leave let me leave, and whatever I have to bear let me bear. Only let me walk with Thee, O my lover, my Beloved, my best in all thy world!

(The Fugitive, Part III, 'Hindu Songs').

Mysticism thus is essentially life—the more finely the soul is attuned, the better the vision it commands. This truth has been
recognised by Dante in The Divine Comedy:

O well-created spirit, who in the rays
Of life eternal do'st the sweetness taste
Which being untasted ne'er is comprehended.

(Paradiso, Canto III).

The discussion in the previous chapters has illustrated that one has to guard himself against certain ambiguities that have gathered round the term mysticism. The word mysticism stands for intuitive experience of direct union with the Supreme Being here and now. This direct union in the case of Taqore may be understood in the sense of identity-in-difference. The Soul's separation from and reunion with the Supreme person go hand in hand. In the state of union with the Supreme Being, the individual is not altogether merged in the Supreme, but he preserves his purified individuality. The relationship between the finite and the infinite is one of interdependence. The influence of Vaishnavism, in Taqore, is more prominent than any other influence. I have already pointed out that his mysticism is a subtle combination of the Vaishnava concept of personal supreme Being with the Upanishadic concept of divine immanence.
In such an appreciation of Tagore's poetry, it has been pointed out that Tagore, the poet of Sonar Tori, Chitra, Naivedya and Kheva, is also the poet of Gitanjali, The Crescent Moon, Fruit-Gathering and Stray Birds. The same poet of Nature, who once sang the songs of human love and life, is now singing the songs of divine love. The idea that I want to convey is that Tagore has a comprehensive view of life and his poetic inspiration draws its sustenance from the love of humanity which is not opposed to the love of God. Accordingly, the chapters of this thesis had been chronologically planned so that they may have a systematic, and even concentrated, study of the poet's gradual development with regard to the topic studied. The chapter division of the thesis had been as follows:

In the first chapter, I have studied the concept of mysticism, the various stages in the development of the mystic, mysticism in relation to the other forms of experience and it terminates with the functions and significance of mysticism.

In the second chapter, I have highlighted the influences on the mind of Tagore in his ultimate conception of God. I have
evaluated his position in respect of the various religious movements during his time, along with the events in the growth of his poetic career by giving details about the origin of his interest in mysticism.

In the third chapter, I have discussed some of the early poems of Tagore to show how each poem has the spark which is beginning to illuminate in Kheya and Naivedya, with mystic-ideas. The theme of these poems progresses through an arrangement of ideas based primarily on Man, Nature and God, as a mystical-pattern.

In chapter four, I have dwelt elaborately upon the mystical ideas in Gitanjali, to show how each poem is pregnant with the mystical thoughts of the Upanishads, wherein Reality is one integrated whole inspite of its varied manifestations.

In the fifth chapter, I have focussed my attention upon the later poems that reveal on a major scale the concepts of transcendence and the immanence of God. I also attempt to give the scattered mystic ideas a kind of structural design.
In the sixth chapter, I have drawn the conclusion that the vitality and dynamism of the poems and the poet derives from the basic pattern of mystic growth and development right from the beginning to the end. The poet first had a glimpse of God in the beauty of Nature. Then arose the yearning to apprehend Him and be united with Him. But the dark night of the soul intervened. The pain of separation became intolerable. But, this separation was felt as much by the Lord as by the poet. In that pain the King of Kings and the beggar asking for love became one, became equals. That equality brought the Lord to the beggar’s doorsteps. And then the beggar realised that God was as much in need of his love as he of God’s. That realisation paved the way for the inseparable union.

Thus, if the earth today is in the grip of chaos and confusion, if the distressed outlook of the human race and its fear of ever-imminent wars are assuming larger proportions and eating into the vitals of the human civilisation itself, it is because we fail to realise the profound universal message conveyed by the Indian mystics. The message of Tagore, that man’s divine destiny lies in the realisation of the Infinite within and its ultimate
expression, is to be imbibed at the physical level, at the mental level and at the spiritual level, in order to bring forth the human values of Truth, Righteousness, Love, Peace and Non-Violence.