CHAPTER – V

CONCLUSION

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A. The Conclusion of the Previous Chapters

Rabindranath Tagore, the greatest figure of the Indian Renaissance has conferred the golden luster for his genius through his poems, dramas, short stories, essays, songs paintings etc. “The pen of Rabindranath is, as it were, the legendary golden magic stick touched by which the asleep captive princess wakes up with all the sensibility and sensitiveness of life from the dark realm of asleep. She is then no longer a senseless, inanimate thing but a living being, as animated as the glowing sun. In like manner, whatever thing or matter is touched by his magical pen, it is immediately transformed into a living thing which glows with intense light and beauty and makes its appearance before our mind’s eye in a fascinating form, leaving an ineffaceably enduring impression upon the mind of the reader.” (Dasgupta 1948: 10–11) His teaching with his faith in the redeeming power of spiritual forces as builder of perfect human society on the earth has greatest value at the present time when the whole world is passing through the panic of a ruinous world war that can even erase the name of human being from this earth. His pursuit is the pure suit of a single-minded, screen devotee offering prayer for human salvation in the midst of atrocious human passions in the world. His patriotism, humanism and prophetic vision are harmoniously inter-blended which have significant message for the whole mankind. That is why, we can say that “Tagore himself belongs to the Ages, securely ensconced in the ranks of the Immortals.” (Nair 1961: 36)

The conception of man in Tagore’s philosophy is total. He has given a concept of moral, spiritual and social man. He believes in the dignity of man above everything who combines in himself Truth, Beauty and Goodness. Being a man of the present era he has studied man in his social, political, cultural, and economical background. Man is individual as well as a social being. Keeping individual difference man should merge in the universal society of man. But the eternal individual in man is not to be subjected to state or society. Communist social order tries to destruct individuality for bringing equality in society. “But Tagore is not a communist in that sense, as for him, ‘Eternal individual’ in man is that which protests against
inequalities and injustice of the society.” (Basak 1991 : 176) Hence, individuality in man should be preserved. But when individual man, due to false ego tries to destruct individuality in all others, that too is not desired, according to the poet. For him, progress of man as well as society means, paving the road for ‘eternal individual and perfect man in human beings to his journey towards eternity and perfection. Perfect adjustment of social and individual man is his aim. This aspect of his humanism is that which separates him from ancient Indian humanists. Whereas they talked for preservation of individuality in man, Tagore does not neglect human society and hence describes man as social in nature. The central message of Tagore’s philosophy is the attainment of fulness, which according to him is the height aim of life. He wants to get the man of his heart who is the man of hearts of all men. Thus, Tagore’s man is far above all narrowness of caste and creed, and also above particularity of nation and race. He has immense faith in man. He believes in greatness and goodness of man, which, according to him, is the positive element in man. He believes that the direction of human is from evil to good, as in every age and at every place, man values most his ideal of goodness.

Tagore is great humanist who associates humanity to God and speaks of divine nature of man. For him, it is not by merely attributing humanity that we realise God by realising humanity we reach God. “Tagore’s humanism is thus the result of a sustained quest for a suitable form of religious expression. He comes to the end of his journey by humanizing God and finding for him a seat among the poor and low and the lost. Man becomes the object of love and service not in his own right only, but as the manifestation of God where He is closest to man.” (Banerjee 1968 : 46) He has never forgotten the demands of man’s earthly existence when he has talked about man’s spirituality and divinity. As he does not consider the world as an inn where man lives only for a short time and reaching a transcendental world is his aim, he wants to set up the kingdom of God on this earth and man to become perfect in this worldly existence. As he has a total view of life which combines spirit and matter in itself he never neglects the suffering of common people as illusion, nor has conceived a materialistic view of life. Removal of social and political injustice and suffering, proper education of man and establishment of universal peace and unity of mankind, are the aim of Tagore’s social philosophy. “In Rabindranath’s estimation there is a special corner reserved in God’s bosom for the poor and lowly, for the
common humble folk. The man who is inflated with the pride of possession can not
reach God." (Dutt 1979 : 32) For him, the meaning and nobility of human existence
consists in serving the society selflessly. None of the social evils has been
overlooked by him. He has worked out a scheme of education for him Viswabharati
which aims at removing all baseness in man's nature and making man really wise
and perfect. We see, Tagore wants both man the knower and the man maker.
Therefore, he wants to render man an intellectual as well as artistic and aesthetic
education. In the field of politics we see, he is against all political subjection and
suppression of man that insults humanity in man. As a citizen of the world he
considers all people of the world as his own kith and kin. He is truly a grand sentinel
of the entire human world. Though he speaks as an Indian, his message is
recognised in every corner of the world which proves the challenging quality of his
humanity. It is possible because he has a broad mind and he has never believed in
any popular 'ism' or has tried to introduce any such 'ism' by himself. For him, the
future urge is the urge of man, it is the striving of the new age to develop in the mind
the faculty of universality. Thus his pure feeling devoid of any prejudice has made his
social philosophy progressive one.

Tagore's method of God's realization or attaining salvation is also humanistic.
He wants to worship God by his own creation. "Tagore declares that God finds
himself only by gazing into human eyes and receiving only by gazing into human
eyes and receiving the touch of human hands." (Narvare 1967 : 124) He considers
that to express oneself in newer forms and in new creations is man's nature and man
can best be united with God and with God and with other people through his creation
which has universal approach. Another method for God's realization according to
him is through love for humanity in which God is expressed. For him, realization of
man's true nature is the realization of God. Hence the process of God's realization is
a process of approaching the Infinite self which is expressed in one's love, action
and works of creation through surpassing the finite self.

Tagore's method of religious synthesis is new and unique He preaches not
any institutional religion but universal religion of man which aims at achieving ideals
of perfection. It is a revolt against traditionalism. "To Tagore, every human
experience and realization, in whatever part of the world it might have been attained,
was for the whole of man. His vision, steeped in universal humanism, never suffered from the myopic malaise of narrow nationalism." (Tagore 1961: 11) Tagore believes that human mind can not be satisfied by more repeating what his ancestors did, but he wants to unveil his self in newer form and direction, creates new values to add newer meaning and purpose to life. Thus, religion is an endless process of self-transcendence. For him, man who is great and infinite, craves for 'Bhuma' i.e. great, which is inherent in his nature. And therefore, according to him, every civilization, every history expresses the story of man's self-revealment. He speaks neither for exclusive meditation nor remote asceticism but for religion applied to one's social life. Being dynamic in nature it accepts change in the form of religion and change in the moral values with the change of condition of our life. His religion leads him to internationalism and his deep and continuous attempt to reconcile the East and the West. His religion is at a time based on ideals and reality which has no obscurity of creeds and dogmas. He never searches temples, images or symbols for the Divine except man. Whenever he has called for God man has responded to it. An in his religion he insists on attaining man’s perfection and self-realization, it can attract the minds of all people of all religious sects and his endeavour for synthesizing all religions has become successful. Thus, we see, being a twentieth century poet and seer, he is above all a humanist. He preaches the perfection of life attainable through the purity of our personal and interpersonal relationship in human society.

Tagore has been brought up in a Brahma environment. The intellectual and spiritual genius of Raja Rammohan Roy has founded a universal religion which synthesizes all religions. Being a humanist, Tagore wants to set free man from all his narrowness and prejudices and preaches, man internationalism and universal brotherhood. "Let the poet come to the rescue of the oppressed and fight the tyranny with his pen mightier than sword." (Sen 1990: 27) Whereas Rammohan Roy mainly has worked for removing social evils but Tagore has worked for removing evils in all fields of our life. Again, whereas Rammohan Roy wants to synthesis all religions through Brahmo dharma, Tagore’s universalism drives him far away from institutional religion. His religion of man can synthesize all religions in best way as it is not any particular religion, nor opposed to the truths of any existing religion.
Tagore's humanistic philosophy to the modern world is its high concept of man, concept of ideal society, ideal of universal unity and universal religion. In this age of humanism we understand that concept of man is at the centre of all things. We cannot make out the nature of things and their capacity to meet human needs unless we have a proper knowledge of man's nature and his cravings. Without first of all acquiring an insight into what man is, we cannot make a proper assessment of the environment of man and cannot fulfil man's demands. Tagore's concept of man provides us with the real knowledge of man who is finite-infinite, biological and spiritual in nature. "The supreme reality resides both inside and outside man and God is not only the Infinite of which our soul is a particle but he is even in our desire to realize Him....." (Bose 1976: 20) The whole philosophy of him is man-centred. His concept of man makes us conscious of our greatness, makes us aware of our potentialities and gives us strength to unfold these possibilities and reveal our true nature. In this age of industrialization he reminds us that man should not be used as a means to realise some material purpose or as a mechanical force, which has often been done in the Eastern and Western countries. In this age of extreme individualization Tagore's message of universalism makes us aware of the inherent unity between man and man, man and nature, and man and the Absolute. This feeling of unity of oneself with the universe and God only can remove selfishness from man's nature.

We find from the very beginning Indian philosophers talked about importance of society and man's social life with talking about preservation of individual dignity, whereas state or nation i.e. political organisation is the basis of Eastern civilization. In India, in medieval age, society dominated man and instead of working for the growth of human personality and welfare of mankind it crushed man's free spirit under the force of superstitions and narrow social laws. As a revolt to this in the nineteenth century social reformers have come to remove all social evils from society. Among these social reformer Rabindranath Tagore is the most important personality. "He was all the time feeling for the common man to rise above his subhuman level. He grew angry at rampant nationalism cloaking itself as patriotism and nursing chauvinism of every kind leading up to an eternal conflict." (Chandrasekharan 1972: 35) We must realize spiritual unity with the whole mankind that can be attained by mutual co-operation, love and fellow feeling.
The social philosophy of Tagore shows that he presents the picture of ideal form of society. Inspired by his humanistic feeling he has dreamt of ascent of such individual beings in the earth in whom all inherent qualities are completely developed who have acquired perfect knowledge, who express themselves in aesthetic creations, and who, realizing their unity with the whole world, love and act for mankind. "With the best that in India, he is also a poet of Man — a poet of the world, with his message of universal humanism." (Mujumdar 1993: 13) For the ascent of such individuals who will be the ideal perfection there is the need of ideal society which creates the necessary atmosphere for that. An ideal society is that which provides the scope for the fulfilment of one's material as well as spiritual needs. It will be based on individual dignity and freedom of man. Democracy, socialism and secularism will be its main principles. Today we see, in every corner of the world people cry for getting equal rights in the political field and getting freedom in economical, social and religious field. We see, Tagore too has accepted equal rights of man in every field. "He was a great torch-bearer, whose business it was to illuminate of the future path of the unfortunate and weary nations of the world. To them all he showed through the burning experiences of his own intuition the true heritage of mankind for the salvation of humanity." (Paul 1963: 30) In such a society every one will be well-fed and well-clad though may not be rich; there will be no capitalist system of economy and all will be paid according to his labour. In that society people may possess private property but their money will be used for the good of the whole society. That society will be free from all social evils found in Indian society like untouchability, caste distinction, parda of women, class-distinctions based on economic inequalities etc. There will be no suppression of man by powerful personal, national and so-called religious force. In that society nobody will be considered as untouchable or low; all will be provided with proper education and will be able to develop their personal abilities in fields of arts, aesthetic, literature, science and commerce. Today we feel the need of upbringing the economically and culturally down-trodden and otherwise backward class, we feel the need of giving equal rights to women to share with men in all fields. Every where in the world the need of forming the classless, casteless society is felt by the men of the twentieth century. Tagore's social philosophy can properly guide us in formation of such society. The ideal of educating a man according to Tagore is the fullest
development of one's personality. If we follow his method in educational field, we will be able to get better citizens. The present social unrest will be an end if people adopt right attitude to life with the poet, who, with his spiritual vision has lifted the social problem on a higher idealist plane. We can solve all social problems in an ideal society if we try to look at them from both real and ideal point of view.

In the field of international relation, his message of unity and educational and cultural intercourse between different countries can make a happy world. In this age we talk about world brotherhood, cosmopolitanism and international citizenship. Today we understand the evils of wars and in every corner of the world man's sense of good is working which wants peace and international brotherhood. Tagore's ideal of human unity, universal peace and internationalism should be the ideal of all races of all countries. "He is of us and has felt our passions and appetites, he has known the love of man and woman, sons and daughters and small children. He has experienced the trouble it takes to make a poet out of a man and a man out of a poet." (Rhys 1915 : 161) This can fulfil our dream of establishing peace in this earth.

The religion of the present age is not of casting our souls in nothingness or in void. It is an idea of completeness, nor of negation. It is a way of life, a dynamic force that seeks to uplift mankind. In modern age when the whole world has become our home and people come in contact of one another owing to political, economical, cultural and social cause, our need is universal religion of man. Now, with our vast knowledge about the universe around us, we find, no more the old form of religion can satisfy us. With the scientific inventions life has become materialistic and mechanical for us, and in such order of existence we need new standard of behaviour, new ideals and laws of morality which can not be supplied by old religions. Now we need a religion which believes not in any transcendental reality but in self-transcendence of man. In the present age what we need is a spiritual religion that will be able to unveil human personalities adding new meaning to one's life and produce a world harmony. Tagore's 'Religion of Man' can truly fulfil the need of modern man which has all above-mentioned qualities for a true religion of twentieth century. "Tagore had a passionate love for humanity. This love urged him to the intensive work for mankind which he devoted so much of his time and his strength, the work for the uplift of the poor and the down-trodden, for the education of youth,
for the reconciliation of nations and a better mutual understanding of different races."
(Estborn 1949 : 180)

Tagore is a philosopher of man and for man, about whom we can say with Dr.
S. Radhakrishnan, "he was one of those rare man about whom it may be said
without exaggeration that neither his own generation nor another will look upon like
him again. He was one of the few representative of the universal man to whom the
future of the world belongs." (Radhakrishnan 1961 : XII) The poet and seer will be
remembered as a humanist who himself has said –

It is needless to ask of a saint the caste to which he belongs;
For the priest, the warrior, the trademan and all the thirty six castes,
alike are seeking for God.
It is but folly to ask what the caste of a saint may be;
The barber has sought God, the washer-woman and the carpenter –
Even Raidas was a seeker after God
The Rishi Swapacha was a tanner by caste.
Hindu and Moslems alike have achieved that End where remains no mark of
distinction (Tagore 1994 : 499)

Rabindranath Tagore was essentially a poet but he was a poet of versatile
genius. The amazing vitality of his genius could not remain confined merely to
literary works nor could it exhaust his energies. He was able to sip nectar from
inexhaustible source of joy that pervades the entire world. This helped him to
overcome serve sorrow, pain and pangs of his life. Hence he made notable
contributions to religious and educational thoughts, the moral regeneration and
economic reconstruction, to politics and social reforms. "In the innumerable sources
of joy that fill the universe, Tagore was able to taste amrita. He had absorbed this
constant stream of joy into his being and this gave him the strength to overcome the
conflicts, blows and sorrows of life." (Sen 2000 : 5) Above all he was a deep thinker
on race-relations and collaborator of a new age in human relationship. In a world, his
interests embraced every subject which is of interest for man. His achievements in
these fields are so great that they mark him out as one of the makers of modern
India. He held in him more than renaissance, curiosity and creativity. He was an
institution in himself.
Tagore as a political philosopher refused to be a tool of any political school. He did not formulate political ideas by design. His political philosophy like everything else stemmed from his love of humanity, his concept of unity and truth, his belief in the power of the soul, his emphasis on social efforts and initiatives as distinct from the external stimulus of the state of machinery and his firm insistence on national self-confidence and self-respect, his ideas of completeness of life, universalism, harmony and cooperation, there are hardly any pressing problems in the life of India and humanity of which the poet has not given definite and farseeing solution. His analysis of certain phases of our national struggle started in many minds a process of rethinking. His political writings bear testimony to his deep penetration and rare capacity for original thinking and show remarkable acumen for that kind of political thinking that endures. He proclaimed in unequivocal terms that respect and freedom are not to be begged but to be achieved. Therefore, he criticized the Indian politicians both Extremists and Moderates who directed all their energies either to propitiate and get crumbs from the political masters or defeat them by agitation and boycott rather than raise people from the position of degradation and poverty through education and service. “Robindranath was the singer and prophet of the new nationalism. He was the maker of its sacraments. The wonderful songs of freedom flowed from his pen one after another to intensify the new found patriotism of the Bengalee, to nerve him for the struggle in which he would be inevitably involved in seeking and ensuring his new freedom.” (Paul 1963 : 109) In order to raise the people morally and materially, he did some pioneer work in education and rural reconstruction.

Tagore’s whole political philosophy in the context of Indian situation may be summed up under the following simple proposition. In the first place, the people must devote all their energies in constructive works in place of partitioning and begging, for he considered this state of attitude as the eternal rag picker at other people’s dustbins. He taught us the boon of self respect. Thus “he was a true patriot and the sorrow and sympathy for his down-trodden country filled him with such subtle pangs of which the ordinary patriot, who is only busy with the solution of bread and butter problem, would have hardly any notion. His faith in God as he understood Him and his devotion to humanity and the great and noble traditions of the culture of his own country gave a holy elegance to his thoughts which is seldom to be witnessed
elsewhere." (Dasgupta 1948 : 111) He exhorted us to know ourselves, to develop and depend on our strength, to raise against tyranny and oppression, to laugh against demagogues, to love humanity and to be interested in the world. Secondly, he wanted to make society supreme, for society has been the dominating institution in our social history. He sought social cooperation and harmony. Thirdly, he advised the people to inculcate moral powers within us. He believed that he Britishers could only respect us when we were strong and that the weak must suffer at the hand of the powerful.

The poet was not content with philosophical discussion of the problem of man and the world, rather he was a conscious philosopher, a man of intellect and vision. His deep study and deeper love for his country gave him a rare insight into its history. He discovered India as few Indian did. It was India of the Ages that was reborn in Rabindranath Tagore, found her voice in his and spoke through him. Thus "as a man Tagore’s patriotism was as deep and abiding of anyone who trod this land. His nationalism is imbued with lofty idealism." (Das Gupta 1961 : 36) The goal of India is realising unit in diversity, creating one out of many not by destroying the many but grasping the supreme truth in them. Through out he preached for humanity and unity. The evil of modern age received the poet’s attention and he carefully and skilfully analysed the root causes of these evils and suggested measures for removing them.

The poet has a spirit of conception of man’s personality. The world of beauty, goodness and truth is described by him as the world of personality. Again, the world of personality is founded on love. It is the principle of unity. The recognition of the principle of love as the centre of spiritual life can be made concrete through love’s service in the human world. To Tagore, the service of man, prompted by love, is the vital truth. Therefore, he wanted the finite soul to be wedded with eternal love. The finite self has, therefore, to realize it own soulhood of personality and know everything valuable in the life for our power, our wisdom and our love and to realise the infinite. The realization of self will lead mankind from untruth to truth, darkness to light, mortality to immortality. Hence, "his polities are concerned more with character building than the mere vocal manifestation of that crowded department of national activity." (Prakasanathan 1981 : 48) To Tagore, love is the cord of individual, social,
national and international binding. Any attempt to seek false harmony through balance of power is doomed to failure. The strong only think of the strong and ignore the weak and herein lies the peril of losing harmony. The accumulation of more and more power by the greater powers is merely tempting them to suicide and encouraging themselves to accept the challenge of the disarmed.

Tagore was not a historian in the academic sense of the term, but he tried to bring out the main trends of Indian history. The main thesis of Tagore was that the task of civilization was to resolve the conflict that appeared on the scene at the various stages of history. The synthetic approach of these is the basis of great civilization. When the people fail to synthesis the differences, the contrary and contradictory forces force them to go down. The civilization of a particular country in the absence of the vitalizing forces and synthesis and harmony hardens itself and meets its doom in the barren cage of inert construction. His interpretation of the history of India is the history of unity in diversity. He warned the people against imitating the western civilization with its soulless materialistic civilization. "From this Tagore draws a warning that is now fairly familiar: how the worship of Machine the hypnosis with technique is likely to affect the human whole and keep it tied to the law of the dead and the inert, if not worse. Modern man has traded his humanity for an impersonal science, a strange barter indeed." (Ghose 1996 : 36) But the poet stood for cultural synthesis. He wanted the evolution of a cosmopolitan humanist culture. Therefore he wanted the meeting of the East and the West to fulfillment. But there would be no rational foundation for the whole scale incorporation of the terrific economic competitive craze that had reduced the West almost to a bloody scene of race conflict and concluded that the essence of Indian history is a cultural and racial unity forced out of diversity by the synthetic genius of India.

He criticized the present structure of the caste system. It is a dull mechanical soulless system which crushes individual "The Hindu society is plagued by the scourge of untouchability. Birth determines the place of a Hindu in the caste hierarchy. Besides the four Varnas, those who are beyond their pale are treated worse than animal. Their shadow even pollutes the upper caste people. Their pitiable position in the society is beyond description." (Saha 2001 : 67) It breeds conservatism, inaction, suppresses the spirit of dynamism and initiative. Therefore
he preached against hereditary rights and pleaded that equal opportunities for education should be given to the lowest sections. And here lies the real development of India. In the name of social stratifications the underdogs of the society were subject to perpetual tyranny. Hence he pleaded for the removal of the institution of caste. Greater good can be done to man and society when all members are bound by the ties of mutual performance of duties and all are treated equal. Tagore delineates his heroines and woman character as displaying a rare assurance and psychological strength. They are also a strong pole of a nation. "In the character of Anandamoyi, Tagore has created the first modern woman whose outlook on life transcends racial, religious and national prejudices. She is ahead of the other women by a few generations, in dress, behaviour and outlook." (Sarada 1988 : 134)

Thus the whole political philosophy of Tagore was influenced by the principles of humanism. According to him, "nationalism cannot prompt a social and moral reform of the nature that is needed; rather it will only whet the popular appetite for increased political warfare." (Dalton 1982 : 195) At the same time he criticized dictatorial regime which crushes creative nature in man, all embracing sphere of activity of state which subjugates man's social instinct, soulless character of foreign rule what exploits aggressive nationalism which breeds imperialism and war, negative approaches to life's problems, vulgarism of man's higher nature and blind and insensate patriotism choking the springs of human civilization. In fact, there are hardly any pressing problems in the life of India and of humanity of which Rabindranath Tagore has not given definite and far seeing solutions.

Though Tagore was primarily a poet and his thoughts did not roam in the poetic world, he was a conscious philosopher, a spectator of time and existence. As a man of intellect and vision, his deep study and deeper love for his country gave him a rare insight into its history. He discovered India, as few Indians ever did. It was India of the ages that was reborn in Tagore, found her voice in him and spoke through him. The goal of India is realizing unity in diversity, creating one out of the many, not by destroying the many but grasping the supreme truth in them. Throughout he held the banner of humanism, harmony, cooperation and unity. Hence Subhas Mukhopadhyay says - "In my younger days, I used to be touched by the fervent speeches of our patriotic leaders. But it was Tagore alone who instilled
patriotism in me by giving a concrete verbal form to my abstract love of my country." (Mukhopadhyay 1999: 46 – 47)

He is a guide to humanity, a torch-bearer to us. Tagore’s voice can never be downed by the taboos of modern age and sometimes in the near or distant future the world will listen to what he said –

My heart is anguished with the fever of unrest,
with the prison of self — seeking,
with a thirst that knows no end.
Countries far and wide flaunt on their foreheads
the blood-red mark of hatred
Touch them with thy right hand,
make them one in spirit,
bring harmony into their life,
bring rhythm of beauty. (Tagore 1994: 365)

The poet wanted freedom of soul from all kinds of bondages freedom from ignorance and inertness and the people united by the bond of equality, fraternity and related by harmony and cooperation. He was the poet of man and the prophet of humanity in life and deeds. “To Rabindranath, humanity was rich and large and many sided. Therefore he felt hurt when for material gains, the personality of man got mutilated in the Western world. His mind revolted at the very idea of man being reduced to a mere machine. He was sore at heart to see the same process of repression and curtailment of human personality advocated under the name of nationalism here also.” (Chandrasekharan 1961: 121) His love for man knows no compulsion, no frontier, no negation. He is a philosopher of man and for man and he wished to be remembered as one of the vast multitude of men. Today when the world is groping in crisis, when the nations of the world are busy in national egoism, exploitation and aggressiveness, when the cold war may burst into hot war, Tagore’s message of unity, harmony, cooperation, fellowship, friendship and humanity can save the world from going back to the law of the jungle. To a world which is wild with the delirium of hatred, conflicts and greed, Tagore’s message of unity in diversity, harmony and cooperation will be heroic remedy. The world to him is the habitation of man’s spirit and not a mere reservoir of political powers. Here lies the genius of the poet and the political prophet, Rabindranath Tagore. "Of we shall not dissociate ourself from the interest of humanity. We shall work for it as a whole – we do not
recognise nations. We recognize the people – one and universal – the people who suffer, who struggle, who fall and rise again and who ever march forward on the rough road drenched with their sweat and blood – the people comprising all men, all equally our brothers.” (Verma 1964 : 80)

Regarding Tagore's idea of nationalism it can be said that he stressed on the formation of one world and one nation of the mankind. In this sense he was an internationalist. He had a clear and steady vision of man's destiny and unerring instinct for those first principles which if men and nations betray, they perish at the root. Thus. “Rishi Rabindranath is a believer of cooperation among nations. His internationalism is not against the rightful aspiration of a nation; on the contrary he is a convinced believer of the idea that as a man must develop his own individuality to serve society, similarly a nation must assert its individual existence and should contribute its share to the progress of humanity. As a believer of human freedom, he is champion of the cause of national freedom of all subject people.” (Das 1932 : 45)

Among the different philosophies of God, Tagore's is the most humanistic and mystic one. In the words of Alexander Aronson, “When they meet Rabindranath Tagore face to face instead of looking upon him as a man among man, they elevate him to the level of a saint and a seer. They did so unconsciously, for it was part of their efforts at adjustment. And with an almost childish eagerness, they observed Rabindranath whenever he showed himself in public.” (Aronson 1943 : 14) Its value consists in the conception of humanized God and the divinised man. When God and man, the Infinite and the finite become one, the latter realizes the eternal communion with God and a divine life on earth.

Rabindranath enjoys the mystic moods, rises to a poetic raptures and bursts into songs. "Tagore is a mystic but his mysticism is simple and beautiful, not obscure. He sees the wonder and beauty and goodness through and beyond all that he actually sees and touches and it fills him with the spirit of worship, of self consecration and aspiration.” (Baumer 1962 : 12) Most of his lyrics are born under mystic environment. In mystic moods the poet feels the presence of the Supreme reality and is seized with real joy. In joy, art takes its birth and poetry and songs overflow.
The realization of God is of the greatest value to man. Life should be God-centred and not self-centred. When man realize God he becomes a Gnostic being. "The all-dwelling love invades, submerges and overwhelms the individual consciousness. The individual body, mind and soul is given up to God." (Radhakrishnan 1961: 38) Rabindranath says, "From the blue sky on eye shall gaze upon me and summon me in silence. Nothing will be left for me, nothing whatever, and utter death shall I receive at thy feet." (Tagore 1913: 64) But this state is not death in the usual sense of the term. It is the dynamic divine life of bliss.

For Rabindranath Tagore, God is immanent in the world and human beings are real and finite forms of Him. "According to his views, the Supreme Divine Essence is the foundation of the Universe; he names it the Supreme Personality, the Supreme Reality or simply the God." (Litman 1961: 88) From these two basic premises, arises his idea of the Jivandevata. The reality of the finite beings and the infinity of God form the basic philosophy of Tagore. Jivandevata is finite as well as infinite, man and God combined in one existence. The speciality in his conception of the Jivandevata is God, and a very near and dear associate of man. Sometimes Tagore conceives of his Jivandevata as his lady love, and at some other occasions as guide of life. Jivandevata is the goddess of his life. In the history of philosophy no other thinker conceives of God in such a humanistic manner as Tagore does. "Although his mind soared to the highest heights of imagination and mystic vision, he found it impossible to live and act except among and for an intimate community of men." (Sarkar 1982: 51)

Jivandevata is the Supreme person. He has human character. Jivandevata is human as well as the transcendental Being. The uniqueness of the conception of Jivandevata lies in the fact that He exists within man and also beyond him. The poet says –

If I say that He is within me the universe is ashamed;
If I say that He is without me, it is falsehood.
He makes the inner and the outer worlds to be indivisibly one;
The conscious and the unconscious, both are His footstools.
He is neither manifest nor hidden, He is neither revealed nor unrevealed:

(Tagore 1994: 502)
Man has two selves – the higher and the lower. The lower self is one’s ego, the higher self is a portion of God. It is the divine principle in man. It is the child and companion of God. Whereas the lower self is the ego which binds man with the worldly objects and aspires for the earthly things, the higher self is above all these attachments. It is the finite as well as the infinite Reality. The lower self has nothing to do with God. When the lower self of man is controlled and guided by one’s higher self, one realizes God who “is not away from us, nor in churches, He is within us. He pervades unperceived, life and death, pleasure and pain, sin and piety, union and separation. This earth itself is His eternal temple.” (Banerjee 1961 : 57)

God dwells within us and we can have communion with Him. God manifests Himself in and through the finite beings, who have their own freedom of will and are independent. Tagore tries to purify his body and mind in order to be a proper vessel for the Infinite. Tagore says “I shall ever try to drive all evils away from my heart and keep my love in flower, knowing that thou hast thy seat in the inmost shrine of my heart.” (Tagore 1913 : 3) According to Rabindranath, evil and finiteness are intertwined together. The poet says, “Pain which is the feeling of our finiteness, is not a fixture in our life. It is not an end in itself as joy is. To meet with it is to know that it has no part in the true permanence of creation.” (Ibid : 48) Evil and suffering are not the ultimate facts of the universe but they do exist for the finite being. The finite self has to realise his own soul or personality and this is why he has to walk through the fire of pain and evil. Egoism obstructs our spiritual harmony with God and offers a great danger to our development as real personalities. Our desires limit the scope of our self-realization. “Thy desire at once puts out of the light from lamp it touches with its breath. It is unholy take not thy gifts through its unclean hands. Accept only what is offered by sacred love.” (Ibid : 5)

Love is one of the direct means for the realization of the supreme Reality. To love is to kill one’s ego. So long as the ‘I’ and the ‘mine’ are prominent in him, he does not love, ‘Aham’ or ‘ego – consciousness makes us narrow individual. “The devotee’s mind is entirely absorbed in God, he has no thought of himself, except as an offering to God as an instrument in the hands of God.” (Ayyub 1980 : 73) The lower self of man binds our soul with innumerable fetters. Only a selfless soul is
blessed with love. The relation between selfishness and love is one of opposition. It is true, or physical, material and social 'Me' gives us pleasure but not bliss. The wise man makes a distinction between the desirable and the pleasurable. Mere pleasure entangles us in the vicious circle of pleasure - pain and that is why pleasure is not desirable. Bliss or anandam is desirable and to attain it is to transcend the region of sensual pleasure and pain.

Love is the surest means to achieve God. In order to realise Him one has to spiritualise one's mind and direct it towards the higher principles of life. Tagore says, "In Gita we are advised to work disinterested abandoning all lust for the result." (Tagore 1913 : 19) He further adds, "This renunciation is not in the negation of self, but in the dedication of it." (Tagore 1931 : 182) The human being is to aspire for oneness of God. But God also requires love from the finite individuals. This idea of interdependence of God on the world and the world on God places Tagore very high among philosophers of the world.

Tagore conceives God to be the supreme person who has human characters; He is the totality of truth, beauty and goodness in their fullest perception. Thus, "Tagore's God is not metaphysical abstraction but a human, worldly reality; the God-in-Man or Man-in-God is to be perceived and experienced by the human senses, by man's inner being, not merely comprehended by knowledge and is therefore a living entity. Indeed according to him, there is no God beyond man; man can never go beyond man in all that they know and feel." (Ray 1967 : 345) The characteristics of God are related with human capacities. Truth is man's capacity for knowledge, Beauty is man's for feeling and Goodness is his capacity for action. Thus God's personality is supreme.

God is infinite in the absolute sense. We cannot limit His existence to the form of Man. God transcends not only human forms but all forms manifested in the cosmos. To conceive of the Infinite in the limited human form is evidently an unpardonable error. But Tagore advances further in putting God in the position of a friend, companion, a lover, a music maker, etc. and thereby he has completely humanized the conception of God-Who "is with us, all the time, not least when most we seem to feel His absence or failure; and we serve His, - we cannot choose but
serve Him—we make an offering to Him of successes and failures, the good in us and even the evil in us; and only that labour is not in vain that is undertaken as an offering to the Divine. God is indeed within, He is the charioteer who is guiding the human car through embattled ways of the world.” (Iyengar 1965: 103 – 104)

According to Tagore, God's footstep is heard in every aspect of the universe. He comes to us in disguise of many forms. "The all-pervading presence of God is everywhere throughout this universe. And yet God is not an abstraction. He is also a living person who appears to us as our friend and comrade as our father and sometimes as our lover." (Chakravorty 1970: 62) If there remains always a difference and duality between the finite souls and God, we do not realise the supreme condition of salvation. To our view, salvation implies divinisation of the body, life, mind and soul of an individual. Not only the soul but mind, life and body of an individual get divinised by their contact with God. The ascent of the soul brings consciousness, force and bliss from God and transmutes the individual into supreme or a divine being. If man always remains man, if he does not become a God or a supreme, salvation has not much meaning for him. Salvation of man consists in becoming superman with omniscience, omnipotence, will and immortality. It is to become a divine being and to realise eternal identity with God that implies salvation.

Tagore is a great lover of nature. Like Wordsworth he has a special fascination about nature. “To Rabindranath Nature is all-in-all. He lives, moves and has his being in nature.” (Aikat 1931: 290) He hears the sweet voice of God when the wind blows through the leaves of the trees. The blue colour of nature is blue apron of God who longs to put on. Thus in Tagore's philosophy “God, man and nature form one unity and are in the closest communion.” (Sengupta 1962: 96)

Thus it is seen that Tagore is a great mystic whose mysticism is so simple that anyone can understand him if he studies him profoundly. The main theme of his mysticism is that he has divinised man and his God is human God. “The most essential thing about his mysticism is that it has been understood as a vision and quality of being and never as the occult approach to phenomena that baffles the ordinary method of scientific investigation.” (Bose 1970: 109) Thus we can say Tagore a great pantheist instead of a mystic as he visualizes God of every corner of
the universe. "At the core of Rabindranath’s pantheism or whatever name it may more accurately deserve, lay the same sense of the sentience is nature. This fact is borne out by his effort to equate the vedantic concept of immanence with that of the Romanticist in his earliest writings." (Singh 1963 : 107 – 108)

B. Place of Rabindranath Tagore in World Literature and Indian Literature in Particular

Tagore was the central figure in the creative awakening that synchronized with what is termed as the Indian Renaissance. Not only did the Renaissance effect a remarkable change in the attitude of the Indian intelligenitia towards the problem of human existence by precipitating new critical attitude but it also ushered in an efflorescence of literatures in Indian languages by the transplantation of new literary genres from Europe. Rabindranath Tagore may be said to exemplify its climax with his extraordinary nexus of talents and gifts – as poet, playwright, philosopher, painter, composer, novelist, short story writer, educationist, cultural hero and a reconciler of indigenous and foreign traditions. Hence Mahasweta Sengupta said, "Rabindranath Tagore was a genius, his accomplishments have few parallels in the history of the world literature in terms of their range and diversity as well as their quality." (Sengupta 1990 : 192)

Rabindranath Tagore is taken as the father of Indian novels. While Krishna Kripalani and T.W. Clark opines that Bankim chandra Chatterjee was the first Indian novelist, Mulk Raj Anand strongly differs from this view and has designated Rabindranath Tagore as "the first novelist of India." (Anand 1961 : 67) Infact, it is as a celebrant and threnodist of the glory of pre-Moghul and pre-British Bengal that the chief excellence of Bankim chandra chatterjee lies and not as the creator of the modern novel, the credit for which must go to Rabindranath Tagore. Commenting on the indiscriminate adulation, set in motion by the award of the Nobel prize to Tagore, E. M. Forster observed in a review of Chitra in 1914. "He is good writer. All must assent to this minimum. But how good? To this there can be no answer until the adoration and the reaction all adoration entails, have passed away." (Forster 1936 : 363)
Tagore is an elixir, whichever thing he touches it becomes gold by the magic spell of his pen. In the field of literature he is an unchallenged champion, in the sphere of song, he is the emperor of song and in the field of painting he is a master artist. Hence 'on his eightieth birthday the Maharaja of Tripura conferred on him the title Bharat Bhaskar, 'The Sun of India'. It is a beautiful little but in one way it is not big enough for him. He loved his own country as dearly as anyone has ever done but he was a citizen of the world too, and made his friends in every corner of the globe.' (Sykes 1943: 125 – 126) In field of literature he surpasses all writers of India owing to his amazing versatile genius. It would be a great doubt whether India will ever produce such great talent or not. He is such a brilliant luminary whose intense light can never be dimmed and diminished under any circumstance.

Tagore came as a harmoniser and he strove to build a durable bridge of understanding between man and nature, man and machine, man and God. The humanistic philosophy which he preached before the people of world is unique and unparallel. The whole world would listen with rapt attention. 'He was one of the greatest humanists of our country and the world. He taught whole generations of the country to be humanist, not vaguely, but by creating, in his novels, those characters ....... ' (Raj 1983: 4) He was a Titanic force in life and literature and his example gave Indians and Asians both self-respect and self-confidence and showed them the way to self mastery and self-realisation.

The concept of nationalism that Tagore talked about is superb and excellent. None could give and speak such a concrete and broad concept which is free from narrowness, bigotry, provincialism. In the words of Hiten Mitra " ............ Tagore's nationalism rose to supra-national heights of spiritual internationalism, had a space journey round the mystic world of the Upanishadic nebula and at least burnt itself in the super-terrestrial bonfire, leaving not even the ashes of old nationalism to gravitate towards this mundane world." (Mitra 1983: 205) Thus his nationalism is free from any region or country. His nationalism is based on humanism. Whenever and wherever men are bled by oppressors, his pen became a dangerous weapon that is ever ready to annihilate them, defying the places they belonged to. "To Rabindranath, humanity was rich and large and many sided. Therefore, he felt hurt
when, for material gains, the personality of man got mutilated in the western world. His mind revolted at the very idea of man becoming reduced to a mere machine. He was sore at heart to see the same process of repression and curtailment of the human personality advocated under the name of nationalism here also.” (Chandrasekharan 1951 : 3)

Tagore was a critic of western nationalism where imperialism is acting at the core in disguise of a nationalism. Hence, "Tagore has been a lonely voice crying in wilderness that that the only way to make ready for the day of righteousness and brotherhood is through full repudiation of the evil of nationalism.” (Kar 1949 : 17) But Tagore has a strong faith on mankind and he never wavered from his path of belief. "Tagore was a bitter critic of western imperialism but he never wavered in his ultimate faith in Man. The achievement of the west, in the realm of science in particular, always evoked his height admiration.” (Sinha 1947 : 83)

Today the whole world remains tension as with the remarkable progress in science every country tries to surpass another. As a result the world splits into different section and is completely obsessed into fever of eternal threat but Tagore visualized the undivided human personality when they come out of the crust of fear, suspicion, narrowness and egoism. "While science is proceeding to the splitting of the atom he held forth the idea of wholeness and completeness and preached the truth and value of undivided human personality, of unity of man, nature and God. To men of all countries and for men of all ages, he has sung as on other poet has done, of the joy of life and of the wonder and beauty of the world, of humanity in God and of divinity in man.” (Sengupta 1950 : 238) Thus he is not only a humanist but a cosmopolitan humanist. In the words of Arun Bhattacharya, "As a cosmopolitan humanist he raised his voice against the tyranny and oppression, of beauty in nature and life.” (Bhattarcharya 1964 : 5)

The message that Tagore preached is not only for India but also for the world, not only for a particular age but also for all age and all period. It is only possible owing to his generous and sublime mind. But "no one will ever know what an extraordinary man he was. One so great, one so good, one of the very best among men, was hidden from people’s eyes and went away unknown.” (Devi 2002 : 252 –
Though a great change has taken place in the world but "Tagore's own writings as a poet, traveler, diarist short story writers, novelist and a commentator on international affairs came out of the ferment of the modern age while they helped to shape the course of literature in Asia and the West and depend its resources." (Chakraborty 2003 : 1)

The philosophy Tagore speaks has created a terrific sensation not only in Asia but the whole world. In his philosophy humanism, nationalism and pantheism are interblended and closely related to each other. Humayun Kabir said about him that "Rabindranath Tagore was a many splendoured genius who was simultaneously a poet and artist, philosopher and social reformer, educationist and man of faith. The golden thread uniting all these expressions of his thought and action is provided by his deep and abiding humanism which permeates not only his poems and songs, novels and plays, but also his writings on politics and economics, society, religion and education. Nor did his faith in humanism remain a merely intellectual belief. It was the principle that governed his speech, thought and action throughout his long and eventful life." (Kabir 1962 : 29) George E.G. Catlin said, "Tagore was a polymath in that great tradition which includes Aristotle, Aquinas, Leonardo, Diderot and Goethe – a tradition unfortunately more honoured today than imitated. He was a painter, poet, singer, dramatist, actor, orator, political prophet and religious philosopher." (Catlin 1964 : 21) In the words of B.C. Mukerji, Tagore was such an immortal as much as Shakespeare in Elizabethan England or Socrates in ancient Greece." (Mukerji 1994 : 98) As long as man loves literature, song and painting and eye can see Tagore must be remembered not only by Indian people but the people of the world as not a great humanist but cosmopolitan humanist, not a nationalist but an internationalist and not merely a mystic but a pantheist and a spiritual leader all the time and all the ages. He will be worshipped as such because his message is significant still now and also in future to prevent the Third world war and makes man live in the shade of love, peace, happiness and mutual co-operation. In contact with him, a seer and saint, man can get eternal bliss and peace from the pain and pangs of life. His impression on human mind for his revolutionary and humanistic philosophy is indelible and he takes a permanent position in the recess of human heart, hence wherever and whenever he goes he is acclaimed as a perennial humanist, mystic and spiritual leader. Thus, "Whatever he wrote, whatever he spoke,
whatever he painted covered as complete a range as life itself. It is not its corners that he wanted to illumine. It is the whole life that he wanted to rarefy, eternalize, sublime. The universe was his canvas." (India News, 1961 : 30)

Rabindranath Tagore’s contemporaries were Toru Dutt, Dr. Radhakrishnan, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Mahatma Gandhi, Vivekananda, Mulk Raj Anand, R.N. Narayan, Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya. Now we have to discuss how Tagore is different from rest of them.

Toru Dutt was born in 1856 in Calcutta. She is well-known for her works, *A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields and Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindusthan*. Though Toru Dutt was by birth a Bengalee girl, She was brought up in England under the English tradition and culture. Hence both French and English were foreign to her. Toru had written so many poems dealing with English and French subject but they are not spontaneous overflow of her powerful feeling. Though she was compelled to stay England but her heart was always on Indian tradition and culture. Almost all of her writings express her pain and pang for India. Here is a fine example of such feeling.

The flowers look loveliest in their native soil
Amid their kindred branches; plucked, they fade
And lose the colours Nature on them laid, (Dutt 2000 : 1)

Compared to her, it is seen that Tagore’s range of thought is vast, his feeling not only confine to India it spread throughout the world. He is India’s great star, without him we can not identify ourself. The whole world know him with a single word. "India’s greatest star, illuminating not only our own country but the world with a synthesis of the rich wisdom of the past and of the present, has set and our hearts are empty. Yet his voice rings in our ears and the flaming message of his recent utterance will be our guiding star." (Ghosh 1961 : 52)

Michael Madhusudan Dutt was an infinitely more gifted writer. A Hindu by birth, he embraced Christianity and worked on an English paper in Madras. His fame now rests securely on his great Bengali epic *Meghaneed Badha*, centering round the heroic figure of Indrajit, Ravana’s son. He is also wellknown for his English poem
Captive Ladie which shows his strong command over English. The following lines will show his strong narrative power and skill.

Me thought there came a warrior — maid,
With blood — strain'd brow and sheathless blade;
Dark was her hue; as darkest cloud (Dutt 1970: 63)

The main theme of his writings is to establish the position of man higher than God. Man is more important than God, according to him. In this sense he like Tagore was a great humanist. But what differentiate Tagore from Michael is that Tagore gives divinity to man. "A twentieth century poet and seer, he was above all a poet of humanity." (Chakravarty 1962 : 17)

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh is another contemporary of Rabindranath Tagore. He was at first was a great nationalist leader who organized secret revolutionary societies to save Indians from British rule. Later, he was arrested in connection with the Alipur conspiracy case. At that time a great change took place in his mind. He became mystic poet who is famous still now for his two immortal creations – The Life Divine and another epic poem Savitri. He like Tagore believed divinity in man. In his epic poem Savitri we find two character Savitri and Satayvan. Savitri symbolizes the Mother of Eternal light who descended on earth to work out the salvation of man. She is the light of Truth and wisdom that struggles with the darkness of Ignorance symbolized by Yama and over comes it. Satayvan symbolizes truth. The union of Savitri and Styavan is the union of Truth and light – the light of knowledge, the light of wisdom and they do overcome the darkness and establish the kingdom of God on earth.

To bring God down to the world on earth we came.
To change the earthly life to life divine. (Ghosh 1962: 204)
The Life Divine is also based on mysticism. Compared to Tagore with aurobindo Ghosh we can say that Aurobindo's nationalism cantines to a narrow geographical boundary where as his mysticism and humanism are almost identical with Tagore.

Another great humanist Mahatma Gandhi was the contemporary of Rabindranath Tagore. "Rabindranath Tagore is a great Humanist with Gandhi. Gandhi called him 'The Great Sentinel.' Tagore is like the sentinel warning us of alleys and by ways of human life in which we may stray away missing our very goal,
namely the establishment of the kingdom of Man which is also the kingdom of God." (Yamunacharya 1961 : 17) Tagore and Gandhi's humanism are almost identical with each other. Gandhi was a humanist and a man of religion more than a nationalist and a patriot. Although he worked for the liberation of India from foreign rule, there was no hatred in his heart for the British. He hoped that Hindustani might one day become the lingua franca of the country, but he continued to write and speak in English and was fully sensible of the advantage of a knowledge of that great world language. My Experiment with Truth written in English gave him fame and recognition. But Gandhi was not a prolific writer as Tagore whose writings are scattered in every sphere of life. Hence, Mr. Y. Krishna Puri gave his homage to him in the following language - "Rabindranath Tagore has been acclaimed as the greatest poet that India has produced since kalidasa. but he was much more than a great poet. His genius found many outlets; he was also a dramatist, novelist, writer of short stories, essayist, journalist, painter, musician, composer, orator and educationist." (1961 : 4) The difference between them lies in the fact that Mahatma Gandhi was the hero of action and active freedom - fighter whereas Rabindra was a great poet, a rishi and a great thinker. Gandhi was a political worker but Tagore had stressed more on spiritual freedom than on political freedom. Gandhi was the follower of idol worship which was always hostile to Tagore. For Salvation, Gandhi took the path of renunciation whereas Tagore wanted to enjoy the delights of bounded life. Gandhi was a great leader but Tagore was a social thinker. His ideas touched all aspects of life, individual, social, national and international.

Tagore was very much impressed by Dr. Radhakrishnan who gained world wide recognition and reputation in the field of philosophy and religion. Like Tagore, Radhakrishnan also tried for the synthesis of the East and the West and for the re-orientation of the basic Hindu outlook. But the difference lies in the fact that where Radhakrishnan was theoretical, Tagore was practical. His ideals got concrete shape by establishing Visva-Bharati in Santiniketan. "The whole world had, indeed, gathered in one nest of Visva - Bharati." (Roy 1995 : 1) It is a university where any man from any country can come and mix with each other. It is a temple where all type of men may unite in a single thread. "Visva -Bharati was established by Tagore as a place where the whole world finds its shelter." (Servora 2001 : 11) Tagore was
not too much interested in metaphysical or ontological discussions, rather he
believed in the constructive works for the removal of deep rooted social evils.

Tagore appears to be closer to Vivekananda in respect of his ideal of human
service. True to the spirit of practical Vedanta which preaches that One Infinite
Absolute manifests Himself in this world and so the best service in this world is the
service of all. Both believe that everything is covered by God. "Rabindranath’s God
is thus the Grand Humanity in man – the Universal Man, none who is wholly or even
partly, outside of us.” (Bhattacharya 1962 : 38) Vivekananda conceived Reality as
love and power. His ideal man is Shri Krishna who is represented as a hero of
action. Power and love are uniquely blended in Him whereas Rabindranath followed
Buddhist theory of maitry. His love knows no power. It is maitry with men and maitry
with everything of this world, that help one know Him. Vivekananda established
Ramkrishna Mission in 1897. His was the aim to revive the monastic culture of
medieval India. While he tried to combine the East and the West, Rabindranath
aimed to revive the ancient culture of India in Santiniketan. Vivekananda always
believed in spiritual unity. Visva – Bharati is to establish an intimate relationship
among the cultures of different countries of the East and West that will help and
strengthen the fundamental conditions of world peace. Thus aim of Visva – Bharati is
more important than that of Ramkrishna Mission. Thus we can say that "Tagore was
not a poet of India alone. His vision of humanism crossed the frontier of India and
embraced in its catholicity the entire world.” (Mukherjee 2004 : 94)

Mulk Raj Anand is another distinguished and renowned figure in Indian writing
in English. He was born in Peshawar in 1905 and was educated at the universities of
Punjab and London. He received his Ph.D in philosophy in 1929. His was for his
writings, Untouchable, The road, The Village, Coolie and the Two Leaves and a Bud.
Anand’s humanism, his concern for under-dog of society is reflected in all his novels
but Untouchable, Coolie, The Two Leaves and a Bud, The Road are particularly
significant in this connection. Anand deals with the misery and wretchedness of the
poor and their struggle for a better life. Almost all his subsequent novels are a
variation on the same theme and are intended to bring home to the reader the plight
of the over - burdened peasant who is powerless to fight superstition and social
convention and is baulked at every step in his aspiration for a better life. Coolie tells
the story of Munoo, an orphan, from the time he leaves his village in the Punjab till he dies of consumption in Simla. Untouchable is concerned with the feelings of Bakha, a sweeper boy and his experiences in the course of a single day in the town of Bulashah. The Two Leaves and a Bud deals with the suffering and misery of the workers on the tea plantation of Assam and The Road again deals with the evil of caste centring round the story of Bikhu, a chamar boy. But compared to Anand, Tagore's humanism is more profound and vast because he gives divinity in man. "Myriad and multifarious thoughts and ideas for Humanity and Mankind as left for us in the posterity by Rabindranath are so vast and wide – encompassing that they boggle our mind, just as we find when we try to understand the complexities of this endless universe and the cosmos." (Ghosh 1997: 63) Tagore's writings touches almost every sphere of life but Anand is confined to a particular sphere. "A personality like Rabindranath Tagore would always have great importance on account of his literary genius. At present he is important on account also of his many other gifts." (Bake 1961: 21)

R. K. Narayan is another well – known figure who is Tagore’s contemporary. His notable works are Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts, The Dark Room, The Financial Expert, A Horse and Two Goats, My Days, The Man – eater of Malgudi and The Guide for which he was awarded Sahitya Academy Award in 1958. His experience of life, his clarifying triple vision of Man, in ration to himself, his environment and his gods, his widening and deepen sense of comedy, all give new dimension to his art as a novelist. He is a master of comedy who can present smiles and tears together, smiling through the tears in things and glimpsing the rainbow magnificence of life. But he is not such a voluminous writer as Tagore. His popularity rests on English Literature as a novelist. In every field of life we find Tagore who "was a true 'Leonardo da vinchi' of the 20th century as those who study and read him know well." (Rodriguez 2002: 1) Narayan writes of the middle – class, his own class, the members of which are neither to well-off nor worried about money and position nor dehumanized by absolute need. He is the only pure artist who writes for art's sake and not for life's sake. In each of his works, he presents a slice of life, as he sees it, with perfect sincerity and truthfulness.
Tagore’s writings belong to world and they have their universal appeal. “Tagore belong to world Literature and Indian Literature, as much as he belongs to Bangla Literature. Being the only Indian recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature, a charismatic nationalist and a member of the distinguished Tagore family, he is one of the few internationally known Indians.” (Devy 2002 : 136) Throughout his life he works for the salvation of man. Salvation does not mean political freedom but spiritual emancipation. His message for mankind is a panacea to recover malady prevalent in the present civilization. Tagore had been called ‘Rabi’ in his childhood. He deserves this name because there is no place in the world where the light of Rabi does not reach. Thus, “Tagore was an artist par excellence and in addition, he made notable contributions to religions and educational thought, to politics and social reforms, to moral regeneration and economic reconstruction of India and the world.” (Kabir 1961 : 3) He thinks that working for mankind gives man freedom, hence Mita Munir says about Tagore that ‘working for love is freedom in action.’ (2007 : 39) Thus throughout his life long career he thinks for the wellbeing of mankind and their spiritual freedom. Thus, “Tagore championed a comprehensive religious community uniting humanity without separations springing from creed, class or country.” (Chandler 2003 : 19) Therefore, peace and happiness will prevail and last long when only true love and truth are achieved and universal brotherhood is an accomplished fact.

Tagore is not only a writer but also a charismatic personality. When he speaks, the whole world listens his message with rapt attention for their wellbeing. Hence Ujjal Majumdar gives his tribute to Tagore in the following words – “I think he was acceptable to the world, not only as a painter but also as an artist who had command over all the branches of art and culture.” (1990 : 298) Today the whole civilization is in crisis and no one can say what is waiting for us. “Imagining the present is his perplexed metaphor of the oppressed empirical and his future is not the fantasy of the nationalist day dream but a tryst with destiny. So Tagore is not simultaneously done up with the exhaustion of nationalism, he continued to exist with the vexedness that his present suffers in its icons and iconoclasts.” (Roychoudhury 2007 : 121) As long as human civilization prevails, the whole world will remember him not only as a great writer but a humanist, internationalist and pantheist.