CHAPTER – IV

PANTHEISM AND RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S WORKS

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A. Indian Concept of Pantheism

To know the Indian concept of pantheism, it is necessary what actually pantheism is. The fundamental formula of Pantheism would seem to be a double one - nothing is which is not God and God is everything which is. There can be no other source of being than God and no other power than His. Men and the rest of the universe are but phrases of His being. Nothing can be conceived as having even temporary separation from Him. God and the universe must be identified and if any part of the universe cannot be identified with Him, that part must be negated. Thus "etymologically pantheism is the view that Deity and cosmos are identical." (Craig 1998: 202)

Pantheistic idea at first is found in the Upanishad which abounds in numerous creation theory. A very creation theory is to be found in Brhadaranyaka, which says that in the beginning this world was soul (Atman) alone in the form of a person (Purusa). Looking around he saw that there was no second entity. He was, indeed, as large as a woman and a man closely embraced. He caused that self to fall into two pieces. There from arose a husband (pati) and a wife (Patri). He copulated with her, therefrom human beings are produced. "Such crude anthropomorphism where the primary Being is conceived of on the analogy of a man and the method of creation is regarded on the analogy of animal production, stamps the theory as one of the oldest preserved for us in the Upanishads". (Kumarappa 1987: 3)

We rise to a distinctly higher level of philosophical thought when we pass from attempts to explain the universe in terms of a magnified man in terms of natural phenomena, such as water, or food and again from such obviously visible and particular elements to elements less visible and more universal, such as air, non-being, being and imperishable. With regard to the water it is said in Brhadaranyaka Unanishad that at the beginning this world was just water. The reason why water was regarded as the source of all things seems to be that life is impossible without water. As the Changogyya tells us, living beings perish if there is no rain. In the similar
manner it is argued that food is the source of all things, for without food creatures must perish. "Crude as these theories are, they mark a tremendous advance in philosophical thought, for here the thinker turns away from the anthropomorphism of an earlier day and all explanations in terms of God and Goddesses, and seeks to interpret the universe, not in terms of some creation of his imagination, but in terms of a principle known to him in everyday experience." (Ibid : 4)

With water and food as the ultimate principle, however, we still move in the realm of the particular and the sensible Wind or breath, being invisible and less sharply defined, tends to lead the mind away from attachment to the sensible – which again could not have been easy for these pioneer thinkers. The reason for regarding this as ultimate seems to have been derived chiefly from the observation that an individual dies when breath ceases, and also from the face that it is breath alone which functions untriringly in the individual while other organs become exhausted and require rest. This is true of air or wind, the counterpart in the inorganic world of breath in the living body, for air never seems to require rest, unlike fire, which soon exhausts itself and the Sun and Moon which daily set and thus take their rest. Moreover, just as all the other functions of the body disappear in sleep into breath and breath alone remains, the elemental of nature such as fire, water, sun and moon are seen to disappear into air or wind. With regard to the supremacy of breath among all the vital elements in the body, we have the dramatic portrayal of the rivalry among the five organs of the body, speech, sight, hearing, mind and breath, and the Victory gained by breath by its showing that without it none of the others can function, while without the other organs it can still function. It is primarily on the basis of the indispensability of breath for living being that it is acclaimed as supreme. Whether the ultimate real is conceived of as water, food or breath, it is precisely because there are absolutely essential to human life.

It is told in Chandogya that the whole universe including man, is nothing but a product of these three elements, heat, water and food which have for their animating principle the Primal Being. "The pantheist believes in an absolute totality, a whole which all things make, an all-inclusive unity. And this all-inclusive unity is divine." (Levine 1994 : 1) It does not seem likely that this being is conceived as characterized by consciousness. The some primeval unconscious substance that underlines all
things is best represented by the three elements of heat, water and food. This being is also described as finest essence out of which every thing in the universe whether conscious soul or unconscious object is ultimately constituted. "Within you is the hidden God, immortal soul, within you is the inexhaustible spiritual treasure. Within you is the fountain of joy and happiness." (Sivananda 1951 : 340) That finest essence has a soul that forms the stuff of all that exist. Out of that primeval substance everything has come. Whether non-being or being the ultimate reality is some abstract potency or essence from which the universe has sprung and into which it will finally return. This ultimate reality is described as Brahman which is not coarse, not fine, not short, not glowing, not adhesive like water, without shadow and without darkness, without air and without space, without stickiness, odourless, tasteless, without eye, without ear, without voice, without wind, without energy, without breath, without mouth, without measure, without inside and without outside.

The doctrine of the Imperishable is put forward by Yajnavalkya who appears as one of the greatest expounders of the view that Brahman is the supreme reality who is the unseen seer, the unheard hearer, the unthought thinker, the understood of understader. In this thought of Yajnavalkya we reach the idea which is predominant in the Upanishads, that Brahman, the ground of all things, is a conscious principle. "We have to perceive Brahman as that which exceeds, contains and supports all individual things as well as universe. We have to perceive it also as that which lives in and possess the universe and all it contains. In nature all thing that exists are becoming of the one self of all." (Bahulyan 1985 : 45)

The word Brahman itself does not appear always to have had this lofty meaning. What separates the concept of Brahman from concepts such as water, breath, or space, is that, unlike these concepts Brahman as cosmic power came to be thought of primarily as we have in the case of Yajnavalkya, as a conscious principle. Thus the seeds of monistic idealism is the teaching of the Upanishads as well as much of the later development of Indian thought. Yajnavalkya, with his philosophic insight, says that Brahman, the ultimate ground of all things is a conscious principle. "The Upanishads advocate the view that Brahman 0is the Ultimate source of universe". (Udhyartha 1976 : 108)
Another very primitive Atman theory is preserved for us in the Aitareya Upanishad. According to this, in the beginning there was Atman, the only one and no other blinking things whatever. He accordingly created the worlds and deities to guard the world. Then he created man. The method employed by Atman in creating the worlds and man is significant. We are told that Atman shaped a purusa and drew him forth from the waters and brooded upon him. From the mouth of this pursua came fire, from nostrils air, from his eyes the Sun, from his ears the quarters of heaven, from his skin plants and trees, from his heart the moon, from his navel, death and from his virile member, water. And in creating man we are told that the deity ordered those various elements in the external world to enter into man. Fire became speech and entered the mouth. Wind became breath and entered the nostrils. The sun became sight and entered the eyes. The quarters of heaven became hearing and entered the ears. Plants and trees became hairs and entered the skin. The moon became mind and entered the heart. Death became the outbreak and entered the navel. Water became semen and entered the virile number. What is noteworthy is that both the self and the non-self, which seem so entirely different from each other, are here regarded as having a mutual correspondence, since both of them are permeated by the same forces which emanated from the primeval purusa. "He must exist everywhere because He is all pervading. He must exist in every tree that we see, everything that we touch and every grain of sand that we perceive". (Nadkami 1977: 22) The view that ultimate reality was purusa or presiding genius of the universe appears to have developed side by side with the view that it was Atman. Though the distinction between purusa and Atman was not maintained, the two being freely identified with each other and in some cases Purusa being subordinated to Atman when latter came to be regarded as Ultimate reality.

The true self of the individual is not the bodily self which undergoes changes, sickness and death. The Atman in the body is found to be the principle of consciousness which underlies all the experiences of an individual and when it was postulated as the ground of the Universe, there was very little to distinguish this from the view that Brahman as a conscious principle pervades the universe and both theories are merged into one, Atman being freely identified with Brahman and Brahman with Atman. "The finite soul and the inanimate world are essentially one
with Brahman and have no separate existence. Brahman is suchidananda." (Chakraborty 2004: 307) Thus this shining, immortal person (Purusa) who is in this earth and with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal person who is the body indeed, is just this soul (Atman), this immortal, this Brahman. By the time of the Svetasvatara, it appears that these three terms were so generally used to designate one and the same being that the svetasvatara uses all three terms to refer to the supreme reality and passes from one to the other without the slightest hesitancy. Whether the Supreme being was conceived of as Brahman, Purusa or Atman, all theories meet in the end in the view that the ground of all things is an all pervading conscious principle. That Brahman is one without a second may be said to be the theme of all the Upanishads. "Brahman resides in the heart of every jiva and controls it from within". (Ibid: 309) All the gods and all the powers hitherto recognised are subordinate to Him.

This unitary being is described an infinite and limitless. Its infinitude is such that even if one removes the infinite from it still remains infinite. Being infinite, temporal and spatial restrictions do not apply to it for it transcends them. It is, therefore, ageless and deathless. This Brahman is without an earlier and without later, without an inside and without an outside, unborn and beyond space.

While in its infinite and transcendent form and in its nature as knowing principle Brahman cannot be known, still as revealed in various elements in the universe, some at least of its attributes may, it would appear, be divined. Philosopher accordingly set themselves to this task. It is this epoch in Indian speculation that seems to be represented by the appearance of Yajnavalkya in the arena of philosophical discussion. Views similar to the one propounded in the Honey-Doctrine which is expounded in fifteen paragraphs, is unable to say very much more regarding Brahman than that He is the soul, the Immortal one who pervades the earth, the water, fire, wind, Sun, the quarters of heaven, moon, lightning, thunder, space, law, truth, mankind and the soul and corresponding with these, pervades also the body, the semen, speech, breath, eye, ear, mind, heat in the individual, sound, space in the heart, Virtuousness, truthfulness, the human, being and the soul. Similarly a philosopher proclaims that Brahman is in speech, breath, eye and ear and corresponding with these in fire, wind, Sun and the quarters of heaven. But he is
unable very much more about the nature of Brahman than that he is the Brilliant one. Yainavalkya paints out that though Brahman is in all these things He is different from these. He declares that it is necessary to pluck apart and to put together these pursusas and to pass beyond them. So far as merely such identification of Brahman with various pursusas goes, he shows himself as expert as anyone else of his day. But his own distinctive contribution lies in his penetrating behind the conventional view that Brahman is speech, life, breath, sight, hearing, mind and heart, in order to discover the attributes of the Being who can be regarded in these various ways.

What is noticeable as we pass from earlier Upanishads to the later is the growing conviction that Brahman must be very different from the universe and therefore essentially unknown. He is seen by subtle seers with superior, subtle intellect. He can be apprehended not by speech, not by mind, not by sight. He is declared to have a transcendent nature, which baffles human thought. His position is in such elevated position where the eye goes not, speech goes not, not the mind. He who is the bodiless among bodies, stable among the unstable, the great, all pervading soul, possesses many marvelous and transcendent powers. He is described in Mundaka Upanishad as eternal, all pervading, omni-present, exceeding subtle. He has an eye on every side, a face on every side, an arm on every side and a foot on every side. Svetasvatara described Him that He has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet; He surrounds the earth on all sides and stand at ten fingers, breath beyond. Without food or hand, He is swift and a seizer. He sees without eye, He hears without ear. "Firmament is his head, the Sun and moon his eyes, his ears are the regions of the sky; his voice is wisdom. Air is his breath, universe his heart, the Earth his feet and He is the innerself of all creature." (Devi 1938 : 36) Thus Brahman has such marvelous qualities that go beyond all thought and imagination.

Besides such qualities which make Brahman awful and incomprehensible, these later philosophers also ascribe to the Supreme Being numerous perfections which render Him an object of aspiration and even of love. Thus he is described as the best the supreme; greater than great, higher than whom there is nothing at all, a light without smoke, all knowing, all wise, lighted by His own intellect, the principle of intelligence, without equal or superior. He is one whom all the gods give reverence,
is worshipped day by day and who grants desires. He is adorable God and the object of desire. Hence J.R. Joshi says, "Turning to the Upanishad, it is found that the concept of Brahman occupies the central position in the mythology and philosophy of these text". (Joshi 1978: 37)

When we turn to the later Upanishads it seems likely that Brahman was regarded as free from evil. Brahman is not merely the unknown conscious principle which He was predominantly conceived to be in the earlier Upanishads but also one characterized by many perfections. It would seem that Upanisadic thought regarding the nature of the Supreme Being passed from an earlier stage of speculation and investigation where the view that was reached was that Brahman was primarily an ultimate, all pervading conscious principle, to a later stage, where Brahman, besides being conceived thus, came also to be regarded as possessing many transcendent qualities as well as several perfection.

Brahman is not Himself the Universe but one who completely pervades the universe as its soul. The philosophers discussed the nature of Brahman, the conceptions of Brahman as the person in the Sun, moon, lightening, space, wind, fire, water, earth, body. Kaikeya points out to the six Brahmans who go to him for instruction that the Brahman – Atman is not to be identified with the heaven, Sun, wind, space, water and earth, for these form only various parts of His body, while He himself is soul, similar to oneself. Yajnavalkya systematically teaches in Brhadaranyaka III that Brahman is dwelling in all things, all things are His body, He controls all things from within, he is the inner controller and immortal. He is the maker of everything for He is the creator of all, the world is His. "God appears in human mind as the universe, infinite in space and time, but to Himself, He appears as timeless, spaceless existence." (Narasappa 1955: 34)

The same view appears also in the alter Upanishads. The Katha proclaims that Brahman exists in the universe as its Inner soul. The Mundaka, in language reminiscent of the Rgvedic idea of the primeval purusa, from the various parts of whose body the universe came into being, teaches that the universe forms the body of Brahman. "The most famous of all is the Rig-Veda a collection of rather over a thousand hymns. These are addressed to Gods who bear a strong resemblance is
the God of the Norseman – the distant cousins, so to speak, of these old Aryans and who are nothing more or less than the great forces of Nature personified. Fire and water, sky and Sun, thunder and rain; all these and many lesser natural phenomena were worshiped under one name or another. (Morno 1911: 6 – 7) He is one from Him comes the seas and mountains, Thus the predominant thought of the Upanishads seems therefore to be that Brahman pervades the world as its soul.

We may conclude, then that the predominant thought of the Upanishads regarding the relation of the Supreme Being to the self, is that He exists in the embodied individual as its principle of consciousness. Some of the Upanishadic thinkers are so impressed by this fact that they tend to identify Brahman completely with the individual, although even while do so doing, many of them tacitly assume that the migrating soul is not in all respects the same as Brahman, but has still to become Him. In some of the later Upanishads the thought appears, which is fully developed only in the Svetasvatara that Brahman and the finite self are two, that the Supreme Being pervades the finite self as something distinct from it, that He does not share in its imperfections and that He seeks by His grace to grant to the finite self that knowledge which it requires for obtaining release.

We may now turn from the more purely philosophical literature and consider the popular religious poem known as the Bhagavadgita or the Lord’s song – a poem which at present day exercises a unique influence over the people of India. “Gita means Tyaga; it is the scripture of the secret of renunciation. It says the one method of realising the supreme is to renounce all that belongs to the phenomenal world – renounce your kartritwa – Abhimana, egoism, attachment – to feel the whole universe is the Virat Swarupa and that all your actions are worship of the Virat. Anasakti and Tyaga are the Supreme admonitions given to the Gita.” (Chidananda 1966: 114) It might be said that, while the Vedas and the Upanishads are valued as sacred possessions handed down from the past, they are not studied in proportion to their felt value. But Gita is both valued and read and for practical importance, hold the first place amongst the works of Sanskrit literature. Through the centuries is has been the predominating influence upon Indian educated thought and to-day it is still a living look of much more than historical interest and read by countless numbers in every part of India.
The Gita is a substraction of section of Mahabharata. The setting of the poem is so well known that we need hardly refer to it. It is the eve of the battle of Kurukhetra, the chief episode in the war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas. Arjuna, one of the Pandava heroes, is in his war chariot and has as his charioteer the god Krishna who has assumed human form. As the battle is about to commence, Arjuna is seized with misgivings. After all, it is an interfamily feud and how can he slay his kinsmen? Krishna under takes to adjust the thoughts of the troubled warrior and in so doing, sets forth the system of religion and philosophy which we have in this great poem.

The Gita’s unique contribution lies in the thought that the Supreme Being of the Upanishads, the all pervading unknowable one whom the philosophers proclaimed has assumed the form the Krishna, Arjuna’s charioteer. He whom cannot be explained except in negative is called as the unknown, the incomprehensible. He appears in human form, speaks through human lips and a concerned about human affairs. Krishna, it would appear, has all attributes hitherto ascribed to the Supreme Being. Hence he is spoken of as Supreme Brahman, highest person, great lord, the imperishable being, not-being, great self. As Supreme Being, He is incomprehensible, infinite of form, having no end, middle or beginning, boundless, from everlasting, primal, unborn, changeless and immutable. Hence Ram Swarup says, "In one name we must be able to see all the Gods; otherwise our knowledge of a God and His names is not sufficient we must also be able to see that a God exceeds all his Forms and names, individually and collectively. The heart of a God is an enigma." (1980 : 160) He is all marvelous, terrible, facing every way, possible of boundless strength and infinite might, resplendent and filled with glory.

Besides such transcendent qualities which compel fear, awe and reverence, He has also numerous perfection which render Him the object of man’s highest aspiration and love. He is the light of lights, the discernment of discerning, the brilliance of the brilliant, the source of memory and knowledge, the dispeller of doubt, the maker of Vedanta, Omniscient and unrivalled in knowledge, the source of the seven Great Seers.
The thought that righteousness is so all important that the deity considers even His infinitude of little account when righteousness needs to be established is a remarkable contribution which the Gita makes to the conception of the Divine. Instead of thought or which was the chief attribute of the Supreme Being in the Upanishads, righteousness seems here to become His essential attribute. The author of the Gita was evidently too much of an eclectic to set this view in opposition to the view of the Upanishads and accordingly, the new thought of the Deity here implied does not gain the pointedness and clarity of expression which it deserves. Never the less it is clearly a contribution of very great significance.

Besides righteousness, another attribute which the Gita ascribes to the deity is love. Krishna is so intimate and human that Arjuna is afraid that in negligence or love, he has not shown the reverence that is due to Krishna. He bears him as father with his son, as comrade with his comrade, as lover with his beloved. Krishna in His turn declares that Arjuna is exceedingly beloved of Him and because of His love, He reveals Himself to Arjuna in a form in which no eyes has ever seen Him and when Arjuna is filled with terror and awe at this glorious form, He assumes a shape more pleasant to Arjuna and consoles the latter. The unmanifest and the incomprehensible reveals indeed a heart of love and compassion and Arjuna bursts forth in adoration at this wonderful revelation.

The deity which the Gita discloses is one who, although in His universal and transcendent nature He is unknown and has powers which far exceed human thought and imagination, is yet possessed of knowledge as well as other perfection, chief among these being righteousness and love. So excellent are His attributes that Arjuna declares that there is no one equal to Him.

Krishna, the warrior and prophet, becomes identified with Bishnu and Vasudeva, and, when we meet with him in the Gita, is just on the point of being identified with the All-God of the Vedanta philosophy. He is not, however, as yet conceived in the abstract manner of the Vedanta. He is as yet full of qualities which we may describe with clearness sufficient to constitute him a definite object of worship. He is supreme over the world and from him the world of matter proceeds.

*Assuing various shapes He bestows benefits on the whole world which is His work.
Glory, might, dominion, wisdom, energy, power and other attributes are collected in Him. Supreme of supreme, in whom no imperfection abide, lord over finite and infinite, God in individuals and universals, Visible and invisible, Omnipotent, omnipresent, Omniscient, Almighty." (Kumarappa 1986 : 126) God or Krishna—Vasudeva is the creative source of a real world of spirits and of matter. Even if we cannot say that matter is part of the being of God, we can at least say that he plants within it the germ of development and works in it and through it. Krishna is represented as the originator of all that is effective in matter. He sets the germ in the great Brahman, i.e. in the primal, indeterminate matter and from there comes all born things. God also sustains and controls the universe which he has made, being both transcendent and immanent in regard to it. He is the essence of all the phenomena of the actual world—the light of the Sun and the moon and the fire and the sound of the ether vibration, the understanding of them that understand, the splendor of the splendid, the first of gods and men, the chief of rishis, saints and priests. He is also to be identified with death, which ravishes all, which indicates the cyclic character of the Krishnaic creation. At the end of the age all things return to him, yet not for final dissolution but to be produced again.

"We obtain, however, a more definitely theistic impression on considering the relation of God to his worshippers and to the world of men generally". Here we approach the conception of divine grace and the answering conception of Bhakti or warm confiding devotion to God on the part of man." (Urquhart 1982 : 336) In reference to human society God appears as a redeemer. Whenever there is a decay of law and an ascendancy of lawlessness He creates Himself. For the protection of the good and destruction of evil doers and for the establishment of the law He is born age after age. The repeated incarnation of the Supreme, in the person of Krishna and otherwise is explained by a strongly ethical purpose of grace. At the request of Arjuna he manifests a form in all its splendor and majesty. If the worshippers will come to him in the attitude of bhakti, putting complete trust in him, giving him the utmost love and worship, keeping a ever in their thoughts even to the house of death, seeing him in all objects of devotion and preferring him above all others, they will attain peace, the bright lamp of knowledge, will be lit for them and they will reach supreme adept ship—ever-lasting bliss. Sometimes the final stage is represented as 'extinction in Krishna' but more often the love which has been manifested towards
individual is continued in the continuance of their individuality in a condition of blessed communion with God.

We have found traces of the influence of the Sankhya philosophy in the detachment of God from the world and in the conception of nature proceeding according to its own process. God seems to exist merely for the purpose of implanting the germ of activity in nature and in order to provide an objective towards which men may flee when they realize their essential separateness from nature. Salvation is obtained when a man realizes this separateness and submits himself to the working of cosmic principle. The ideal is that he should treat world world-process with indifference. But before he can reach this attitude of indifference, he will have to pass through an intermediate phrase of thought in which nature he cannot now interpret as akin to his spirit will manifest itself as a relentless might. The mood of fatalism will precede in the individual mind the mood of indifference and the confession of helplessness will come before the defiant assertion of insouciance. There are many illustrations of this sense of the oppressiveness of nature—of the moods of nature which perform all the work in an endless process of evolution and devolution. Even God becomes again identified with the relentless movement. "The Bhagavatas did not reject any one of them but accepted all as emanations of the Thousand selfed (Sahasradhatma) Great Being, Mahapurusha who is Vishnu". (Agrawala 1970: 14) He is Himself Time that makes world to pass away, waxing full and working here to compass the world’s destruction. And this world force press with all its might upon the individual life. But the warriors whom Arjuna hesitates to slay have already been given to death and the same might will compel Arjuna to fight whether he wishes to or not. Every human being is insignificant in the presence of the world-forces and is fit only to be spun about as though set upon a whirligig.

In the face of this world might the only possible attitude, according to the teaching of the Gita, is one of indifference. If we cannot resist, we may simply submit and make the submission of as little consequence as possible by arguing that the soul is really unaffected by all the happenings amongst outward things. We may allow the world. Process to have their way with physical and social relationships. They constitute, after all, only the shell of our souls and it matters not what happens to the shell, whether this be our own or other people’s. We may slay our friends in
battle without compunction, reflecting that it is only their bodies which have an end. To take an interest in anything mundane is unfitting. It is not well to sorrow for any born things. There is on the one hand no reason for sorrow in the objective fate of those who perish. Life in any case is an unmeaning misery and if we free men from life we shall do them good. Subjectively also, sorrow is unfitting because it indicates unreasonable attachment to the world process. The world is a vast system of necessity in which everyone must fulfil his function and meet his appropriate fate whether he will or not. Thus we shall become indifferent to honour and dishonour, indifferent to the interest and friend and foe, renouncing all undertakings and attain to the Spirit of the Ultimate who is indifferent also to all born being. "Throughout these works one supreme spirit is recognised, self existent and unknowable, yet the light and life of all. Manifestation and forms may come and go but the unknowable remains." (Beswick 1959: 13) Thus in this part of the Gita we find traces of the same indifferentism, the same sense of futility and fatalism, the same coldness of attitude to ordinary experiences and relationships which have been discovered in connection with the Upanishads and the Vedanta.

Although, then, as already noticed, the Gita often speaks as though the Supreme being were one without difference with the individual self, its own distinctive position, as indicated by its predominantly moral and religious character, is that the Supreme Being is distinct from the individual whom He pervades and controls.

In conclusion we may say that the deity as revealed in the Gita appears to be one who, though in His transcendent aspect He is essentially unknown, is revealed in His relation to the universe as Supreme self or person, possessed of wonderful power and excellences. All that exists, matter and souls, form a part of Him and He is one aspect of Himself brings them into existence, pervades, governs and withdraws them into Himself. Though containing, supporting and pervading all things, He does not share in their evil nature, nor is He polluted by His relationship to them. He is the principle of consciousness which exists in all individuals, but He is not responsible for their actions. "Hindu mythology, like all other mythologies has its starting point the one great God, the Father of all other Gods, the background and container of all, eternal and self existent." (Ibid : 20) He is characterized by
righteousness and incarnates Himself from time to time to establish it. He institutes the rule that righteousness should be rewarded and evil punished, whether in this birth or in others. He is also characterized by grace. He loves all being alike, whether good, bad or indifferent but more especially His devotees whom He wishes to possess completely. Nothing therefore delights Him so much as their wholehearted devotion. He is pleased with those who with mind centred on Him seek to gain Him by strenuous discipline, unselfish work, knowledge or simple devotion. He gives of His grace to even the most undeserving so that they may come to Him quickly and freeing them from sin, he finally takes them to Himself, to eternal peace, bliss and perfection, never again to return to the weary cycle of birth and deaths.

Thus in the Gita we have found certain doctrines which go a considerable distance in the direction of moral indifference, determinism and ultimate pessimism and do much to counteract the influence of the healthy ethical tendency, the assertion of moral freedom and the elevated religious ideal which we find in much of the rest of its teaching. "We feel that the Gita has not fully reckoned with the dualism which is either the inevitable consequence of pantheism or is made more acute by pantheism. Neither has it fully reckoned with pantheism itself." (Urauhart 1982 : 403)

It has admitted a secret enemy into its own household of faith and allowed its highest religious influence to be impaired. Success will not be attained by simply putting the theistic ideal alongside of the ideal of abstract pantheism. The fundamental error of the latter must be laid bare. It must be shown that we cannot acquiesce in a facile identification of God with the world, or in a — perhaps less facile — merging of the world in God, if we are to have any secure foundation for morality, progress and religion. For idea of deliverance must substitute the ideal of salvation and the salvation not only for the individual but for the world. In the Gita there is much to give us hope but also much to cause us to despair and amongst the cause of despair the chief place is occupied by pantheistic inheritance we have been considering.

The influence of pantheistic ideas after the period of the Gita and the law of Manu must be studied in close connection with polytheistic development. We have to turn our attention away from philosophy to popular religion and we find ourselves in the presence of the beginnings of modern Hinduism. During the second four hundred years of the Christian era there was no philosophy or philosophical religion of
outstanding importance to put over again the traditional polytheism. Buddhism had lost its force and Brahmanism was only beginning to regain sometime of its former importance. Its power was closely connected with a more or less genuinely receptive attitude towards the god of the popular polytheism of the period. At the same time this polytheism could not be treated in entire separation from the traditional philosophy or from the reconstruction of it at the hands of Kumarila and Sankara, the results of whose labours were making themselves apparent in general thought. Consequently, in any attempt at religious expression we shall expect to find a combination of pantheism and polytheism. This combination would be no new thing. It was evident in the universalizing of the nature-gods of the Vedas and the coexistence and interconnection of philosophical and popular beliefs may be traced right down through the literature. J. Gonda talks about Vedas, “one of the popular features of Vedism is the occurrence and celebration in pairs of number of deities whose names are often joined in the form of that special kind of dual compound which has sometime been styled ‘Go Hendvandva.” (Gonda 1972 : 5) Such a synthesis again appears in the Puranas. We should notice, in passing that the synthetic relation between pantheism and polytheism may be due not merely to historical causes but to an intrinsic connection.

The Puranas are sometimes described as a fifth Veda but they are not very serious treatises either religiously or philosophically. They are eighteen in number and are usually assigned to the period between the sixth and the sixteenth centuries. They are a mixture of crude mythological cosmogonies, legends of Gods and heroes, ritual and social regulations. They are usually devoted to the cult of one particular deity of the Hindu pantheon and speak in no moderate terms in condemnation of those who fail to accord due worship to this special object of worship. The best known of the Puranas and the most influential at the present day are the Bhagavata and Vishnu Purana. These probably owe there modern popularity to a portion which they have practically in common, viz, an account of the youthful days of Krishna, forming the tenth book of the former purana and the fifth book of the latter. The account in the Vishnu purana is slightly more abridged than in the Bhagavata Purana.
We may select the Vishnu Purana for slightly more detailed examination. It is divided into six books, of which the first gives an account of the creation of the universe, which account is mainly drawn from Sankhya sources. The second gives a description of earth, especially of the region of Bharatavarsa, of the seven regions of Patala, under the earth, of the different hells, the Sun, the moon, and the planets, concluding with the legend of Bharata. One of the most important parts of this book is the fourteenth chapter, in which Bharata expounds the nature of existence and the means of identification with the Supreme Spirit. Of the third book the first two chapters treat of the Manus and the Manwantaras, the doctrine the four ages being introduced at the end of the second chapter. This gives opportunity for a description of the functions of Vishnu during the four ages. In the Krita age he is the imparter of wisdom; in the Treta age he is the universal monarch; in the Dwapara age he promulgates the four Vedas; and at the end of the Kali age he is expected to appear as Kalki; for the purpose of bringing back the wicked to the paths of righteousness. The next four chapters are occupied with legends about the promulgation of the Vedas and the next ten mainly with minute regulations as to the duties of the four castes, the duties peculiar to the four conventional periods of life, together with particulars of birth, marriage and funeral ritual. The last two chapters are polemical. The seventeenth gives an account of the strife between the gods and the demons. The gods are delivered by means of prayer addressed to Vishnu, who provides them with an illusory form by which Daityas or demons are to be deceiver. In the concluding chapter the illusory form turns out to be Buddha, who, teaching skeptical and contradictory doctrines, spread heresies amongst the demons and converts them to the Jain and Buddhist faiths. The demons are thus induced to lay aside the armour of religion and become an easy prey to the assaults of the gods.

Book IV contains accounts of the solar and lunar dynasties and Book V is mainly devoted to the story of Krishna. In the sixth and last book there is a renewed consideration of the theory of the four ages. The disabilities of the Kali age are dwelt upon, but at the same time it is allowed to have creation redeeming features, and the authors point out that, whatever our external lot may be, devotion to Vishnu is sufficient for salvation. Salvation, however, is of a negative character, for, whether in infancy, manhood or old age, the world of our experience is full of suffering, and even the happiness of heaven is imperfect. So we must rise through the various
stages of Yoga, or contemplative devotion, meditating on the individual and universal forms of Vishnu, until we reach the perfect knowledge and the final liberation which it brings.

The Vishnu Puranas, as its name implies and as its contents show, is devoted to the praise of Vishnu. By this time Vishnu had become the most important member of the Hindu trinity, the member of which are usually given as Vishnu, Siva and Brahman. "In the Puran Brahman is the first of the trinity as the creator of the Universe, with Vishnu as protector and Siva as destroyer." (Devi 1938 : 210) Brahman is by no means of equal importance with the other two. He is usually regarded as merely an emanation of Siva or Vishnu and in later times worship of him gives place to the worship of the female manifestations of the essence of Siva. Even Siva, however, had to waive his claims in favour of Vishnu and his many incarnations, such as Rama, Krishna. The Purana represents an extreme sectarian attitude. Vishnu is identified with the All and the followers of the other gods are regarded as heretics, unless indeed they are willing to regard the gods worshipped by them as wholly subordinate allies of Vishnu, dependent on him for their existence and protection.

What chiefly interests us, however, is the method and stages of the Vishnu's glorification. This seems to be brought about by the application of pantheistic ideas. Such a pantheistic tendency is certainly not confined to the Vishnu Puranas but is a characteristic of this whole class of literature. The doctrine of pantheism – the identification of God and the universe – is another principle which the Puranas most unequivocally and resolutely maintain. Vishnu or Siva or Sakti, whatever individual they undertake to glorify is not only the remote and efficient but the proximate and substantial cause of the world. In this connection Nagendra Kumar Singh says, "pantheism is a high level metaphysical theory whose sources lie in philosophical inquiry and speculation." (1997 : 238) Romesh Chandra Dutta emphasizes the negative aspect of the puranic pantheism.

It has sometimes been pointed out that it is to the infusion of this pantheistic tendency that we may attribute the chief distinction between Vedic and Puranic deities. The Puranic deities are the lineal descendants of certain members of the
Vedic pantheon, Siva being identifiable with the Rudra of the Vedas and Vishnu occupying a minor position in the Vedas under his own name. There are also many general similarities between the Vedic and the Puranic deities but the elemental character of the Vedic gods is more strongly marked and though the puranas indicate a return to the worship these or similar gods, it is a return under the influence of more absorbent pantheistic ideas. In connection with Ved, Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya says, "Vedanta tells you this world is like a mirror – house and all these bodies are like different mirrors and your true Atma or real self is reflected on all sides, just as the dog saw his figure reflected from the four walls. Just so does the one Infinite Atma, the one Infinite Divinity, the Infinite power, reflect itself in the different mirror." (1963 : 155 – 156) Thus Vedanta bears the pantheistic ideology. In the Puranas the individual gods are of minor importance. Above them there is the Supreme Being and if at times this Supreme Being appears in a triple manifestation, the trinity soon disappears and either Vishnu or Siva is identified with the All. Vishnu seems to have been peculiarly susceptible to pantheistic treatment, especially of a negative character. He has indeed been described as the sectarian aspect of the Vedanta system. On this account the Vishnu Purana may, with special appropriateness, be studied for the purpose of tracing the influence of Vedantic pantheism in the Puranic age.

We have already alluded generally to the pantheistic colouring of the method by which Vishnu is elevated to Supreme rank. Vishnu is the source of all. Compounded of the three qualities he is the cause of creation, preservation and destruction, the parent of nature, intellect and other ingredients of the universe. The Parasara address in the beginning of the second chapter is more uncompromising in its pantheism. The world not only emanates from Vishnu, but is identified with him. Vishnu is the one universal nature. He is the root of the world and in him consists the world. After the manner of Vedanta, he is represented as composed of contradictory qualities. He is both subtle and corporeal, indiscriminate and discrete, the support of all things and the smallest of the small. But, throughout, there is unity of essence; in him is the whole world interwoven and from him and in him is universe. The divine Hari is the cause of all things by successive developments. As all the parts of future plant, existing in the seed of rice, spontaneously evolve, when they are in approximation with the subsidiary means of growth, so gods, men, and other things, involved in
many action, become manifested in their full growth through the influence of the energy of Vishnu. The commendable story of Prahlada is that he has learnt to adore Vishnu in a pantheistic manner as the universal cause of causes who pervades all the religions of the universe. He forgot entirely his own individuality and was conscious of nothing else than his being the inexhaustible, eternal, supreme soul and in consequence of the efficacy of this conviction of identity, the imperishable Vishnu, whose essence is wisdom, became present in his heart, which was wholly purified from sin.

With the help of the Vishnu purana we have been tracing the universalizing pantheistic process in connection with Vishnu. We may now turn our thought in the other direction and try to realize the logical, if not temporal, transition from pantheism to polytheism — from the conception of God as the All to the worship of gods many.

We may here point out certain characteristic of the polytheism which existed and still exists along side of the elevated religious and pantheistic tendency to be found in the Vedanta and to a much lesser extent, in some portions of the Purans. We have already alluded to the Trimurti — the Hindu trinity — Brahma, Vishnu and Siva — the creator, the preserver and the destroyer Of these Vishnu was seen to be the most important and to lend himself most readily to the universalizing tendency. He is described as "Lord Vishnu is called ‘Narayan’ meaning the one who dwells in water. Nara means water and ayan is the place of dwelling. Life is supposed to have come out of water and to sustain it water is an absolute necessity. Therefore, Narayan is an absolute necessity as the main one of the Holy Trinity." (Bahadur 2001 : 11) Siva is more sectarian. His character was the most complex amongst the three aspects of the ‘Unmanifest Supreme lords.’ He is at once merciful and dreadful, most benevolent and most ruthless when angry. He is also described "as an ascetic, light in color except for a blue throat, often with four arms and a third eye. He carries a trident, a drum, often of bow and a club with a skull attached to it." (Johnson 1972 : 41) Brahman is the lord of creation. He is usually pictured with four heads representing the four quarters of the earth and his heads usually face four direction. He is also the god of wisdom and is shown carrying the Vedas in one of his four hands. "In connection with of the Vadic period we have Brahman of the Puran who is also described as seated on the leaf of a lotus and not on a full — blown lotus
blossom as is the current custom. Brahman is our Fire-God but is also the recognised creating energy of the Trinity." (A recluse of Vindhyachala 1999 : 55)

Though apparently it seems that there is a conflict between pantheism and polytheism but pantheism is really a secret friend of polytheism, encouraging and sustaining it. There is, therefore, no need either of the elevation of love or the reformation of wrath. An understanding may easily become to between forces which are not opposed to one another. A close interpretation of Indian mythology shows that there is one Supreme entity, Brahman who is given an elevated place above all God which is the most striking feature of pantheism. "Brahman was exalted above the Gods and the Gods were only the doors through whom Brahman might be attained." (Ghurye 1965 : 259)

Ramanuja is great figure in Indian religious sphere. He was born probably in the first half of the eleventh century. At an early age, he was placed under the tuition of Yadavaprakasa who belonged to the Advaitic School of Samkara. His characteristic independence of judgment soon brought him into conflict with his teacher with whom he could not agree in the interpretation of sacred texts. According to Ramanuja Brahman is not mere thought but highest self. He has for His essential attributes thought, bliss and freedom from evil. "For Ramanuja the natural world is not simply an appearance to be dispelled by the higher knowledge of the one. Rather the sentiment and non sentiment matter that forms the universe is the body of God. Just as the individual soul pervades the individual physical body, so does Vishnu or God, pervades all souls and the entire natural world." (Rinehart 2004 : 355) He is characterized by every perfection and above all by love. The world and all that is their in are real and completely dependent on him. He is their cause in the sense that he holds them within Himself in subtle form prior to world creation, and then by His body in the sense that thought animated, sustained and controlled by Him for His own ends, their change and imperfections do not in any was affect His own essential nature. They are His attributes or modes in the sense that, though distinct from Him, they can have no existence apart from Him. Of the constituent elements of the world, matter exists entirely for the sake of souls, Brahman not sharing in its evil nature but employing it in order to mete out to them pleasure and pain in accordance with their deeds so that He may lead them to Himself. Souls are true individuals whom He
loves and who share the perfections of His nature but who owing to their own deeds are imperfect. In His grace He seeks to lead them to a life of perfection and complete devotion to Himself and when they have once attained it He will never allow them to be separated from Him again.

This in brief is the conception which Ramanuja seeks systematically to uphold. Sankara, another great religious figure in Indian mythology, had developed a view that the world is nothing but mere illusion though he considered that there is one reality that is Brahman. Here lies a basic difference between Sankara and Ramanuja who thought Brahman as soul, world as body, Brahman as cause, world as effect. On the basis of the Upanishad and other ancient text, Sankara developed the view that in truth there is but one reality. It is known in the Upanishads as Brahman, the Ultimate. He held that the world that is experienced in everyday life as a world of infinite diversity is the world of mere appearance.” (Ibid : 353)

The pantheistic tendency is also found through the nineteenth century and during the early years of the twentieth century. At that period the Brahman Samaj was established by Kashab Chandra Sen and it bears the pantheistic features because they did not believe the worship of idol and they believed that there is one Supreme entity that pervades the entire universe. After this Samaj got a strong basis by the great man like Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, Rabindranath Tagore and created a terrible sensation in the cultural society of India. Many people at that period accepted their ideology and become Brahman. They thought that the whole universe is the dwelling place of God, so there is no need to worship Him in a particular form. “To the Hindu, the universe is his temple and so every object in it has a divine nature. If universe is a divine creation then there is nothing in it that is not divine and no form of worship that is false.” (Bedi 1998 : 9)

Sri Ramkrishno and his disciple Vivekananda played a vital role in Indian religious movement. Though Ramkrishna was a great devotee of Kali, he had belief in monotheism. He told that Krishno and Kali are the same entity of God. We worship Him in different names and manifestations. From this viewpoint we find that people of India would like to worship god in human form and when they go to the temple, they visualize that stony idol as sometime their own daughter, their father, their
universally present in all the finite beings. As there appears to be a gap between the finite and the infinite, to explain the idea of God involves some difficulty. But man, instead of stepping back, went ahead and gave explanation.” (Behera 2002 : 106)
The Religion of India is thus characterized as being polytheistic but these innumerable deities are only manifestation of the Brahman or Supreme spirit who can take any form. This has resulted in the essentially secularly and tolerant nature of Indian religion. At long last it can be said “that the secret behind the universality of the idea of God is man himself, being of the Divine origin – a part of God. If each man would realize that he is a part of God, and whole heartedly seek to reach that Divine reality – God, then instead of strife and discord among men, there would be only peace and accord.” (Ibid : 116)

Thus Indian religion is apparently polytheism by nature but it is pantheistic to the core. They believe that all living creature has their origin from Brahman, that Supreme spirit that is immeasurable, unperishable and infinite and that knows no death and birth.

B. Western Concept of Pantheism

The word ‘pantheism’ has come from a Greek word and if the word is divided into two words ‘Pan’ and theism’ the concept of ‘pantheism’ would be clear. ‘Pan’ means all and ‘theism’ indicates God, so pantheism is that philosophy that denotes the supreme spirit that pervades the entire universe. "Pantheism, then, being a term derived from two Greek words signifying 'all' and 'God', suggests to a certain extent its own meaning. Thus, if atheism be taken to mean a denial of the being of God, pantheism is its extreme opposite; because pantheism declares that there is nothing but God." (Picton 1914 : 8) It must be admitted that pantheism is not easy to define precisely. Pantheism needs not be a variety of materialism and if its materialistic it includes a high view of the worth of matter. Yet pantheism has served as a term of abuse and another term for theism and materialism and deism terms bearing quite different senses.
Within pantheistic perspective, God is not conceived as transcending the universe and so is not thought of as creator or providence, cause of the world though distinct from it, an agent who affects history, or a comprehending hearer of prayer and receive of worship. Monotheism means by world roughly 'whatever exist besides God' and this makes possible its claim that the world depends for its existence on God while God exists independently. Pantheism means by 'world' simply 'all there is' with nothing left over and hence resects any creator / creature distinction. From monotheistic standpoint this is atheism, however, valuable the pantheist may conceive everything, or each thing, to be.

In contrast with polytheism, pantheism views nature as coming under the control of various beings, each with limited capacities and knowledge. Polytheistic deities are god and goddess of limited capacities but they are typically conceived as possessing a transcendence of nature incompatible with pantheism. "Further, Pantheism is a radical type of thing, however many and diverse its interlocking elements and one fundamental kind of thing." (Craig 1998 : 202) Thus not only the distinction between creator and creation in which the former transcends the latter but such distinction as soul and body, concrete and abstract, and immaterial and material, seen as identification of kinds of things such that anything belonging to one kind cannot belong to other, are rejected.

Then it is necessary to describe the two routes to Pantheism. If B depends for its very existence on A then B is a part of A or B is in some other manner not a distinct being from A. Then one would have started as a monotheist and ended as a pantheist. This process will be helped alone if one also thinks that if B depends for its very existence on A, then for any quality A that B has, B has A only because A causes B to have A. Monotheism plus determinism plus the view that dependence rules out distinctness will yield pantheism. This is one route. A different possible route goes in the opposite direction. If one believes that everything that exists depends every movement for its existence on something else, that everything that exists is valuable by virtue of simple existing that dependence rules out distinctness, then one will presumably conclude that there exists but one organic thing and that one thing is valuable. If one thinks very highly of its value, one may express one's view by saying that it is divine, using divine in some such sense as 'possesses the height
possible value. It is perhaps in this attitude that pantheism contrasts with atheism, in so far as there is a contrast.

Now it is better to explain how the philosophers of the west describe pantheism and show various attitude about God. Plato was the first philosopher in the West to conceive of god in a very special manner. He thinks God as the architect of the world. "This idea looks odd on the face of it, but is not really so; because, where from a philosopher can take his conception except from human experience? And what does human experience disclose?" (Srinivasan 1981 : 12) It divulges man as the make of certain objects which serves his purpose; he makes them out of some given material according to a plan or model he has in the mind. But there are several other objects in the universe which man cannot make; these are all natural objects. In fact, man along with the other creatures in the world, is such an object among natural objects. Hence the question necessarily arises whether there should be a maker, an architect for all these objects of the world or not? Plato's answer is 'yes', and such a God is a cosmic architect. But he too needs models are called eternal ideas, perfect essences or archetypes by Plato. An archetype is different from the architect who uses it as a model. An archetype is also different from any natural object since it is pure form unlike the natural object, an eternal essence unlike a temporal existence. Thus we find in Plato's philosophy an anthropomorphic idea of God derived almost on the pattern of human experience. Moreover, even though God is related to the essences and the existents, he is different from both. Plato thought it was possible to think of them as related without reducing them to each other. The merits of this way of thinking came to be recognised much later in the history of western thought.

But the immediate reaction to Plato was something different. It came from no other than his own student, Aristotle. Aristotle wanted to closely follow the philosophical view of finally reducing all the related entities to a single entity. This is known as monism according to which 'to be related means to be united,' and that means to be numerically 'one'. So stated the monistic view seems to be queer no doubt, but as philosophy advanced, further refinement both in thought and expression set in and the same came to be expressed in a more logically acceptable manner.
The framework of Plato's philosophy disclosed a triangular type of dualism at three points — between essence and existence, between essence and God and between God and temporal existence. Plato has regarded pure essences as eternal and had considered them alone as real as distinguished from the temporal existents which were regarded as the created images or appearances of the essences. "Thus, for Plato, what was eternal was real, and what was temporal was unreal." (Ibid : 14) This maxim moulded the formation of many subsequent idealistic systems of thought. But, it was regarded as a strange reversal of truth by many philosophers who were more realistic in their approach.

Aristotle was the first philosopher to disagree with Plato on this point. He could point out that the essences, though eternal, still lacked reality in themselves and were mere abstraction, they could be considered as real only in their manifest form as concrete temporal existents. Aristotle could not also agree with any dualism or gap between God and the eternal essences. Taking his clue from the idea of the good which Plato had regarded as the apex or the height essence, Aristotle rejected the conception of the plurality of ultimate independent essences or form and identified God himself with the pure form expressing itself in the world of material objects.

Thus, being dissatisfied with Plato's dualistic conception of God, Aristotle sought to replace it by a monistic conception with what little success he could. He identified God with pure form and also emphasized the immanence of form in the material world. But where does this lead him to? Back to the platonic position without much difference. For, eventhough Aristotle emphasized the immanence of form in matter, he did not identify them; such identification, if attempted, would deny the distinct reality of form itself and make matter all-important. Aristotle was not prepared to accept this conclusion, for he regarded form as more fundamental in principle, as that would explain matter in terms of its evolution, value and meaning. Hence he accepted finally the reality of the form independent of matter. This is Aristotle's God which no less transcendent than Plato's. Thus Plato's dualistic conception of God repeats itself in Aristotle's philosophy in spite of the initial difference between them.
With the advent of Christianity, the philosophical conception of God came to be influenced by religious faith. The existence of God became more a matter of faith than of reason; even when reason was used, it was used mostly as a handmaid of faith. This approach to God through faith centered round the concept of creation. In Greek Philosophy, it was believed that creation could not take place out of nothing, since nothing comes out of nothing and this principle made the dualism between God and the primal stuff inevitable as was made evident in the Aristotelian dualism of form and matter. A sharp deviation from this principle was made in medieval philosophy, which, in accordance with the Christian faith, affirmed that God created the world out of nothing. It is difficult for the human intellect to explain how this could be done. But what is inexplicable or inconceivable to the human intellect need not necessarily be impossible for God. Divine creation is in this sense a mystery. This was the general stand taken by the medieval philosopher and it removed the dualism between God and any other original stuff or material out of which the world could be created. But between God and the world itself, the dualism still persisted, since the creator has never been one and the same, by implication. Infact, this kind of dualism between God as the creator and man as the creature was of basic importance in Christian faith which believed in redemption.

Since the emphasis was on faith in preference to reason in medieval times, practice was considered to be more important than ratiocination, and faith came to be looked upon as the means of knowledge. Direct communion with God came to be stressed in the place of indirect theoretical knowledge about God and God came to be regarded as a truth revealed through mystic intuition. The medieval times accordingly produced philosophers such as St. Augustine, St. Anselm and St. Thomas Aquineas who claimed personal knowledge in their experience. For them, God was a revealed truth which they could directly intuit as a result of their intense faith. Faith would thus lead them to mystic intuition, in which God would reveal himself to them. What could not be proved by means of reasoning could thus be directly intuited or felt and in this sense, intuition was considered to be a higher organ of knowledge than reason. Reason was considered only as secondary and its role was one of the justification of religious faith and authority. Nevertheless reason did operate with sufficient intensity during the medieval times and the result was the proofs which it could put forth in support of God's existence. The most important of
these proofs was the ontological proof of St. Anselm which was late more systematically developed by Descartes in his rationalist philosophy.

We find a shift of emphasis from faith to reason with the dawn of modern philosophy. Descartes was the first rationalist philosopher who sought to free philosophy from the shackles of religious dogmatism. His was an attempt to construct a system of philosophy purely on the foundations of reason. Sense experience is often found deceptive and no indubitable conclusion can be based upon it. Pure reason, on the other hand, can function independent of sense experience and can yield indubitable conclusions. Such operation of reason can be found in mathematics which is hence regarded as an exact science. "Descartes therefore sought to model his philosophy on the pattern of mathematics." (Ibid : 19)
The certain truth which mathematics contains is of two kinds, the self evident truth and the demonstrable truths. Descartes believed that the existence of God could not be regarded as a self-evident truth, but also as a demonstrable truth. A demonstrable truth must be based upon proof and the proof must be of a mathematical nature; it must be shown to be conclusion, logically deducible from a self-evident truth or axiomatic proposition. Thus, to establish the existence of God as a demonstrable certainty, Descartes had to start with certain self-evident truths, regarded as clear and distinct in themselves and not requiring any other proof of own veracity. It was not difficult for Descartes to discover such self-evident truths to start with. The first self-evident truth which he could easily discover was the existence of the self itself. For, the existence of the self as the doubter could not be doubted while the existence of anything else like God or the world could be doubted. The existence of the self, is in this sense, an indubitable certainty, since any attempt to doubt its existence would involve us in obvious self contradiction. This self-evident truth was expressed by Descartes in his well-known statement, 'cogito, Ergo Sum' (I think, therefore, I am).

But the self is not empty; it contains idea within, itself. Of these, some ideas are adventitious coming from the external material objects, their validity is as dubitable as the essence of the material objects from which they seem to be coming, some other ideas are innate to the self, not coming from the external world; these ideas have an intrinsic validity of their own and their truth is as indubitable as the
existence of the self itself. Descartes mentions two such innate ideas which are relevant to his proof of the existence of God.

One such innate idea is the idea of a perfect being. Descartes argues that this idea logically implies the actual existence of God or a perfect being, since without the implication of actual existence, the idea of perfection would be inconceivable. This is known as the ontological proof for the existence of God which was later criticized by Kant.

Another innate idea equally clear and distinct is the idea of causality. Descartes rejects the view that the idea of causality is generated out of our experience in the world. On the other hand, he maintains that the idea of causality is already and always present in the self since its birth and it is only applied by the self to the occurrence of events in the world for the purposes of understanding them. The idea of causality should however be applied not only to the external events in the world but also to the ideas within the self. Most of these ideas, being adventitious in character, can be supposed to have been produced by the external objects whose existence is yet to be proved. But the idea of a perfect being is not an adventitious idea; it is an innate idea; it must have been implanted in the self right from its birth, it must have a cause in this sense. For, nothing can come into existence either in the self or outside, without a cause. That every thing must have a cause, is thus another innate idea discovered in the self along with the innate idea of God and it is as clear and distinct as the idea of God. If so, what could be the cause of the idea of God? Here we are dealing with an idea which is unique, the idea of God is the idea of a perfect being when has the height possible meaning and reality in it. Therefore it cannot be supposed to have been produced by anything finite or less potential. For, according to Descartes the idea of causality, not only means that everything must have a cause but also that the cause must have at least as much potentiality or reality in itself as the effect. This second part of the causal truth should concern us here. For, it rules out the possibility of regarding the finite entities of the world as the cause of the idea of God. The only possibility logically left over is the affirmation of God as the cause of the idea of God in the self. For, none but the infinite can cause the idea of the infinite and this is known as the causal argument for the existence of God.
The ontological and the casual proofs for the existence of God are of special significance in Descartes philosophy, since he followed in them his method of mathematical deduction. In other words, in these proofs, he did not seek to establish God's existence on the basis of the world whose existence was yet to be proved but strictly adhered to his premises and tried to followed his rationalist method consistently. But once the existence of God was so established, it was easy for Descartes to establish the existence of the world is a 'real' world; otherwise, God would have to be regarded as a deceiver all the while deceiving the self by the creation of the illusion of a world; this would be contradictory to the nature of the perfection of God. Thus the reality of the world was established by Descartes on the basis of the honesty of God and this was an affirmation of the world as a demonstrable certainty on the basis of the existence of God which was already established as a demonstrable certainty.

In addition to the ontological and the causal proofs for the existence of God, Descartes also systematically expounded the cosmological proof. But this proof is based upon the existence of the world unlike the ontological and the causal proofs and therefore will be valid in his system only in so far as the existence of the world can be taken to be already proved.

The cosmological proof can be stated in two ways; (1) everything in the world has a cause and therefore the world as a whole must have a cause. This cause can be no other than God, since God alone, an infinite being can be the cause of an infinite universe. (2) Everything in the world is only an effect of a cause but that cause in its own turn will be an effect of some other cause and so on ad infinitum. This leads us to an infinite series of causes which becomes logically inconceivable; therefore, God must be posited as the uncaused cause of all the events in the world.

It was Spinoza's presupposition that the existence of God was self-evident and needed no empirical proof or demonstration. "He has been hailed as one of their leaders by the mystics and by those who lay stress on abandonment to the divine as the chief element in religion." (Urquhart 1982 : 546) He designated God as substance and expressed the truth about substance in the form of a self-evident truth or axiom from which the world of truth could be derived as a matter of logical
certainty. The mathematical method which was accepted by Descartes came to be used more rigorously by Spinoza. While Descartes regarded only the individual self which was subjective as self-evident, Spinoza regarded God or substance which was objective and universal as self-evident. Thus, for Spinoza God was not an objective demonstrable truth, but an objective self-evident or axiomatic truth. This approach to the question of the existence of God endowed Spinoza's philosophy with a mystic beginning and orientation which we do not find in Descartes' philosophy. But what is more important for our present purpose is that it did mark a definite advance in man's claim to the knowledge of God's existence.

Spinoza defined substance as that which exists in itself and is conceived through itself. This definition is indeed stated very carefully. For, what is implies is only that there is existence, reality or being designated as substance or God and no further predication of any quality or attribute to it. When any such predication is made, no doubt, it requires demonstration as following logically from the definition of substance. But the existence of substance or reality itself does not need any such demonstration, since it is the ground of all such predications. In this sense, the existence of God or substance is self-evident since without reference to it no prediction, no philosophical utterance or speech would be possible. "He is himself the universe within which the distinction and differences constituting the world obtain." (Roth 1929: 71)

It is to be noted that Spinoza thinks that God and nature are identical, the more we know mature, the more we know God. "To Spinoza, God and nature are one but Nature which is God is far wider than the world of our experience." (Ibid: 64) He thanks that God is not a spirit or soul that pervades the entire atmosphere but He himself is the universe. What seems dead to one is alive to God and what seems illogical to us is logical to God. Thus God has such a transcendental power which the common people cannot comprehend. Spinoza did not use the words substance and God in different sense but used them synonymously. He could hence speak of substance both in personal and impersonal terms. This is a point worthy to be remembered while considering Spinoza's conception of God. However, once Spinoza's definition of substance is accepted, certain implications would follow format and this implication may be made clear.
As we can see, the definition has two parts—"That which exists in itself" and "that which can be conceived through itself." The former stands for independence in existence and the later for independence in knowledge. That means, the former part of the definition implies that substance or God is uncaused and eternal, the latter part implies that it is one without a second, an Infinite which can be known only through itself and not by relation to anything else. "Call it by what name you will, universe or God or the one .......... " (Alexander 1920 : 342) Substance or God which is infinite in character is necessarily indeterminate.

However, a fundamental question would arise at this point. If substance or God is indeterminate, how can we explain its relation to the world which is full of determinate objects, including man? Spinoza's description of substance as indeterminate lends itself to two interpretations one is to regard substance as purely attributeless; the attributelessness of substance would make it impersonal in character, disconnect it from the world by nullifying me latter and yield totally an 'cosmic' view of the world. It is very difficult for us to say whether Spinoza wholly subscribed to such a view. Hence the other interpretation of the indeterminate character of substance is attempted and that is to regard it as having, not a limited number of attributes but an infinite number of attributes. This interpretation makes it possible for Spinoza to conceive of substance as God in personal terms, relate it to the world and thereby develop a cosmic view grounded in the premise of the infinite substance or God.

The implication of the second interpretation may be developed further. As substance or God is infinite, it attributes should also be infinite in number. But man being finite cannot understand all these attributes. He can understand only two of them — 'Thought' and 'Extension'. He can understand these two attribute, since he has in his own limited being their presence. Extension is present in him in the form of the physical body which is extended and 'Thought' is present in him as mind which is capable of thinking. 'Thought' and 'Extension' have however nothing in common between themselves and they are mutually independent of each other. But each of them consists of an infinite series of modes or particular entities and there is one-to-one correspondence between the two series. There is thus a corresponding
extension-mode for each thought - mode and this is called 'parallelism of attributes' in Spinoza’s philosophy. God is the source of parallel attributes in Spinoza’s philosophy and God is the substance from whom the whole world of logical ideas on the one hand and the physical entities on the other necessarily follow. "God is the cause of all that is, of existence as well as of essence." (Urquhart 1982 : 547) Thus, in Spinoza’s monistic philosophy of single substance, substance alone is independent whereas everything else is only a mode depending for its existence and function on the substance. Spinoza’s affirmation of God as the single source or ground of the universe, thus reduces freedom of man to an illusion. "God is transcendent to any and everyone of the parts of nature because he is the whole of nature itself." (Roth 1929 : 74) Thus, Spinoza accepted only one substance and that was God. Mind and matter, in the form of Thought and Extension are the attributes of one substance.

David Hume was a sceptic. His scepticism was the result of his empiricism. But he did not accept empiricism in the wide sense of term but restricted its meaning to sensationalism. Accordingly, he could not regard any thing as real unless it was directly presented to the mind as a sensation. Mind itself was nothing more than a series of sensation which could produce a feeling of self – identity or permanence owing to their own rapidity of succession and association. Therefore, nothing apart from the sensations could be regarded as real. In such a philosophy, God could be least real, since there was not even the remotest possibility of having a sensation of God. Thus, while Berkeley affirmed God as an infinite source of all sensations, Hume demanded a sensation of God himself which he could not find. Hence he had to deny the existence of god within the framework of his philosophy. Hume’s denial of God was thus the result of his sensationalism and it was a matter of philosophical compulsion for him because of his sensationalist stand point.

But Hume knew that God was essentially an object of religious faith and that his philosophical criticism would not affect it in the least. Not was it his intention to dislodge the human religious faith in God, his intention was only to point out that such faith had no philosophical basis. Thus arose the gulf between religious practice and philosophical theory which Hume did not deny. He did not think that it should be the business of any adequate empirical philosophy to discover the source and
justification for the common human practices such as the religious and the moral. Hume’s denial of God repeated itself in Kant’s critical philosophy. He also believed that God would neither be perceived nor conceived if there was no sensation of God.

Hegel could see the main point of Kant’s criticism that from the idea of God the actual existence of God could not be inferred. He could also see that this criticism perhaps would not arise if there were no dualism or gap between the idea and existence. “Hegel is above all things a monist. His immediate philosophical problem was to get rid of the dualism of Kant and to find some place, within a unitary system, for that uncomfortable thing in itself.” (Urquhart 1982: 582) Hegel thought that the best course would be to shift our attention from the individual to the cosmos and affirm an identity between ‘Thought’ and ‘Reality’ at the cosmic plane. This shift of emphasis resulted in Hegel’s Absolutism which is regarded as the culmination of Western Idealism.

According to this view, the ‘Idea’ is the basic reality which evolves into the different levels of existence in the universe in a dialectical manner. According to Hegel, the dialectic is the method in which reason works through the steps of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, the same is the manner of evolution of the different levels of existence in the universe and hence Hegel considered ‘Reality’ as rational.

But, now the question arises whether the ‘Idea’ which evolves into the universe is God. Hegel’s answer is not quite clear on this point. He says that the ‘Idea’ may be regarded as God, if God is considered without ‘self-consciousness.’ But God without self consciousness is no God, since God as conceived by the religious mind is a being who is conscious of himself as district form the worshipper, a being who not only creates the world but is also conscious of himself as the creator. These dualistic implications of the concept of God could not be ascribed to the basis ‘Ideal’ or the Absolute by Hegel because of his commitment to a monistic conception of the Universe. On the whole, it should, however be admitted that the distinction between God and the Absolute never clearly in Hegel’s philosophy as his interest were divided between a monistic philosophy on the one hand and dualistic form of religion on the other.
For the first time, in the history of western thought, a clear and emphatic distinction was made between God and the Absolute by F. H. Bradley in his well-known work ‘Appearance and Reality.’ Bradley’s distinction between appearance and reality is non-contradiction and accordingly, all that is self – contradictory is only an appearance. That means, if human thought finds itself constrained to make two opposite or mutually contradictory statements about anything then it cannot be accepted as real but only as an appearance. By applying this standard, Bradley comes to the conclusion that the whole world of objects including the categories like the self, the thing and quality, space and time, change or causality, is just an appearance.

Whatever is relational is therefore, an appearance and God is no exception. For, religious God cannot be conceived without being related to the worshipper in a mode of religious relation and therefore cannot be but an appearance. Thus by using purely a formal and logical criterion of reality and by using the word in a very specific sense, Bradley comes to the conclusion that religion and God are appearances. But, at the same time, he refuses to place God on a par with other appearance in the world if we can make distinction between appearances, we will have to admit, that even though God is an appearance, he has in him a much higher degree of reality than the other appearances; for that depends upon the degree of comprehensiveness of powers and attributes with which God is conceived in religion. "If I am forced to take reality as having ........... only one sense I must reply that God is not real at all, any more than you and I are real. Nothing to me in this sense is real except the universe as a whole, for I cannot take God as including or as equivalent to the entire universe ........ But if I am allowed to hold to degrees in reality ........... God to me is now so much more real than you or myself that to compare God’s reality with our would be ridiculous." (Bradley 1914 : 448)

The absolute alone is most comprehensive, all inclusive and therefore non-relational. "We cannot understand how in the Absolute a rich harmony embraces every special discord. But, on the other hand, we may be sure that this result is reached." (Bradley 1906 : 192) The non-relational Absolute should necessarily be impersonal or supra-personal, since anything personal would be a rational being. The personal God of religion is thus less than the impersonal Absolute and in fact,
he is only an appearance as distinguished from the non-relational Absolute which alone is real. The derogatory status which Bradley accorded to the personal God and the superior status which he ascribed to the impersonal Absolute soon provoked sharp criticism from several philosophers who obviously wanted to restore to the highest philosophical status to the personal God of religion. "It is an inversion of the true philosophic method to define the Absolute on the basis of the empty principle and from that definition to reason down to the various phases of our actual experience and to condemn its most characteristic features root and branch as "irrational appearance and illusion". (Pattison 1917: 230)

It has been already pointed out that Hegel's philosophy which did not clarify the distinction between God and the Absolute gave rise to two trends of philosophical thinking. The impersonal Absolutism which regarded God as an appearance was developed by Bradley while the personal Absolutism which regarded God as the Absolute was developed by thinkers like Lotze, T. H. Green and Royce.

The conception of the universe was for the first time most adequately expressed by Hermann Lotze in the history of European philosophy. The ultimate truth is not a bare law or order, not a bare infinite, but an Infinite manifesting itself in the various finites. The Infinite is prior neither temporally or logically to finite existence but is always beheld in and through the finite existents. The finite and the infinite are not separate entities which are to be welded together into a concrete whole; they are not two different terms to be related by an extrinsic relation, but are always inherent to each other, their concrete union which can be best conceived in terms of an organism, is the ultimate basis of all truth understanding of the nature of reality.

The certainty of self-existence always implies self-development and the self always experienced as a finite centre of activity within a whole of Reality which is the ground of it limited existence. Interaction between the finite things or selves finds a suitable explanation only on the postulate of an infinite living Being as the unitary ground of finite things. Thus, the unity between finite entities is not a bare extrinsic bond which combines several terms which would otherwise remain unrelated, but is
the very essence of every finite existent. The infinite unity is not divided through the finite differences, but is wholly present is every finite existent.

T. H. Green was another philosopher who thinks the Absolute in personal terms as God in his "Prolegomena To Ethics." Green thought that the Absolute being the cosmic self or God, its existence and nature could be best understood after the nature of the finite self. The finite self has an aspect of unity in it, in so far as it unifies our several experiences and holds them together; it has an aspect of multiplicity in it, in so far as it maintains the distinctness of each experience without confusing one for the other; it has an aspect of transcendence in it in so far as it can hold itself back both form the unity and the multiplicity of its experience and knows itself as their experiencing ground without being lost in any of its experiences.

What is true of the finite individual self should also be true of the cosmic self or God in so far as its constitution or structure is concerned. The infinite variety of objects and selves in the universe are all united in the cosmic self by means of certain universal laws and this is the aspect of unity within the cosmic self or God, at the same time, however, the uniqueness of each object or self is maintained by God and this is the aspect of multiplicity in God; but the Absolute also knows itself as distinct from the world of objects and selves which it unifies and this is the aspect of transcendence of the Absolute. There is thus similarity between the structures of the finite self and the cosmic self, the main difference between them being the objects unified in the cosmic self are concrete entities and not merely as in the case of the finite self.

The metaphysics of the Absolute as the Infinite self was more systematically developed by J. Royce in his work, 'The world and the individual.' For Royce, the Absolute is a real concrete whole and the concrete content of this whole is the world itself. Unlike Bradley, Royce would take his stand on the reality of common experience and not on abstract thought and the result would be an Absolute which would not appear as the world manifest itself as the world and include all such manifestation within itself as the real content of its own being.
But the question would be, how to conceive, such an Absolute? Is there any thing in our experience which would serve as the clue to our understanding of the nature of the Absolute? Royce's answer is that we can find no better clue than the finite individual self, with which each one of us is most intimately acquainted. This is obviously because the Absolute itself is a self, which includes within self the whole world just as the finite self includes many individual experiences. Perception or sensuous consciousness should be predicated of the Absolute, otherwise the Absolute would miss what the finite self possesses and would, thereby, become less perfect. In the words of Royce, "Unless the Absolute knows what we know when we endure and wait, when we love and struggle, when we long and suffer, the Absolute in so far is less and not more than we are." (Royce 1904: 364)

B. P. Browne designated his system as personalism. This was obviously because he wanted to emphasize the view that the self should be used as the key to the interpretation of the nature of reality; the self, in other words, would provide the specimen of what reality is in its structure and therefore would provide the right pattern for our understanding of structure of reality. This, in short, is the definition of personalism. "It also believes that anything to be real must be a self; a part or aspect of the self, a function or a result of it, in other words, nothing can be or be conceived without reference to a self. This is the standpoint of personalism and its criterion of reality." (Britman 1943:41) If we bear this in mind, it will immediately bring to our mind Browne's similarity to T. H. Green and Royce on the hand and his sharp difference from Bradley on the other.

Bowne's follower like A. C. Knudson, E. S, Brightman, G. A. Wilson etc. clarified and strengthened the theistic personalism of Browne by criticizing the stand point of Royce's Absolute personalism. "Their main contention against Absolute personalism was that the 'finite self' would be depersonalized and lose its selfhood when it came to be regarded as an idea within the Absolute." (Brown 1908: 34) Hence, in the interests of the self hood of the finites self, it had to be excluded from God, in which case God would not be the all inclusive Absolute, but only the creator of the universe.
Brown's difference from Bradley was conspicuous at the outset. His philosophical attitude or purpose itself was different from that of Bradley. While Bradley committed himself to the logical formula of non-contradiction as the criterion of reality, "Browne's purpose was to make the loftiest possible philosophical assumption in support of our deep rooted religious emotion." (Knudsen 1927 : 155) Browne believed that experience is deeper than logic and it would be most unfair to dismiss the basic religious experiences and beliefs of man as appearance from the standpoint of any logical standard. "The belief in the reality of the world implies no less an experiential truth, whose validity should not be denied from any limited logical standpoint; the finite self is the most immediate and self-evident truth of which we are in possession" (Bowne 1898 : 23) It would be absorbed to turn it into an appearance from the standpoint of an impersonal reality; in fact as Brown and his followers repeatedly emphasised, nothing higher than the nature of the self could be conceived by the human mind and hence the height reality conceivable would be God and not the impersonal Absolute.

According to Brown, God is a conscious and self conscious being since he knows himself as distinct from the world which he has created. He is an eternal and transcendent being, and yet the world of change and temporality is real for him since it is his own creation. The world being real, God also functions as the preserver and the guarantor of the values produced in it. Besides these, Browne also recognizes the traditional attributes of God such as omnipotence, omniscience, benevolence etc. "But now along comes the pantheist asserting that divinity is real but not a person." (Drabkin 1996 : 1) According to him, the self is active and constructive in knowledge, even though it receives the stimulations for the construction of knowledge from outside. The source of these stimulations which are in the form of sensation is God himself and they are constructed as meaningful objects by the finite self with the help of the categories it employs. In Bowne's theory of knowledge, the divine stimulations or sensations thus serve as the occasions for the construction of the knowledge of the material objects which are, no doubt, real as they are real constructions out of real data provided by God and constructed by a real self. This view of knowledge presented by Bowne is called 'occasional.' In Bowne's philosophy, the finite self which serves as the key to the understanding of reality is
itself a creation of God. God is said to create the finite self in his own image. Freedom is the core of self-hood and without it, the self cannot be conceived.

It is certainly to the credit of Bowne that he could establish a school of personality philosophy with a definite standpoint of its own in distinction from the monistic types of philosophy. Many became his admirers, especially because of the religious orientation of his philosophical thinking. But it is not necessary that an admirer should admire everything which the master has said; he may agree with him on certain fundamentals but differ from him on certain other important ill-use. This was especially true of E. S. Brightman who was in profound agreement with the personality premise as laid down by Bowne but took serious objection to the description of God as omnipotent and omniscient. Brightman’s objection was mainly based upon the presence of evil in the world and he thought it could never be reconceived with the supposed omnipotence and omniscience of God. For, if God were omniscient and omnipotent, he would have foreseen all the possibilities of evil – both moral and nature and prevented them. But the fact that evil does exist only shows that God is not omnipotent or omniscient but finite. Whatever be the source of evil, it implies an element of ‘resistance’ (Brightman 1930 : 113) and God being most benevolent to his creatures, constantly struggles to overcome evil without which the words good or God would become meaningless. Thus Brightman substitutes his conception of a benevolent struggling God." (Ibid: 134 – 135) to the conception of an omnipotent and omniscient God. But the question might arise whether the conception of a benevolent, finite God would be worthy of human worship. Brightman however claims that it is more worthy of love and worship than an omnipotent or powerful God who could have prevented evil, but who has not. Thus, benevolence becomes a much more fundamental attribute of God than power according to Britghtman.

In explaining the problem of evil, Brightman also does not accept the explanation offered by philosopher like Royce, Brown etc; that evil arises purely from a limited standpoint, but in the long run turns out to be merely incidental in the process of production of a much higher good in the universe. Brightman’s sharp criticism against such an explanation is most interesting. He points out that evil in the form of pain or suffering which an individual suffers is uniquely his and what is thus a
particular or specific reality cannot be denied or negated from a universal standpoint; the main issue of the problem of evil in the form a particular individual’s pain or suffering will itself be lost sight of by a shift of emphasis from the “individual to the universal.” (Bowne 1946: 244) and that will be most unfair according to Brightman in the school of personalism.

There were some philosopher who were not much concerned with the determination of the nature or attributes of God but with the relation, the bond of kinship which man should cultivate towards God. Soren Kierkegaard, the forefather of contemporary existentialism was such a philosopher. Kierkegaard firmly disagreed with Hegel’s Absolutism. For Kierkegaard, both man and God are real and the relation between them is also real. Existence belongs to man as much as to God, eventhough they may be enormous differences between them in their attributes like power, knowledge etc. “One proves God’s existence by worship ...... not by proofs.” (1941: 485) God can be regarded as infinite only in terms of his attributes, but not in terms of his existence, for the finite excludes from itself not only the other finite entities but also God and it is only such mutual exclusion between man and God which can make any religious relation between them real. This is the logical principle, which Kierkegaard accepts in emphasizing the distinct existence of man and God and the relation between them.

But how do we know that God exists at all? If this question means to demand that God’s existence should be proved as an objective certainty, Kierkegaard would reply that such proof is impossible and God shall therefore remain an objective uncertainty. But the existence of God cannot be rejected on that count. For as Kierkegaard would point out, an objective uncertainty can be transformed into a subjective certainty in an experiential truth which is to be realized in the interiorised consciousness. What is important here is the intensity and depth of consciousness which becomes effective enough to disclose God’s truth; God’s truth in this sense, is essentially a matter of how to be experienced and not a what to be objectively demonstrated. “An objective uncertainty held fast in an appropriation process of the most passionate inwardness is the truth, the highest truth attainable for an existing individual.” (Ibid : 182)
Kierkegaard draws an emphatic distinction between the authentic and the unauthentic types of human experience. The unauthentic existence is the pleasure-seeking or hedonistic type of existence, either at the practical or intellectual level without any sense of commitment or personal responsibility. He points out that the unauthentic existence leads to man's deterioration mainly through three stages—boredom, melancholy and despair. By engaging himself in a series of pleasure seeking acts and constantly changing from one to other, man finally finds no enduring satisfaction in anything and feels bore of the type of life he has been living. This is the sad picture of unauthentic existence and as an alternative to it, he suggests the authentic existence which is ethico-religious in character. Man's ethical life of freedom lived with a sense of personal responsibility is invariably linked with his sense of religious commitment to God, the creator who is the embodiment of compassion and righteousness.

Another philosopher who sought to support faith in God was William James, the famous well-known American thinker. But he went a step further than Kierkegaard and attempted to construct a philosophical system which very much resembled the theistic personalism of Bowne. The reality of the many and their relations, the activity of human consciousness, the freewill of the individual and the existence of God—all these received due emphasis in the pluralistic philosophy of James which was developed mainly as a critical reaction to the Absolutism of Royce and Brodley.

William Wordsworth finds God in all objects of nature. " .......... He was worshipper of nature, he was a pantheist and not a Christian, for a Christian worship God through Christ." (Mac Farland 1969 : 270 – 271) His pantheistic creed is well reflected in various works. In his famous poem 'Tintern Abbey' he says that all objects of nature—the setting sun, the roaring ocean, the blowing air, the blue sky are permeated with this spirit, Even the mind of man falls the sphere of its influence. This spirit running through nature and man gives all things unity and meaning. Thus there is a perfect harmony in the universe. The diversity of things is only apparent, what is real and substantial is the unity behind all things.

And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
of something for more deeply interfused,
whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of thought.
And rolls through all things (Wordsworth 1974 : 77)

Contemplation of this spirit in nature fills the poet with great joy and lofty thoughts.
Nature, to him at this stage, is not a mere attractive pattern of colour, form, smell but
is a manifestation of the all pervasive spirit, call it by what name we like. This is
Words worth's pantheistic creed. He feels the presence of one spirit in all objects of
nature and in the mind of man. This spirit is immanent in all things and in the mind of
man. This omni present spirit is the guide of man in his noblest activities. Henry
David Thoreau, another great pantheist like words worth, acknowledges that nature
is identical with God. "His identification with nature seems complete enough to
satisfy any monist. This earth which is spread out like a map around me is but the
linking of my inmost soul exposed." (Wood 1993 : 2) Thus we see that "Pantheism
lay not simply in the propagating, but equally in the living of this curiously
metaphysical, yet immensely secular, if not political creed" (Jacob 1981 : 215)

The Christian people like the people of India also believes that God dwells in
all living creature and He descends on this mundane world in form of man to rescue
mankind. " .......... one of the central claims of the Christian faith namely that God is
a personal being with whom we may live in a personal relation ship." (Brummer 1992 :
3) They think that Jesus Christ is no one but God Himself who had to put up with
unbearable pain and pang of life in order to save mankind from future annihilation.
"Jesus Christ is God's work and word. He is the fire of God's love by which all
theological existence is consumed even more radically than all human existence. He
is the Judge before whom all men can only fall and perish alone with their knowledge
and deeds and this is known best by those who know Him best." (Barth 1963 : 153)
Though God has diverse forms, it is, in reality, one Supreme entity. The way and the
form we, the human being feel Him, We see Him in that form. Actually, 'Man, God
the Universe, provoking one of its members to reflect.' (Marsden 1998 : 1) So the
world and God are not two different entity, rather they are closely related to each
other. "............... there is simply no discernable difference between the God's knowledge of the world and the world that God knows." (Mander 2000 : 199) This world is the manifestation of God who "is identical to the temporal world." (Vollenhoven 2000 : 1) David K. Clark and Norman L. Geisler, the two christian critics of pantheism presents their argument on pantheism that "Pantheism is understood as the idea that God is not a personality but all reality, that is, all the laws, forces and manifestations of a self-existing universe." (Clark and Geisler 1990 : 254) Before drawing conclusion about the western concept of Pantheism, it is better to put another view on pantheism "In pantheism, god is not distinct from the universe, as in Christian faith but is the universe. Christianity teaches that God created the universe and is separated from it. In other words, within christinity God is said to be transcendent but also immanent – active in the universe without being universe." (Family Action Organisation 2007) Thus it is seen that the western people also believes that there is one Supreme Spirit that pervades the entire universe.

C. Pantheism in the Works of Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore is a theistic philosopher. For him the ultimate reality is the personal God who has infinite qualities. He imagines God in two ways. First of all he holds that God is beyond the human self and the entire universe. There is no conceivable attribute of God – mental or physical. The supreme God is beyond our reach and is unknown and unknowable. In its immanent aspect, God stands at the very centre of human heart. He has moral, metaphysical and causal attributes. Tagore holds that God is perfect and benevolent. God possesses a perfect knowledge of all things – past, present and future. "The metaphysical attribute of God implies his omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence." (Srivastava 1976 : 26)

God is the supreme person. He is the combination of truth, beauty goodness which are related to human capacity for knowledge, beauty is man's capacity for enjoyment and goodness is man's capacity for activity. "The contents of the three do not vary, though their form does. Arts, philosophy and religion are different forms and
expressions of worship and different ways of approach to God." (Radhakrishnan; 1961 : 33) The art, philosophy, religion, worship, love and devotion are the different methods for the realization of God. These have meaning only when God is personal and the object of worship. The poems and songs of Gitanjali are addressed to God. Through them Tagore expresses his utmost love and devotion to God. God as the object of love and devotion should necessarily be personal. Jivandevata is the supreme reality which manifests in each and every form of the world. He describes Him in different ways in his different period of life. He calls Him God, Goodness, beloved—lady, friend or husband. Thus pantheism is found in his philosophy and the readers of East and West calls him as a great pantheist and a mystic poet. "It is fact that some of Rabindranath's readers and critics especially in the west say that his understanding of God, man and the universe is pantheistic." (Chunkapura 2002 : 221). Now we have to discover how pantheistic element pervades in different works of Rabindranath Tagore.

*The Religion of Man* (1930)

*The Religion of man* contains the Hibbert lectures delivered by Rabindranath Tagore in Oxford at Manchester college during the month of May, 1930. Here Tagore speaks about supreme man whose dwelling place is the every heart of man. For an exposition of Tagore's metaphysical view, a certain amount of isolating and sorting principles is required. It is necessary because the poet himself never attempts to classify his doctrines. Tagore says, "I have never looked at God, man, and nature as problems which can be considered in isolation from each other. I could never conceive of their occupying watertight compartments" (1931 : 36) His philosophy presents the integral picture of God, man and nature. "My mind, " he says, "is used to look at reality as an integral whole, it being understood of course, that I am referring to the wholeness of spirit and not to material unity." (Tagore 1981 : 36)

The religion of Man is based on human God who is alive in all living creatures of the world. That is why Tagore says, "The idea of humanity of our God, or the divinity of Man the Eternal, is the main subject of this book." (Tagore 2003 : 10) To realize God, the intimacy of nature is absolutely necessary, nature should not be looked upon as the mere channel of information for our mind but that object which
satisfies our personality with manifestations that make our life rich and excites our imagination in their harmony of forms, colours and sounds. The very period Tagore belonged to prevailed a kind of song known as Bauls declared the divinity of man and express an intense feeling of love. Coming to the closest proximity to the men who are unsophisticated, living a simple life in obscurity. It gives us a hint to the hidden meaning of all religion. "For it suggests that these religions are never about a God of cosmic force, but rather about the God of human personality" (Ibid : 11)

Creation is possible through the continual self-surrender of the unit to the universe. The spiritual universe of Man is also ever demanding self-renunciation from the individual units. All the movement of the world is pervaded by one Supreme unity and therefore the true enjoyment can never be found through the satisfaction of greed "but only through the surrender of our individual self to the Universal self." (Tagore 2003 : 14) Man must realize not only the reasoning mind but also the creative imagination, the love and wisdom that belong to the Supreme person whose spirit is over us all, love for whom understands love for all creatures and exceeds in depth and strength all other love, leading to hard essays and martyrdoms that have no other profit than the fulfillment of this love itself. "The Isha of our Upanishad, the Super soul, which permates all moving things, is the God of this human universe whose mind we share in all our true knowledge, love and service, and whom to reveal in ourselves through renunciation of self is the highest end of life." (Ibid : 15)

Since philosophy is essentially a theory of being, often preoccupied with speculative thought, it contemplates the physical world as a manifestation of the spirit and ultimately concerns itself with the apprehension of the relation of the individual with the Absolute. In a way, philosophical reflections raise a man beyond the self of the senses or his animal nature to bring him close to the divine. In fact, in the poetry of the world's greatest poets love often acts as a potent force to emancipate man from the chains of impulse to make him aware of truth. In this context "the most universal instrument to touch the heart and to awaken in us the life of the spirit is religion." (Lilly 1911:636)

Tagore's approach to religion is distinctly different; it grows out of his poetic experiences which are deeply rooted in his humanism which grew out of his genuine
concern for the well-being of humanity. In his ‘Hibbert Lectures’, delivered at Oxford in 1930, he clearly states that his main subject is to put divinity on man. He also says that the thought of God has not grown in his mind through process of philosophical reasoning. On the contrary, it has followed the current of his temperament from early days until it suddenly flashed into his consciousness with a direct vision. In this context he speaks of his indebtedness to the Upanishadic learning that he imbied in the family and directly from his father which made him aware of the Super soul which permeates all moving things and is the God of the human universe. Tagore’s abiding emotional bond with the mendicant folk-singers of Bengal called Bauils believe in no temples or scriptures, ceremonials or images but in the divinity of man, the Eternal, the ideal man of perfection whose only God is love that binds and emancipates. “I have mentioned in connection with my personal experience some songs which I had often heard from wandering village singers, belonging to a popular sect of Bengal, called Bauils, who have no images, temples, scriptures, or ceremonials, who declare in their songs the divinity of Man and express for him an intense feeling of love. Coming from men who are unsophisticated, living a simple life in obscurity, it gives us a clue to the inner meaning of all religions.” (Tagore 2003:11)

An intimate association with the simple, unsophisticated and obscure life of these singers and poets who believe in the religion of love that celebrates the divinity of man, suggested to Tagore the essence of all religions which lies not in the God of cosmic forces but in the God of human personality. “For it suggests that these religions are never about a God of cosmic force, but rather about the God of human personality.’ (Ibid : 11)

Tagore’s conception of religion shows an advanced stage in the evolution of the human worship of the divine which has moved away from the external rituals or magical rites towards the moral and spiritual significance. Tagore came to realize that all religions of the world owe their origin to some persons who represented in their lives a great truth which was hardly cosmic or unmoral but was human and good and was aimed at general human welfare. It must be said that he was greatly indebted to the Persian prophet, Zarathustra, who showed mankind the path of freedom from blind obedience to ‘unmeaning injunctions’ or multiplicity of shrines’ or
compulsive religions rituals to truth in its moral significance, upholding the essential
goodness of man in good words and good deeds.

Since the essential philosophy of the Baul poets and singers incorporates
something of the Sufi philosophy which upholds the esoteric truth of God and man
relationship as one of a bond of love which obtains between a man and a woman,
Tagore has insisted on the supremacy of the bond of love as the essence of all
religions: "This is the divine being, the world worker, who is the Great soul ever
dwelling inherent in the hearts of all people." (Ibid : 47)

Tagore was unwilling to concede that he had developed any firm philosophy
or sense of religion. In one of his letters he clearly stated that he could never say that
he had developed any sense of religion in common parlance of the term. Elaborating
on this he said "I have called that power which unifies and gives meaning to my life's
joys and sufferings and binds my transformations and transcendence into a unity,
through which I realize the universal unity, my Jeevandevata' (the divinity of my life's
Being)." (1943 : 10) There is little doubt that Tagore understood the essence of our
life and existence through his understanding of the Upanishadic ideas as exemplified
in the world and its environs. In fact, it was the Upanishadic idea of the presence of
the divinity in man himself and in the things and being of Nature 'Raso Baisha' – that
filled Tagore with the idea of wholeness unity of creation. However, Tagore has
attached greater importance to the law of love that binds men and women and
makes them realize themselves in others as well as emancipates them from narrow
confines of physical life. He has clearly stated in his Amarparchy that when he wrote
Prakritir pratisodh in his early years, he said that in believing in this world or in this
society of human beings one could know the truth. He pointed out that in
apprehending the near from the distant, the visible from the imaginative, one could
perceive the essence of religion, whose object is to raise man above the self of the
senses and his animal nature, to approximate his to the divine.

The very universe in which we are connected through our sense perception,
reason or imagination is man's universe. The mysteries of all phenomena are
generalized by man as laws which have their harmony with his rational mind. In the
primitive period of man's relations to the external world were most important for the
maintenance of his life, a life that he has in common with other creatures and therefore the first expression of his religion was physical. It came from his sense of wonder and awe at the manifestation of power in nature and his attempt to win it for himself and his tribe by magical incantations and rites. "In other words his religion tried to gain a perfect communion with the mysterious magic of Nature's forces through his own power of magic." (Tagore 2003 : 51) After that he had the freedom of leisure to divert his mind to his inner nature and the mystery of his own personality gained for his its highest importance.

The comprehensive and universal humanist outlook of Tagore that develop through the influence of different human aspirations and ideals of the world, finally inspires him to explain the existence of man in a natural form. This natural expression of human life, according to Tagore, is the proper religion of man that firstly, explains his material existence in this material world and secondly, evaluates his essential human spirit to overcome the material contradictions of life towards the development of unity or harmony. According to Rabindranath Tagore, this harmonious development of human personality is the fundamental basis of human existence, that on the one hand, relates the idea of religion with the expression of human nature and thus makes human life free from the supernatural influences like dogmas, orthodoxy etc. and on the other hand, develops the idea of religion of man of his own which is the inauguration of universal Man in and through the contradiction of the material existence of man in this world. It may be said that man's spiritual nature is expressed initially in man's naturalist situation, then by the enlightened spiritual consciousness man goes beyond the basic nature. In this context Tagore says, "true realization is not through argumentation of possession in dimension or number. The truth that is infinite dwells in the ideal of unity which we find in the deeper relatedness. This truth of realization is not in space, it can only by realized in one's own inner spirit." (Ibid : 45)

In order to develop the idea of man's religious consciousness, Tagore explains the significance of the term in his own way. According to him, religion is the recognition of man's natural basis of life. Man, owing to different complexities in this material life, creates different contradictory processes in the natural way of life or in simple procedure of religion. Religion is used in this sense for the satisfaction of
material interest or poor demands of life and thus it can exploit the natural sentiment of common men and in this way different contradictions like orthodoxy, sectarian outlook etc. are created in the normal procedure of life or religion. Human body is withered in course of time but his multi-personal humanity is immortal. Man realizes the universal man through the boundless love for his fellow men. “He misses himself when isolated, he finds his own larger and truer self in his wide human relationship. His multicultural body is born and it dies; his multipersonal humanity is immortal. In this ideal of unity he realizes the eternal in his life and the boundless in his love.” (Ibid :9) Thus through the love of mankind we realize the Supreme entity who takes shelter in the heart of all living creatures.

Different social evils produced by the narrowness of mind or heart caused by the material interest in the name of religion can be removed through the proper interpretation of the meaning of human life as the religion of man. The true significance of religion that lies in the human existence can be realized by an analysis of the intrinsic nature of man. Proper analysis of human nature, according to Tagore, proves that religion exists in the roots of human existence which formed the basic nature of man. So, religion being the inner nature of man is identified with human life. Thus man does never exist without religion. Tagore observes that man, in this material world, has undoubtedly material demands or ordinary interests of life which can create conflicts and tension in life. “ .................. all movement is pervaded by one supreme unity and therefore true enjoyment can never be had through the satisfaction of greed, but only through the surrender of our individual self to the Universal self.” (Ibid : 14) According to Tagore, the higher or supreme need of life is the vital need for a developed religious consciousness which is realized in a higher order through the development of universal element of religious consciousness of mankind in general.

Thus it may be said that this vital need for religion in life inspires man to overcome different limitations and contradictions of life. It is already indicated that the self-interest or lower material demands can create conflicts and contradictions in the normal life of man. But religion, according to Tagore, “contradicts the trivialities of our daily life and upsets the arrangements made for securing our personal exclusiveness behind the walls of individual habits and superficial conventions. It
inspires in us works that are the expressions of a Universal spirit." (Ibid : 10) This is man's realization of spiritual consciousness by a progressive detachment from the interests of lower orders of life.

Truth in man, in the opinion of Tagore is to overcome limitations or contradiction through the realization of infiniteness or perfection, potential in him. This perfection, that exists in the root of human nature, urges him to develop his nature through the suppression of narrow desires or animality and thus through this manifestation of perfection an individual exists as the Man, different from animal. So awareness of perfection is the essential part of human nature and that, according to Tagore is the proper religion of man.

The perfection, potential in human nature, is recognized by Rabindranath Tagore as the power of surplus in human life. In different stages of evolution, man has tried gradually to realise his own nature or the nature of inherent power that is above all the paradoxes or the contradiction. Human life comes along a long course of evolution which according to Tagore, is a gradual realization of his inner power of surplus, in man which exceeds the narrowness or limitation of his life. "The consciousness of God transcends the limitations of race and gather together all human beings within one spiritual circle of union." (Ibid : 55) The power of surplus in man thus develops the proper significance of man's existence as 'The vision of Being' which has kinship with truth. This power of surplus in man urges him to understand the diverse aspects of life which gradually discountenance him to know and to realise the ultimate principle or Supreme Value of life.

Jivandevata is the supreme reality which manifest in each and every form of the world. He describes Him in different ways in his different periods of life. He calls Him 'God', Goddess, Beloved-lady, Friend or Husband. He also calls Him the 'inner self', the lord of life and 'Antarikshmi.' Though he calls Him by all these names, Jivandevata is neither God nor soul, nor human being. He is not any external entity. But he is the heart and soul of everything.

Jivandevata is a dynamic force and being. A growing and dynamic thing is much more difficult to define than that which is relatively static and stagnant.
Jivandevata is the spirit and source of one's energy. The entire life of the philosopher is guided by this unknown deity. All through his life he feels the presence of this spirit within him. In his pleasures and pains and works he feels that he is directed and guided by this force. He surrenders his individuality to this all-pervading power and accepts Him as the Supreme Reality. Tagore feels himself to be an instrument at the hands of his Jivandevata. He sounds the same tune, which is played by the Jivandevata. His idea of Jivandevata finds a nice expression in his poem 'Jivandevata.'

Thou who art the innermost spirit of my beings
art thou pleased, lord of my life?
For I gave to thee my cup
Filled with all pain and delight
that the crushed grapes of my heart had surrendered,
I wove with the rhythm of colours and song the
Cover for thy bed,
and with the molten gold of my desires
I fashioned playthings for thy passing hours.
I know not why thou chosest me for thy partner
Lord of my life!
Dist thou store my days and nights,
my deeds and dreams for the alchemy of thy art,
and string in the chain of thy music my songs of
autumn and spring,
and gather the flowers from my mature movement for thy crown?
I see thine eyes gazing at the dark of my heart Lord of my life?
I wonder if my failures and wrongs are forgiven.
For many were my days without service
and night of forgetfulness;
futile were the flowers that faded in the shade not offer to thee.
Often the tired strings of my lute
slackened at the strain of thy tunes.
And often at the ruin of wasted hours
my desolate evenings were filled with tears.
But have my days come to their end at last,
Lord of my life,
While my arms round thee grow limp,
My kisses losing their truth?
Then break up the meeting of this languid day.
Renew the old in me in fresh forms of delight;
and let the wedding come once again

Tagore thus depicts his Jivandevata as the Lord and supreme creator of his being. The Jivandevata expresses His own Being in and through His creation. He is
the inner God of man. It is in and through the human life — that the Jivandevata finds his fulfillments. He collects all the sacred things from human beings, who surrender everything to Jivandevata. Human life is a sacrifice at the feet of Jivandevata. Jivandevata selects the finites as His play — objects and He wears the girdle of the finite beings. He takes not only the successful hours of human life but also all his achievements.

Tagore describes his Jivandevata at the consumer of the life’s value. Just as in a lonely isle a farmer cultivates crop and waits for a sailor to take it from him and the former is left there, the Jivandevata is the sailor and the crops are the values of human life. In the realm of eternity, human being perishes away but his works and creations are carried and preserved by the Jivandevata. The Jivandevata carries away all the values of life. But when the person wants room for his own little self, he feels disappointed. The person is left alone only his life’s work and values are taken away from him. Charu Chandra Banerjee observes, “the true immortality is that of deeds not of an abstract self. The Golden Barge has no room for individual but only for their actions.” (Banerjee 1951 : 228)

Tagore gives highest tribute to man in whom God dwells. It is through love for man, love for any living creature, man will realise the very presence of God. “Love is the magic stone, that transmutes by its touch greed into sacrifice.” (Tagore 2003 : 78) Heaven longs to be earth and Gods want to become man for the sake of this love. In God-man the infinite sees the finite, the perfect knowledge seeks love and when the form and the formless that are the individual and the universal are united love is fulfilled in devotion. It is that supreme man who is always within mankind and whenever men unlock their own self and meet in a true love with all others, mankind knows him. “He is within us, an unfathomable reality. We know him when we unlock our own self and meet in true love with all others.” (Ibid : 50)

Man is to realize that supreme person who is in the heart of all by emancipated consciousness of our own personality. In India, there are those whose effort is to merge completely their personal self in an impersonal entity which is without any quality of definition, to reach a condition where in mind becomes perfectly blank, losing all its activities. Those who claim the right to speak about it
say that this is the purest state of consciousness, it is all joy and without any object or content. This is regarded to be the ultimate end of Yoga, a cult of union, thus completely to identify one's being with the infinite Being who is beyond all thoughts and words. "Nothing is greater than the person; he is the Supreme, he is the ultimate goal." (Ibid : 83) The Supreme man is infinite in his essence, he is finite in his manifestation in mankind. A man must live the full term of life and work without greed and thus realize himself in the Being who is in all beings. This means that he must reveal in his own personality the Supreme person by his disinterested activities.

When man becomes truly conscious of his own self he also become conscious of a mysterious spirit of unity that finds its manifestation through him in his society. "It is a subtle medium of relationship between individuals, which is not for any utilitarian purpose but for its own ultimate truth, not a sum of arithmetic but a value of life." (Ibid : 102) Man has understood that this comprehensive spirit of unity has a divine character who could demand the sacrifice of all that is individual in him, that in it dwells his highest meaning surpassing his limited self, representing his best freedom. Man's reverential loyalty to this spirit of unity is expressed in his religion, is symbolized in the name of his deities. With the extension of the consciousness of human unity his God become expressed to him as one and universal, proving that the truth of human unity is the truth of Man's God.

The term religion means dharma which implies the principle of relationship that holds us firm and in its technical sense it means the virtue of a thing, the essential quality of it. Religion consists in the endeavour of men to cultivate and express those qualities which are inborn in the nature of Eternal man and to have faith in him. If these qualities are naturally found in individuals, religion could have no purpose. "We being our history with all the original promptings of our brute nature which helps us to fulfil those vital needs of ours that are immediate." (Ibid : 103) But the deeper understanding of man shows that there is a current of tendencies which runs in many ways in a contrary direction, the life of universal humanity. Religion has its function to reconcile the contradiction by subordinating the brute nature. This is only possible when we have a firm faith on the Eternal man whom we call by different names and imagine in different images. "The contradiction between the two natures in us is so great that men have willingly sacrificed their vital needs and
courted death in order to express their dharma which represents the truth of the Supreme man." (Ibid: 103)

The vision of the Supreme Man is realized by our imagination but not created by our mind. We gain our true religion when we consciously co-operate with him and find inexplicable joy through suffering and sacrifice. For through our own love for him we are made conscious of a great love that radiates from his being who is the Supreme Spirit. Man can get prosperity in his life by evil means but he does not find mental solace that is such a noble quality that it enables man to come near to God, the Supreme Man. "Through adharma (the negation of dharma) man prospers, gains what appears desirable, conquers enemies, but he perishes at the root." (Ibid: 104)

The Eternal person is manifested in all persons. It may be one of the numerous manifestation of God. Tagore has given divinity in man for whom he is "compelled to come out of the seclusion of literary career and take part in the world of practical activities." (Ibid: 117) Thus, one Supreme God pervades in the hearts of all man.

All the higher religions of India tells about the training for Mukti, the liberation of the soul. Men are engaged in the expression and enjoyment of our finite and individual nature. In the soul of mankind man are conscious of the transcendental truth in men the universal, the Supreme Man and this soul, the spiritual self has its enjoymet in renunciation of the individual self for the sake of the Supreme soul. "This renunciation is not in the negation of self, but in the dedication of it." (Ibid: 130) This soul of men are waiting for its freedom from the ego to reach that disinterested joy that is the source and goal of creation. It cries for its mukti, its freedom in the unity of truth. The idea of mukti has affected our lives in India, touched the springs of pure emotions and supplications, for its soars heavenward on the wings of poesy." (Ibid: 131)

Man has two aspects, one is transcendental and another his finite self. The finite self in man means his confinement in world of material gain and loss. Man should try to break the shell of this limitations so that he can come near to Brahman who "is the absolute truth, the impersonal it, in which there can be no distinction of
this and that, the good and the evil, the beautiful and its opposite, having no other quality except its ineffable blissfulness in the eternal solitude of its consciousness utterly devoid of all things and all thoughts." (Ibid : 147) Thus, it is seen that 'The Religion of Man' is highlighted and based on human God who prevails in every mankind. So pantheism is prominent in 'the religion of Man' as it is the Supreme man who "is one, and who dispenses the inherent needs of all people and all times, who is in the beginning and the end of all things, may he unite us with the bond of truth, of common fellowship, of righteousness." (Ibid : 175) In order to realize God one has to come out his narrow self and such consciousness "raise a man beyond the self of the senses or his animal nature to bring him close to the divine." (Ray 2004 :1)

Sadhana (1913)

It contains eight essays, some of which were read at Havard University at the invitation of professor James H. Woods of the Department of Philosophy. Tagore has told in the preface that he has used translations of the passages from his Bengali discourse which is given to the students at Santiniketan, done by his friends Babu Satish Chandra Roy and Babu Ajit Kumar Chakraborty. The essays were written during the six months (28 October 1912 to April 1913) when Tagore was in USA. In this book he had spoken at different places – Urbana, Chicago, Rochester and Boston, The book was received with tremendous enthusiasm by the English reading public. Within twelve months of its publication it was reprinted eight times.

Tagore has a thorough study of the Upanishads which he recites now and then. He frankly admits in the preface of Sadhana that he "has been brought up in a family where the text of the Upanishad are used in daily worship ....." (Tagore 1994 : 278) He has before him the example of his father who lived a long life in communion with God. Maharshi spent his life in the contemplation of God without neglecting the duties of earthly life. Tagore says "To me the verses of the Upanishads and the teaching of Buddha have ever been things of spirit and therefore endowed with vital growth." (Ibid:278) Tagore, as we observe, is acquainted with the Upanishad from his very childhood. From this very childhood pantheism is ingrained in his mind and
later many words and superb language by the help of beautiful imagery he describes that Ultimate entity.

The *Upanishads* are the perennial source of diverse schools of thought. They are the monistic conception of the Ultimate Reality. From the subjective standpoint it is called 'Atman' and from the objective view it is called Brahman who "is immanent in all this creation and yet transcends it." (Sharma 1931 : 7) But Atman and Brahman are not two different realities because "the real essence of the God is one." (Ibid : 6) These are the two aspect of one reality since "the real is one, the learned call it by various names, Agni, Yamo, Matariswan." (Radhakrishnan 1931 : 94) Atman is the consciousness and Brahman is the being of the Universe. In the *Upanishads* they are conceived to be one and the same Reality.

One becomes the Supreme Brahman when one dwells in the infinite. Finites are nothing else than the manifestations of the Infinite. Like the Upanisadic seers, Tagore also believes the mere appearance and disappearance of the things of the universe take place like waves on the sea, but the life which is permanent knows no decay or diminution. Tagore says, "with everything, whether it is above or below, remote or never, visible or invisible, thou shall preserve a relation of unlimited love without any animosity or without a desire to kill. To live in such a consciousness while standing or walking, sitting or lying down till you are asleep, is Brahman Vihara, or, in other words, is living and moving and having your joy in the spirit of Brahman." (Tagore 1994 : 287) Tagore thus believes in the Upanisadic idea of the Supreme Being. God is all pervading existence and the innate good in all. To be truly united with all beings and to realize one's own self in the all pervading God is the essential teachings of the *Upanishads*.

Rabindranath realizes the real spirit of the *Upanishads*. The Upanisadic seers sacrifice material prosperity for the attainment of the spiritual truth. Tagore also adopts the same ideal. He says, "In order to find him you must embrace all. In the pursuit of wealth you really give up everything to gain a few things and that is not the way to attain Him who is completeness." (Ibid : 286 – 287)
Since time immemorial Indian people have a close connection with nature who like benevolent mother provides shelter from the scorching heat of the Sun, pastures for cattle, fuel for sacrificial fire and material for building cottage. From forest Indian civilization comes out and "it was surrounded by the vast life of nature, was fed and clothed by her and had the closest and most constant intercourse with her varying aspects." (Ibid : 281) Living in constant contact with nature human mind is free from the narrow desire. His sole purpose is not to capture but to understand, to expand his consciousness by growing with and growing into his surroundings. "He felt that truth is all comprehensive, that there is no such thing as absolute isolation in existence and the only way of attaining truth is through the interpenetration of our being into all objects. The sages of ancient Indian dwell in the forest to realize the spirit of man and the spirit of the world. Thus the spirit of man and God are in harmony with the nature and create a close proximity.

From this forest springs up cultivated fields and wealthy cities. Mighty kingdoms which has close connection with the big powers of the world are erected in the heyday of its material prosperity. Man concentrates on his own life and work and as a result, "creates an artificial dissociation between himself and the universal nature within whose bosom he lies." (Ibid : 282) The people of India believe that there is a close relation between man and nature which is a living entity, where God also prevails. But the western people look upon nature as non-living things. To detach nature from the mankind is like diving the bud and the blossom into two separate categories, and putting their grace to the credit of two different and antithetical principles." (Ibid : 282) The Indian mind never has any hesitation to acknowledge its kinship with nature that is unbroken.

The earth, water and light, fruits and flower are not merely a physical entity but have a spiritual meaning. When a man does not understand his kinship with the world, he dwells in a prison-house whose walls are foreign to him. When he comes in contact with the eternal spirit in all objects he is emancipated, the he discovers the fullest significance of the world into which he is born. "In India men are enjoying to be fully awake to the fact that they are in the closest relation to things around them, body and soul and that they are to hail the morning sun, the flowing water, the fruitful earth as the manifestation of the same living truth which holds them in its embrace."
Man has to realise the essential unity of the world with the conscious soul of man who learns to perceive the unity held together by the one. Eternal Spirit whose power creates the earth, the sky and the stars and at the same time enlightens human minds with the light of a consciousness that moves and exists in unbroken continuity with the outer world.

When men detach themselves from the inexhaustible life of nature physically and mentally, when they become merely man, not man in the universe they create puzzling problems and shutting artificial methods each of which brings its own crop of interminable difficulties. "When man leaves his resting place in universal nature, When he walks on the single rope of humanity, it means either a dance or a fall for him ......." (Ibid : 284) But this can not last long, man must understand the completeness of his existence, his place in the infinite when man loves to confine himself from the invigorating and purifying touch of the infinite and falls himself for his sustenance and his healing he goads himself into madness, tears himself into shreds and eats his own substance. When the consciousness of man is confined to the immediate vicinity of his human self, the deeper roots of his nature do not find their permanent soil, his spirit is ever on the brink of starvation.

Man can destroy and plunder, earn and accumulate, invent and discover but he is great as his soul understand all. When he covers his soul in a dead shell of callous habits, when a blind fury of works whirls round him like an eddying dust storm, shutting out the horizon, it is dire destruction for him. Man is not a slave of himself or of the world but he is a lover. His freedom and fulfilment is in love that is another name for perfect comprehension. "By this power of comprehension, this permeation of his being, he is united with the all pervading sprit who is also the breath of his soul." (Ibid : 286) Whenever man tries to surpass others by pushing and jostling all others, he is alienated from that Spirit.

The being who is in his essence the light and life of all, who is world-conscious is Brahma. Man's spirit is to be conscious of everything, to feel all. Men are immersed in his consciousness body and soul. "It is through consciousness that the Sun attracts the earth, it is through his consciousness that the light-waves are being transmitted from planet to planet." (Ibid : 287) Man has to unite his feeling with
all pervasive infinite being to attain world consciousness. The true human progress is coincident with the expanding of the range of feeling. The man who aims at his personal aggrandizement underrates everything else. Man has to shake off all his personal desires in order to be fully conscious of the reality of all. Hence Tagore says, "I bow to God over and over again who is in fire and in water, who permeates the whole world, who is in the eternal crops as well as in the perennial trees." (Ibid : 287) So everything, whether it is above or below, remote or near, visible or invisible has a close connection with that supreme entity whose bond with every object is formed by unfathomed love.

It is the hope of ancient India to live and move and have its joy in Brahma who is the all-conscious and all pervading spirit. Man will be able to do so by expanding his feeling of consciousness over all the world. If the extension of consciousness is an outward process, it is limitless, then it will be like "attempting to cross the ocean after ladling out its water. By beginning to try to realize all, one has to end by realising nothing." (Ibid : 290) Man has numerous burden in his life but he knows that he can lighten the burden of his load by adopting a system. "Whenever they feel too complicated and unwieldy, he knows it is because he has not been able to hit upon the system which would have set everything in place and distributed the weight evenly." (Ibid : 290) This quest for system is really a search for unity. Man gradually becomes aware that to find the one is to capture the All. Facts are numerous but truth is one. The intelligence of animal knows fact but human mind has capacity to understand truth. The discovery of a truth is pure joy to man but a mere fact is like a blind lane, it leads only to itself, it has no beyond. On the hand, a truth opens up a whole horizon, it drives man to the infinite.

After getting the knowledge of such consciousness, man must understand clearly some central truth which give him an outlook over the widest possible field. The egoistic emotions, selfish longing obscures the true vision of the soul of man since they only show their own narrow self. Whenever they are conscious of their soul, whenever they realize the inner being that surpasses their ego and has close affinity with the all. The soul of Man, when isolated and confined within the narrow self, loses its significance, as its essence is unity. Man will be in trouble and live in a state of fear so long as he is not able to discover the uniformity of law in nature, then
the world is alien to him. "Children, when they begin to learn each separate letter of the alphabet, find no pleasure in it, because they miss the real purpose of the lesson; in fact, while letters claims our attention only in themselves and as isolated things, they fatigue us. They become a source of joy to us only when they combine into words and sentences and convey an idea." (Ibid : 291) Man feels inexplicable joy when he realizes himself in his surroundings. The sense of difference is wiped out in love and the human soul fulfils its aim in perfection, crossing the limits of itself and reaching across the threshold of the infinite. Hence love is the highest bliss and he truly knows through love that he is more than himself and he is at one with the All.

Establishing relations far and wide through literature, art and science, society, state craft and religion the principle of unity in man's soul is ever active. Our great revealers are those who manifest the true meaning of soul by giving up self for the love of mankind. They face calumny and persecution, deprivation and death for the sake of love. "They live the life of soul, not of the self and thus they prove to us the ultimate truth of humanity." (Ibid : 291) That is why they are called as Mahatmas, the men of the great soul.

It is very often found that men's love for children, friends or loved ones separates them from the further realization of their soul. To know their soul apart from the self is the first step towards the realization of the Supreme deliverance. Men must know with absolute certainty that essentially they are spirit. This they can do by winning mastery over self, by shaking off pride, greed and fear, by knowing the fact that worldly losses and physical death can take nothing away from the truth and greatness of their soul. "The chick knows when it breaks through the self centered isolation of its egg that the hard shell which covered it so long was not really a part of its life. That shell is a dead thing, it has no growth, it affords no glimpse whatever of the vast beyond that lies outside it." (Ibid : 292) The bird has been called the twice born in Sanskrit, man too is called so as he has gone through the ceremony of the discipline of self restrain and high thinking for a period of at least twelve years, he has come out simple in wants, pure in heart and ready to take up all the responsibilities of life in a disinterested largeness of spirit. He is regarded to have had his rebirth from the blind envelopment of self to the freedom of the soul life in
order to have come into living relation with his surroundings and to have become at one with the All.

The teachers of India preached a renunciation of the world and of self that leads only to the blank emptiness of negation. But the pride of self obstructs the proper function of soul which is to understand itself by perfecting its union with the world and the world’s God. The doctrine of deliverance that Buddha declared was the freedom from the bondage of avidya that is the ignorance that obfuscates the consciousness of man and confines to it within the boundaries of personal self. "It is this avidya, this ignorance, this limiting of consciousness that creates the hard separateness of the ego, and thus becomes the source of all pride and greed and cruelty incidental to self seeking." (ibid : 293) When a man is in sleep, he is confined with the narrow activities of his physical life. Though he lives, he does not have the idea about the varied relations of his life to his surroundings, hence he does not know about himself. That is why when a man lives in life of Avidya he is shut off within his narrow self. It is a kind of spiritual sleep, his consciousness is not fully awake to the heighest reality, hence he does not understand his own soul. Whenever he attains Bodhi, the awakement from the sleep of self to the perfection of consciousness, he becomes Buddha.

The poverty of man is abysmal, his hopes and wants are limitless till he is truly conscious of his soul. Therefore the world to him is a continual flux. There was a time when the earth was only a nebulous mass whose molecules were spattered for apart through the expanding force of heat. She had not attained definite form and had neither beauty not purpose but only heat and motion. When her vapours were condensed into a unified rounded whole through a force that draws all struggling matters under the control of a centre, she got perfect position among the planets of the solar system. It is "like an emerald pendant in a necklace of diamonds. So with our soul." (Ibid : 294) When the heat and emotion of blind impulses and passions diffuse in different directions, men can neither give nor receive anything truly. When men find their centre in their soul by the power of self restraint, by the force that harmonizes all the warring elements and unifies those that are isolated, all their separated impressions turns into wisdom and all their momentary passions of hearts find their completion in love, all tiny details of their life express an infinite purpose
and all their workings and deeds unite themselves inseparably in an internal harmony.

The ultimate aim of man is to find the One which is in him, which is his truth, which is his soul, the key with which he opens the gate of the spiritual life, the heavenly kingdom. Men's desires are many and they madly run after the varied objects of the world. The entity which is in him is ever seeking for unity — unity in knowledge, in love and in purpose of will. The vision of supreme one in man's soul is a direct and immediate intuition that is not based on any reason. The eyes of man see an object as a whole, not by breaking it up into parts but by bringing all the parts together into a unity with themselves. So man naturally understand its unity in the Supreme one with the intuition of their soul-consciousness. "Thus deity who is manifesting himself in the activities of the universe always dwells in the heart of man as the supreme soul. Those who realize him through the immediate perception of the heart attain immortality." (Ibid : 295)

The Supreme entity is Vishukarma whose multiplicity of forms and forces are outward manifestation but his inner manifestation in the soul of men is that which is found in unity. Therefore men cannot attain the supreme soul by successive additions of knowledge acquired bit by bit even through eternity since he is one, he is not made of parts. Men can only know him as heart of their hearts and soul of their soul, men can only realize him through love and joy they feel when they shake off their self and stand before him face of face. Men are miser by nature, they are always willing to take but not to give as they are creatures of self that is unyielding and narrow, that scatters no light, that is blind to the infinite. The human self is loud with discordant clamour, it is not transformed into harp whose chords vibrate with the music of the eternal. "Sighs of discontent and weariness of failure, idle regrets for the past and anxieties for the future are troubling our shallow hearts because we have not found our souls and the self revealing has not been manifest within us." (Ibid : 295)

The goods are the daily bread of men's soul. They confine to themselves in their pleasure and in good they are freed and they belong to all. "As the child in its mother's womb gets its sustenance through the union of its life with the larger life of
its mother, so our soul is nourished only through the good which is the recognition of its inner kinship, the channel of its communication with the infinite by which it is surrounded and fed." (Ibid: 296) Righteousness is the divine food of the soul. God stands aside from man self, where his watchful patience is unbound and where he never force men to open the doors if it is shut against him. The self of man has to gain its ultimate meaning not through the compulsion of the power of God but through love, thus uniting with God in freedom.

The idea of God that man has in his being is the wonder of all wonders. He has understood in his life that what appears as imperfect is the manifestation of the perfect. "In fact imperfection is not a negation of perfectness, finitude is not contradictory to infinity, they are but completeness manifested in parts, infinity revealed within bounds." (Ibid: 298) Pain that is the feeling of their finiteness is not a fixture in their life. It is not an end in self as joy is.

If man confines himself within a narrow space of time the sight would be cruel. Man in his life makes many mistakes and comes across many failures. "When we watch a child trying to walk, we see the countless failures; its success are but few. But we find that in spite of its repeated failures there is an impetus of joy in the child which sustains it in its seemingly impossible task." (Ibid: 299) Like the child man should not take the failure seriously showing many imperfection in their knowledge and available power and in the application of will they meet with sufferings in various forms in their life. When they select for observation a limited area of their activities their failures and miseries make a permanent impression on their mind but their life leads them instinctively to take a wider view. It endows them an ideal of perfection which ever carries them beyond their present limitations. Within them they have a hope that surpasses their present narrow experience, it is unflinching faith in the infinite in them and it will never any of their imperfection as a permanent fact.

It is true that man is not a detached being he has a universal aspect. To live in perfect goodness is to understand one's life in the infinite. "This is the most comprehensive view of life which we can have by our inherent power of the moral vision of the wholeness of life." (Ibid: 302) The teaching of Buddha is to cultivate this moral power to the highest extent. Man's activities are not confined to the plane of
narrow self. This is the vision of the heavenly kingdom of Christ. When man is able to attain that universal life, he becomes free from the bonds of pleasure and pain and the place which is vacated by their self becomes filled with an unspeakable joy that comes from unfathomed love. When Buddha contemplated upon the way of releasing mankind from the grip of misery he came to the truth that when man attains his height end by uniting the individual in the universe, he becomes free from the thraldom of pain.

Man's individuality is not the highest truth, there is a feature in him that are universal. If he lives in a world where his own self is the only thing to consider, it would be the worst prison imaginable to him because man's deepest joy is the union of all. "This, as we have seen, would be an impossibility if there were no law common to all." (Ibid : 304) Men become great, realize the universal by discovering the law and following it. Men suffer pain as long as their individual desires are at conflict with the universal law.

When an individual man in them chafes against the lawful rule of the universal man, they are morally small and they are bound to suffer. In that condition their successes are their greatest failures. They hanker after special benefits for themselves, they long to enjoy privileges that none can share with them. "But everything that is absolutely special must keep up a perpetual welfare with what is general." (Ibid : 304) In such a state man leaves behind obstacle and their homes are not their real home but artificial barriers around them. The universal spirit is longing to crown them with happiness but the individual spirit in man does not accept it. It is their life of the self that creates conflicts and complications everywhere. It is that narrow urge that overturns the normal balance of society and gives rise to miseries of all kinds.

Men have to sacrifice their individual will for the sovereignty of the universal will in order to be happy. When they are able to reach that situation where in the adjustment of the finite in them to the infinite is perfect, pain is no longer a pain but becomes a valuable asset. "It becomes a measuring rod with which to gouge the true value of our joy." (Ibid : 305) Man's freedom lies not in being saved from troubles but it is through trouble, man can get freedom. It is only possible when they understand
that in them they have the world-man who is immortal, who is not afraid of death or sufferings and who looks upon pain as only the other side of joy. "He who has realized this knows that it is pain which is our true wealth as imperfect being and has made us great and worthy to take our seat with the perfect." (Ibid : 305) The man who loses all pleasure in order to accept pain sinks down to the lowest depth of penury and degradation.

The true deliverance of man is the deliverance from avidya, from ignorance. It is the ignorance of men that they think that they themselves are real when they take the wrong view of self the ultimate object of their life. "Then are we doomed to disappointment like the man who tries to reach his destination by firmly clutching the dust of the road." (Ibid : 307) When a man, with excessive care, arranges for the enjoyment of the self, he lights a fire but has no dough to make his bread with, the fire destroys itself like an unnatural beast that swallows its own progeny.

It is only avidya that makes mankind fetter by making them think that it is an end in itself and by hindering their seeing that it contains the idea that surpasses its limits. "That is why the wise man comes and says, set yourselves free from the avidya, know your true soul and be saved from the grasp of the self which imprisons you." (Ibid : 308) when men understand their true nature they gain real freedom, understand God. An artist gets his artistic freedom, when he finds his ideal of art. The function of the religion is not to destroy man's nature but to fulfil it. The Sanskrit word dharma has a deeper meaning in Indian culture. It is the innermost nature, the essence, the implicit truth of all things. It is the ultimate aim that is working in the self of man.

Man is sinful by nature and a person can be saved by the grace of God. "This is like saying that the nature of the seed is to remain enfolded within its shell and it is only by some special miracle that it is can be grown into a tree." (Ibid : 308) When it is tested, it is found in it carbon and protein and a good many other things but not the idea of a branching tree. When the tree takes its shape it can be affirmy said that the seed that has been wasted and allowed to rot in the ground has been obstructed in its dharma. The history of man is like seed. It is seen that the great purpose of man is found in the lives of greatest men. Numerous individual lives seem ineffectual, it is
not their religion to remain barren but it is for them to burst their cover and transform themselves into a vigorous spiritual shoot growing up into the air and light and branching out in all directions. The freedom of the seed lies in the revealment of its nature and reaching the destiny of becoming tree.

The realization of God is the ultimate goal of human soul. This realization consists in the union of individual soul with God. We have found that human soul has double aspect, the finite and the infinite. In the finite aspect the soul is separated from God. It is for beyond by its nature. "But at other pole of my being I am separated from all. There I have broken through the cordon of equality and stand alone as an individual. I am absolutely, I am I, I am incomparable." (Ibid : 306) But in the infinite aspect the soul is similar to God. It is unlimited, eternal and free like God. "At one pole of my being I am one with stocks and stones. There I have to acknowledge the rule of universal law." (Ibid : 306) In the finite aspect the soul is always conscious of its separateness from God and it strives to keep this distinction more and more. It thinks that it has its own freedom and is completely unrelated to God. It has its own meaning in itself. But the case is not so. God has given freedom the individual self. But, this freedom never indicates the distinctness of soul from God. We wrongly explain the meaning of freedom. Everything has its truth and appearance. We find that Tagore believes in the reality of the phenomenal world. Tagore reconciles Maya and the world by saying that from the standpoint of human experience both 'Maya' and the world are real. The reality of these two are indubitable. "The world appears as illusion, only to those who approach it intellectually. It becomes positive and real to us when we enjoy it (i.e. experience it). It is only a person with a narrow outlook, sitting inactive in a corner of his room, who can divide this world as an illusion." (Narvane 1977 : 106)

Our ultimate aim of life is to realise the truth of the self, not its appearance. And in order to do so, we have to remove our ignorance or 'Avidya'. This ignorance is not a reality but an illusion. "We must rid ourselves of the avidya, our ignorance, and then our mind will find its freedom in the inner idea." (Tagore 1994 : 307) It is not a positive reality and hence it can be removed. Ignorance consists in our egoism which isolates the self from God. Egoism leads us to the fulfillment of our selfish and narrow desires. In the course of the fulfillment of these desires, an individual has to
undergo so many sufferings and miseries. It has to face many obstacles and yet his desires remain unfulfilled. The soul then realizes its finitude and limitations. It thinks then, that it is completely separate from God because the nature of God is totally different from its nature.

Bondage is the detachment of soul from God. We have to strive for liberation or ‘Muktí’. Ignorance is the cause of soul’s bondage. Hence liberation can be attained by removing ignorance. We have to go beyond our narrow selfish desires and self interests in order to overcome ignorance. We must purify our hearts with universal love or love for others. It is through God’s love and joy that souls enjoy freedom which is the gift of God. But we misinterpret the meaning of freedom. Its true meaning lies in the recognition that the soul is not merely individual and separate but it is universal, infinite and united with the supreme soul, ‘paramatma’ or God. “We must know that the meaning of our self is not to be found in its separateness from God and others, but in the ceaseless realization of yoga, of union; nor on the side of canvas where it is blank, but on the side where picture is being painted.” (Ibid : 301)

The salvation or the liberation of soul consists in having its union with God. Our ‘Muktí’ or freedom can be realized only through perfect love. God creates individual soul not out of necessity but out of joy and love. Our separation from God is not due to repulsion but due to love. “Repulsion has only the one element, severance. But, love has two, the element of union which is the ultimate truth. Just as when the father tosses his child up from his arms it has the appearance of rejection, but it truth is quite reverse.” (Ibid : 310) Thus the separateness of self is due to God’s love. The finite self tries again and again to reach its infinite source. Thus, individuality and finitude consisting in the separateness of self from God is not final. It is only an apperance and not reality.

There is a remarkable difference between the Eastern and the western conception about the nature of man. According to Christian faith man is sinful, guilty and so needs salvation by God. On the other hand, according to Vedantic view, man is good virtually because the Infinite is potentially present in him, ever-guiding his action on earth. “The deliverance of man is not, however, worked out by mere grace.
It is the removal of ignorance or 'avidya' which leads man to real deliverance." (Reddy 1971 : 5) Sometimes, even the knowledge of the right will endow him opportunities to break away his selfish fetters to become one with the Divine.

The essence of man is his soul-consciousness. The inherent unity of the soul is the eternal and universal reality. In this context, Tagore says, "we have seen that it was the aspiration of ancient Indian to live and move and have its joy in Barhma, the all-conscious and all pervading Spirit by extending its field of consciousness over all the world." (Tagore 1994 : 290) Soul-consciousness leads to God-consciousness that itself is cosmic consciousness. There is a fundamental unity between the individual soul 'atman' and the universal soul 'paramatman'. The one in man which is the unity of his soul seeks for the unity in knowledge, love and will. As a result, all contradictions of life and distinction of self are dissolved and the one in man because one with God.

The Selfhood of man is the wholeness of man. Though one with the universal man stands alone as an individual. His soulhood is his selfhood. He has no other duplicate in the whole universe. None can crush out the individuality of man. If by any chance man is deprived of his individuality, he will become bankrupt and lose his creative joy at once. The individual is individual; he cannot be generalized or universalized by any means. He has his own authentic individuality and creative personality. Man as a collective is not conscious of his distinctiveness but man as Man is a unique being.

Tagore regards man and nature to be an indispensable elements of universal reality. Nature depends upon the spirit for its meaning as much as spirit depends upon nature for its expression. "Nature is not merely a store-house of objects but a habitation of man's spirit as well. Man's place in nature is superb and significant." (Raddy 1971 : 25). Without man nature is a broken arch and man without nature is deserted land. Nature exists for man and so without him nature would be as good as nothing.

Tagore who is a mystic poet of India, recognizes two approaches to nature. The one tends to divide man from the object of his desire and so man from nature.
The other tends to setup a contact between man and destiny and so man and nature. The former approach to nature is prevalent in the west and the latter is in vogue in the East. The kinship between man and nature and the relationship of man with every other object of the world is very well recognized by Tagore through famous theory of creation. As every note in music is needed to complete a symphony, so every phenomenon of physical nature like earth, water, light, fruits and flowers etc. are necessary in the attainment of the ultimate ideal of perfection. In this context the master poet draws a line of distinction between knowledge and perception, science and philosophy. The man of science is a man of knowledge who is led to power and a man of philosophical perception, though placed far way from physical world, is nearer to nature and so close to himself. In this vein Tagore says, “when a man does not realize his kinship with the world he lives in a prison – house whose walls are alien to him.” (1994 : 283) Civilization is a way of life, a kind of mould of each nation, according to its best ideal. The best of men in India flew to forests, led a contemplative life and converted the savage habitation of the forests into the sanctuary of the sacred people. They searched for the abiding peace and most of them could enter into the holy life of the universe. “Therefore India chose her places of pilgrimage wherever there was in nature some special grandeur or beauty, so that her mind could come out of its world of narrow necessities and realize its place in the infinite.” (Ibid : 283) There was a perfect harmony, i.e. ‘pracantah’ between man and nature and perfect comprehension i.e. ‘Yuktatmarah’ between man and man. Thus, the world of external nature has a special function to perform – the divinisation.

Man has two different aspects, one exposes itself and the self that surpasses itself and there by exposes its own meaning. He tries to stand upon the pedestal of accumulation and to retain every thing in order to display itself. He gives up every thing to reveal itself like “a flower that has blossomed out from the bud, pouring from its chalice of beauty all its sweetness.” (Ibid : 307) Man is like a lamp that contains its oil and tries utmost to guard from the least loss. Thus it is isolated from all other objects which are around it. But whenever it is lightened, it finds its true meaning and a nice relationship with all things far and wide is set up and it freely sacrifices its fund of oil to feed the blaze. So as long as man hoards his possession, he remains in the dark. When he finds illumination he foregets himself in a moment, holds the light of
his life high to enlighten his surroundings. The road Buddha told was not merely the practice of self-abnegation but the widening of love. It is through the love of all creature one can come near to God.

The Gita says that men manifest themselves through action but this manifestation is not perfect as long as their action is not free. In fact their nature is obfuscated by work that is done by the compulsion of want or fear. “The mother reveals herself in the service of her children, so our true freedom is not the freedom from action but freedom in action, which can only be attained in the work of love.” (Ibid : 310) The manifestation of God is found in his creation and knowledge, power and action are of his nature, they are not imposed upon him from outside. He gets his freedom in his work and he realizes himself through his creation. God’s creation is not from necessity but he creates out of love.

A man may piles up huge amount of money in bank but the wise paper of the bank note is all Maya. It is the ignorance of man that makes them believe that the isolation of self like the paper of the bank note is valuable in itself but they are rendered into valueless by acting like this. When the ignorance is removed, that very self comes to men with a priceless wealth. “For he manifests Himself in deathless forms which this joy assumes. These forms are separate from Him and the value that these forms have is only what his joy has imparted to them.” (Ibid : 311)

It takes an accidental and contingent character when man does his work out of pure necessity. But when his work is done out of love, joy it takes have the element of immortality. Men have come to know the truth that there is a harmony in the dualism of life and death. They realize that the life of a soul that is finite in its expression and infinite in principle must go through the doors of death in its journey in order to understand the infinite. Death is monistic, it has no life in it where as life is dualistic, it has an appearance as well as truth. Death is that appearance, that maya which can not be isolated to life. Men invoke death when it can not be isolated to life. Men invoke death when they are unwilling to accept death, when the self realizes no impulse that urges it to grow out of itself. Death does not mean annihilation but eternal life. “It is the extinction of the lamp in the morning light, not the abolition of the sun.” (Ibid : 311)
The man who seeks for self glorification with the wish for the social good can realize his higher self. Man has two aspects finite and infinite. There is a ruthless attempt to isolation self from the rest in its finite aspect and in its infinite aspect its wish is to that harmony that goes towards perfection and not its mere aggrandizement. "It transcends the limits of the present and the personal. It is on the side of the infinite." (Ibid : 312) The emancipation of the physical nature of man is found in love, in goodness. The function of love does not lead to darkness but to illumination, the attainment of bodhi or the true awakening that gives an infinite joy in mankind. Our spiritual self in order to have its union with God renounces its narrow individuality for the sake of supreme self. This renunciation is not the negation of self but the attainment of a higher self by purifying it through perfect universal love. "He who is wish tries to harmonize the wishes that seek for self glorification with the wish for social good and only thus can realize his higher self." (Ibid : 312)

Man have the dualism of appearance and truth in the freedom of their will. Their self will is the appearance of freedom and love is the truth. When they try to make this appearance independent of truth, then all their attempt renders into misery and proves this futility at the end. Everything has two aspects, Maya and satyam, appearance and truth. "Word are Maya where they are merely sounds and finite, they are satyam where they are ideas and infinite." (Ibid : 313) The self of man is maya where it is merely individual and finite, where it regards its isolation as absolute. It is satyam when it realizes its essence in the universal and infinite, in the supreme self, in paramatma. The individual he gains its perfect end when it understands its freedom of harmony in the infinite he. Then comes mukti, its emancipation from the thraldom of maya, of emancipation from the thraldom of mayas, of appearance that comes from avidya, from ignorance.

The co-existence of the infinite and the finite, of the Supreme being and the soul of man is a problem that men come across. Infinite is real and it is only maya that causes the appearance of the finite. The world in its essence has a pair of opposite force "These forces, like the left and the right hands of the creator, are acting in absolute harmony, yet acting from opposite directions." (Ibid : 316) There is a bond of harmony between the two eyes of man that acts in unison. Similarly there
is a close continuity of relation in the physical world between heat and cold, light and
darkness, motion and rest. If there is any chaos in creation, it is thought that two
opposite are vying to surpass each other.

The individual soul of men may be isolated from the supreme soul but this
does not happen from alienation but from the fulness of love. Hence untruths,
sufferings and evils are not standstill, the human soul can easily defy them, yet
more, render them into new power and joy. The infinite joy is expressing itself in
various forms, taking upon itself the bondage of law and they fulfil their destiny when
they go back from forms to joy, from law to love when they unlock the knot of finite.
"The human soul is on its journey from the law to love, from discipline to liberation,
from the moral plane to the spiritual. Buddha preached the discipline of self restraint
and moral life, it is a complete acceptance of law." (Ibid : 320 – 321) But the bondage
of law can not be an end by itself, men can acquire the means of getting beyond it by
mastering it property. He who wants to reach the stage of Brahma – vihara, the joy of
living in Brahma, shall cheat none, look down upon none and never injure any body
through anger. He shall have unfathomed love for all creatures like a mother who
protect her son at the cost of her own life. He shall scatter his unbounded love for all
creature, below, high and all around him.

Men do not love as they do not understand it. Love is the ultimate meaning of
everything around them. It is not mere emotion, rather it is a truth, the joy that is the
root of all creation. "It is through the heightening of our consciousness into love and
extending it all over the world, that we can attain Brahmavihara, communion with this
infinite joy." (Ibid : 321) Love spontaneously endows itself in endless gifts that lose
their significance if men do not reach through them. They must have love in their
heart and he who has no love judges those gifts according to their usefulness. But
utility is temporary as when the want is satisfied, utility becomes barren. But when
they have love in their heart, a mere token is a great value to them because it is not
for any special use, it is an end in itself.

A country civilization where man looks upon man as his food can never thrive.
Lust, greed and love of comfort bring man in a lower scale. He is looked upon as a
mere body that is sold in the market by the price of his flesh only. He becomes a
machine that is working day and night for those who want to acquire more money. It is a kind of self deception on a large scale. The desires of man obfuscates the truth that the wrongs done by themselves invoke their own spiritual suicide because God looks upon all alike. "It produces ugly sores in the body of civilization, gives rise to its hovels and brothels, its vindictive penal codes, its cruel prison systems, its organized method of exploiting foreign races to the extent of permanently injuring them by depriving them of the discipline of self – government and means of self-defense." (Ibid : 322) Man is useful to man as his body is a marvelous machine and his mind is an organ of wonderful efficiency. At the sometime, he is a spirit which is truly known by love. When we define man by the market value of service, we understand him imperfectly. Whenever men know him as a spirit, they know him as their own. Then they feel that cruelty to him is cruelty to themselves.

The ideal of man is not only perfection of consciousness but the pursuit and realization of love and joy. A man of comprehension is always a man of love that is supreme. Just like a white ray of light passes through a prism and is split up to into its component colour parts, so also love emanates from Brahman. Love is the white light of pure consciousness that comes from God and pervades the whole world. "So to be one with this sarvanubhuh, this all feeling being who is in the external sky, as well as in our inner soul, we must attain to that summit of consciousness." (Ibid : 321) An ideal of life is never separated from the ideal of life which is hard work.

Man aspires to a spiritual vision that is the vision of whole truth that endows him a great pleasure as it divulges to him the deepest harmony that exists between man and his surroundings. It is the desires of men that limit the scope of men's self realization and create obstacle to the extension of consciousness. Men can never have a true view of man unless they have love for him. Civilization must be judged and prized not by the amount of its power but by how much it has expressed the love of humanity. A civilization is doomed to destruction whenever man's worth is cheapened or some powerful group of men began to look upon the people as mere instrument of their power. "Civilization can never sustain itself upon cannibalism of any form. For that by which alone man is true can only be nourished by love and justice." (Ibid : 323)
Whenever men look at the world through the veil of their desires, they make it small and narrow and fail to understand its full truth. It is clear that the world fulfills the desires of man but their relation to it does not stop there. They have a deeper bond with it that of necessity. They are glad to know that they are attached to it with numberless threads that extend from this earth to the stars.

All the contradictions of existence merge themselves and are lost in love. Love must be one and two at the same time. The heart of men charges its place till it finds love and then it has its rest. Loss and gain are harmonized in love. "In its balance sheet credit and debit accounts are in the same column and gifts are added to gain." (Ibid : 324) Bondage and liberation are antagonistic in love as love is free and at the same time bound. There would be no creation if God were free. The finite and infinite are made one in Him who is love. Thus, "from love the world is born, by love it is sustained, towards love it moves and into love it enters." (Ibid : 324)

Some people in India thinks that action is opposed to freedom. They imagine that activity being material plane is a restriction of the free spirit of the soul. But they remember that as joy divulges itself in law, so the soul gets its freedom in action. "It is because joy cannot find expression in itself alone that it desires the law which is outside." (Ibid : 326) Similarly it is because the soul can not find freedom that it wants external freedom. The soul of man gets freedom from its own folds. It is always busy producing for itself fresh fields of action in order to set free itself from the mist of indistinctness and come out into the open.

Those who have fully understood the soul have never talked about the sorrowfulness of life of bondage of action. "They are not like the weakling flower whose stem-hold is so light that it drops away before attaining fruition." (Ibid : 327) They hold on life with their might and joy, pain and sorrow do not dismay them. They are never razed into the ground by the weight of their heart. Like a victorious hero they march through life seeing themselves in increasing resplendence of soul through joys and sorrow.

Life is not complete within itself, it must come out. Its truth is in the commerce of the inside and the outside. The body of man must maintain its various relation with
the outside light and air not only to gain life-force but also to manifest it. Similarly the soul cannot live on its own internal feelings and imaginings. "It is ever in need of external objects; not only to feed its inner consciousness but to apply itself in action, not only to receive but also to give." (Ibid : 328)

Men understand law in creation through their sense and they also realize harmony in the universe through their sense of beauty. When they understand the law in nature they stretch their mastery over physical force and become powerful, when they know the law in their moral nature they gain mastery over self and become free. "In like manner the more we comprehend the harmony in the physical world the more our life shares the gladness of creation and our expression of beauty in art becomes more truly catholic. (Ibid : 335) As they become conscious of the harmony in their soul, their understanding of the blissfulness of the spirit of the world becomes universal and revelation of beauty in their life moves in goodness and love towards infinite. That is the ultimate aim of existence. They understand the whole in love as love gives it birth, retains it and takes it back to its bosom.

The realization of beauty is as much an important ideal with man as his realization in action and love. "Beauty is omnipresent, therefore everything is capable of giving us joy." (Ibid : 334) It is the narrowness of perception, which divides aesthetic consciousness into ugliness and beauty. Otherwise the aesthetic consciousness as such, shows the vision of beauty that is everywhere. Man understands himself in art as much as through beauty and music. The ideal of Man is self-relation through creative mediums of self-expression, through art, music or beauty.

The realization of God is fulfilment of man. There is no other greater calamity for man than his indifference to His power. The poet of the spirit exhorts man to give himself up to find that Brahman is everywhere. This can only be possible when he frees himself from the life of the self. "The worship of God is not really the process of gradual acquisition of him but the daily process of surrounding ourselves, removing all obstacles to union and extending our consciousness of him in devotion and service, in goodness and to love." (Ibid : 338 – 339)
The spirit of renunciation is the deepest reality of the human soul. By the very act of possession they understand that they are grater than the things they possess. When men realize that all their possessions are mere illusion, they know their soul which is far above there material things and they will emancipate from their bondage. Thus, man truly understands his soul by outgrowing his possession. The feeling of infinite in men is not merely a intellectual proposition but it has to be experienced and that experience is bliss. "The bird, while taking its flight in the sky, experiences at every beat of its wings that the sky is boundless, that its wings can never carry it beyond. There in lies its joy." (Ibid : 340) The bird can not get pleasure within the limits of necessary. It must feel that what it has immeasurably more than it wants and therein lies its joy. The soul of man is also like this, it soars in the infinite and she must realize that in the sense of not being able to come to the end of her attainment is her supreme joy, her find freedom.

The happiness of man is not in getting any thing but in giving himself up to what is grater than himself, to ideas that is larger than individual life. His existence becomes miserable and sordid unless he finds some greater idea that can truly demand his all, that can set him free from all attachment of his belongings. "Tagore observes that divine nature of man transcends all limitations and finally realizes his completeness which is the realization of universal Man in him." (Chattopadhyay 1987 : 60) Buddha, Jesus and all great prophets express such great ideas. They hold before mankind opportunities for surrendering their all. When they stretch out their divine aims-bowl, men feel that they can not help giving and they find their truest joy and liberation in giving.

The finite pole of man's existence has its place in the world of necessity where man rooms here and there for food, to live, clothing to get warmth. But this act of getting is partial. It is limited to the necessities of man. "We can have a thing only to the extent of our requirements, just as a vessel can contain water to the extent of its emptiness." (Tagore 1994 : 340 – 341) Man's relation to food and house is in feeding and habitation. They call it a benefit when a thing is fitted to some particular want of men. So, to get is always to get partially.
The existence of men whose direction it forwards infinite wants not wealth but freedom and joy. There the reign of necessity ceases and there the function of men is not to get but to be one with Brahma because the religion of the infinite is the religion of unity. "Words do not gather bulk when you know their meaning, they become true by being one with the idea." (Ibid: 341) But the west do not believe this idea and they never reconciled to this idea of human unity with the infinite being. It is a piece of blasphemy of man's becoming God.

But the East holds the idea that is the function of human soul to gain God, to utilize him for any special purpose. All that they can aspire, imagine is to be more and more one with God. "In the religion of nature, which is the religion of diversity, we grow by acquisition, in the spiritual world, which is the religion of unity, we grow by losing ourselves, by uniting." (Ibid: 341) Procuring a thing is by its nature partial but being is complete, it belongs to wholeness of man, it comes out not from necessity but from close affinity with the infinite with is the principle of perfection that men have in their soul.

The soul of men can become Brahma, the all pervading spirit, but it can never leave Brahma and move beyond him. "The river can become the sea but she can never make the sea part and parcel of herself." (Ibid: 342) When man's soul understands the Ultimate aim of repose, all her movement acquires a purpose. It is this ocean of infinite rest that endows significance to endless activities.

The complete and lucid idea invigorates a poem in which every sentence carries that idea. When the reader understands that pervading idea, as he goes through, the reading of the poem gives joy to him. Then the every part of the poem becomes meaningful by the light of the whole. If the writer uses disconnected images, though it is beautiful, the poem becomes wearisome in the long run. "The progress of our soul is like a perfect poem. It has an infinite idea which once realized makes all movements full of meaning and joy." (Ibid: 342) If men isolate their movements from the ultimate idea, if they do not look the eternal rest and only see the infinite motion, the existence seems to them a dread evil, violently moving towards an unending aimlessness.
Intellectual knowledge is partial as intellect is an instrument, it is a part of mankind, it can give them information about things that can be isolated and expounded and whose possessions can be divided part by part, But Brahma is perfect and knowledge that is partial can never by a knowledge of him. " ...... words can never describe him; he can only be known by our soul, by her joy in him, by her love. Or in other words, we can only come into relation with him by union – union of our whole being." (Ibid : 343) He must be growing into Brahma and all his movements should be controlled by that ultimate idea and all the creations should be an offerings to the supreme spirit of perfection.

Thus, the very thoughts and ideas that Tagore places in his superb essay Sadhana have some similarity with that of Upanishad that has an indelible impression on Tagore’s mind. But all his feeling about God and man and nature come out from his own lips. “Sometimes we find that the poet himself discovered some truth but he tried to link them up with those of the Upanishad. Again, we find that while expounding a particular Upanishadic shloka, he adds to it some wisdom of his own.” (Roy 1949 : 4) In this essay we find that all pervading spirit that every heart of man and without it man’s existence in this mundane world is meaningless. “For thou dwellest in me and I in thee. Thou without me or I without thee are nothing.” (Ibid : 345) Thus, the notion of God that Tagore finally arrives at, guided by his own religious consciousness is pantheism. He defines pantheism as monotheism that "holds God to be an infinite person, a spirit who is in and above the world of things and spirits." (Chaudhury 1959 : 4) The pantheism of Tagore is a richer and a more delicately fashioned system than conventional pantheism but does not expound the difference. But we are agreed with Amiya Chakraborty when he says that "his Sadhana, which is usually taken to represent his philosophy of religion, deliberately avoids a schematic exposition of his thoughts. There in is no defined theology of Hinduism or any Eastern doctrine as such, but an attempt to interpret India’s spiritual attitude as he knew it, and this spirit of India was for Tagore the faith that welcomed a diversity of religious traditions (Chakraborti 1968 : 46)

Thus through this essay, Tagore wants to say that God’s dwelling place lies in every heart of mankind. He gives divinity in man who is the manifestation of God. 'Sadhana' means worship and if a man wants to feel and face God, he has to
worship man. Another form of God is man and he descends from the heaven to this mundane world to get human love. The every action of the whole universe is going on by the direction of that Supreme Entity. We, human being, are so blind in pursuit of power, puf and fame that we, instead of serving man, worship the stone idol that is devoid of God. Tagore's pantheism is hidden in this attitude to God.

*Personality* (1917)

It is a collection of six lectures delivered in America during Tagore's visit there (September 1916 – 1917) sponsored by the Pond Lyceum in connection with a lecture tour from coast to coast. It was first published by Macmillan, London and was dedicated to C. F. Andrews.

Men's relation with this world is manifold, they come in contact with this great world face to face in order to have live, to till the soil, to gather food and to clothe themselves. Thus, they are always in touch with this great world through their physical needs. But they have their own mind that wants its own food and has its necessity too. It faces with manifold facts and becomes surprised when it is not able to trace out one unifying principle that clarifies the heterogeneity of things. "Man's contribution is such that he must not only find facts but also some laws which will lighten the burden of mere number and quantity." (Tagore 1980: 3)

There is another type of man in man, not the physical but the personal man who has his own likings and disliking and wants to find something to fulfil its need of love. This personal man who is able to contact with the supreme is found in the region where they emancipate from all necessity. "It is the highest in man – this personal man. And it has personal relation of its own with the great world and comes to it for something to satisfy personality." (Ibid: 4) The world of science is not a real world but an abstract world of force. They can utilize it by the help of intellect but can not understand it by their personality. It is like a swarm of machines that though creates things for mankind, are mere shadows to them.

There is another world that is real to mankind. They see it, feel it and deal with it with all their passion. Its mystery is infinite as they can not expound or gauge it. It
is the world from which science turns away and Art takes its place. The basic difference between man and animal is that the animal is bound within the limit of its necessity. "Like a retail shopkeeper, it has no large profit from its trade of life; the bulk of its earning must be spent in paying back the interest to its bank." (Ibid : 9) On the other hand man, in life's commerce is a big merchant who earns a great deal more that he is forced to expend. In animals, emotional expressions like the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, fear, anger and love have gone little beyond their bounds of usefulness. "Bun in man, though they still have roots in their original purposes, they have spread their branches far and wide in the infinite sky high above their soil." (Ibid : 11) Man has a fund of a emotional energy that is not all captured with self-preservation and this surplus gives expression in the creation of Art.

The west may believe in the soul of man but they do not really believe that the universe has a soul. The East believes in this idea. According to them, the most important thing is this universal soul for which the Eastern sages have sat in meditation and eastern artists have united them in artistic realization "because we have faith in this universal soul, we in the East know that Truth, Power, Beauty lie in simplicity, -- where it is transparent, where things do not obstruct the inner vision." (Ibid : 25) Therefore all the sages of East have essayed to make their life simple and pure as they have the understanding of a positive Truth, that, though invisible is more real than the gross and numerous.

The idea of life is not mere logical deduction, "it is as real to the poetess as the air to the bird who feels it at every beat of its wings." (Ibid : 26) Woman has understood the mysteries of life in her child more intimately than man. She has realized it to be infinite not through any reasoning process but through the illumination of her feeling. Therefore, what is mere abstraction to one is real and authentic to another whose sense is wide. The Western critics describe the Indian mind as metaphysical since it is soaring in the region of infinite. But the infinite is not a philosophical conjecture to India, it is a real as sunlight. "She must see it, feel it, make use of it in her life. Therefore, it has come out so profusely in her symbolism of worship, in her literature." (Ibid : 27) The slightest movement of life is not possible if the sky is not filled with infinite joy. This universal presence is as real to him as the earth under his feet.
In India, the greater part of literature is religious as God is not a distant God to them, they belong to their homes and to their temples. In their festival He is the chief guest whom they honour. In the season of flower and affection, in the coming of rain, in the fullness of the autumn they see the hem of his mantle and listen to His footsteps. "We worship His in all the true objects of our worship and love Him wherever our love is true." (Ibid : 28) In woman they know Him, they feel Him in man who is true, He is born again and again in their children as he is the Eternal child. Hence, all eastern religious songs are love song and their chorific occurences such as birth of a son, or the coming of a daughter from her husband's house to her parents and her departure again are woven in their literature as drama whose counterpart is in the divine.

Man has two aspects – finite and infinite. When they exhaust their finite they have another side where their aspiration, enjoyment and sacrifice are infinite. "This infinite side of man must have its revealment in some symbols which have the elements of immortality." (Ibid : 30) Naturally it searches perfection; hence it rejects all that is flimsy, feeble and incongruous. It builds a dwelling paradise by the help of those materials that have surpassed the earth's mortality. Men are the children of light. Whenever they fully understand themselves, they realize their mortality. As they realize it, they extend their region of the immortality into every region of human life. The main aim of art is to build a true world of man, the living of truth and beauty. "It seems that in Tagore's view the personality of the artist rubs out the individuality of things, their essential character, in response to the challenge of the Supreme person" (Mukerji 1972 : 61)

Man is true when he understands his infinity. He is divine who is the creator in him. Therefore, he creates with the attainment of truth as he can live within his creation and find out the world of God as his own world which is his own heaven, the heaven of ideas shaped into perfect forms with which he surrounds himself. It is a world where his children are born, where they come to know how to live and to die, how to love and to fight, where they understand that what is merely seen is not real and wealth is not that which is accumulated. If a man can hear the voice coming from the heart of his own creation, he would hear the same message coming out
from the ancient Indian sage. "Hearken to me, ye children of the Immortal, dwellers of the heavenly worlds, I have known the supreme person who comes as light from the dark beyond." (Ibid:31)

It is that Supreme person who has made himself known to man and made this universe so deeply personal to him. God has a special care towards man "as man manifests God's perfections better, God treats him as a son, a companion. He does not destroy the liberty of man." (Kanapilly 1945 : 109) Therefore, in India the places of pilgrimage are in the meeting place of river and sea, in the eternal snow of the mountain peak and in the lonely seashore. They can not meet that Supreme person in the mere substance and law of this world but in the places where the sky is blue and the grass is green, where the flowers has its beauty and fruit its taste, where there is not only perpetuation of race but joy of living and love of fellow-creatures, sympathy and self renunciation. "There, not merely are facts pelted down upon our foreheads but we feel the bond of the personal relationship binding our heart with this world through all time. And this is Reality which is truth made our own, - truth that has its eternal relation with the Supreme person." (Tagore 1980 : 32)

The 'good' is the supreme moral value. It is not an appearance that has to be submerged in the Absolute. All thoughts of Good and evil become meaningless if a being for whom these distinctions are eminently real is conceived to be false. Tagore affirms the truth of the personality of God, for without it one can not expound one's religious aspiration for communication and oneness with them. The same applies to aesthetic sense as well. "In art," says Tagore, the person in us sends its answers to the Supreme person." (Ibid : 38)

Harmony, according to Tagore, exists in man's inner power of surplus that is his idea of beauty as related to that of goodness. When man overcomes his poor ego and understands the existence of universal unity, harmony in him he is able to realise goodness which is the realization of universal self. This realization is possible through love that is the spiritual truth. This ideal of love exists in the very nature of man that encourages him to love others and to sacrifice for other man. So the realization of goodness through love helps a man to understand a higher or greater self in him. Goodness in thought, activity and life rouses the feeling of a
comprehensive consciousness. Finally, goodness with love sets up a unity of man with the Universal Man that is the realization of infinite personality in him. Tagore explains "And this consciousness of the infinite, in the personal man, ever strives to make its expressions immortal and to make the whole world its own. In Art the person in us is sending its answers to the Supreme person, who reveals Himself to us in a world of endless beauty across the lightness world of facts. (Ibid : 38) So the realization of infinite personality crossing all the limitation of confronted facts and contradictions or differences of life is the realization of complete humanity where a perfect unity among all men is set up. According to Tagore, this is the final establishment of supreme goodness in human life.

Tagore insists on the finite-infinite nature of the finite individual who as such tries to fulfil himself as the spirit of the whole is operative in him. The facts of diversities that are seen around man is only phenomenal. Ontologically, there is only one Brahman that pervades the entire atmosphere. The poet says, "What is it in man that asserts its immortality inspite of the obvious fact of death? It is not his physical body or his mental organisation. It is that deeper unity that ultimate mystery in him, which from the centre of his world, radiates towards its circumference which is in the body, yet transcends his body ..... what is it? ........ It is the personality of man, conscious of his inexhaustible abundance" (Ibid : 38) Man is torn between the present and future because of his finite – infinite nature.

As far as the relationship between god and man is concerned, Tagore, quoting from the Vedas, says that man is able to know God because God reveals himself. "For him God was essentially love. The love of the mother for her child or of the lover for the beloved are only instances of the Supreme love that is God." (Kabir 2005 : xxiii) Inspite of man's best efforts to grasp the reality of God with his mind and describe Him with words, Brahma will always remain transcendent and therefore beyond grasp. He expounds that true knowledge is possible only through the union of love and the resulting joy. Tagore, basing himself on the Upanishads says that man cannot hope to know solely the finite or sole the infinite. This is because Truth is both finite and infinite at the same time. He quotes, "They enter the region of the dark who are solely occupied with the knowledge of the finite, and they enter into a
still greater darkness who are solely occupied with the knowledge of the infinite,"
(Ibid : 56)

God is the creator of the universe. The supreme soul or God being the creator is also called Visvakarma. The nature with its multiplicity of forms and forces are nothing but the outer manifestation of Visvakarma and God's inner manifestation lies in our souls. God manifests in the universe in order to find himself through His creation. Tagore says that we can conceive neither Brahma, nor the world as the only reality. Those who want to pursue the knowledge of finite for its own sake can not find the truth. "For it is a dead wall obstructing beyond. This knowledge merely accumulates but does not illuminate. It is like a lamp without its light, a violin without its music." (Ibid : 56) Just as a book can not be known by counting its pages, a survey of all the finites can not exhaust reality.

The soul pursuit of the infinite drives to a deep darkness as the absolute infinite is empty. The infinite and the finite are one as song and singing are one. "He who knows that the knowledge of the finite and the infinite is combined in one, crosses death by the help of the knowledge of the finite and achieves immortality by the help of the knowledge of the infinite." (Ibid : 57) The absolute infinite is like a music having no definite tunes, therefore meaningless. The absolute eternal is timelessness having no meaning at all but merely a word. The reality of the eternal is there where it contains all time in itself.

Those who pursue the transitory enter the region of darkness but those who pursue the eternal enter the region of still greater darkness. He who understands both the transitory and the eternal crosses the steps of death by the help of the transitory and reaches immortality by the aid of the eternal. The forms of things may change but the real truth lies in personality and that truth is real, not abstract. "We have seen that a mountain and a waterfall would become something else, or nothing at all to us, if our movement of mind changed in time and space." (Ibid : 58)

It is significant that we rarely find the word 'Absolute' in the writings of Tagore. He speaks God as the supreme person, Universal person or Supreme Man. He attributes personality to God. If personality implies finitude, Tagore would not
attribute it to God. He openly ridicules the idea of a finite God but personality does not really make God limited. But Tagore has emphasized that reality can be personal and yet above the relational and the conditioned. The phrase infinite personality is not only self—contradictory, it is in fact the most suggestive description of Reality which is possible. Rabindranath says, "The relational word is for me both individual and universal. My world is mine but it is also yours ....... It is not in my own individual personality that this reality is contained, but in an infinite personality." (Ibid : 58)

Form is absolutely necessary for the manifestation of idea. But the idea that is infinite can never be expressed in finite forms. Hence forms are bound to move and change and they must necessarily die to express the deathless. If the expression is definite, it can only be in its form, but at the same time at the expression of the infinite, it must be indefinite. Therefore when the world takes its shape it always surpass its shape. Neither the transitory nor the eternal has any meaning, separately. Men cross the transitory and understand the immortal through the help of the perfect harmony between the transitory and eternal because this world is the world of infinite personality it is the object of our life to establish a perfect and personal relationship with it." (Ibid : 61)

Everything that is moving in the world is held by the infinity of God and the world movements are not blind movement but they are related to the wish of a Supreme person who is without stain, without body, and therefore without bodily injury or bodily organs of strength, without mixture and without any touch of evil, can enter into everywhere. He is the poet, the ruler of mind, the all becoming and the self born. Brahma, the Supreme person, in his negative qualities, is clam. Brahma, in his positive qualities, acts upon all time. "He is the poet, he uses mind as his instrument, he reveals himself in limits, the revelation which comes out of his abundance of joy and not from outside necessity." (Ibid : 63) He can fulfill human desires through endless years by giving himself.

Men express their infinity in everything around them, in work they do, in men with whom they mix, in the enjoyment of the world with which they are surrounded. The soul of men permeate their surrounding and create itself in all things. This life of their has been filled with the gift of divine giver. "The stars have sung to it, it has
been blessed with the daily blessing of the morning light, the fruits have been sweet
to it and the earth has spreaded its carpet of grass so that it may have its rest." (Ibid : 64)
Life is perpetual creation, it has its truth when it surpasses itself in the infinite.
When it stops, accumulates and turns back to itself, when it has lost its capacity to
look beyond, it must die. "Those who slay their souls pass from hence to the gloom
of the sunless world." (Ibid : 65)

The mind has its limitations, the sense organs are occupied with things that
are before them but a spirit of oneness in mankind goes beyond the thoughts of its
mind, the movement of its bodily organs. Men are conscious of this one that is more
than all its belongings and they do not believe that it can die. "Because it is one,
because it is more than its parts, because it is continual survival, perpetual overflow,
we feel it beyond all boundaries death. (Ibid : 66) This consciousness is oneness
beyond all boundaries is the consciousness of soul.

The knowledge of the unity of soul must not be an abstraction, it is not that
negative kind of universalism. It is not an abstract soul, it is human soul that he must
realize in others. "I must know that if my soul were singularly mine, then it could not
be true; at the same time if it were not intimately mine, it would not be real." (Ibid : 67)
Through logic men could never have arrived at the truth that the soul finds its
perfection in its unity in others. They have realized it through the joy of this truth.
Man's delight is in understanding themselves outside them. When he loves in other
words, when he realizes, he is truer in someone else than himself he feels great joy
as one in him understands its truth of unity by uniting with others.

God is giving his love to all. Derive creates obstacle in love, it is the
movement towards the opposite direction of truth. The understanding of human soul
has its moral and spiritual side. The moral side shows training of unselfishness,
control of desire, the spiritual side represents sympathy and love. They should be
taken together and never isolated. But "The cultivation of the merely moral side of
our nature leads us to the dark region of narrowness and hardness of heart, to the
intolerant arrogance of goodness; and the cultivation of the merely spiritual side of
nature leads us to a still darker region of revelry in intemperance of imagination."
(Ibid : 68 – 69)
Man has also known direct communication of the person with the person, not through the world of forms and changes but in the innermost solitude of consciousness. Through this meeting he has felt the creation of a new world, a world of light and love that has no language but of music of silence.

The inward and the outward has become as one sky
The infinite and the finite are united
I am drunken with the sight of this All. (Ibid : 71)

The poet in this has arrived at the conclusion that the ultimate reality is in the person and not in the law and substance. Man must understand that if the universe is not the revelation of a Supreme person, then it is a stupendous deception and a perceptual insult to him. He should know that under such enormous weight his personality must be razed into the ground.

Life breath is the breath of immortality. The body ends in ashes and all the deeds of man are controlled by the Supreme. He gives highest tribute to God in the following language. "O God, O Fire, thou knowest all deeds. Lead us through good paths to fulfillment. Separate from us the crooked sin. To thee we offer our speech of salutation." (Ibid : 73) Man can realize their soul in the Supreme Being through renunciation of self and union with all.

The earth and the sky are woven with fibers of man's mind that is at the same time universal mind. If it is false, then poetry would be false and music a delusion and the mute world would force the hear of man into utter silence. The Great Master plays but the instrument is the human mind through which he brings out his songs of creation

The earth is His Joy: His joy is the sky;
His joy is the flashing of the Sun and the Moon;
His joy is the beginning, the middle and the end;
His joy is eyes, darkness and light.
Oceans and waves are His joy.
His joy the Sarawati, the Jumana and the Ganges.
The master is one; and life and death,
Union and separation are all His plays of joy. (Ibid : 74)
Man has the dualism in his consciousness of what is and what ought to be. But that is found in animal and its conflict is between what is and what is desired where as in man there is a conflict between what is desired and what should be desired. Man can share with animal what is desired but what should be desired belongs to a life that is far beyond it. Hence a second birth has taken place in man. “He still retains a good many habits and instincts of his animal life; yet his true life is in the region of what ought to be.” (Ibid : 80) In this physical world the mind of animal is fully engrossed immediate necessaries of life but in the case of man these objects are more varied. They realize that there world of present needs is one with a world that infinite Surpasses their present needs.

Men can gain perfection more truly than by lying within its breast through their separateness from the universe. The birth of the self is like the birth of a child. The relation of the unborn child to its surroundings in the mother’s womb is very intimate but it is without its final meaning. There all its wants are supplied to in all their details but its greatest desire is unfulfilled. When it is born into the world of light and space and freedom of action, its limbs and sense-organs have their only meaning in the freedom of the air and light. In the womb of the mother it is one with her but in order to see her, canoodle her and have fellowship with her it must be isolated from her. “In the world of things and men, this rhythm of That and This flows on in countless channels of metres; but the meaning of it is absent, till the realization is made perfect in the Supreme That and This.” (Ibid : 85) In the same manner the birth of self must take place if man is to gain his full meaning in the universe. They have to retain their uniqueness unimpaired. This is really the desire of the universe acting in them. The isolation of self, consequently, is only a means to a higher end that of fellowship, love and harmony. This is the positive significance of their existence.

The Suppression of the egoistically obtrusive self is a necessity for the spiritual growth of human personally. This, however, causes conflict with the laws of the natural world. But in the spiritual world this law has a quite different meaning. Tagore says, “Here comes the greatest suffering of dualism in man, the dualism of the world of nature and of the world of soul. (Ibid : 86) To break the power of self is a hard and painful task. Tagore’s experience of the evil of the life of soul has deepened considerably since the time of his basic religious experience. In a letter of
C.F. Andrews in 1914, he reveals how painful he found this task. “I know that I must pass through death. God knows it is the death – pang that is tearing open my heart. It is hard to part with the old self. One does not know, until the time comes, how far it had spread its roots and into what unexpected, unconscious depths it had sent its thirsty fibres draining out the precious juice of life.” (Tagore 1928 : 42)

In nature men are blind and lame like a child before its birth. But in the spiritual life they are born in freedom. The ultimate aim of freedom is to know what he is. The animals, by feeding and satisfying their desires, understand their own selves but their realization is like a smoke without fire. “The animal knows it, but its knowledge is like the smoke, not like the fire – it comes with a blind feeling but no illumination and though it arouses the truth it darkens it.” (Ibid : 95) Freedom is the aberration of man’s consciousness from the separateness of the self into its unity with all. This freedom is not perfect in its mere extension by its intensity of love. The freedom of the birth of the child from the womb of the mother is not fulfilled in its fuller consciousness of its mother but in its deep consciousness of mother in love. In the womb it is gradually developing but after its birth the mother gives the child the joy of the fullest consciousness through the medium of its freedom, the inter-communication of the love of the mother. The child is a person and its personality can never be understood in the bondage of the womb. “It has to be free and the freedom of personality has its fulfillment, not in itself, but in other personality, and this is love.” (Ibid : 96)

The animals also feel love but it is so feeble that it cannot illuminate consciousness to such a degree as to express the whole truth of love to them. Their love has a glow that brighten their selves without the flame that goes beyond the mystery of personality. Men are born in the lap of the infinite personality. Their true world is not the world of the laws of matter and force but the world of personality. When they fully understand it, their freedom is fulfilled. Then they understand, “know all that moves in the moving world as enveloped by God, and enjoy by what he renounces.” (Ibid : 97)

The consciousness of personality lies in the feeling of isolation from all and has reached its culmination in the feeling of the unity with all. With the
consciousness of isolation there must be consciousness of unity as it can not exist solely by itself. But when the consciousness of isolation takes the first place and of unity the second place in life, personality is narrow and dim in the light of truth, on the other hand when consciousness of unity is the primary and isolation the secondary factory the personality is large and bright in truth, this is the life of soul. The main aim of man is to emancipate his personality of self into the personality of soul, "to turn his inward forces into the forward movement towards the infinite, from the contraction of self in desire into the expansion of soul in love." (Ibid : 98) This personality that is aware of the principle of oneness, the centre of relationship, is the ultimate aim of attainment. This world appears real on in its relation to a central personality. When that centre is taken away, it falls to pieces and becomes a heap of abstractions, matter and force and logical symbols.

But these centres are many and each creature has its own little world related to their own personality. Hence a question appears in human mind whether the reality is one or many. But they understand that in them the principle of oneness is the basis of all reality. They have arrived at the truth that there is one infinite centre to which all the personalities and therefore all the world of reality are related. "He is 'Mahantam purusham', the one Supreme person, he is satyam, the one Supreme Reality; he is 'Jananam; he has the knowledge in him of all knowers, therefore he knows himself in all knowings; he is 'Sarvanubhuh', he feels in him the feeling of all creatures, therefore he feels himself in all feelings." (Ibid : 99) But this Supreme person is not merely passive, he is the joy that reveals itself in forms and it is his wish that creates.

Will has its supreme response which is not found in the world of law but in the world of freedom, not in the world of nature but in the spiritual world. This they understand in themselves, they furnish them with their necessaries but their relation is not perfect in them. They have their own freedom of will that get its harmony on the freedom of other wills. "Where we are slaves ourselves in our selfish desires, we feel satisfaction in slaves. For slaves reflect our own slavery, which comes back to us, making us dependent." (Ibid : 99-100) The highest joy of man lies in love where they understand freedom of will in others.
The joy of mankind lies in freedom, they may have pleasure in the fulfillment of their necessary but that pleasure is negative by nature because necessity is a bondage. The real freedom is that which frees man from it. It is positive by nature. In the rhythm of harmony man find perfection. "Beauty is the harmony realized in things which are bound by law. Love is the harmony realized in wills which are free" (Ibid : 101) They do not see the substance or the law but some relationship of forms that has its harmony with their personality. The infinite centre of personality that gives its joy by giving itself out in freedom must create other centres of freedom to unite with it in harmony.

The creation of the natural world is the creation of God and men can only receive it and make its own by receiving it. But they are the partners of God in the creation of the spiritual world. In this world God tries to harmonize his will with the mankind. "It is not power which builds this spiritual world, there is no passivity in its remotest corner, no coercion." (Ibid : 102) Whenever man’s consciousness can emancipate from the mist of illusion and his will be free from gross passions and narrow desires, he will definitely meet God where he creates. Their union will not be passive as he is not a passive being. Man’s relation with God is not mere the receivers of gift, God gives man from his own fulness, on the other hand man gives him from his abundance. Here lies joy not only for mankind but for God also.

The greatest influence of Vaisnavism on Rabindranath Tagore’s idea of God has to do with the vaisnava faith that God needs man as much as man needs god for the fulfillment of love. Rabindranath wrote, "In our country the Vaishnavas have realized this truth and boldly asserted it by saying that God has to rely on human souls for the fulfillment of this love". (Ibid : 102) The salvation or liberation of soul consists in having its union with God. Our ‘Mukti’ or freedom can be realized only through perfect love. God creates individual soul not out of necessity but out of joy and love. Our separation from God is not due to repulsion but due to love.

The fulfillment of human personality lies in gaining God’s nature for itself, in self sacrifice out of love. Men have came in this mundane world with human limitation and appetites yet they proved that they breathed in the world of spirit. The highest reality is the freedom of personality in the perfect union of love. They
emancipate themselves from all selfish desires, all narrowness of race and nationality, bondage of creeds and conventions. They are united with their God in the free active life of the infinite, in their infinite abundance of renunciation. They suffer and love. They embrace in their breast the hurts of the evils of the world and prove that the life of the spirit is immortal. A great change has been taken place in \great kingdoms and like cloud they disappear in the long run but these individuals carry in themselves the deathless life of all humanity. Their ceaseless life glides like a river through the green fields and deserts, through the long dark caverns of oblivion into the dancing joy of the sunlight, bringing water of life to the door of men, healing and allaying thirst and clearing the impurities of daily dust.

That is the Supreme path of This,
That is the Supreme Treasure of This.
That is the Supreme world of his,
That is the Supreme joy of This (Ibid : 107)

Tagore, the master-poet. was a far-sighted educator. Through out his life he was engaged in educating the children both at Shantiniketan and Sreniketan. In this context Sunil chandra Sarkar said, "people who paid even a single visit to Santiniketan always tended unwittingly to adopt the appellation ‘Gurudeva’ in their reference to him, although their previous interest in or attraction for him might have been due to quite other reasons. And this might indeed be an indication that a day may come when the world will recognize and honour him most, not merely as a poet, but as the poet educator, as Gurudeva" (1961 : 250) The poet knew very well that the cage of life of children and their parrot training was a hindrancce to the new dawn. Tagore started his Santiniketan on the line of ancient tapovana wherein the boys were taught to follow the austere life. Tagore very well knew that mechanical system of education cannot provide the desired goods. On the other hand, he gave the children full freedom. The child personality devoid of proper freedom cannot grow freely and feel the nearer presence of the world. It is their first introduction to the great truth that man’s true relationship with the world is that of personal love and not that of the mechanical law of causation. (Ibid : 112) Nature was the first teacher and Gurudev was the next teacher for the boys.
Rabindranath Tagore believed that the outdated economic doctrin and the rigid principles of ruling democracy can not free man. "The young mind should be saturated with the idea that it has been born in a human world which is in harmony with the world around it. And this is what our regular type of school ignores with an air of superior wisdom, severe and disdainful. It forcibly snatches any children from a world full of the mystery of God's own handiwork, full of the suggestiveness of personality." (Ibid : 114) Real man is indigenous and the purpose of all education is unfolding of this real man. That education which is divorced from the real springs of action is no education. That education which tends to exclude the ideals and aspirations of masses is soul-less and mechanical. Thinking on these lines, Rabindranath, the far-sighted educator, started his Vishva-Bharati under sylvan surroundings. He had at the back of his mind the picture of ancient tapavan. "Thus we have in Rabindranath Tagore not only a write and poet but also an educationist, a social and economic reformer and rehabilitator and political lender of his highest type with vision, a musician and a composer and a dramatic producer as well as a plastic artist – a painter." (Chattopadhaya 1997 : 13)

Tagore's idea of the Eastern University became a living plan for his 'Vishvabharathi' at Santiniketan. The education of Visvabharati can be summed up in the completion of man. "The school at Santiniketan assuming the ride of an idealized community had its own codes of cultural, moral and social values. In practicing discipline, such children as in the school at Santiniketa were exposed to control their emotion through a number of pedagogic tools." (Chattopadhyay 2002 : 132) Tagore's education never excluded the study of child temperament. Man's life starts in simple innocence and ends in perfect calmness. The education of nature is the real education for the child. The mechanical environment of the school caused a great reaction in the mind of Tagore and perhaps this may be the main cause for his reluctance to continue his higher study. "The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but make our life in harmony with all existence." (Ibid : 116)

The school should not be a special arrangement for giving lesson. The aim of education is to endow man the unity of truth. When life was simple the various elements of man were in complete harmony. "But when there came the separation of
the intellect from the spiritual and the physical, the school education put entire emphasis on the intellect and the physical side of man" (Ibid : 126) By doing so it created a break between the intellectual, physical and the spiritual life. But spiritual world can never be separated from the physical world where man are living in God. Born in this great world which is full of mystery of the infinite, they can not accept their existence as a momentary outburst of chance drifting on the current of matter towards an eternal. Men have discovered infinite personality in human love, in the greatness of the good, in the martyrdom of heroic souls, in the ineffable beauty of nature that can never be a mere physical fact nor anything but on expression of personality.

The mission of "India, is to understand the truth of the human soul in the Supreme soul through its union with the soul of the world. This aim has taken its natural form in the forest school in the ancient him – that Tagore wanted to set up at Shantiniketan. It urges man to seek for the vision of the infinite in all forms of creation. They feel it in the air they breath, in the light in which they open their eyes, in the earth on which they live and die. "Therefore, I know – and I know it from my own experience, - that the students and the teachers who have come together in this ashram are daily growing towards the emancipation of their minds into the consciousness of the infinite, nor through any process of teaching or outer discipline, but by the help of an unseen atmosphere of aspiration that surrounds the place and the memory of a devoted soul who lived here in intimate communion with God." (Ibid : 138) Keeping this view Tagore has made the teaching system of his school at Shantiniketan. When human being comes to know the realization of the Supreme Truth through meditation, all their actions, behaviour and words become true.

Om bhur bhuvah Svah
tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi
dhiyo yo nah prachodayat (Ibid : 152)

The word 'OM' means completeness and it is a symbolical word having the meaning the Infinite, the perfect and the Eternal. One's meditation begins and ends with the word 'OM' that is used so that the mind may be filled with the feeling of the infinite completeness and freed from the world of narrow selfishness. 'Bhur' means earth, 'Bhuvah' indicates the middle region, the sky and 'Svah' shows the starry
region. Men have to set their mind in the heart of this universe where they have to understand that they are born in the Infinite and they do not belong to a particular part of the earth but to the whole world.

Men have to bring into their conscious the vision of Vastness of all and then say that God creates this world from His infinite creative power. Everything in this earth shows the infinite will of the creator. "It is not like the law of gravitation, or some abstract thing which I can not worship and which can not claim our worship ... it claims our worship because it belongs to a supreme person, it is not a mere abstraction." (Ibid : 153) The earth, the sky, the starry heavens take one side and on the other side it is human consciousness. There is an eternal connection between man and the world as human consciousness takes the one side of the world. God is man's creator and everything in this universe and in man's life is god's gift to him. Man is conscious being only because God is "the supreme consciousness at the source and centre of every conscious being." (Ibid : 153) If there is no supreme consciousness at its source and centre, there could not be a world.

The power of God generates and flows as consciousness in man and in the world outside. Men actually want to halve it but these two sides of creation are intimately interlinked as they spring from the same source. Human consciousness and the vast world outside man are one. Whenever they meditate upon this fact, this does not mean that they are not taking anything for themselves but renouncing themselves to become one with all creation.

We saw that the idea of God as friend, lover and beloved is found in the Indian religions, especially Vaisnavism. But what about the idea of God as father that Rabindranath Tagore speaks of as also an Indian idea of God? Where did he find this idea in the Indian religion? Rabindranath gives us the answer in the book 'Personality,' where he quotes a text from the Upanishad and explains it, stating that this was the text used at the shantiniketan school for the boys to meditate upon and to use for their daily prayer. Part of the Sanskrit text and its translation by Tagore is given below, "Om pita no'si, pita no bodhi. Namaste'stu. Pita no'si. Thou art our Father. Pita no bodhi. Give us the bodhi, the consciousness, the awakening in this—that thou art our Father." (Ibid : 155) This truth has still not understood by man in the
life of man owing to their imperfections, miseries and sins. Therefore, they pray that they may be able to understand it in the consciousness. The word 'Father' in Sanskrit language includes mother. We use this word in its dual form 'Pitaru,' meaning Father and Mother. Man is born in the arms of the Mother. Men have to feel their father and mother are the true symbols of their eternal relationship with God. When they realize that they are eternally related to their Father, they rise above the trivialities of things. "Therefore the first prayer is to realize God as pita. Thou who creates the infinite world of stars and worlds. Thou art beyond me, but I know one thing intimately, Thou art pita, Father." (Ibid: 159)

Men have the idea of the world in their mind as the world of force and matter, hence their relation to it is mechanical relation of science. In that situation they miss the height of truth that he is a personal being that the law cannot account for that. "Law is about the physiology of our body, the physiology of our minds, the mechanism of our being. And when we come to our personal nature, we do not know any law which explains it." (Ibid: 156) As science ignores this very truth of personal man, the whole world becomes a machine and there can be no question of looking upon the creator as Father. If they look upon this world as a combination of forces, there can be no question of worship.

Man's true attitude is not that of pride or self-satisfaction but of self-surrender. The Supreme Person who is ruling the entire universe is his Father and this concept should burn like a fire in him. "Like a naked child let me place all my thoughts in Thy arms for Thy care and protection through the day." (Ibid: 160) Though men are eternally related to their Father there is some obstacle that prevents the full understanding of this truth and this causes the great suffering to man. Though they are surrounded by wealth, prosperity and ease, they feel unsatisfied, as they do not fully realize some being who takes shelter in the heart of all living creature.

Physical death does not mean complete end of life and there must be a higher life that is waiting for man. Hence he prays to God not to leave him in the region of death, he is not satisfied with this life. "As the child's cry is for the mother's food, which she supplies out of her own life, so we cry to the eternal Mother, Do not smite me with death, but give me the life which comes out of their own nature." (Ibid: 163)
Men want to understand full consciousness of life in Father. In order to reach that stage they have to "break all sins, selfish desires, craving of self, and own me as your child — your child, not the child of this world of death." (Ibid : 163 – 164) The greatest hindrance for the realization of this consciousness is selfish life. Hence man prays to God not for worldly prosperity but to set up a complete relationship with the Father. He should clean his mind and get rid of impulses of selfish desire and the fear and sorrow of the narrow life of self. He should pray to God, "Give me what is good, in whatever form — in sorrow, loss, insult, bereavement — I shall be glad to receive it, for I know it comes from Thee." (Ibid : 164)

Though man may be plunged into misery and sorrow, he who understands that he dwells in his father will be pleased to accept any kind of gift from His hands. This is freedom that cannot be felt in mere enjoyment. When they are able to put aside danger, death, sorrow, when there is not least doubt about a life in their Father, everything comes with a message of gladness, "We bow to Him in whom we all enjoy life, in whom is the welfare of the soul, in whom is the good," (Ibid : 166)

Thus, the thoughts that Rabindranath Tagore place in his essay 'personality' are superb and full of mysticism. They are the manifestation of the gradual development of Tagore's mind towards God. Hence Pabitra Kumar Roy says "Tagore's idea of religion was not readymade; it developed slowly, incorporating diverse components as Nature, deity and civilization and taking over influences from the Upanishads italic to the grassroot wandering Bauls, poetry of the Vaisnavas and medieval Indian saints in his stride." (Roy 2002 : 103) Here one Supreme reality who controls the whole universe is called as "Father; So one Supreme personality on whom all living creatures depend on is a world personality who manipulates all the activities of all living creatures. Here lies Tagore's pantheistic creed in disguised form. Tagore frankly admits in essay 'My boyhood days', "The Master workman, who made me, fashioned his first model from the native clay of Bengal. I have described this first model which is what I call my boyhood and in it there is little admixture of other elements." (Tagore 2005 : 84)
It is a lecture delivered at Andhra University under the terms of Sir Alladi Krishnawami of Waltair. The original form of the lecture was in Bengali, under the help of Amiya Chandra Chakraborty and Humayun Kabir translated the lecture into English. *Man* contains three lectures, 'Man', 'Supreme Man' and 'I am he'.

Man is certainly a superior being in all creation. It is not that he goes beyond the scope of his physical security breaking the natural barriers and other limitations of his environment but he inclines to invent value and sets to create beauty. Purity lies in the sanctifying of the heart. It is the prayer of the universal personality in the heart of the individual. When man understands that truth in the soul of other, he enjoys an inexpiable pleasure. "This was the invocation of the universal personality in the mind of the individual person." (Tagore 1996: 193) Unlike other species the mind of man is always directed towards the unknown than known, distant than near, abstract than concrete. His physical and vital have entered into partnership with his mind. Man conducts all his experiments on the unknown and the unexpected in the living laboratory of his life. Thus leisure may be treated as real pleasure and his creation a novel treat and recreation.

The course of evolution in the opinion of the poet has changed in two ways. The struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest have had their own influence on the organic life of man in the post. But with the emergence of the socio-cultural influences, the ever-growing benefits of one-world order and with the physical emancipation of man's life from the harrows of disease and death, the emphasis of evolution is more on the supra – physical character of man's personality. "He has observed the deeper endeavour of his own heart and felt that he is not exclusively an individual he is also one in spirit with the Universal Man, under whose inspiration the individual engages in expressing his ultimate truth through crossing nature's limitation." (Ibid: 194) The evolution of man has made rapid strides in its long course through the passage of time when compared to other species of creation. As a result, the human species could surpass its boundaries of physical integrity in much less than its time limit. Subsequently the creative ideals of human unity, self-fulfilment and community co-operation become one with the conscious existence of
man. This is all due to his character differentiation and linear evolution. There has been a rapid shift from body to mind from sensual to non-sensual as if there is a new turn in the life-process. The mind of man does not represent the isolated lonely mind. On the other hand it represents the common and the universal mind in which all minds take part. Thus, man is superior to the rest of creation for more than one reason. For example the evolution of his linear consciousness of the comprehension of inner culture and the sanctifying of his inner self etc. are a typical to his creation. He is even capable of understanding his own soul in those of others and the souls of others his own. Thus there are two aspects of man, the one that connects his ancestors, grows in vertical direction re-claiming the past and the other that breaks with the animal life evolves itself into greater unity with the rest of creation. It leaves the past and holds the future. This is the universal in man which embodies all that is particular in all men and all other objects tend to feel one in spirit with the universal man. Thus a well ordered harmony is set up between the particular and the universal, finite and the infinite, the one and the many. This, according to Tagore, is creative unity, joy and fulfilment.

The major portion of man exists in form of immortality and this feeling comes to him when the individual man at a great cost of himself thinks the thought of all men, fulfils the desire of many and gives form to the joy that is for every one. The human body is a universe dwelt by million of cells and each of them is instinct with its own individual life and yet with a deep direction towards a mystery of unity. If they had self consciousness they would have been conscious of their isolation and at the same time of their identity with the whole body.

The study of evolution of man shows a conscious divergence from the normal process of the animal world. The nebula of human consciousness is not diffused in indistinct light like that of the other mammals. It is so distinct and integrated that it speaks of human habitation, its past, present and future. ".......... this body exists not only here and now, but its past persists in it, its future awaits it. There is also a common element of general felicity pervading the whole system, which cannot be analysed, which is what we mean by health." (Ibid : 194) In the case of animal species which lived on terrestrial globe, there might have taken certain amount of degeneration owing to some or other maladjustment in their normal or natural
adaptations. Some of them might have even died out and extinguished from the face of evolution. On the other hand, man made constant strides in the course of evolution with increased emphasis on his mental make-up leaving his physical body behind to grow with the rest of the organic life. Thus, the aspiration of man which had its origin in the differentiation of human species continued throughout his past. The peculiarity about man is that he aspires more for the unarrived future than the past. Tagore so makes a clear distinction between man and other species of creation.

Animals live on the terrestrial globe but the place where man live is not geographic but spiritual. "It is enriched with the currents of thought and love that have flowed through the ages. Countless is the number of those who have gone through suffering and death in order to prove the truth of the person who is immortal in them and the country is the creation of their sacrifice." (Ibid : 196) Their thoughts and achievements belong to all men. Human being dwells in a region where each man exists beyond the boundaries of his time and place a region where his learning and endeavours become true in communion of all men of all times. The past and future equally belongs to the world man.

Tagore visualizes an emergence of the supreme man whose major qualities are yet to be unraveled by the process of human understanding. This is excellently expressed by the poet of apt comparison through the example of the marriage party. "The marriage party is continually gathering, its members are waiting for ages in the distance one hears the music of bridegroom's march." (Ibid : 196) The coming of the supreme man is partly due to his ineffable spirit of perfection and partly owing to the descent of gnostic consciousness in the being of man. So man is doubly rewarded. He needs not be frightened by the deep waters of the unintelligible. He is neither conformed by his conditions nor bound by any restrictions. Above all he has some 'extras' in the departments of his knowledge that surpass all other excellance.

There is a basic duality in man's being. In the aspect of man that belongs to animal life, the satisfaction of necessities is adequate to his happiness but in his heart of hearts man reaches up to the world man. Then he no longer wants mere happiness but something greater. He wants profusely and at the same time gives profusely there is the Infinite man in him. "This Infinite Man does not hanker after
happiness, nor is he afraid of suffering.” (Ibid: 197) This Infinite Man destroys the shelter of comfort that men make up. Man’s delight lies in his glory that is understood by man through strain and struggle.

When a piece of iron is observed, it appears to us nothing. But it is a symbol expressing the mysterious spirit of relationship, which cannot be seen by physical eye. "Likewise the distinctions of time and place between individual men are very great, and yet there is large and deep unity encompassing all men.” (Ibid: 103) Those who have felt within themselves the one spirit in all men are called as Mahatma or Great soul who lay down their life for the good of all men. They can address the comprehensive soul within and without them and say – “He is dearer than a son, dearer than wealth, dearer than all else is this spirit who is in our inmost heart.” (Ibid: 173)

Men’s acquaintance with the physical world is through sense perception but their true understanding of the spiritual world is felt through love. In the love of his parents man beings his acquaintance with the spiritual world from the very moment of his birth. Here we find immeasurable mystery – the contact of the indescribable.” (Ibid: 204) Men can realize the characteristics of this earth from scrutinizing from outside but they understand the mystery of parenthood in the depth of their own spirit and it is there where they feel the Supreme Father who does not take shelter in any particular heaven, nor is He found in the history of any particular time or country. He has not divulged Himself once and for good in any particular individual but extends His love over the past and future of humanity and pervades the whole world of man. "We hear of the God of man whatever has splendour, has beauty and excellence, is born of an aspect of my own divined energy.” (Ibid: 205)

There are many things small or large in the universe but they all have same value so far as their existence is concerned. "But man has in his mind a standard of value that does not judge by need nor by the measurement of size, or degree. In man, there is the sense of perfection transcending all quantitative standards – a consciousness of the inmost satisfaction.” (Ibid: 205) All scientific truth has come across many errors but the truth is one. The errors are personal where as truth belongs to all. That truth is the Supreme entity that can be attained when external
and internal obstacles have been overcome. The understanding of pure truth is the manifestation of the universal mind.

Man is one in spirit with the supreme object of his striving. He can not reach towards Him through mere knowledge but he has to understand through the perfection of being, by abstaining from evil conduct, by gaining a steadfast mind through the control of passions. This realization is the attainment of one's eternal truth. In order to attain spiritual truth man must remove all impurities and individual idiosyncrasies. With the development of humanity man's understanding of God gradually grows free of prejudice. "Mistakes in science, or in our code of conduct, arise from our inability to comprehend the wholeness of truth. In spiritual life we realize the wholeness of our being when it is conscious of a centre in great and eternal meaning." (Ibid : 207) The earth revolves round in its own orbit and at the sometime it circles round the Sun. Whatever occurs in human society exposes there two tendencies. On the one hand wealth and power are accumulated through the urge of the individual ego and on the other hand men unite with one another in their activity and joy under the inspiration of the universal Man and sacrifices for one another's sake.

With transparent heart men understand the totality. The true and the good are in totality. They understand their nature when they obtain from evil and works for the good of all. "He whose spirit refrains from evil and attends to the good has comprehended the sarvam, the totality. He therefore, what is natural to him and what is an aberration." (Ibid : 208) His nature does not concern the individual alone, it concerns of Him who is the humanity in men. In the mind of man there is, on the one hand the Universal man and on the other the animal man limited by his self-seeking. The man who sacrifices his life for Truth, for the good of man finds that personal happiness and misery have changed their meaning for him. Such a man can easily shake off his happiness with case and he surpasses it by accepting pain. "In the life of self-seeking, the burden of pleasure and pain is very great, but when man transcends his self – interest he feels the burden so light that his patience when faced with the bitterest suffering and his forgiveness in spite of the heaviest insults seems to us to be superman. (Ibid : 209)
A person who worships God as exterior to himself do not realize him, he is equivalent to animal belonging to God. It is easy to keep one’s God outside and worship him through traditional ceremonies but when he has to understand and acknowledge the divine man in his thoughts and action, then the difficulty comes. “They who weak cannot attain the truth of the Eternal Spirit. The great soul who is within me, who is beyond age and death and sorrow, beyond hunger and thirst, He who is true in thought and in action, Him we must seek, Him we must know.” (Ibid : 211) This seeking realize him is not seeking and knowing outside oneself. It is knowing to become one with the Supreme.

Man’s true freedom is not in separation but it is in the profound union. In Indian philosophy it is seen the dignity of man in their spiritual identification with God himself. The mother is spiritually one with her child, otherwise she would become a maidservant. “When our government is not foreign to us, when it represents our own will, then we are saved from humiliation in our relation to it.” (Ibid : 211) The self in man that surpasses his self-interest finds its infinite truth through the union with all. Its action are universal actions and also unfettered. The individual souls that is united with the Supreme soul enter everywhere.

Once man was barbarian, he lived in the region of animal. Hence he did not have any particular idea about God and he was in a servile manner afraid of God and tried to satisfy them with flattery and incantations. When his mind was illuminated with divine light, “his awaken consciousness journeyed along widening avenues of life, crossing the frontiers of individual life into the universal life of humanity.” (Ibid : 212) The enjoyment that is shared with all is universal and that kind of joy in art, literature, it is manifested in his social doing, in the hospitality of love. The scripture in India shows that the guest is divine as when the guest, the vicar of the universal man comes into the house of individual man, he extends the limits of the home towards the world. “If this invitation is obstructed, then it is penury even for a royal household. In this hospitality lies the philosophy, this is to say, I am in union with him who is mine and who is more than me.” (Ibid : 212) In India there are some mark who render their life into an extreme inactivity and callousness. They torture their body in order to overcome the narrow existence of earthly life. They shake off the ego connected with materials.
God dwells in all class of society and in the eye of God all men are equal. Hence Ramananda, leaving his disciples, embraces the chandal, Mahomedan and Sweeper. He was ostracized high class people of society. It is Ramananda who "alone had said I am He. But that truth alone he had transgressed the limits of petty conventions and contempt which cruelly diving man and man in the name of social stability strike at the roots of social morality." (Ibid : 214) Jesus Christ said that he and his father belongs to same entity. When man is able to cross the boundary of ego, he understands himself as one with the Supreme man. He reveals the unfathomable truth within himself through immeasurable love. They who know the Great in man realize the Supreme Being himself as he realizes the divine man in humanity. Without hesitation man reveals through immeasurable love the divine within himself.

Spiritually man is more than his apparent self, he lives in his infinite surplus. He who is infinite in man must be expressed in the finitude of human life. Man must render this idea in action. The Baul song had a great influence on Taoire's mind. From there his spiritualism consolidates on a strong basis. "The Baul's search for Him is a Guru-guided search, an esoteric pursuit, but when he pines for Him as an unseen Man, he becomes a mystic and this mysticism of theirs affected Rabindranath Tagore also. The eagerness for finding the hearts of man, the inner man, the unsophisticated manner of expressing this eagerness, the depth of feeling and above all, the simple and down-to-earth diction of their song earned the illiterate Bauls of Bengal Rabindranath's love and respect." (Chakraborty 2004 : 108 – 109)
He knows that men are divine incarnation; the immortal pursuna of inexhaustible light takes shelter within human soul who understands all. "Innumerable men in knowledge, in self-giving, in various forms and ways are revealing the immeasurable within them. History does not record their names, from their individual lives they pour into the living stream of humanity the immortal energy of Him." (Tagore 1996 : 215)

Man in human society is trying to realize himself in the world man by breaking the shell of his ego. In the great evolution of Universe, the first significance is given to a cell of life, then to the animal and to the man. From the outer universe man gradually comes to the inner realm and one by one the gates of freedom are
unfasten. "When the screen is lifted on the appearance of Man on earth we realize
the great and mysterious truth of relatedness of the Supreme unity of all that is." (Ibid
: 217) It is only man who can announce that those who knows Truth can enter into
the heart of the all. Thus through this essay 'Man, Tagore shows man's eternal strive
to seek the Superman whose unseen presence is throughout the universe. Hence
'Man' is wrapped up in the sheet of pantheism.

The King of the Dark Chamber (1910)

The King of the Dark Chamber is a translation of the Bengali drama 'Raja' by
Rabindranath Tagore himself. Raja is Tagore's "first really symbolic drama" (Sen
1971 : 278) which is perceived extensive dramatic employment of symbolic
technique for embodying the sublime theme of humanity's quest for union with
divinity. This archetypal drama of man God relationship in its multifarious aspects
has been expressed with poignant intensity in many a poems of the phase of which
the crowning achievement is Gitanjali with which 'Raja' is contemporaneous. The
idea of a lover God holding secret love – tyst with the human soul in the dark has a
currency. Raja is per excellentiam a religious drama and to spiritual perspective it
ranks undoubtedly among world's greatest dramas. It is a complex organization, an
intertexture of two distinct elements, the spiritual and the human, unfolding the whole
gamut of passion and mystery brought into play in the love drama of the human soul
bride courting the Divine lover. The play hinges on the human soul's desire for
understanding of the personal relationship that binds man with God. Raja is the
symbolization of the love-drama of the union of the human soul with the divine.

"The story in its outline is taken from the Buddhistic story of the king Kusa"
(Ibid : 279) According to the source, Kusa, the eldest son of Mallaraj, was profoundly
wise but extremely ugly-looking man. He was married to Pravabati, the uncommonly
beautiful daughter of Madrarou. Lest Pravabati should hate him if she saw him in the
daylight, the mother of Kusa did not allow her son and daughter-in-law to meet in the
daytime. In order to console Pravabati who was over-insistent on seeing her
husband in the broad daylight, her mother-in-law resorted to the stratagem of
showing instead the handsome young brother of Kusa. But the meeting of Kusa and
Pravabati could not be prevented for long. Shocked on seeing the ungainly
apparance of Kusa, Pravabati left her husband and went away to her father's palace where she was compelled to lead ignoble life. Finally, however, Kusa saved Madraraj, his father-in-law, from the royal suitors who had gathered to seek Pravabati's hand in marriage and ultimately won his wife's love by his vigour.

This source legend is metamorphosed into a mystic symbolic love-drama. Referring to Raja, Tagore observes, "Human soul has its inner drama" (Tagore 1928: 49) And it is this inner drama of the soul that is symbolically conceived and planned here. It is given the form of a profound love – drama where the human soul, conceived as a bride, initially baffled in its attempt to see outwardly with the sensory eye in the naked light the invisible lord to whom it is eternally wedded. The human soul gains through delusion followed by acute laceration of spirit the right insight that reveals the king's reality to overcome the barrier that prevents the true union.

Queen Sudrasana, wedded early in her life to the king who would meet her only in a dark chamber of his palace, insists on seeing her husband in the light. The king's disinclination to make himself visible greatly disgruntles her. She is equally annoyed when her maid of honour, Surangama who understands the ways of the king, tells the queen to be content with this secret meeting in the room which is in the interior of the earth, especially built by the king for her sake. The queen asks Surangama to tell her whether the king is handsome or not. She is hardly satisfied with the ambiguous description of the king she extorts from her maid. The queen directly requests the king to reveal himself to her outer sight. The king tells her that she will fail to recognize him in his manifestation among other outer things, unless she is prepared for it. The Queen profoundly replies that she would certainly succeed in spotting him. On her insistence the king agrees to make himself visible on the occasion of the ensuing Spring festival. The mystery of the invisibility of the king intrigues the generality of mankind who have come out from far and near to take part in the festival. Some are even skeptical of the very existence of the king and consider the country to be kingless. Thakurda, who claims himself to be the faithful friend of the king, has no doubt whatsoever about the king's omnipresence. Sudarshana is tricked into believing the personable Subarna to be the king, whereas the latter is no more than a "trumped-up-king" who has appeared before the public and most of whom are taken in by his kinglike outside. Allured as queen Sudarshana
is by his outer beauty, she sends him her garland through a maid of hers. Subarna
is presently found out by the shrewd king of Kanchi to be a pretender whom he
proposes to use as a decoy to capture queen Sudarshana. Kanchi sets fire to the
palace garden which, however, soon spreads beyond control. Surrounded by fire,
Sudarsana approaches Subarna, whom she takes to be the king, to save her, who
tells her that he is not the king, but also a hypocrite and a scoundrel. In the
conflagration she feels that she has seen the king who appeared terrible. Shamed
beyond bearing she longs to be reduced to ashes. The queen presently meets the
king in the dark chamber with the gnawing sense of shame for she knows that she
has betrayed herself by putting another's garland around her neck. She would not be
consoled by the king and her imperious selfwill makes her desert him and seek
shelter in the house of her father's house where Sudarsana has more sorrow in
store for her, for all the kings pursue here there to claim her. They challenge her
father to fight or surrender her to them. In the fight, she learns to her extreme
remorse that her father has been taken prisoner and the victorious kings are waiting
for Sudarshana to choose one of them as her husband. But an earthquake disturbs
the gathering of the kings and Thakurda as one of king's generals, dressed as a
warrior, challenges the rebel kings in a straight fight. Of the kings Kanchi alone goes
to fight the king on the battlefield. The news comes that the battle is over and the
king's enemies are routed. But Sudarshana, who is eagerly awaiting the arrival of the
king, is told that he has gone away after his victory. Queen Sudarsana and the king
of Kanchi realize that they were misled by wrong values. One perceives that the king
is beyond physical sight, while the other feels that he is beyond physical might.
Sudarsana, now spiritually awakened, is lovingly bidden by the king to come outside.

The play begins with the assertion of an unawakened ego acting as the
obstructing force to the union and ends in the triumphant union through self-
surrender, a dramatized spiritual paradox of victory-in-defeat. This theme of
realization of the human relation with the Divine contrived through a gripping
situation is the chief point of attention and not alone the underlying metaphysical
concept of man-God relationship. The reality of the king is beyond sensory
comprehension, for he is God, the pure spirit. The error of the Queen lay in the
intense longing to see the pure spirit with sensory eyes that can see only the
externals of things. The hurdle one has to cross to achieve this union is the self. The
process of the elimination of the obstructing source, the ego, forms the arch of the
dramatic action, with increasing intensification of the queen's quest for union.
Through two contrasting sets of characters the value needed for the realization of the
secret union is presented. Thakurda and Surangama stands for unshakable faith in
the king achieved through a process to chastening which is suggested but keep out
of focus. Each of them is there to stand firm as a point of reference, a symbol of
perfection achieved. The self absorbed Sudarshana and self asserting Kanchi's
elevation to that height of faith forms the dramatic matrix. So long there is
consciousness of the self, there is separation Moreover, the union achieved is not
the end; it is a continual enfoldment. That is why Thakurda and Surangama join
Sudarshana and Kanchi in the end of their journey to the ultimate union. This is key
move in the plot.

Raja dramatizes a process of inner elevation. The pre-existing but unrealized
relationship of the human soul with the Supreme lord is the basis of the dramatic
idea. It begins with the groping of the unenlightened self in the dark chamber and
ends in the climactic self – illumination and consequent spiritual equipoise. Naturally,
the basic images of the play are darkness and light, fire and destruction. Invariably a
new dramatic design emerges and with the first words uttered the keynote of the
drama is struck. Queen Sudarsana whose colourful personality is the centre of
dramatic action is shown talking with her maid of honour in the dark chamber. "Light,
light! Where is the light? Will the lamp never be lighted in this chamber?" (Tagore
1955 : 39) The speech is charged with tension. The dialogue of queen Sudarsana
and Surangama, and the more so with the king in the dark chamber, patently
evidences the use of symbolism in diction. The light the queen seeks is an illusion; it
is ambivalently worded being the light that sensuously reveals but spiritually darkens.
The play hinges on this paradox. The central paradox of the drama is that light is
darkness and darkness is light. Light, in the phenomenal sense, is a thing of the
outer domain, the visible world, whereas darkness is the sphere of invisibility. The
deepest reality can be seen with the eye of the heart alone. There are people who
can see outwardly but cannot feel inwardly. This is the opening speech of the
Bengali play 'Raja', not of its English version, "The king of the dark chamber that
begins with the people's scene which provides the context for the drama of the
human soul's personal relationship with the Divine being. In such a reorganization of
the material the dramatic action moves from circumference to the centre. The art of the playwriting can hardly afford to ignore the immediacy of an effective opening. The first scene in the English version, obviously, becomes too generalized and not urgently specific. The action in the original Bengali play brings from the centre itself with the stress on the psychic problem of queen Sudarsana vis-à-vis the king to the circumference, broading the issue and moves back again to the centre. Though the issue of the existence and the identity of the king in the supposedly kingless country is basic to the play, it is relationship of Queen Sudarshan with the king that is the play's central concern.

The first scene of the English version, *The King of the Dark Chamber* is a thirty eight pages long rambling expository street scene where the people with their multiplicity of views and relation concerning the king forms the setting for the main action. Raja, as has already been noted, begins with that all important 'Dark chamber' scene where the dialogue between the queen and her maid straightway takes one to the heart of the central action. The juxtaposition of two scenes dealing with the central and circumferential issues respectively is typical of the Tagorean dramatic structure. But the subject of discussion in the chamber scene too is the reality of the king through which comes out the contrast of the attitudes of the two interlocutors, Sudarsana and Surangama outwardly, a maid of honour, Surangama is truly a devotee of the king, an awakened soul with unweaving faith in the reality of the Supreme being. Her thought are the thoughts of a mind spiritually attuned to the Divine spirit. She knows the nature of her self willed Queen and seeks to prepare her for her union with the king. When Sudarsana complains about the central darkness in her chamber she tells her, "My Queen, all your other rooms are lighted – will you never long to escape from the light into a dark room like this?" (Ibid : 39)

Mystical intuition in this play is transformed into a tense dramatic intuition. And a dramatic artist engaged in revealing the reality of a mystical idea depends on evocative and incantatory symbols, in concretizing the dramatization of the mystical relationship between God and the passionate human soul. To express the inexpressible is one of the canons of the symbolic art. The dramatization of the spiritual material that goes to the making of the play, patently needs the exploitation of the resources of the symbolic technique. Despite the permeating symbology, the
action pattern stands foursquare to be interpreted always in human terms. The inter-
penetration of the mystical and the human is perfect when each may be understood
in the terms of the other. Most of the dramatic material for effective stage
presentation needed to be conceived symbolically, as only symbols could express
the invisible essence that the king is. The sustained symbology in 'Raja' serves
technically in Yeats' words, as a "transparent lamp without spiritual flame."
Thompson rightly observes, "Raja shows his symbolism full-grown." (Thompson
1926 : 210) And the meeting with the king in the dark chamber of human soul is one
of the suggestive symbols serving as the instrument of dramatic action itself. The art
of drama has to have its effect immediately, favours the use of distinctly luminous
symbols to be unfolded meaningfully and directly during performance. Since the play
is steeped in symbology, it often tends to baffle those who are wanting in the
imaginative faculty which is pre-condition for the understanding of its import.

Sudarsana is not yet prepared for the joy of union with her king in the dark
chamber. Surangama reminds the Queen that it is only in the inner most recess of
the heart can the union with the king take place. The reality of the king can be
perceived only by a spiritual insight, which sees what sight cannot. Sudarsana says
"I cannot live without light I am restless in this stifling dark. Surangama, if you can
bring a light into this room, I shall give you this necklace of mine." (Ibid : 41) But
Surangama's answer is quite different, "she says, "It is not in my power, O Queen.
How can I bring light to a place which he would have kept always dark!" (Ibid : 41)

Sudarsana feels surprised at the strange devotion of Surangana for the king
who once punished her father. Sudarsana is hardly impressed by what she is told by
Surangama about her conversation. She has as yet no awareness of the value of
such a change. But dramatically this admission on the part of Surangama of her
humble resignation is of significance, being a piece of foreshadowing of what the
Queen herself will have to pass through. What Surangama says can not construed
as preachment, it is the communication of her spiritual realization to one who is as
yet spiritually unawakened. The queen is concerned with the king's appearance only,
not with the reality. She asks Surangama, "Tell me, Surangama, I implore you, won't
you tell me what is the king like to look at? I have not seen him yet for a single day.
He comes to me in darkness, and leaves me in the dark room again." (Ibid : 44)
Surangama's answer is "To tell you the truth, queen, I could not say well what he is like. No- he is not what men call handsome." (Ibid : 44) Passionately desirous of seeing the king, Sudarsana says - "I do not quite understand you - though I like to hear you talk about him. But I must see him at any cost. I do not remember the day when I was married to him. I have heard mother say that a wise man came before my marriage and said, "He who will wed your daughter is without a second on this earth." How often have I asked her to describe his appearance to me, but she only answer vaguely, and says she cannot say - she saw him through a veil, faintly and obscurely. But if he is the best among man, how can I sit still without seeing him?" (Ibid : 45 - 46)

In a play born of this kind of spiritual intuition that has to be adapted to dramatic requirement the details that supply the needed motivation and information go greatly to enrich the dramatic fabric. Queen Sudarsana's intensely yearning passion to see the king, the location and the significance of the dark chamber, Surangama's change, the appearance of the king, even the reference to having seen the king only through a veil, faintly and obscurely. Sudarsana's absolute imperceptiveness of spiritual matters, her unbending ego, all are important ingredients to the shaping of the dramatic idea. The dramatist loses no time to introduce the king after he has set the stage for his coming. The approach of the invisible visitant is typical of Tagore. Surangama says, "Do you not feel a faint breeze blowing? Do you not smell a soft perfume? The large door has opened .......... he is coming; my king is coming in." (Ibid : 46)

To the Queen's poignant longing for this rave spiritual feeling, Surangama, who has been entrusted with the task of taking care of the dark chamber, consoling says, "you will have it, Queen .......... this sense will awaken in you one day. Your longing to have a sight of him makes you restless and therefore all your mind is strained and warped in that direction. When you are past this state of feverish restlessness, everything will become quite easy." (Ibid : 47) In offended pride Sudarsana's ego remonstrates, "How is it that it is easy to you, who are a servant, and so difficult to me, the Queen?" (Ibid : 48) Surangama's reply is reflective of her deep spiritual perception. "It is because I am a mere servant that not difficult baulks
me ....... Oh, there he comes! ....... he is standing outside, before the door. Lord! O king!” (Ibid : 48)

Raja, a play with twenty six songs, is well-known for its striking use of songs which further dramatic action. Thompson aptly says, Raja is crammed with songs, only a few of which appear in the English translation. The first two with their rapt exaltation build up the atmosphere of awe which the play requires. And the first song, the key song, dramatizing the divine lover’s approach to human heart, fittingly comes from the king himself, waiting outside door of the dark chamber of human heart, eternally calling like a lover to be allowed in;

Open your door. I am waiting.  
The fire of the light from the dawn to  
the dark is done for the day. 
The evening star is up. 
Have you gathered your flowers, braided your hair,  
And donned your white robe for the night?  
The cattle have come to their folds and birds to their nests. 
The cross paths that run to all quarters 
Have merged into one in the dark 
Open your door. I am waiting (Ibid : 49)

The dual response of Queen Sudarsana to the king is dramatically significant, Surangama imploringly prays, “O King, who can keep thy own doors shut against thee? They are not locked or bolted – they will swing wide open if you only touch them with thy fingers. Wilt thou not even touch them? Wilt thou not enter unless I go and open the doors?” (Ibid : 49) Surangama’s entreaty is followed by her song, for her intuent sensibility tells her that song reaches where speech can not. It is a feelingly intoned song.

At a breath you can remove my veils, my lord!  
If I fall asleep on the dust and hear not your call,  
Would you wait till I wake?  
Would not the thunder of your chariot wheel make the earth tremble?  
Would you not burst open the door and enter your own house unbidden?  
(Ibid : 50)

After the song, she requests the queen to open the door for him, for he will not enter otherwise. But Sudarsana, still spiritually obtuse, replies – “I do not see
anything distinctly in the dark — I do not know where the door are. You know everything here — go and open the door for me." (Ibid : 50) A typical instance of employment of symbolic speech that characteristically illuminates the play’s thought structure.

The stage direction in a Tagore’s play is invariably inbuilt. There is however a very significant piece of one — sentence stage direction in Raja. For the effective stage presence of the invisible king who would be talking and functioning as the most important force in the play, a sound device has to be found. The king remains invisible throughout this play. Raja, from whom the play derives its title, is no doubt a character; but he is also more than a character. He is the Supreme Being and as such a universal concept, the concept of the Divine. The delineation of the omnipresent king through a voice is a major theatrical innovation of the playwright. A traditionalist, Tagore is not usually esteemed as a technical innovator, yet the voice, which symbolically personifies the king, is an effective theatrical technique for an audio-sensory perception of this profound spiritual conception. The archetypal symbol of the king is a haunting iconography of the deeply felt reality of the Divinity, the conception of the indwelling divine spirit, immanent yet traditional, personal yet super—personal, manifest in infinite but outwardly elusive bonds of relationship with humanity. Tagore’s pantheism finds noble expression here. Though the king does not appear in the flesh, he permeates the dramatic action all through, for every character — and the play has a long cast is presented in one way or another, vis-à-vis him. The technical problem of anthropomorphic presentation of the invisible divine entity is central to the play. The dramatization of an archetypal theme involving humanity — Divinity relationship brings to play Tagore’s characteristic mystical insights. The chief concern of the play is God’s realization or attunement of human spirit with God, and the variety of ways in which, overcoming obstacles, it is achieved.

The basic problem which sustains the play is projected through the dialogue of Queen Sudarsana and the voice of the king. Many an ideas of metaphysical speculation, the relationship of humanity and the Divinity, of the finite and the infinite, have been introduced into dialogue scheme of Sudarsana and the king in this soul-drama embodying in most impassioned imaginative terms the highest spiritual truths. When Queen Sudarsana asks the king to tell her what he sees in her, the voice
speaks to her from the darkness. "I see that the darkness of the infinite heavens, whirlied into life and being by the power of my love, has drawn the light of a myriad stars into itself, and incarnated itself in a form of flesh and blood. And in that form, what aeons of thought and striving, untold yearnings of limitless skies, the countless gifts of unnumbered seasons!" (Ibid : 52) Sudarsana who can visualize things only in human terms is excited to hear such things about herself, such comic dimensions of her finitized being from the lover-God and she says – "Am I so wonderful, so beautiful? When I hear you speak so, my heart swells with gladness and pride. But how can I believe the wonderful things you tell me? I cannot find them in myself!" (Ibid : 52 – 53)

To the query of the Queen’s gladden heart, the voice, perfectly in keeping with the divine majesty, proffers a heightening reply. "Your own mirror will not reflect them it lessen you, limits you, makes you look small and insignificant. But could you see yourself mirrored my own mind, how grand would you appear! In my own heart you are no longer the daily individual which you think you are – you are verily my second self." (Ibid : 53) That she is created in the image of her Lord is an elevating feeling and this makes the Queen speak out passionately. "Oh, do you show me for an instant how to see with your eyes! Is there nothing at all like darkness to you? I am afraid when I think of this. This darkness which is to me real and strong as death – is this simply nothing to you? Then how can there be union at all between us, in a place like this? No, no – it is impossible: there is a barrier betwixt us two; not here, no not in this place. I want to find you and see you where I see trees and animals, birds and stones and the earth." (Ibid : 53 – 54)

Knowing that she is not yet spiritually awakened to feel his reality, the king acquiescently allows Sudarsana to have her way. "Very well, you can try to find me – but none will point me out to you. You will have to recognise me, if you can, yourself. And even if anybody professes to show me to you, how can you be sure he is speaking the truth?" (Ibid : 54) The play actually assumes the form of a quest myth, the inner search for the reality of the king. The Queen, blinded by her ego, profoundly asserts, "I shall know you, I shall recognize you. I shall find you out among a million men. I cannot be mistaken." (Ibid : 54) The Queen's trial begins. To her unpreparedness and unperceptiveness, comes the seemingly innocent
challenge: "Very well, then to night, during the festival of the full moon of the spring, you will try to find me out from the high turret of my palace search for me with your own eyes amongst the crowd of people (Ibid : 54) At that moment, Surangama, called by the king, enters and their dialogue is focused on the complexity of the problem inhering in the Queen's insistence on seeing the king outwardly.

Surangama has the intuitive certainty that it is in the stillness of the heart and not outside that the king can be seen. She asks, "what can be seen in that hide and seek of darkness and light? There the wind is wild and restless, everything is dance and swift movement — will it not puzzle the eyes?" (Ibid : 57) The king only tells her — "The Queen is curious to search me out." (Ibid : 57) Surangama who knows the limit of curiosity, comments; "Curiously will have to come back baffled and intes." (Ibid : 57) This speech of Surangama is a fine piece of anticipation. The first movement of the play, consisting of the expository and anticipatory material, sets the scene for the course of action to follow and it is done with a rare mastery. But the scene ends with a song that illuminates the theme.

"Ah, they would fly away the restless  
Vagrant eyes, the wild bird of the forest!  
But the time of their surrender will come, their flights  
hither and thither will be ended when  
The music of enchantment will pursue them and pierce their heart  
Alas, the wild birds would by to the wilderness." (Ibid : 57 – 58)

The second scene moves from the centre, the inner recess of the dark chamber where an intense love drama goes on, to the circumference, a street scene where people have assembled to rejoice at the spring festival, when Queen Sudarsana is to try to find the king out. The transition from the interior to exterior with subtly juxtaposed but interrelated action is dramatically functional, for it widens the dimension of the play. The same thread binds the two; the issue of the identity of the king. The shift of action from the dark chamber to the highway where high and low meet corresponds with the shift in the emphasis from the personal to the plebeian approach to the king, with Tagore's characteristic dramatization of the dialectics regarding the reality of the king. The misconception of the people about the king whom they want to see parallels on a lower key that of Queen Sudarsana. Despite its seeing triviality — the dramatist makes the people talk in a light — hearted manner
about sublime things – the Road scene which bustles with groups of people holding several shades of opinion is organic to the main design. The people think that the king shut himself up from the public owing to his hideous look. By far the most dominant figure is Thakurda, the male counterpart of Surangama. This wise oldman of unshakable faith declares himself to be the friend of the king. He serves as the criterion in respect of the people as Surangama serves in respect of the Queen, for matters regarding the king. Thakurda another variant, of the character of Thakurdada who first appears in Saradotsaba, has grown joyous, almost hilarious, and even valorous. He is seen in boisterous exuberance all through the play. Surangama’s character is ennobled by her complete humility and self-effacement; Thakurda’s faith has an unmistakable note of militancy about it. The development of the religious sensibility of the extremely religious man that Tagore was is a subject of study in itself. To Tagore the Most High is a Master, a Friend, a Lover, a Guide, a Companion, a Maker. Incant, there is a song about him which is a spiritual character-sketch of Thakurda who vociferously protests against the propriety of the song being sung on the occasion of the spring festival. When one of the citizens complains of the absence of the king on this festive occasion which is taken as one big gap which can not but make itself felt to every one in country. Thakurda who knows the truth about the God-crammed country emphatically says: “Gap, do you say! Why, the whole country is all filled and crammed and packed with the king and you call him a ‘gap’! Why he has made every one of us a crowned king.” (Ibid : 14)

The individual drama of Queen Sudarsana’s soul is linked with a wider drama which finds expression through the varied responses of humanity at large to the king. As She is absolutely in the dark about the true identity of the invisible king, so are the people wholly ignorant about the inscrutable mystery of the invisible king’s governance, seemingly in a country of anarchy and this is developed with unmistakable parallelism. But for the knowing the creation, not being a disintegrated world-order, is in itself a confirmation of the existence of an over-ruling kingship. The concept of the king and the subjects as co-partners stresses the theme of the play which is the human-Divine relationship and this finds vibrant expression in Thakurda’s song –
We are all kings in the kingdom of our king.
Where it not so, how could we hope in our heart to me him!
We do what we like yet we do what he likes;
We are not bound with the chain of fear at the feet of a slave-owing king.
Were it not so, how could we hope in our heart to meet him!
Our king honours each one of us, thus honours his own very self.
No littleness can keep us shut up in its walls of untruth for eye.
Were it not so, how could we have hope in our heart to meet him!
We struggle and dig our own path, thus reach his path at the end.
We can never get lost in the abyss of dark night.
Were it not so, how could we hope in our heart to meet him! (Ibid : 14 – 15)

The song is perfectly integrated to the thematic idea. In God’s world there is perfect freedom even to deny the very existence of God.

The party of the foreigners who enliven the stage and are skeptical about the existence of the king are seen engaged quibbling discussion which turns on actually seeing the king in the flesh. This prepares the stage for the appearance of pretender laying claim to being the king. Prior to that, however, a band of Baul singers, a sect of God – intoxicated people enter. In a Tagore play, at a moment of double, hesitancy and uncertainty, the song comes as a clear and sure voice of Truth, a truth that is so difficult of grasp in the troubled state of spirit. The direct bearing of the song on the situation is obvious. The song is an advance comment on the true and cry that is to follow when taking advantage of the apparently kingless state of the country, a pretender king appears to lay claim to kingship and deludes the people including Sudarsana, but not Thakurda and for a different reason also not the Argus-eyes king of Kanchi who alone with other spineless kings has come to participate in the spring festival. The burden of the song of the Bauls is that after realizing the presence of the man of one’s heart, God, within, one can look for him every where outside.

My beloved is ever in my heart
That is why I see him everywhere.
He is in the pupils of my eyes
That is why I see him every where
I want far away to hear his own words,
But, ah, it was vain!
When I came back I heard them
In my own songs.
Who are you who seek him like a beggar from door to door.
Come to my heart and see his face in the tears of my eyes!  (Ibid : 21)
The close of the song with its purposeful internal focus is followed by the entrance of the "Heralds and Advance Guards shouting at the people to stand off for the king. This causes a great commotion, for the people have never seen the king appearing in public. People, by and large, are taken in by the beauteous look of Subarna, the pretender, posing as the king. Thakurda, undeluded by imposters like credulous fools is an exception. The perception of the distinction between the bogus king and the real shows the distinction between the right and wrong values. As the mystery deepens, kumbha, another citizen goes out to call Thakurda whose opinion is sought on all such crucial occasions involving a crisis of faith. Thakurda, whose is the voice of unerring spiritual perception, asks kumbha whether visibility can be a very unfallible test of kingship. But kumbha, like many others is bewitched by the figure of Subaran and describes that the king's banner had a red kimshuk flower printed on it. To dispel his double Thakurda says that his king has a thunderbolt within a lotus painted on his flag, the emblem of beauty and power that is symbolic of the real king. Thakurka says, "Why, so he is, of course: but he has no heralds, no army, no retinue, no music bands or lights to accompany him," (Ibid : 36) where as kumbha's answer is, "So none could recognise him in his incognito, it seems" (Ibid : 36)

Through such dialogue of the knowing and the unknowing is developed the theme of the drama which is the concept of the reality of the king. And these are the trivialities through which the deeper layer of dramatic idea outroll that Thompson's thought to be encumbering the plot. The scene ends in the typical Tagore's manner with an estatic song underscoring the deeper spirit and creating the mood needed for the realization of the king. Tired of the conventional hair-splitting regarding the true nature of the Divinity, Thakurda welcomes the mad man, not a launatic outre but an alienated visionary, who is seeming off his mind, to sing the song: "Do you smile, my friend, do you laugh, my brothers? I roam in search of the golden stag! Ah yes, the fleet foot vision that ever eludes me!" (Ibid : 37) The assumption of the king's role by Subarna, the pretender, release a chain of dramatic reactions from the bedazzlement of the gullible multitude to the arrogance of the earthly king, who too are pretenders in a way, to the central dramatic action, the delusion of the spiritually unperceiving Queen Sudarsana. With the arrival of the royal dignitaries, Avanti,
Koshala, Kanchi and others, in the pleasure Gardens, another thread is introduced into the knot of action in the third scene.

In the fourth scene Queen Sudarsana sees from the turret of the royal palace the procession headed by the pretender Subarna. Her spiritual inadequacy is the initial motivating force of the play and her great delusion is born of her vain persistence to see in a finitized form the infinite Divinity that courts her eternally. She is not prepared as yet to accept that the true and complete union with her lord can take place in the dark chamber of the soul alone. She has a passionate longing but as yet no inner perception. The cause of dramatic complication is her spiritual ignorance. With her sensuous eyes open, she can see only in the light but she will have to learn that it is only the eye of the soul that can enable here to perceive the king in the dark. The king, who wants to reveal himself to her slowly and gradually agrees on her insistence to reveal himself to her on the occasion of the spring festival. Not as yet prepared to recognize the king in his external manifestation, Sudarsana allured by the outré beauty of Subarna, maladroit sends to him through her companion Rohini, some blossoms as her greetings, only to be disillusioned too soon. She is told by her companion, Rohini that the person whose beautiful exterior so irresistibly draws her is without doubt the king. Yet she has her doubt and asks Rohini, "Are you sure that you are speaking of him who has a sunshade made of flowers held over his heard?" (Ibid : 77) Confirming Rohini says, "The same: he whose flag has the kimshuk flower painted on it." (Ibid : 77) Boastingly the Queen asserts, "I recognized him at once, of course, but it is you who had your doubts." (Ibid : 77)

Though not spiritually perceptive, Queen Sudarsana is intensely sensitive and human and it is this extreme sensitivity of her character that is the main prop of the play. With perfect justification the dramatist claimed "She was as real as Lady Macbeth." (Tagore 1928 : 48) As Rohini goes but carrying her gift, the queen soliloquizes and the inner drama of her wavering soul takes shape. "My heart is all a quiver and restless to night. I have never felt like this before. The white, silver light of the full moon is flooding the heavens and brimming over on every side like the bubbling foam of wine .......... It seizes on me like a yearning, like a mantling
intoxication." (Tagore 1955 : 81) Rohini tells the Queen, "when I gave the king those flowers, he did not appear to understand anything." (Ibid : 84)

Learning that her offer of love has not evoked the desired response, in great anguish, Sudarsana who now realizes that she has crossed the limit of propriety, vents her feeling of shame; "Woe is me, to-night's festival has opened wide for me the doors of ignominy and shame! What else could I expect? Leave me alone, Rohini; I want solitude for a time. A great blow has shattered my pride to atoms today and yet .... I cannot efface from my mind that beautiful, fascinating figure! No pride is left me – I am beaten, Vanquished, utterly helpless ...... I cannot even turn away from him. Oh, how the wish comes back to me again and again – to ask the garland of Rohini! But what would she think!" (Ibid : 85 – 86) But beauty – intoxicated as the Queen is, she takes, with her motive nakedly bare, from Rohini the pearl necklace she was presented by Subarna. Yet as Rohini goes out after giving her the necklace in exchange of her bracelets, Sudarsana's tormented innerself speaks, "Another defeat! I should have thrown this necklace away, - but I could not! It is pricking me as if it were a garland of thorns – but I cannot throw it away. This is what the God of the festival has brought me to-night – this necklace of ignominy and shame!" (Ibid : 87)

The central action of the drama, the process of the disillusionment of Queen Sudarsana, fall into there well-marked stages – the intense longing at the beginning , the turmoil of the middle and the tranquility of the end – showing her transition from one moral plane to another, from the impeded union of the dark chamber of the first scene to the perfect union with her king in the last scene. The whole curve of this evolution contributes to the dramatic design. The course of this transit brings out her passion, pride, delusion, conflict, suffering, humiliation, self surrender to her final realization. Through a series of unexpected turns of events the play moves along with masterly ease to the paradoxical truth of self-realization through complete self surrender.

The fifth scene, the locate of which is near the door of the pleasure house, beginning with Thakurda's participation in the spring festival, mainly as contrast to Sudarsana's introduces a new complication to the action scheme. The festive spirit is
highlighted by a series of songs. But an important hint is dropped in course of meeting of the two awakened, enlightened souls, Thakkurda and Surangama. A new thirst is given to the action. Kanchi, a firm unbeliever in the existence of the king and one who takes some pride in considering himself a master strategist, enters into plot with the false king, Subarna whom he uses as a means to his end. He instructs Subarna to set fire to the garden wherein is situated the Queen's palace so that in the state of disorder that would follow he will achieve his purpose which is to secure the Queen Sudarsana. Suddenly kanchi notices Thakurda standing nearby and suspects that he must have overhead their plan. As Thakurda tell them that he has heard their talk about setting fire to the garden, Kanchi the man of action forthwith holds Thakurda captive. Might overtakes faith, but, as it will turn out to be, only for a while. Thakurda, the man of faith, takes it as a call of the king and submits to it. To Kanchi's question what he is mumbling about, Thakurda says that he feels the master's bailiff has at last come to serve a summons on him to move to the inner apartments. This quibbling answer is, of course, dismissed as sheer nonsense by kanchi, a dweller still only on the outer plane.

Action gain pace in the sixth scene, which shows the fire set by subarna spreading beyond control unexpectedly. The happenings are projected rightly through the Queen's friend, Rohini, who understands things. Only in their outer aspects she finds things in a state of alarming disorder. The atmosphere is thick with fear, restless, envy, rivalry and premonition of something dire brewing. The panic-stricken Gardeners who have served the king all their life are seen hectically running away from the garden lest they may get into trouble. Even the kings, each envious of others, and all suspecting the motives of kanchi; move hither-skelter. The infighting of kings sets off the supremacy of the supreme King. The scene in which no major character appears in the external counterpart of the tremendous inner upheaval that is in the offing.

The action gets new focus in the next scene. All the three characters responsible for the imbroglio - Kanchi, Subarna and Sudarsana - finds themselves desperately placed. What eventuates shows their action boomeranging on them. Kanchi has been presumptuously planning to capture Sudarsana, the queen of the kingless country, Subarna tries to pass himself off as the king of the place and
Queen Sudarsana acts in defiance of the king’s will. King Kanchi and king Subarna see that the fire they set to the garden near the palace going out of control and preventing their escape from the garden. As Kanchi overbearingly threatens to kill him if he cannot take kanchi out of the fire-encircled garden, king Subarna who has been passing himself off as the king of the country helplessly admits – “I am not the king – I am not the king (Throwing himself on the ground with folded hands) where art thou, my king? Save me, oh, same me! I am a rebel – punish me, but do not kill me.” (Ibid : 104) But Kanchi is made of different stuff. He is not the man to give into despair. The contrast between the determined kanchi and the spineless Subarana is dramatically important and is developed through their dialogue. Dramatically the irony of the situation lies in the masterful kanchi’s “best laid schemes” going away.

But the discomfiture of Queen Sudarsana crowns it all. Amidst general shouting coming from the outside Sudarsana enters helplessly to implore her king, to come to her rescue. Both Queen Sudarsana and king Kanchi depend on falsity, and the parallelism is too marked to be ignored. The dialogue of Queen Sudarsana and the false king, Subarna, depicts the shattering of her obstinate pride. When Sudarsana says that “you are not the king!” the king’s reply is, “No, I am a hypocrite, I am a scoundrel (Flinging his crown on the ground) Let my deception and hypocrisy be shattered into dust!” (Ibid : 105) With this Subaran goes out with kanchi and the anguished Queen gives vent to her turbulent emotions- “No king! He is not the king? Then O thou God of fire, burn me, reduce me to ashes! I shall throw myself into thy hands; O thou great purifier, burn to ashes my shame, my longing, my desire.” (Ibid : 106) In this distressful plight enters Rohini, the Queen’s friend to tell her; “Queen where are you going? All your inner chamber are shrouded in raging fire – do you not enter there. ” (Ibid : 106) But the deeply mortified Queen impetuous as ever, would not listen; Yes! I will enter those burning chambers! It is the fire of my death.” (Ibid : 106) It is a significant movement in the action, the beginning of the death of her lesser self through great suffering. A fiery ordeal awaits her.

The profound tussle of her soul following the shock of her twofold errancy – mistaking Subarna because of his charming look for the king and the frightful conflagration in the pleasure gardens for the true image of the king – is befittingly depicted in the dark chamber where Queen Sudarsana is once again seen
conversing with the king, bringing into focus a tense moment of the human soul's inner drama, contrived through a gripping situation. The meeting of the two in the dark chamber of the scene right from that of the scene one arches a significant phase of the progression of action. The well-arched 'middle,' a scene of complication born of wrong values, prefigures greater complication. The two will meet again in the last, the twentieth scene of the play. Instead of drawing any lesson from her latest heart-rending experience, she further precipitates the spiritual crisis in which she finds her already involved by obstinately leaving unheeded the king's counsel and going her own way. The action of the impulsive Queen shows the complexity of her tormented soul, her anguish and ignorance, her passion and offended pride, her desperation and self will. What passes between the two is a comment on her moral position, symbolizing the errancy of one, without spiritual moorings. Her happiness at an end, broken and contrite, she gets into the dark chamber where she is told by the king that she is not be touched by the fire. But Sudarsana says, "I have no fear — but oh, shame has accompanied me like a raging fire." (Ibid : 107) The king's words of consolation can hardly assuage her present inconsolable mental distress and the despair full says, "This fire will never cease — will never cease!" (Ibid : 108) Again the king tries to quiten her distracted soul, Do not be despondent, Queen!" (Ibid : 108)

Sudarsana, conscious that her act was one of spiritual faithlessness to her king, admits her lapse and its consequence "But it is his gift to me: yet I could not fling this garland away! When the fire came roaring on all sides of me, I thought of throwing this garland into the fire. But no, I could not. My mind whispered, "Let that garland be on you in your death"..... what fire is this, O king, into which I, who had come out to see you, leaped like a moth that cannot resist the flame? What a pain is this, oh. What agony! The fire keeps burning as fiercely as ever, but I go on living within its flames!" (Ibid : 108 – 109) The king reminds her that it was all her doing, for she acted against his explicit counsel. "But you have seen me at last your desire has been fulfilled." (Ibid : 109) To this Sudarsana replies — "But did I seek to see you in the midst of this fearful doom? I know not what I saw, but my heart is still beating fast with fear." (Ibid : 109)
Sudarsana bares her innermost impression! "Terrible, - oh, it was terrible! I am afraid even to think of it again. Black, black - oh, thou art black like the everlasting night! I only looked on thee for one dreadful instant. The blaze of the fire fell on your features - you looked like the awful night when a comet swings fearfully into our ken oh, then I closed my eyes - I could not look on you any more. Black as the threatening storm - cloud, black as the tumultuous waves!" (Ibid: 118) The king tells her that one who has known him within can alone see him unerring outside - "Have I not told you before that one can not bear my sight unless one is already prepared for me? One would want to run away from me to the ends of the earth. Have I not seen this time without number? That is why I wanted to reveal myself to you slowly and gradually, not all too sudden."

In her present plight of hopelessness Sudarsana feels that her tainted love is not worthy of her great lover - "But sin came and destroyed all your hopes - the very possibility of a union with you has now become unthinkable to me." (Ibid: 111) In order to see the king outwardly, the Queen went on a wrong track and courted disaster. Misled by her imperceptions she accepted the outwardly beautiful as the truly beautiful. The reality of the king has purposefully been developed in the closing song of the third scene through a magnificent nature mage. The king is a totally made of multitudinously varied contrary elements. To instill hope in the Queen the king tells her that the realization of his love comes only through a slow process of maturation - "It will be possible in time, my Queen. The utter and bleak blackness that has to-day shaken you to your soul with fear will one day be your solace and salvation. What else can my love exist for?" (Ibid: 111) And this is followed in the original by the beautiful song of the king. The action of the noble love - drama follows a tortuous path and the Queen, still unlightened, impetuously spurns the great love of the king. "My love has now turned away from you. beauty has cast its spell on me - this frenzy, this intoxication will never leave me - it has dazzled and fired my eyes, it has thrown its golden glamour over my very dream! I have told you all now - punish me as you like" (Ibid: 111-112)

But the Queen conscious of the inner rift can not face the king and wants like an offended lover to run away from him. But you do not cast me off. I will leave you."
(Ibid: 112) But the divine lover whom the human soul cannot I care for ever asks her impassively to disown him if she likes and if she can "you have the utmost liberty to do as you like." (Ibid : 112) But the King’s cold answer infuriates his unprepared beloved who raves – "I can not bear your presence! My heart is angry at you why did you – but what have you done to me? ...... Why are you like this? Why did they tell me you were fair and handsome? Thou art black, black as night – I shall never, I can never, like you. I have seen what I love – it is soft as cream, delicate as the shirisha flower, beautiful as a butterfly" (Ibid : 112 – 113) This object of worthless beauty, the king tells her, "is false as a mirage, empty as a bubble"(Ibid : 113).

Raja as perfect a drama of the soul as Tagore ever conceived, dramatizes the whole gamut of feeling. The symbolization of the plexus of action indicates an instinctive facility. In this two-way relationship the lord desires the human soul to be an involved and active a participant as he himself is. The chief cause of Sudarsana’s dissatisfaction is that the king would not act on her own terms. She has still to realize that it is she who must submit herself to his will, in other words, to divine discipline, the pre-condition of the perfect union of the two. The king implores the Queen, "will you not even try a tittle? " (Ibid : 113) But Sudarsan passionately replies – " I have been trying since yesterday – but the more I try, the more relleilous does my heart become. If I stay with you I shall constantly be pursued and hounded by the thought that I am impure, that I am false and faithless, " (Ibid : 113 –114)

The king of the human heart knows that all appeals are wasted if the human soul is irresponsive. "Thus with seeming indifference the great lover says – "well then, you can go as far from me as you like." (Ibid : 114) But the Queen, who wants the king like a passionate and powerful lover to hold him back, if necessary, by force even, argues with him – "I can not fly away from you – because you do not prevent me going. Why do you not hold me back, hold me by the hair, saying "you shall not go? Why do you not strike me? Oh! punish me, strike me, beat me with violent hand! But your unresisting silence make me wild – Oh, I cannot bear it." (Ibid : 114) But the divine voice speaks the truth when it says that it is not really inactive, the basis of a true union is that first positive more has to come from the impassioned human soul that first surrenders itself completely to the king. "How do you think that I am really silent? How do you know that I am not trying to keep you back?." (Ibid : 114)
Sudarsana, not yet competent to understand the silent bidding of the king, protestingly exclaims — "oh, no no! I can not bear this — tell me aloud, command me with the voice of thunder, compel me with words that will drown everything else in my ears — do not let me off so easily, so mildly!" (Ibid : 115) The words of the king stress the individual's freedom of choice, God may be accepted or rejected at will, though God does not reject anybody. This is unequivocally stated by the king — "I shall leave you free, but why should I let you break away from me?" (Ibid : 115) The contrast between the ever-loving, ever-patient divine lover and the defiant selfwilledness of the turmoiled human soul is brought out with spiritual intuition and feeling dramatic imagination in their dialogue on the eve of her break away from the king preparing the ground for her great suffering that is to come and ultimate salvation that is to follow.

Surangama, a soul truly attuned to the ways of God is alone on the stage when she sings with excellent dramatic propriety a song that reinforces the spiritual mood of the moment: the need for striking the fearing soul hard to humble itself before God till he manifests himself in his fear dispelling, peaceful, eternal form. The closure of Surangama's song is followed by hurried reentrance of Sudarsana with her characteristic nervous intensity. The Queen's departure and reappearance with the functional song trown in between are well-timed moves in the action. Their dialogue impressively dramatizes an important phase of the action of the love-drama. Surangama understandingly reads the mood of the Queen and begs to be allowed to accompany her in her forlornness, for she wants to be with Sudarsana in her travail of awakening. Queen Sudarsana's determined obduracy to drift into distressful uncertainty intensifies dramatic expectancy. Surangama's offer to cast in her lot with the queen whose hopes of union with the king are now dashed to the ground, is further accentuated by a feeling song in the original version.

The entanglement that follows Queen Sudarsana's desertion of her husband's palace is imperative to the erosion of her ego-consciousness through overwhelming sorrow. Her fallen condition is seen as she approaches for shelter the house of her father, the king of Kanyakubja, who too is not prepared now to accept her warmly. Sudarsana's father tells his minister that she, who has faithlessly left her
husband, will be no more than a mere maid-servant in his house purposefully, contrived alternation of the scenes from the outer to the inner world leads colour to the action scheme. The next scene, the tenth, is in the inner apartments of palace where Sudarsana, with the innate imperiousness of her nature, brought so low now, talks with Surangama about the utter indifference of the king towards her in not coming to take her back. The scene ends with Surangama’s song of complete self abnegation and self-surrender suggesting a note that is opposed to Sudarsana’s egoistic pride and wilfulness.

The Queen does not realize that she is in the wrong and also in for more shocks. The plot is further complicated in the eleventh scene. There is no relaxation in the pace of action. Things are happening to bring home to her psychic limitation. As Queen Sudarsana abandons the secure shelter of the king’s house she falls into the hands of the petty, earthly, kings who come pursuing her. The eleventh is a scene of “Encampment” and Kanchi is conversing with the messenger of Sudarsana’s father, the king of kanyakubjam making clear to him that kings are waiting to rescue Queen Sudarsana from the servitude and degradation of which she is condemned in her father’s house. The challenge of kanchi anticipates the confrontation between the kings and Sudarsana’s father. The crucial moment is clearly the outcome of Queen Sudarsana’s desertion and she has to pass through terrible ordeals. Her defection is followed by a scramble among the king for possessing her. The chief interest of the scene is the delineation of kanchi’s character. Kanchi, is a rationalist, believing in seeing. But he has no awareness of things beyond the reach of reason and the realization of the reality of the Supreme Being is not accessible to reason. He would not take for granted any supposition however current. Unlike the gullible he can readily see through sham. He has a reckless daring and he believes in his own might, forgetful of the mightier power that be. He dismissed as sheer accident what happened in the pleasure gardens to upset his plans. But, it will be seen, in his defeat he would realize the all – important fact of the omnipotence of God. When his soldier informs him that the kings of Vivat, Panchal and Vidarbha too have come and encamped on the other side of the river, kanchi discloses his strategy to Subarna. “In the beginning we must all fight together. Let the battle with kanyakubja first be over, then we shall find some way out of
difficulty." (Ibid : 139) But the great planner, ironically enough, will see his plans brought to naught.

The next scene (XII) is again the interior of the palace. Sudarsana is ever seen in the interior, never outside, except in the end, which symbolizes her emergence into the outer world and shows her on the road to union. As the battle is at its height outside, Sudarsana's sorrow finds expression in her talk with Surangama. "Before going out to the battle my father came to me and said, "you have come away from one king, but you have drawn seven kings after you : I have a mind to cut you up into seven pieces and distribute them among the princes" It would have been well if he did so." (Ibid : 141) She knows how her rash act has imperilled her father and how impassive is the king to her helpless plight. She tells Surangama "If your king had the power to save me, could my present state have left me unmoved?" (Ibid : 142) To this Surangama replies characteristically – "My Queen, why do you ask me ? Have I the power to answer for my king? I know my understanding is dark; that is why I never dare to judge him." (Ibid : 142) The contrasted attitude speak for themselves.

The plot of the inner drama of human soul takes a new turn. Even in her present despairful mood a ray of hope soothes Sudarsana's troubled spirit. She confides to Surangama that since she came to her father's house she felt suddenly many a times as if somebody were playing in a vina below her window and that though she can hear the music she can not see the musician. The scene ends with a heart-rending blow to Sudarsana who is informed by the doorkeeper that her father has been taken prisoner. After Sudarsana's father has been defeated Kanchi in order to avoid any fight among the princes, makes the proposal of holding a swayambara to make Sudarsana choose any of the kings as her husband. Other kings agreeing to Kanchi's proposal go off the stage. To ensure his success kanchi plans before hand to use Subama as his umbrella – holder for he knows, 'with what favour the Queen' looks upon the latter.

The fourteenth scene shows Sudarsana and Surangama at the window discussing the question of the Queen's attending the Swayambara, a condition though humiliating for her is the only way left by which the life of her imprisoned
father can be saved. The two can see from the window the assembly of the kings determined to capture her. The dialogue of the two is designed to trace the course of his disillusionment. The messenger comes in to inform that the kings are waiting for Sudarsana in the hall. Surangama also goes out to bring for the Queen her veil and Sudarsana, seared in heart, is alone on the stage. In her noble soliloquy with which the scene ends, spirited expression is given to her intense remorse of conscience. "O king, my only king! You have left me alone and you have been but just in doing so. .... This body of mine has received a stain — I shall make a sacrifice of it today in the dust of the hall, before all these princes! But shall I never be able to tell you that I know of no stain of faithlessness within the hidden chambers of my heart? This dark chamber where you would come to meet me lies cold and empty within my bosom today — but, O my Lord! None has opened its door, none has entered it but you, O King! Will you never come again to open those doors? (Ibid : 155) The Swayambara becomes designedly symbolic depicting the warring passions Queen Sudarsana has fallen a prey to. Profoundly humiliated, she realize herself wrought spiritual condition of extreme helplessness which is revealed through her song, her only song in which she uses an image describing herself as self exiled by the pull of evil desires. Her salvation, she now knows, lies in total extinction of the masterful ego that stood in the way of her true union. She comes to realize this after passing through a soul — searing spiritual ordeal. The inner conflict of Sudarsana, a majestic figure wrestling with herself and becoming a symbol of the restless human heart, reveals not only the intensity of her passion for the king but the working of an evolving soul passing through different stages of self invented trials and tribulations. The oscillation of her soul is the axis of the dramatic action. Her emancipation from the bondage of illusion to a true realization is dramatized with a rare spiritual sensibility, delineating the gradual process of her spiritual growth. The preparation for her salvation is motivated by that anguished cry of her soul in the soliloquy quoted above which, stylistically, is the instance, like a few others, of his newly — acquired linguistic resources.

The scenic alternation of external and internal focuses are a structural feature of the play. The fifteenth scene, the gathering of the kings for the Swayambara, marks a decisive stage in the sequence of action. The effrontery of the puny earthly kings to presumptuously claim as their own what truly belongs to the Supreme king, is shattered. The self satisfied kings engaged in talking light heartedly in anticipation
of their coveted reward are suddenly startled to feel their seats to be shaken as in the earthquake. To this phenomenon the assembled kings react differently. Amidst tense expectancy enters Thakurda, dressed as a warrior, tells the kings, "You have recognised me to perfection. Who is so unworthy as I to bear my king's command? And yet it is he who has invested me with these robes of a general and sent me here: he has chosen me before greater generals and mightier warriors." (Ibid : 165) The battle to be fought is a symbolic conflict of values. The valiant Kanchi, a clear-sighted man of action devoid of spiritual perception, is the direct antipode of Thakurda. Other kings, doubters and hesitators are shaken by the challenging man of faith. They dare not flout when the king sends out his call and most of them slink away. But Kanchi bravely tells Thakurda — "All right, general. I too am going — but not to do him homage. I go to fight him on the battle-ground." (Ibid : 167) Thakurda welcoming Kanchi says "You will meet my king in the field of battle: that is no mean place for your reception" (Ibid : 167)

As the sixteenth scene opens Queen Sudarsana and Surangama are closeted together discussing the outcome of the symbolic fight in which the skeptics are routed Sudarsana, is eagerly awaiting the arrival of the king, who, she thinks has vanquished the kings to free his Queen from their clutches. Sudarsana expresses her feeling in the following manner — "I feel such a throb of joy, Surangama, that my breast is positively aching. But I am dying with shame too, how shall I show my face to him?" (Ibid : 169) It is this crosscurrent in her psychic realm that makes Sudarsana so convincingly living a character. Surangama offers the right advice — "Go to him in utmost humility and resignation, and all shame will vanish in a movement." (Ibid : 170) But there is still a streak self pride in queen Sudarsana that prevents the adoption of this attitude of utmost and resignation. Sudarsana bares her heart of Surangama. "I cannot help confessing that I have met with my utmost defeat for all the rest of my life. But pride made me claim the largest share in his love so long. Everyone used to say that I had such a wonderful beauty, such graces and virtues; everyone used to say that the king showed unlimited kindness towards me — this is what makes it difficult for me to bend my heart in humility before him." (Ibid : 170)

The imperative necessity of subduing the rebel in the soul, the prerequisite for perfect union, is slowly dawning upon Sudarsana. This is the central moral problem
and the action shows that it is by no means easy. A lurking pride in Sudarsana still acts as a barrier and this too has to be overcome by an inner struggle the dramatization of which is the last move in the plot. The dialogue of Sudarsana and Surangama shows the beginning of the transposition of values in the former’s inner life an anticipation of the drawing of realization with which the dark night of the soul is to near its end. She is to suffer inwardly and through the cathartic effect of affliction and inner expiation, unprepared though she is, she learns that only by complete self – surrender and single minded devotion the union with the Supreme being is possible. To the Queen, impatient of delay, her maid says – “Have I not told you my king is cruel and hard – very hard indeed?” (Ibid : 171) But Sudarsana who cannot restrain her extreme eagerness for the meeting with the king asks Surangama – “Go out, Surangama and bring me news of him.” (Ibid : 171) Surangama says – “I do not know where I should go to get any news of him. I have asked Grandfather to come, perhaps when he comes we shall hear something from him.” (Ibid : 171)

As Thakurda enters he is received by Queen feelingly. “I have heard that you are my king’s friend, so accept my obeisance and give me blessings.” (Ibid : 172) Thakurda’s character is revealed in his reply “What are you doing, Queen? I never accept anybody’s obeisance. My relation with everyone is only that of comradeship.” (Ibid : 172) Sudarsana asks him to tell her when the king is coming to take her back. From Thakurda comes a characteristic reply – “You ask me a hard question, indeed! I hardly understand yet the ways of my friend. The battle is over but no one can tell where he has gone.” (Ibid : 173) When Sudarsana is infuriated with this comment, Thakurda says, “I have known him now I have know him through my grief’s and joys – he can make me weep no more now.” (Ibid : 174)

The love-drama goes on and the proud-dearted lover in Queen Sudarsana give utterance to her feeling with a sullenness typical of her. "Very well, I shall see how hard he can be! I shall stay here near the window without saying a word; I shall not move an inch, let me see if he will not come!" (Ibid : 175 – 176) But Sudarsana has yet to realize that only a passionate expectation is not enough to bring about the union with the Divine lover, it must be accompanied with complete submission. Mere waiting will not do, one has to move towards him with an eager longing. She is
apprised by Thakurda of this secret spiritual principle that should govern human soul’s attitude to the Divine lover. “You are young still – you can afford to wait for him; but to me, an old man, a moment’s loss is a week. I must set out to seek him whether I succeed or not.” (Ibid : 175) Thadurda goes offstage but his words go unheeded. Tagore always keeps the interest up till the very end. The last words of the scene came from the still rebellious Sudarsana, her soul in a state of agitation. “I do not want him – I will not seek him - ! Surangama I have no need of your king! Why did he fight with the princes? Was it for me at all? Did he want to show off his prowess and strength? Go away from here – I cannot bear your sight. He has humbled me to the dust, and is not satisfied still!” (Ibid : 175)

The Seventeenth is a typical Tagore scene, with the people, unidentified characters, chorus-like commenting on the state of action following the ‘evenful battle. The plot is constituted of two interlinked but parallel streams; the chastening, each in its own way, of two insubordinate spirits. First, the citizens began discussing the nature of the battle which to them was little more than the mockery of a battle, for the kings could not make a concerted attack, each being suspicious of other’s move and each looking to his self interest. Second, they were all agreed that Kanchi fought like a real hero and was loth to acknowledge himself beaten till he was fixed in the chest by deadly missile and though saved by the physicians he would carry the mark of his defeat on his breast till his dying day. The third item for discussion was the punishment meted out to the rebel kings. The people were surprised by the strange nature of the justice. The salvation of Kanchi, the greatest offender, came through his open defiance.

The locale of the next scene, the eighteenth, is significantly, ‘The street’ at night were, not the people, but Thakurda and Kanchi whose approach to the king unlike that of Queen Sudarsana is not that of a deluded lover but of a deluded man of action. Paradoxically, he proves a blissful defeat. The transformation of the king to Kanchi from an insurgent to a believer, is the transformation of the agnostic, for the battle he waged was the battle of an unbeliever with the Supreme Reality. In the treatment of this deeply spiritual theme, the characteristic qualities of Tagore’s dramatic art are seen at their best. Mysticism and symbolism go hand in hand highlighting his mythopoeic vision. In his pride the great challenger forgot that he
was fighting an unequal fight and so deserving the fate of one daring to defy the divine order. The outer man in Kanchi is outfought. He tells Thakurda that the king who has shattered his pride and reduced him to complete submission is eluding him now. He says - "But how long more will he elude me like this? When nothing could make me acknowledge him as my king, he came all of a sudden like a terrific tempest - God knows from where and scattered my men and horses and banners in one wild tumult: but now when I am seeking the ends of the earth to pay him my humble homage, he is nowhere to be seen." (Ibid : 183) Underscoring the key theme of the play Thakurda consoles Kanchi - "But however big an Emperor he may be, he has to submit to him that yields." (Ibid : 183)

The penultimate scene, the nineteenth, brings to equilibrium the forces that formed the dramatic tangle. The four most important characters - the two errant, Queen Sudarsana and king kanchi and the two perceptive surangama and Thakurda - are on the stage. The locale, symbolically significant, is the road, the road not of outward but inward journey. The first to appear on the stage are sudarsana and surangama. The unique feeling of the dramatization over coming of the inner hurdle which is precondition of spiritual awakening can be understood through extensive extracts from the dialogue of the characters which reflects it. Emerging from her traumatic experience, the Queen with her soul - chumed new values open her heart to her companion - maid. "What a relief, Surangama, what freedom! It is my defeat that has frought me freedom. Oh, what an irony pride was mine! Nothing could more it or soften it. My darkened mind could not is any way be brought to see the plain truth that it was not the king who was to come, it was I who ought to have gone to him." (Ibid : 186)

This is the keynote of man - God relationship. God the eternal lover is ever sending his call to the human heart but when the man actively responds to it there is perfect reciprocation. Raja dramatizes this archetypal principle through Sudarsana’s education. Following this cathartic humiliation comes the moment of Queen Sudarsana’s turnabout. She realizes that her union with the king can be completed only by way of complete submission rather than of rebellion which as Surangama says, is to dissolve all barriers of love. Sudarsana, now spiritually awakened, is possessed of another kind of pride, the pride of whole hearted submissiveness - "He
did at last send me on the open road – I could not withstand his will. When I shall find him, the first word that I shall tell him will be, .... "I have come of my own will – I have not awaited your coming." I shall say " for your sake have I trodden the hard and weary roads and bitter and ceaseless has been my weeping all the way" I shall at least have this pride in me when I meet him." (Ibid : 188 – 189) Correcting the Queen, Surangama remarks "But even that pride will not last. He comes before you did – who else could have sent you on the road? (Ibid : 189)

But even at the last stage, the plot has something in store. The two aberrant souls, now transformed, are brought together, for they are on the same road now. The third traveller of this dark road at this hour of the night is of all people the formidable kanchi. When Surangama asks her Queen not to frightened the latter adds – Afraid! Why should I be afraid? The days of fear are gone for ever for me.” (Ibid : 191) Of great dramatic importance is having, another regenerate rebel, as her fellow – traveler for their shared experiences and values make them pursue similar destination. The valiant – hearted kanchi, vanquished but regenerated, it but on the road questing for inner realization, kanchi's address bespeaks his change – "Queen mother, I see you on this road! I am a traveller of the same path as yourself. Have no fear of me, O Queen!" (Ibid : 191)

In Tagore man and nature are spiritually akin, attention is directed by Surangama to the dayback, a nature symbol which signifies the emergence from darkness which is a new birth. "Look, my Queen, there on the eastern horizon comes the dawn, we have not long to walk: I see the spires of the golden turrets of the king's palace." (Ibid : 193) The song of Surangama that follows elaborates the symbolic implication. In a new style of playmaking technical innovations are unavoidable. To crown the resolution of the inner drama of human soul, the fourth character, Thakurda, a man of virile spirituality, is brought on the stage.

For God – realization there has to be utmost humility; not only pride but also outer garb indicative of high station in life have to be surrendered. Kanchi thinks his regal robes might be a barrier and he says – "Grandfather, do not forget me in this game of your! I also will have to get this royal garment of mine soiled till it is beyond all recognition." (Ibid : 196) To this Thakurda perceptively and feelingly replies –
That will not take long, my brother. Now that you have come down so far — you will change your colour in no time. Just look at our Queen — she got into a temper with himself and thought that she could spoil her matchless beauty by flinging away all her ornaments. "But this insult to her beauty has made it shine forth in tenfold radiance, and now it is in its unadorned perfection. We hear that our king is all innocent of beauty — that is why he loves all his manifold beauty of form which shines as the very ornament of his breast. And that beauty has today taken off its veil and cloak of pride and vanity! — What could I not give to be allowed to hear the wonderful music and song that has filled my king's palace today." (Ibid : 196 - 197) Thrice in this scene attention is directed to the sunrise, the dawn of a new life, a suggestive enough symbol. The scene ends with the words of Surangama — "Lo, there rises the Sun!" (Ibid : 197) But the spiritual realization is not a once-over thing. It has to be sustained by continual effort. Herein is the propriety of the road symbol.

In short, significant and typically Tagorean scene with which the play closes is in the dark chamber where the play began. The Queen to whom the dark chamber has only dark now sees light in it. The paradox of light in darkness, the central dramatic motif, is presented in the climatic scene with this growing realization. The long prepared for meeting between Queen Sudarsana and the king, the natural dramatic finale, is profoundly moving in its impact. The wheel has come full circle. The interrupted union of the Queen and the king is now completed so gloriously. The king says — "I open the door of this dark room to-day — the game is finished here! Come, come with me now, come outside into the light." (Ibid : 199) Sudarsana's reply is "Before I go, let me bow at the feet of my lord of darkness, my cruel, my terrible, my peerless one!" (Ibid : 200)

(Raja, a representative piece, is a profound soul drama where Tagore has attempted to plumb the depths of the mystery of the divine love in terms of human passion and he reaches a height of dramatic achievement never surpassed by him.) With its sharp characterization, stirring conflict, spiritual sensibility, deep mysticism, truth of human nature, universal motivation and majestic flights of imagination, it has become dramatically the most moving of his symbolic plays, capable of an appeal beyond the reach of the drama of mere mundane interests. Raja is remarkable
forgiving a consummate expression to the eastern dramatic sensibility noted for its spirituality, mysticism and symbolism.

Thus, Tagore through the character of Sudrasana and Surangama wants to show that god is the king of all kings. He can not be seen by physical eyes but can be felt in mind. Or he can be seen in the light of mind. Sudrasana’s longing to see the king, the Supreme king (God) is unfulfilled until she is spiritually awakened. When she realises that the king is always with her and is dwelling in the recess of her heart, she sees Him in the divine light. On the other hand, Surangama, the maid servant of Sudrasana, is already spiritually enlightened. She feels the presence of God in the human mind and hence she requests her queen to open the spiritual eyes, closing her physical eyes so that she may feel his omnipresence in the universe. Thus man is the manifestation of that supreme king for whom lies every man’s perennial longing to meet him. Here is Tagore’s pantheism.

Arup Ratan (The Jewel Without Form), 1920

Arup Ratan is Raja rewritten and retitled. Raja, the title character of the earlier play and who remains invisible throughout, is referred to in the later play as ‘Arup Ratan’, the precious jewel that has no form. ‘Raja’ is a more precise title, dramatically ever for the eternal lover in a love-drama has to be anthropomorphically concretized. Arup Ratan, a luminescent metaphor, is a poetico - philosophical concept which makes the lover - king an abstraction, relatively. The theme of both plays is, however, the same; the realization of the soul’s relationship with the Supreme Reality. The introduction, no doubt, provides the characteristic critical interpretation of the spiritual base of the play.

Oh, their sight rushes forward
On the road to wealth and pride, to plenty
Oh, in droves.
They have made a vow to see,
But the mind does not know whom to see,
When they look into love’s gaze
Oh, their eyes must overflow with tears.
Do not call upon me,
I go to the ferry ghat, the formless - rasa - ocean.
Winds unfettered strike the sail,
At the time of going toward the coast
I will drown both of these eyes
Oh, within the shoreless nectar — sea. (Tagore 1987: 274)

In the plot of the new play that too deals with a quest myth, the pursuit of the human soul for the ultimate, creation basic changes takes place. Raja is a play in 73 pages and has 20 short but significantly conceived scenes — whereas Arup Ratan is obviously a much shorter play in 47 pages with not so well-defined movements. The action sequence is deliberately telescoped. The limitation of the abridged can be understood only in the context of the original version. The action pattern in Raja is well motivated. In the hurriedly made abridgement the links are often missing. The baldness of the attenuated version too conspicuously shows the lack of multi-layered suggestiveness and expansiveness of the earlier play. When brevity disturbs the rounded wholeness of an artwork it does not invariably make a better play.

Here too the tendency to explain and the resultant matter of fastness dilute the pervasive mysticism, a distinctive feature of the original in its masterly use of a rich allusive style. The most important feature is in the central motivation Sudarsana, the key character in both the plays, is already the Queen in Raja, linked in a mystic wedlock with the king. In Arup Ratan Sudarsana is a princess, the daughter of Kantikaraja, aspiring to marry the king of kings. In Raja the mystic relationship between the king and Queen Sudarsana already exists; it is the re exploration of the bond of the pre-existing union that constitutes the dramatic action. In Arup Ratan the relationship has to be forged. There is only a passionate yearning. Surangama sings.

When I was blind
Time passed in happy games but bliss I could not find.
I built the walls of a dollhouse
I was observed in my day — dreams,
You broke the wall and came inside
My bonds were then destroyed,
The happy games appeal no more
I have found bliss.
O terror mine, destruction mine
My sleep has now become short-lived,
In violent agony, anew
You turned all my desires.
The day you came disguised as fire
And look away all that was mine,
That day did I become complete
My conflicts were destroyed,
Beyond the banks of grief and joy
I found you bliss. (Ibid: 276)

In this drama Surangama is also blessed with mystic aura whereas such idea Suddrsana cannot feel. She feels the presence of God in every objects of nature. He is her pilot, her guide, destroyer and preserver of all frail vessel of her body.

The stage direction in Raja makes it clear that the king remains invisible through this play whereas in Arup Ratan he is an off-stage voice. Further some of the king’s speeches, particularly those in which the king in Raja asks the agitated Queen Sudarsana to try to break away from him, are assigned to Surangama which as such, do not have the ring of profundity of the Almighty’s voice in allowing full freedom to the individual. The kings have new names, Kanchi becomes Vikram which means might. Rohini is dropped, even some of the people are named. When the voice says to Sudarsan – "I can see in you is embodied the meditation of countless yugas, the light of this world and the next, the flower and fruit of many hundreds of autumn and springs. You are the new form of the very ancient" (Ibid: 279) he enjoys an inexplicable pleasure but complains that darkness is the only obstacle to recognize the voice, the voice of Supreme entity – “Go on, speak this way. I feel as if I’ve been hearing the song of time immemorial through all my lives. But lord, this darkness is like solid black iron, it is pressing upon me like sleep like a swoon, like death. How will the union between you and me occur in this place?” (Ibid: 279) Thus it is seen that light and darkness are two aspect of God, God is more perfectly perceived in darkness in lieu of light, the earth is moving and the whole universe is formed in the name of God.

*Arup Ratan* is as remarkable for the songs as is Raja. There are nearly the same number of songs: as against the 26 of Raja, ‘Arup Ratan’ has 24, including the two that serve as prologue and epilogue. Some of the songs are common. Additional songs specifically composed for the new play, no doubt, enrich it. The epilogue shows atonement of Sudarsana who now shake off all her pride, shame and feels the presence of God in dark chamber of her heart, merges with the Supreme entity whom is found and felt in every object of nature.
The night becomes the dawn, the path comes to an end.
Listen to every region raise the song of light.
O traveler you're fortunate
Fatigued by sleepless nights
Your dusty ashen life indeed is fortunate.
Close to the forest's lap
The winds have woken up;
Honey - beggars in rows
Come to the garden-doors
So the journey's complete
Wipe off the flow of tears,
Shed are the shame and fears
Vanity is destroyed. (Ibid : 137)

Surangama, the maidservant of Sudarsana, stands another pole of
Sudarsana. She is always eager to surrender herself to the alter of God and her
earent pray to God is nicely expressed through a song.

Lord, tell me, tell me when
The colours of the dust upon your path
Will make my anchal colourful.
The scarlet dust of your forest
Causes the puja flowers to bloom,
Alas, when will that dust
Accept me as its own?
All those poor pilgrims of the dust
Who go to palace pranams upon
Your feet, will recognise
Me as one of their own. (Ibid : 278)

The central motive of the earlier play, self-realization through self effacement,
the self that melts in the fire of suffering, remains. Yet abruptly conducted is the
dramatization of the dawning of psychic awareness resulting in the self abnegative
attitude, the precondition of the establishment of relationship with the Supreme Lord.
The voice that speaks to Surangama and Sudarsana is the voice of God that speaks
about omnipresence throughout the universe. Baul speaks about the nature of God
through a superb song.

The person for my life is in my life
That's why I see him everywhere
He's in the stream of light within my eyes,
That's why I don't lose him,
Oh yes, that’s why I see him here and there
Which ever way I look
To hear his words
I want so far,
But could not hear, I could not hear,
Today, returning to my land
I hear them now
I hear his speech in my own songs
Who are you who search for him
Dressed as beggars, door to door,
You never see him, never see
Oh you, come running take a look
Within my heart
Oh look within these eyes of mine. (Ibid : 287)

Thus ‘Arup Ratan’ like ‘The king of the dark chamber, is based on man’s univesal quest to meet God with which everything is intimately interlinked, herein lies Tagore’s pantheistic creed.

*The Post Office* (1912)

The Post Office is a translated work of the Bengali drama *Dakghar*. It was translated by devabrata Mukerjee and published from Macmillan in 1914. Tagore in *The Post Office* tempted to present man’s internal urge for communion with God. It deals with the idea that love transcends the limitation of phenomenal world brings a positive deliverance of the Spirit. Amal’s longing to break the bondages imposed by his father and his hope of having letter from the king and finally his wish to be his postman symbolically represents man’s eternal quest for attaining union with God. The central idea that he elaborates is that child’s spirit, being untainted by the intricacy of material world, feels a bond of kinship with the spiritual existence of things.

The play consists of two Acts. In the first Act the child sitting near the window muses and talks to the strangers and longs to come out of room. In the second act the child is lying on the bed and the people are talking to him. Madhav and the doctor represent physical world. Mahdav for the well-being of Amal does not let him come out of the house. The doctor too, only possesses theoretical knowledge, hence lacks the penetrating human insight to emotional and spiritual crisis of Amal. Being
disgusted with habitations he draws enjoyment from "the Squirrel sitting with his tail up and with his wee hands he's picking up the broken grains of lentils and crunching them." (Tagore; 1914 : 10 - 11) To divert his attention Madhav suggests him to read books and to be learned. However the idea of confinement of spirit in the books terrifies him "No, no, uncle; I beg of you by your dear feet - I don't want to be learned, I won't." (Ibid : 13) Contrarily he expresses his desire to go beyond the hills and appreciates the beauty of unknown. But Mahdav has neither the will nor the sensibility to go beyond the hills and considers them as barrier created by God so that one cannot go beyond it. However for the spiritual vision of Amal, the vastness of hills is no mystery. Like a perfect mystic he realizes the truth behind their existence.

In The Post Office too Tagore created different characters representing various codes of life in contrast with Amal's conscience. Sitting near the window Amal watches the panorama of human life and each character in his own way conveys to him the idea of deliverance. The appearance of the old man with his pair of worn out shoes and with a bamboo staff on his shoulder proceeding towards hill in search of job symbolizes the pleasure of existence beyond the utilitarian motifs. In his life style Amal seeks a consolation and dreams of such a life far from bondages. The intensity of emotion is evident when he says - "Oh, I will walk on, crossing so many streams, wading through water. Everybody will be asleep with their doors shut in the heat of the day and I will tramp on and on seeking work far, very far." (Ibid : 18) Further, he is thrilled at the call of curd seller and feels an anguish, "I seem to feel homesick when I hear you call from far down the road." (Ibid : 21) With the vice of the curd seller, his body quivers, eyes start blinking and his spirit elevated at the reference of River Shamili and Panchmula hills. Amal's identification with them vitalizes before his eyes the entire picture of the big old tree, red road and the image of the women in red sarees going back with pitcher from the river. After it, Amal meets the watchmen. He brings a representative of law and order who threatens Amal - "Suppose I march you off then?" (Ibid : 28) But the idea of liberation instead of terrifying him stirs a new hope in his supposed soul. Simultaneously, the watchman's remark, - 'Time has not come' (Ibid : 29) baffles Amal because he is only looking for the deliverance in the from of death. The more idea of deliverance gets a hold of his mind, the more restless he becomes to go to the land from where
none has yet come back. The revelation of eternal truth by the watchman – “One greater than he comes and let us free: - (Ibid : 32) expends the horizon of imagination. The watchman further drags his imagination towards the post office that is being constructed in front of his window. He also inculcates in Amal’s mind the hope of getting a letter for him. The image of the post office focuses the conscience of Amal. Immediately after the revelation he declares to be the king’s postman. The presence of Headman is only to assert the principle of obstructing authority. Unlike Doctor, he lacks the sensibility and depth of Amal’s longing. The idea of having a letter from the king is treated by him as an act of imprudence. But Sudha emerges as an image of love and beauty and Amal pines to share her maddening gladness and aspires to gather flowers form the top most branches right out of the sight. Finally, the apperance of the playing boys is most suggestive and phychological. Amal projects all his dream and happiness and in the happiness of those boys and give up all his joys in the form of toys which are getting dirty and are of no use to him. His act of renouncing the toys is the final separation from the external world.

In the second act Amal is in his bed and has little contact with the external world. Subsequently, he feels a greater suffocation for the liberation of the spirit. However the appearance of Gaffer, for the second time, works as an instrument of the final deliverance of Amal. His idea of parot’s Isle is sheer fancy and it takes firm hold on his mind and the post office that is only a big house with a flag flying high, comes to be invested in child’s mind a romantic even mystic aura. The inner conscience of Amal strongly craves for a letter from the king bringing him the massage of his deliverance. The gradual fading vision of the external world illumine the glooming darkness of the dark chambers of his heart. Consequently, the image of the postman becomes a living experience. Like a mystic he identifies with the image of the postman coming down from far off the hills. Through his imagination, he feels the approach of postman coming down the hill side with a lantern in his left hand and on his back a beg of letters. The nearer the postman is, the lesser is his suffocation. Amal’s final desire to be king’s postman is his carving for the final merger with the divine spirit. “I shall ask him to make me one of his postman that I may wander far and wide, delivering his message from door to door.” (Ibid : 85)
On the physical plane death approaches but on the spiritual plane it is his gradual breaking of the ties with the physical world. In the midst of his crisis. Doctor's act of tightening the security is only to enhance the intensity of his crisis. In contrast, Gaffer's decision of opening all windows and doors, relaxing all restrictions, is to present his liberation with the opening of the door. Amal feels a sigh of relief and says - "I feel very well, doctor, very well. All pain is gone. How fresh and open! I can see all the stars now twinkling from the other side of the dark." (Ibid : 83) Amal feels the approach of the king the death. The physician suggests him to be quiet as sleep is coming. No doubt sleep comes but only in the form of death. Amal’s death is suggestive of spiritual rebirth.

Amal, an orphan and a frail child, has been adopted by Madhav Datta, a worldly – minded man who perpetually dotes on him. Filled with concern regarding his death, Madhav keeps Amal confined indoors, on the advice of the village physician who is of the view that slightest exposure might cause an aggravation in the condition of the child. "I have already mentioned, on no account must he be let out of door." (Ibid : 4) Through half opened window the irrepressibly imaginative Amal maintains a contact with the world outside. Before him unfolds the shifting panorama of the village life represented by different type of people. The sight of the post office in front of the house deeply stirs his imagination. Despite all precautions Amal's health steadily deteriorates and this is attributed his seating to his sitting by the window Amal is bedridden and Madhav Datta wants to keep a tight hold on the boy whose desire for the expansion of consciousness has already taken him far away. At this point enters Thakurda in the guise of a Fakir for he understands the nature of Amal's aspiration and sits by the little boy's bedside feeding his imagination and acting as his companion in his quest. The village physician presently comes in and despairing on Amal's life prescribed stricter confinement. The Headman follows and mockingly passes on to Amal's hand a blank slip of paper as the king's letter for him. Assured by Thakurda Amal does not doubt the authenticity of the letter as coming from the king. The king's Herald enters to announce that the king would come to him on the second watch of the night. The herald is followed by the state physician who orders all the doors and window to be flung open. Hearing the news of the impending arrival of the king Amal goes into a trance.
The world of Dakghar is not one of whimsicality or make – believe. Its foundation goes deep into that reality of human life that urges for mukti, the liberation of soul that is intuitively apprehended by the mystical imagination. Here the intensity of conception is now where relaxed, so purposefully every moment of mind has been welded to the main idea. Tagore is concerned with a vision of life for tracing a spiritual process in dramatic form. "His is not the beautiful world of unrealities that the late nineteenth century European aestheticism brought into vogue. The national spiritual tradition was in Tagore's veins and his dramatic imagination has no resemblance with the once fashionable Maeterlinckian cult of weird sensationalism and of the occult forces of destiny." (Chakraborty 2000 : 201)

The play in a rare example of technical economy. Not a word is wasted, not a move is superfluous, not a character is supernumerary. Everything is calculated to the building up of the total dramatic design. The play exemplifies the perfection of dramatic art of a specific kind. The inspired craftsmanship bears the closest scrutiny for even the minutest touch is superb art here. As the expanded metaphor of the title refers to a deep truth in terms of a familiar image object of the post-office, in the same way the response of the prisoner soul to the varied impacts of life is symbolized through the simple image of a sick child confined to his room overleaping spiritually the restraint he is submitted to. The central image of the play, the post office through which the king's message is being projected is entwined with the imprisoned child's spiritual perception which makes him transcend his bondage.

The theme of the post-office concerns itself with man's yearning for the identification with the Infinite by overleaping the barrier that imprisons him to the realm of the finite. Amal represents the man whose soul has received the call of the open road, he seeks freedom from the comfortable enclosure of habits sanctioned by the prudent and from the walls of rigid opinion built for him by respectable. But Madhab, the worldly wise, considers his restlessness to be the sign of a fatal malady and his adviser, the physician, the custodian of conventional platitudes gravely nods his head and says that freedom is unsafe and every care should be taken to keep the sick man within walls and precaution is taken. But there is the post office in front of the widows and Amal waits for the king's letter to come to him direct from the king,
bringing to him the message of emancipation. "No, let him be, Doctor. He is a friend. It was he who brought me the king's letter." (Tagore 1914 : 84)

To Amal, the universe is a post-office of king who is constantly transmitting messages perceptible only by the sensitive. There is a built-in opposition in the relationship of Madhav and Amal. Amal's foster uncle Madhav with whom the world is too much, is engaged in a futile attempt to keep as his own. The child, however, inwardly freed, instinctively emerges out of his self to identify himself with everything around him. An opposite force is at work impelling the child's imaginative aspiration preparing him for his final union with the king for which he pines. Tagore's characteristic constructive skill reaches a new height in this delicate composition. The action begins straightway with the first word uttered. The note of tension, restrained only by a tender solicitude is sounded by the foster uncle's concern for the child's condition.

The opening scene shows the central character Amal, a small boy, suffering from a serious ailment in a state of confinement; in the following, his increasing yearning for communication with the world outside, from which, he is constantly receiving messages as from a post-office, is depicted; in the final scene the source of message is contretized in the king who sends his own Herald and physician to free Amal from his bondage and to prepare him for the union with the king. The piece dramatizes the instinctive response of the sensitive human heart to the multifarious call of the world represented through the name symbol Dakghar that constantly sends out invitations to the human soul to take part in the visva-leela, cosmic manifestations. The dramatic action assumes a subtle form as this yearning prompted by man's responsiveness is developed through a tension and conflict of sympathetic and antipathetic relationship.

The play's structure presents a transparent surface through which is shown layer of deeper meanings with the characters who belong to different levels, helping or impending the psychic response of central character. To the spiritually obtuse, Amal's imaginativeness is a malady. Madhav, his foster uncle and the physician, both deficient in spiritual perception but sincerely anxious only for Amal's physical well-being, makes him ironically enough, a closer prisoner by their eager solicitude.
The consummate artistry of this play lies in the symbolism implicit in the conception of each character, situation and action. The play's action advances from very outset to the climatic resolution through the impact of a series of characters repressing varying segments of life. The interest of the piece lies in the manipulation of the heightening process of a complete realization.

The dramatic interest centres in Amal, a sick boy, who is tied to the world by the frailest of bonds which serving as a barrier between him and outside world, makes him constantly pine for his release from this state. It is but natural that in his confinement Amal finds stimulus to escape. He says – "It seems to me because the earth can't speak it raises its hands into the sky and beckons. And those who live far off, and sit alone by their windows can see the signal." (Ibid : 14 – 15) The basic value contrast motivating the action is Madhav's mundane possessiveness and Amal's urge for affinity with the Infinite. His sickness, the home-sickness of the soul, signifies his restlessness for release from the bondage he is in. His unimaginative care-takers, Madhav and Kaviraj, who are concerned with only the physical aspects of his malady, try their best to impede his contact with the myriad-phased illimitable external world, symbolized through the concept of Dakghar. Dakghar, emanating from a subjective spiritual experience, gives dramatic form to man's yearning for union with the universal soul, manifested in creation, haunting and tempting man to come out of his bondage.

The setting of the play is a typical Bengali village. The initial situation is marked by a subtle tri-personal conflict of attitudes – the attachment of Madhav, Amal's adoptive uncle, the impersonal concern of the professional physician who is being consulted for the treatment of the ailment which is, in truth, the sick child Amal's restlessness for release. The polarity between the first and last is too obvious – the one represents a down to earth attitude and the other, its reverse. That between the first and second is subtler still – thought both represent attitude different from Amal's. Kaviraj enjoins that Amal, his patient, needs the most scrupulous care because "the autumn sun and the damp are both very bad for the little fellow – for the scriptures have it. "In wheezing, swooning or in nervous fret, In jaundice or laden eyes." (Ibid : 5) Mahdav's relationship with Amal displays a mutual alliance whereas Kaviraj's relationship with him is lacking in any human note. No sooner than he
leaves, there appears Thakurda, the spiritually perspective, adding a new dimension to the tripartite relationship. Madhav is 'jiggered' by his arrival, for he discovers in him the very essence of the autumnal wind and sun from which Amal is to be protected. Madhav and Thakurda vis-à-vis Amal represent a polarity enlivening the action. The former's love for Amal is confined to the plane of physical attachment whereas the latter's to the spiritual. Madhav's attitude to Amal, developed ironically all through is fully exposed at the climatic change.

The design of the drama is a paradox – the physically sick child being spiritually the most alert. The action has begun with the central character, a child with rare spiritual sensitivity in a state of bondage with the tension of his arrested yearning creating the initial stir. At the beginning Amal is presented as a sick child taken care of by his doting adopter and the village doctor, a strict follower of the injunction of the medical text. As the play ends it becomes manifest that it is not the child but his elders who are actually sick suffering from the malady of spiritual obtuseness. The irony is central to the drama. One of the basic points about the main character is his physical frailty and spiritual vitality. The expression of this especial acuity and pervasiveness of sensibility is the dramatic care. The contrariety and muffled conflict imbue the play with irony and tension. Amal's confinement a dramatic expediency of great effect is symbolic of the imprisoned human soul struggling for liberation. Ironically, the more securely Amal is confined, the more restless he grows and his condition worsens. His increasing restlessness represents his growing spiritual yearning as his worsening physical condition indicates his looking links with his ailing body, an apt symbol of the spirit's prison house. The initial imbalance from the temporal point of view, that Amal exhibits and which sets the action going, emanates from his over-weighted spirituality which leaves his frail body-awareness far behind. The character concept of Amal is a masterly stroke and the situation he is in, whether taken metaphorically or not, is a sensitive imaginative construct of infinite expansiveness.

The last portion of play it is seen that Amal is hearing footstep of the king and he is eagerly waiting for that Supreme king who will make him free from his physical link with the mundane world and help him merge with paramatma. Amal says – "I can see, it all, there, the king's postman coming down the hillside alone, a lantern in
his left hand and on his back a bag of letters; climbing down for ever so long, for
days and nights and where at the foot of the mountain the waterfall becomes a
stream he takes to the footpath on the bank and walks on through the rye; then
comes the sugarcane field and he disappears into the narrow lane cutting through
the tall stems of sugarcanes; then he reaches the open meadow where the cricket
chirps and where there is not a single man to be seen, only the snipe wagging their
tails and poking at the mud with their bills. I can feel him coming nearer and nearer
and my heart becomes glad.” (ibid : 68) Amal is innocently willing to identify himself
with all creation, however tiny and longs for an experiential awareness. He
expresses his desire to roam about the world and see everything and be everything.

Amal is brought into contact with various type of villagers whom he sees
through the window of the room he is confined in. Sitting beside his window - the
road side window which enables the prisoner inside to see the world outside being a
happy symbol – he comes in touch with different characters, appearing in close but
well demarked succession, each of whom, by referring to the passing of time, feeds
the theme and signifies the constant progression of dramatic action beside
stimulating Amal’s imagination and spurring his longing. Through each Amal has a
new contact with life, each brings him a new message of the post-office world. Each
engaged in a pressing occupation can stay with him only for a shortwhile; Amal
alone is an idle though imaginatively restive stay at home. The character scheme
and the slice of their dialogues, irradiated with a multiple suggestivety, motivate the
action and sustain the muted conflict. The Dairyman, the watchman, the village
Headman, the flower girl Sudha, the troup of boys come to him one by one, each a
distinct facet of village life, provoking a new response in him, revealing a new phrase
of his restless aspiration which imparts to the dramatic action a progression. Another
dramatically contributory factor is the extensive use of irony. The play is made of the
juxtaposition of two layers of value always crossing each other, one of the
convention dominated natural world and the other of pure spiritual perception. The
play of two kinds of sensibility makes Dakghar a chequered pattern of contrasted
values. The curd sellers, hawking about, emits a call which has an emotive impact
on him in his imaginative flight. Next to come is the watchman, the time keeper has
an important role in the scheme of action. It is the watchman who tangibly implants in
Amal the ideas of receiving the letter of the king from the post-office presented as a
The watchman says - 'One greater than he comes and lets us free.' (Ibid : 32) Again it is from him that he gets the idea of becoming a king's postman. When Amal is in doubt the royal letter from the king, the watchman assures him by saying - 'Of course, one fine day there may be a letter for you in there.' (Ibid : 33) Amal has a deeper realization of the greater significance of the post office pictured by the watchman. The reference to time in their dialogue has almost a metaphysical association. The time sense, stressed by the watchman which permeates the play right from the beginning may be interpreted as a technical device to keep expectancy. Amal's wish to fly with the time and its dramatic importance is re-emphasized.

Amal next meets a person who is unlike the two preceding sympathetic characters. The entrance of the village Headman who feels annoyed at Amal's calling him intimately, strikes a different note. He is bully, incredulous and ironical. He makes fun of Amal's idea of getting a letter from the king. He mockingly says - 'Ha! Ha! What an uncommon little fellow you are! Ha! ha! The king indeed, are not you his bosom friend, eh! You haven't met for a long while and the king is pining for you, I am sure. Wait till tomorrow and you'll have your letter,' (Ibid : 39) His comments are marked by extensive use of sarcasm as against Amal's unwavering conviction in the reality of king's concern for him. The headman who animates the action by his pugnacious self importance is discomfited towards the end by the innocence of Amal which dissolves the irony of the village bully's mockery and incredulity.

Sudha who comes next with her anklet-belts tinkling, fills Amal's heart with joy and stimulates his imagination to escape into a world of folktale with their talk about seven champak brothers and their only beloved sister Parul. Like the curdseller, she is also in a hurry. Sudha as the embodiment of life's sweetness has a role of symbolic import. Amal wants from her a flower and she promises that she will not forget him and bring the flower on her return. When she has left, Amal sees a troup of boys hurrying to play. He detains them with the request to play in front of him with his toys. The boys are presently surprised when Amal who has no consciousness, gladly parts with his toys. A short extract form their dialogue will illuminate the point that shows the touch of a master.
Boys : How jolly! What fine toys! Look, here's a ship. There's old mother Jatai. Isn't gorgeous sepoy? And you'll let us have them all? You don't really mind?

Amal : No, not a bit have them by all means.

A boy : You don't want them back?

Amal : Oh, no, I shan't want them. (Ibid : 50)

The boy's content with the toys, know nothing beyond playing. They provide a contrast to this exceptionally sensitive boy, who, significantly, as they play, feels bored and tired and presently dozed off. He however learns from them the names of the king's postmen - Badal (Rain), Sarat (Autumn) - with obvious symbolic connotation.

The course of action in the final scene which opens with an aggravation in Amal's malaise and who is now seen in bed, is full of twists and turns. The play's spiritual dimensions are suddenly extended. The characters are grouped around him in a variety of relationship ranging from that of genuine sympathy to one of gentle antipathy. This variety of human responses creates a sense of contrast, the essence of which is dramatic. Each character has its duly assigned role in the delicate dramatic design. Madhav, on doubt, loves Amal and is afraid to lose him. The concept of Amal as an adopted child is integral to the play but a special role has been assigned to Thakurda who is the sole supporter of Amal in his quest. Thakurda in the guise of the Fakir has in the meantime befriended Amal without the knowledge of Madhav. Tahhurda presently enters in a fakir's guise and sits by Amal's bed and delights him with his stories of the excursions to the 'isle of parrots, the weightless land and by his positive faith in the king he feeds his aspiration. This kinship of the two is contrasted with that of Amal and his foster uncle's. Fakir's is the freed spirit as opposed to the narrow minded Madhav's. The latter is out of his depth when he listens to their conversation which is all exasperating rigmarole to him. He is flabbergasted when he is interposed between the two.
Amal: Where have you been this time, Fakir?

Thakurda: To the isle of parrots. I am just back.

Madhav: The parrot’s Isle?

Thakurda: Is it so very astonishing? I am not like you. A journey does n’t cost a thing. I tramp just where I like.

Amal: (Clapping) How jolly for you? Remember your promise to take me with you as your follower when I am well.

Thakurda: Of course, and I’ll teach you somang traveller’s secrets that nothing in sea or forest or mountain car bar your way. (Ibid : 60 – 61)

Thakurda’s talk of traveling which implies the time sense and expansiveness, is again thematically significant. The image of journey, a pivotal image, that he evokes has a close alliance with Amal’s yerning, for yearning itself is a mental journey.

Thakurda understands the real truth behind Amal’s restlessness and allays it by helping the latter in his imaginative flight and intense spiritual urge, strengthening his expectancy for the approaching fulfilment of his communication with the king. In course of his talk with Thakurda, Amal’s imagination is so stirred that he can instinctively visualize the king’s postman coming with the letter. The speech is an instance of his sensitive perception rendered in highly imaginative prose charged with mystical yearning. “I will go to his gate and cry ‘Victory to thee, O king!’ and dancing to the tabor’s sound, asks for alms.” (Ibid : 69)

To quieten Amal Thakurda is seen fanning him. The arrival of the physician at this stage is suggestive. Thinking that Amal’s ailment has taken an unfavorable turn, the physician prescribes stricter measures to keep Amal confined. He, a typical world physician setting off the king’s physician who is soon to appear, has no awareness of anything beyond the physical aspect of the malady when Amal says – I’ve been feeling a sort of darkness coming over my eyes since the morning. Everything seems like a dream. I long to be quiet. I don’t feel like talking at all. Won’t the king’s letter come? Suppose this room melts away all on a sudden, suppon - " (Ibid : 73) The exist of the physician is followed by the entrance of the Headman. He has no faith at all in Amal’s yearning and intuitive response to the call of the Infinite. He mockingly says to Amal – “How can it be false? You’re the king’s chum. Here’s
your letter (showing a blank slip of paper). Ha, ha, ha! This is the letter." (Ibid : 78)
The seemingly asleep, Amal has been all along mentally awake. Amal is consoled by Thakurdar who tells him that it is truly the king's letter. In the present state of mind Amal can heart the king's trumpet. The cross - grained Headman is pacified by Amal when he says — "Mr. Headman, I thought you were cross with me and did not love me. I never could have believed you would fetch me the king's letter. Let me wipe the dust off your feet." (Ibid : 80)

The King's Herald is followed by the Royal physician who opens all the doors and the windows fastened by the village physician, symbolic of the preparation for the release of the soul in captivity and inquires after Amal's health and wants to know whether he would be able to go out with the king when he arrives. The psychic tension, though under a still facade, is brought into sharper focus as Amal replies — "Of course, I am dying to be about for ever so long. I'll ask the king to find me the polar star — I must have seen it often, but I don't know exactly which it is." (Ibid : 84)

When the Royal physician wants the Headman who came to bully Amal to be removed from the room, Amal pleads with the former — "He is a friend. It was he who brought me the king's letter." (Ibid : 84) Thakurdar his spiritual fellow traveller, has the fullest understanding of what happens to Amal. The presence of the insensitive bully is no more a disturbing factor to Amal in his spiritual quietude. In keeping with Amal's state of grass the atmosphere is spiritually charged. In the moving climax of the representation of that blessed state of suggestiveness of the long awaited apocalypse, the play rises in a hushed crescendo to a mood of serene beatification. The play ends on a note of transcendental quietude. Though the implications of the moment can hardly be exhausted, here is seen Tagore's spiritual insight at its transparent best. The force of the movement is likely to be lost on the insensitive, in a situation like this the imaginations of the fit spectators finds a happy release.

Anticipating the advent of the king, the calculating Madhav whispers into Amal's ear — "My child, the king loves you. He is coming himself Beg for a gift from him. You know our humble circumstances." (Ibid : 85) To this Amal, with an ironic touch, replies — "Don't you worry, uncle — I've made up my mind about it." (Ibid : 85)

Unaware of all spiritual values, Madhav, fully discomforted, 'Madhav (slapping his forehead) Alas, is that all?' (Ibid : 86) The irony of the relationship of the two
once again surfaces. Madhav's myopia of mundaneess in contrast to Amal's spirituality is completely exposed. The king's physician says "Now be quiet all of you. Sleep is coming over him. I'll sit by his pillow; he's dropping asleep. Blow out the oil-lamp. Only let the star-light stream in. Hush, he sleeps." (Ibid : 86 – 87) To Thakurda, who stands like a statue folding his palms as one witnessing a supreme ritualistic act, Madhav wishper - "I am nervous - say, are these good omens? Why are they darkning the room? How will star-light help? (Ibid : 87) Madhav is forthwith snubbed by Thakurda - "Silence, unbeliever! (Ibid : 87) The crowning moment of the play is invested with a symbolic majesty. Sudha with her tender remembrance comes to lend a human touch. When Amal is in reposeful trance, she appears with her promised flowers for him, uttering the last words of the play, - "Tell him Sudha has not forgotten him." (Ibid : 88) It is an end with a superbly calculated effect. Illuminating is comment that Tagore adds - "The only things that accompanies him in his awakement is the lower of love given to him by Sudha." (Tagore 1928 : 172) The aesthetic rapture of the apocalyptic climax does not bespeak any native artlessness but a superlative art, the effulgence of which ever remains unconcealed.

Whether at the end Amal dies or not has long been a moot point. Those whose conjecture goes to the death of Amal are unbelievers, no one dies in the hands of the royal physician though the outer physician almost killed him. The question whether the play ends in Amal's death or not is beside the point, for the climatic apperance of the king's Herald and the king's physician setting the stage for the advent of the king, points to the union of a soul-in-bliss with the Supreme reality which is the focus of the play. Further, if death is taken to be an inescapable condition of that Supreme realization, Amal's spiritual yearning and it fulfillment will considerably lose their dramatic pertinence. The idea that Amal is united with the king through death is too facile and interpretation. The play has no pathetic or tragic undertone but one of the assertion of triumphant spiritual realization. No touch of sentiment or gush which accompanies the death of an ailing child is played upon.

i Through this drama Tagore wants to show that the rivers, the hills, the seas and the human habitations of the world invite those captive minds who long to get rid of their restricted surrounding where they have to work for a long time, the worthless accumulation of their occupation and dead habit get settled in course of human
being live within that enclosure and not in the real world. By breaking that barrier from time to time if they get a glimpse of that great world they can realize how vast is their birth place, they can realize that they have not born in a prison house. When a man does not realize his kinship with the world, he lives in a prison house whose walls are alien to him. When he meets the eternal spirit in all objects, then he is emancipated, for then he discovered the fullest significance of the world into which he is born; then he finds himself in perfect truth and his harmony with the all is established. Thus the play has no doubt a solid basis on pantheism.

**The Cycle of Spring (Phalguneer) 1916**

*The cycle of spring* was first published in 1917 and it is a translation of Bengali drama Phalguni. A greater part of the introductory portion of this drama was translated by C.F. Andrew and Nishikanta Sen and revised by the author himself. Although its plot is thin, it is rich in music. It was one of the two Tagore dramas associated with the festivals of seasons, the other being *Autumn Festival*. After bringing out ‘Post Office Tagore’s mystical vision started fading under the pressure of social and political crisis around him. Still Phalguni, came out as his last play to bear the passing shadows of the Post Office and Sanayasi. It is basically a lyrical play and lacks the desired tension of serious drama.

In the play Tagore celebrates the idea that the involvement in worldly activities is essential for attaining renunciation and feeling God as God himself is a supreme worker. Life is a continuous, ever changing and eternal process like the cycle of Spring. The thematic interpretation of the play evinces that an inherent definite purpose the logical and amicable extension of Sanayasi and post-office.

Tagore made an innovation in it and wrote it in two parts – The prelude and the drama. The play beings with an exceptionally long prelude. The king suddenly discovers two grey hairs behind his ears and is shocked to interpret them as an intimation of death. He feels desperate to realise the immense of death. He is disheartened to realize – “you may remove Death’s invitation but can you remove Death, the Inviter?” (Tagore 2002 : 5) He withdraws himself from all worldly
responsible as he feels that the signal has come to him from the last great frontier of all the frontier of death. To ease out his tension, he takes shelter in the maxims of Srutibhushan, the pundit and he even does not respond to the call of humanity. The cry of the starving multitude makes no impression on him because he gets a vision that "the burning of hunger is quenched at last on the funeral pyre." (Ibid : 7) Only death can liberate a man from all pleasures and pains of the world. Srutibhushan, like the doctor of the post office by the quoting the maxims of scriptures makes effort to set up that salvation can be sought only in the form of renunciation. As a foil to him the poet having a greater sensibility pleads a contradictory philosophy. He consoles the king — "nature is trying to rub out the green of youth and to paint everything white." (Ibid : 14) He convinces that even death is not an end, rather it is a gateway for a newer and fresher life, the physical death is for spiritual rebirth, the immortal life where he meets God. He says

Ah, brother, don't cling to your goods and chattels,
And sit ever in the corner of your room.
Come out, come out into the open world.
Come out, ye youthful Renouncers  (Ibid : 15 – 16)

The poet further pleads that to keep pace with the movement of the world is the only step to salvation. Change is the law of nature, hence old age is pathway for fresher life. The constant flux of universe reflects divinity. Similarly, the urge for action in human soul is the manifestation of divine glory. Hence suspension of activity is a living death. Tagore in The cycle of Spring for the first time emphasizes the concept of creativity to humanitarian mysticism. The poet in this play makes it clear that man's inherent quest for work constantly corresponds with the infinite stimulus scattered in universe and with the suspension of correspondence, the death approaches. Like Marlow’s concept of heaven and hell, for Tagore too death is more a mental submission to the life conditions, rather being an imposed fate. For king, the real worry should be for the suspension of sensibility at the call of humanity, rather at the growth two grey hairs. He asserts — "I ask you, king, to rise up and move. That cry outside yonder is the cry of life to life. And if the life within you is not stirred, in response to that call without there is cause for anxiety indeed — not because duty has been neglected, but because you are dying.” (Ibid : 20 – 21)
The king's meeting with the poet seems to bring a transition to the king's conscience. His consent to meet the chief of Army, Chinese Ambassador and his orders to stop the demolition of the poet's house is suggestive of his renewing interest in the worldly activities. The poet in support of his conviction, decides to stage a drama that contains the idea of disrobing of the winter. The characters of it are very symbolic. The leader is the guiding impulse of life, Chandra makes life happy, Dada stands for duty while blind Minstrel is a symbol of unified personality.

Verse prelude of the first Act, consisting of four songs; the song of Bamboo, the song of blossoming champak, the song of bird and the song of Morning all convey the message of joy of rebirth as destruction for creation is the law of nature.

Bamboo urges the south wind to tingle life into his dead branches –

O South wind, the wanderer, come and rock me
Rouse me into the rapture of new leaves.
I am the wayside bamboo tree, waiting for your breath
To tingle life into my branches.
O South wind, the wanderer, my dwelling is in the end of lane
I know your least touch
your way faring and language of your footstep.
Your whisper gleans my secret. (Ibid : 34)

The bird conveys the hopeful message of joy and beauty.

The sky pours its light into our hearts,
We fill the sky with song in answer.
We pelt the air with our notes
When the air stirs our wings with its madness.
O Flame of the Forest
All your flower-torches are ablaze
You have kissed our song red with the passion of youth.
In the Spring breeze the mango-blossoms launch their message to the unknown.
O Sisis, you have cast your perfume net round our hearts,
Drawing them out in songs. (Ibid : 34 – 35)

The champak too is eager for a new current of life.

I, the blossoming champak, stand unmoved on the bank,
With my flower – vigils.
My movement dwells in the stillness of my depth,
In the delicious birth of new leaves,
In flood of flowers
In unseen urge of new life towards the light. (Ibid : 350 )

The morning sing for the end of the dreadful winter and the arrival of spring, joy, mirth and laughter.

The fire of April leaps from forest to forest,
Flashing up in leaves and flowers from all nooks and corners.
The sky is thriftless with colours,
The air is delirious with songs.
The wind-lost branches of the wood land
Spread their unrest in our blood.
The air is filled with bewilderment of mirth;
And the breeze rushes from flower to flower, asking their names. (Ibid : 36)

with the opening of the play some young boys go in search of the old man. This search represents men’s eternal search to unfold the mystery of old age and death. In the second act boys go in search of old man (winter) and try to disrobe him. Like Amal they try to get dues from the ferryman, watchman and Oilman for the true and original old man. The oilman provides a bit of information but simultaneously represents a very dreadful picture – “Black. More black than our brother here, the watchman. Black as night, with two eyes on his breast shining like two glow warms.” (Ibid : 75)

By the third Act the winter is almost unmasked and the herald of Spring are surprised to find the position of winter. Boys, Chandra and other get exhausted but at this juncture the appearance of Blind Ministrel is by far very significant. Inspite of being the prototype of Gaffer of Post office and Grandfather of the king of the Dark chamber, he represents the vision of Sudarsana and Amal. To realize eternal infinite, God the light of the soul is required. Being blind he is capable of hearing the footsteps of God but as soon as his external light is extinguished, it eliminates the darkness of the soul to respond to the darkness. He says – “when the sun of my life set, and I became blind, the dark night revealed all its lights, and, from that day forward, I have been no more afraid of the dark.” (Ibid : 91) In the fourth act the blind minstrel leads them to the cave and says his followers – “Wait for me. I shall return.” (Ibid : 106) and throughout the night he keeps on waiting and the dawn brings new message of faith and joy. Death is nothing but awakening to realize the existence of
God and the old man is the realization of eternal youth. Chandra comes out of the cave but fails to explain to the old man as it is a realization that has no physical expression. He asserts — "if my mind were a voice, then I could tell you." (Ibid : 113) None but the leader comes out in all his youth and freshness without any further detachment and they celebrate only the arrival of the spring. Winter exposes its utmost beauty in the form of spring suggesting death is the token of immortality. "Those, who have been made immortal by death, have sent their message in these fresh leaves of spring." (Ibid : 103 – 104)

The analysis of the play establishes that Tagore was to make The Cycle of Spring a reinterpretation of his basic philosophy of seeking joy of infinite with the finite. His mystic plays mark a process of evolution from ignorance to realization, the cardinal care of his mysticism is his ideal of humanism. In The Cycle of spring Tagore celebrates the idea of infinitude of man. He seems to establish that man is but a part of the universe as a whole. All misery in the world arises out of man's vain craze to establish distinctive individually. The dynamic principle that runs through man is the same that governs the universe. It should not not lead to misconception that Tagore was against individuality. The only thing is that Tagore believed in such infinite expansion of individuality where a man becomes the part of whole — "Our true individuality is thus cosmic personality through which alone our individual functions, interests, ideals and freedom of being should find their ultimate satisfaction." (Das Gupta 1990 : 69)

In the cosmic nature, the ageless old appears as the ever new in the Cycle of Spring and in the human nature as well. The eternal vitality of life realizes itself against and again. The advent of Spring in nature by discarding the cloak of winter is paralleled by the triumphant assertion of the ever youthful vitality of man by overcoming the transient phrases of lassitude and dotage. The ever-triumphant youth of life is the spiritual constant which is only temporarily eclipsed by the threat of decay and death. The deathlessness of life is the thematic concept, to Tagore a fact is an isolated event whereas the truth is a universal principle. In the eternal flow of life there is continual renewal.
The prologue of the play establishes the atmosphere for the mythicized quest. It is regarded as explanatory and full of redundant materials. As a matter of fact, it provides a meaningful background to the action of the main drama which, viewed proper context, gains a new dimension. The action of the main drama is like a calix linked to this introduction, which supplies much needed information regarding the structure and technique. A new theatrical aesthetic is formulated through the consideration of the role of songs and scenery and other pertinent matters. The serio-comic beginning shows a king in a despairful state on noticing a touch of grey in his hair. This makes him averse to all his royal duties, for he takes it as a sign of physical decay pointing to ensuring death. The king says – “the news has come to me from the last great frontier of all, the frontier of Death.” (Tagore 2002 : 5) Losing all interest in state affairs, the reception of Chinese Ambassador, the discontent of the famished people etc. he adopts a negative attitude of life. He decides to practise renunciation and calls for the royal pandit Srutibhushan, an avaricious and hypocritical preceptor, to help him in regaining his composure of the traditional negative doctrine of renunciation. In sharp contrast is drawn the royal poet, kabishakhar, who comes to the rescue of the king. The character of the poet may be taken as a persona of the poet-wright for projecting a positive attitude to life which the king is dire need of. He assures the king that this stance of depression is unwarranted, as it is the outcome of a vision isolated from the comic life where there is no decay but continual renewal. He says – “In the open world all is change, all is life, all is movement. And he who ever moves and journeys with this life-movement, dancing and playing on his flute as he goes, he is the true renouncer.” (Ibid : 16) In order to enliven the king’s drooping spirit and to bring home to him the truth of realization, he presents a play within the play that is the real drama which embodies symbolically the truth of his reading of perpetual continuance of life disproving the finality of death.

To the king’s question regarding its dramatic design, the poet producer says – The door of each act will be opened by the key of song.” (Ibid : 29) He adds that the subject of the songs will be “the Disrobbing of winter.” The main drama does not deal with nature alone. It has a human subject, a band of young companions has run off in pursuit of an old man, the eternal man and they have taken a vow to catch him. The distinctive quality of this plot lies in the intertwining of the two-fold drama of
nature and man moving from the sombre thought of cleath to the realization of the life's eternal principle of deathlessness. This organically integrated double focus of the theme and plot is a point of great structural subtlety. Through the exchanges of the king and the poet is brought out the functional nature of the characters of the play that is to follows:

Who, then are the chief characters?
One is called the leader
Who is he, poet?
He is the guiding impulse in our life. Another is Chandra.
Who is he?
He who makes life dear to us.
And who else?
Then there is Dada, to whom duty is the essence of life, not joy.
Is there any one else?
Yes the blind minstrel. (Ibid : 30 – 31)

From the very beginning, Dada, the antitype of KabiShekhar and the counterpart of Srutibhushan, tediously inflicting state homiletic verses, is assigned a special role. He regards the boisterous spirit of the youths as unbounded childishness. Dada stands for the spirit of stagnancy in life which is daringly defied by the youths. Utilitarian and over cautious in his philosophy of life, he is the very antithesis of the young adventures. In course of his dialogue with theme the keynote of the play's them is struck.

Dada : Why are you so excited to-day? Have you any particular business to do?
Yes, we have very urgent business – very urgent indeed.

Dada : What is your business about?
We are out to seek a play for our spring festival.

Dada : Play! Day and night, play! (Ibid : 42)

Soon is broached the concept of the old man in whose existence sardar does not believe at all.

Leader : What does he look like?
Some say he is white, like the skull of a dead man.
And some say he is dark like the socket of a Skeleton's eye.
But haven't you heard any news of him, leader?

Leader: I don't believe in him at all
Well, that goes entirely against current opinion. That old Man is more existent than anything else.
He lives within the ribs of creation.
According to our pandit, it is we who have no existence. You can't be certain whether we are or are not. (Ibid: 48 – 49)

The action starts with the leader challenging the youths to capture the old man, the symbol of decay and death, who "lives within the ribs of creation." (Ibid: 49) Acceptance of the challenge by the youths moves the action briskly as they have resolved to bring the Old Man to join them in the Spring festival. The dramatic interest is maintained by their adventurous urge to seize the Old Man. The second scene begins with the youth trying to obtain the information about the path from the Ferryman who is know to have the knowledge of the way. They meet also the watchman who, as the Ferryman tells them, knows about the wayfarers. The third man they encounter is the oilman from whom they get discouraging description of the Old Man. The young are constantly subjected to scorn, doubt and despair that have to be overcome before the goal is reached. The hesitation here, is in the minds of the youthful seekers challenged by the maxim-monger Dada, the incredulous Ferryman and the worldly-wise watchman and the faint hearted Oilman who represents the very spirit of settled order in life. The scene begins with the dialogue between the Ferryman and the youths.

Ferryman: What do you want?
    We want the oldman.
Ferryman: Which old man?
    Not which old man? We want the oldman.
Ferryman: Who is he?
    The true and original old man. (Ibid: 59 – 69)

The dialogue between them and the person next encountered depicts the spirit of the young seekers.
Watchman: But what do you want?
    We want the old man.
Watchman: Which old man?
    That eternal old man.
Watchman: How absurd! While you are seeking him, he is after you (Ibid: 62-63)

The Blind Minstrel plays an important part in this drama. He has lost his outer vision to gain inner light and he appears with his seer-like confidence and heightened perception to act as the spiritual guide of the youths in their quest of the Old Man. The sightless Minstrel as a man of profound insight is an archetypal character drawn with superb dramatic art. From his song it is realized that he is obsessed with the thought of God who is his eternal guide and he feels Him in every object of nature.

Gently my friend, gently walk to your silent chamber.
I know not the way, I have not the light,
Dark is my life and my world.
I have only the sound of your steps
to guide me in this wilderness.
Gently, my friend, gently walk along the dark shore.
Let the hint of the way come in whisper,
Through the night, in the April breeze,
I have only the scent of your garland
to guide me in this wilderness. (Ibid: 92)

The climax, full of suspense, is a symbolic spectacle. It represents the end of their search, crowned with the realization that the old man, the winter of the world, denoting decay and dotage preceding Death is illusory and youth, the dynamic spirit of life is ever real, eternally renewing itself through the ever-moving cycle of change. The play is centred upon the youths realizing the truth that the Old Man, the symbol of Death is not final scheme of things. He is icon of death and at the sometime is a replica of rebirth. He is the universal spirit, man is not able to meet Him face to face. They saw Him from behind and as a result, do not able to guess concrete shape. *Those who saw you from behind imagined you in all kinds of shapes.* (Ibid: 115)
Thus, *The Cycle of Spring* is another daring experiment in welding the mystical, the symbolic and the lyrical into a dramatic design where the patter of death and rebirth in the cyclic rhythm of life, with an implicit archetypal bearing is the key motif. In the drama of the continual renewal of life, death is never final. This idea on which the play rests has been stressed at the initial stage while introducing the theme.

*Sanyasi or The Ascetic* (1917)

Composed three years after Rudrachandra, *Prakritir Pratisodh* (English translation: *Sanyasi or The Ascetic*) strikes a different but deeper note. Both are patently revenge plays, notwithstanding the dissimilarity of motifs. *Parikritir Pratisodh*, as the title signifies, dramatizes the revenge of nature on human aberrancy. The central issue of the play is life-denial vis-a-vis life acceptance. The play’s ascetic hero Sanyasi who sought freedom from the bondage of the world that appeared to him as maya by escaping to become a recluse finally is brought round to accept the bondage of human relationships. Rabindranath Tagore wrote in *Reminiscences* about the drama *Prakritir Pratisodh* — “This Nature’s revenge may be looked upon as an introduction to the whole of my future literary work; or, rather this has been the subject on which all writings have dwelt — the joy of attaining the Infinite within the finite.” (Tagore 1917: 238)

Close translation of a literary work is essential for any critical appraisal. *Prakritir partisodh* was written by Tagore at the age of twenty three. Whereas the English translation of the play, *Sanyasi or The Ascetic*, appeared in 1917, when the playwright was fiftysix. The translated version is the product of a different sensibility and sensibility is expected to undergo a change in the course of thirty three years. The architectonic of the original is lost in the process of the play’s rendering into English translation in the eliminating of structural elements. The plot scheme is so attenuated that it does not provide any feel of the original play. Wanting in the spirit of the original, the translation does not depict convincingly the process of the conversion of the sannyasi which forms the life of the paly. "The hero’s inner oscillation, his psychic tension, his passage from detachment to attachment, the
motivation of the change of his indifferent soul to a living one, all that set the tone in
the original play, are left out in the atrophied version from which all blood has been
pumped out." (Chakraborty 2000 : 73)

Tagore’s mystical vision from Sanayasi to the cycle of Spring marks a process
of development in the relationship between God, man and nature. In Sanayasi he
undertakes the idea that God is engaged all the time in creation inspite of the
conflicting pulls of different forces. However, such a faith like that of wordsworth was
not the culmination of his realization. He presents the thesis that pantheistic God
being an impersonal phenomenon is incapable of interacting with the sensibility of
human soul. That is why it is said that “Rabindranath’s view has been analysed as
far as possible in a technical way. But as Rabindranath’s mind belongs to a level far
above the level of common understanding and as his writings are the writings of a
realized soul who has seen and experienced truth in and through the brilliant
imagination and exquisite sensibility .......” (Divi 1999 : 144) It is an abstract vision
and the exchange of love is not possible with an abstract ideology. Tagore not only
conceived the possibility of man’s longing for union with God but also went to the
extent of establishing that even God is keen to seek the love of individual man for his
own realization. His desire to transmit delight to human heart, leading to self
realization includes the need of expressing his love through service. It is therefore,
that the three faculties of the intellect, the emotion and the urge to work can be
realized only through man.

The play Sanayasi that was published in the year 1889, is the first major play
of Tagore, bearing the glimpses of his mystical attitude. It consists in the faith that
humanity leads to divinity and salvation consists in responding to the call of
humanity. Spiritual realization is the realization of human, love and that is the only
and the fullest manifestation of divinity. Sanayasi, an ascetic, renounces the physical
world to attain supreme joy and confines himself in a solitary cave in order to be one
with God. The play beings with the soliloquy of Sanayasi who denies the law of
nature and neglects his obligations toward humanity to have union with God. It
directly brings us into the deep recess of his soul. Sanayasi like a perfect ascetic
goes beyond the division of day and night and of months and stars and identifies
himself with the comic realization of the world. He asserts – “The world’s limit
recede, line after line. The stars, like sparks of fire, flown from the anvil of time are extinct; and that joy is mine which comes to the God Shiva, when, after aeons of dream, he wakes up to find himself alone in the heart of the infinite annihilation. I am free, I am the great solitary one. When I was thy slave, O Nature, thou didst set my heart against itself and maddest it carry the fierce war of suicide through its world. Desires, that have no other ends but to feed upon themselves and all that comes to their mouths, lashed me into fury. I ran about, madly chasing my shadow. Thou drovest me with thy lightening lashes of pleasure into the void of satiety. And the hungers, who are thy decoys, ever led me into the endless famine where food turned into dust, and drink into vapour." (Tagore 1917 : 3 – 4)

The second part of the play represents the exposition of thought. It is packed with the constant coming and going of the characters from the cross-section of society. It represents the multifarious aspects of human life. The short meetings of different character are like short scenes. In contrast, Sanayasi, sitting outside his cave indifferently observes the panorama of human life. It passes through the conscience of sanayasi. In the form of crown, the whole world passes before his eyes, but his ego remains unaffected. He evaluates the earth as too small and too confined. Keeping himself indifferent he satirizes the hectic struggle of worldly creatures who always seems afraid of missing something. The crowd is deliberately placed in contrast with the philosophy of Sanyasi. "How small is this earth and confined, watched and followed by the persistent horizons. The trees, houses, and crowd of things are pressing upon my eyes. The light, like a cage has shut out the dark eternity; and the hours hop and cry within its barriers, like poisoned birds. But why are these noisy men rushing on and for what purpose? They seem always afraid of missing something, - the something that never comes to their hands." (Ibid : 6)

In this sequence, two women appear making a fun of an old person who has lost his charms as well as his vitality. The village Elder, like the grandfather of the king of the Dark chamber, dispels their ignorance and suggests them not to judge the things by their physical beauty as it is unessential. "There are fools who judge men by their outside." (Ibid : 7) Grand father's suggestion of not judging the things by their external appearance is a criticism of Sanayasi who judges the world by its externals that is the reflection of divinity. It is followed by the meeting of two villagers
who condemn their proud enemy. Out of their conversation the comment of the third one – “The ants, when they begin to grow wings, perish” (Ibid : 9) suggests the idea that man has his own limitations and his attempt to violate the laws of nature is a prelude to his own destruction. Two students appear before Sanayasi with a problem. They ask “what is original, subtle or gross? Sanayasi says that “Origin is the end and the end is origin.” (Ibid : 12) and the distinction between the subtle and gross is the ignorance of man. However, is his own life he is not ready to admit that distinction between the divine and the human, the spiritual and material is his ignorance. The presence of two flower girls singing a song for their lover is to add an emotional element to the crisis of Sanayasi. Sanayasi sitting by the roadside assert that he is not a partaker of human activities, still with this experience of human life his ego shakes. He who earlier declares himself beyond the limitation of time and space now realizes the glow of mid-day sun and aspires to be a part of it. “What sight of man have I seen. Can I ever again shrink back into the smallness of these creatures and become one of them?” (Ibid : 15)

Besides, to awaken the humanitarian sensibility of Sanayasi, Tagore introduces the character of Vasanti. Hence after Sanayasi’s meeting with her, all his self imposed inhibitions vanished when a woman condemns Vasanti for being untouchable. Sanayasi at once consoles poor Vasanti by saying – “But they are all that, - a pollution. They roll in the dust of existence. Only he is pure who has washed away the world from his mind.” (Ibid : 17) Filial love overpowers all other consideration in him. No doubt with this experience of human sensibility is stirred in Sanayasi but still the synthesis of humanity and divinity is beyond his idea of perfection. Human sensibility pricks him but his ego does not let him make a compromise with it. In all arrogance he asserts – “I have deserted both Gods and men.” (Ibid : 19) But his succeeding attitude explicitly reveals his latent love. Had Vasanti been nothing for him he would not have provided shelter to her. His love for Vasanti brings her to a state of crisis from where neither retreat nor escape is possible. The soliloquy that follows, obviously externalizes his divided self. He wants to escape but his conscience let him not to do so. He seeks a consolation in the thought – “These are Nature’s spiders’ web, they have danger merely for moths, and not for a sanayasi like me.” (Ibid : 26) But as soon as Vasanti puts her cheeks on his palm, his emotional crisis becomes a sensational experience. It crumbles his image
of secluded life and he visualizes in Vasanti the ecstasy of human love. He feels that the touch has something of great darkness "which touches one's soul with the wand of the eternal." (Ibid : 30) From this juncture onwards, Sanayasi, becomes sensitive not only to human life but also to infinite beauty of nature. He appreciates the beauty of nature and seems to have insight into the secret working of God. With the sensational experience in the company of Vasanti, Sanayasi's conflict becomes a psychological obsession. On the one hand he cries out — "No, no, the beautiful is mere phantasy. To him who knows, the dust and the flower are the same. But what languor is this that is creeping into my blood and drawing before my eyes a thin mist of veil of all the rainbow colours?"(Ibid : 31)

The transition of Sanayasi's conscience occurs in the second part. By and by he beings to realize some unknown principle pervading through all the objects of nature but was not the end of Tagore's mystical vision. It is, therefore, no doubt Sanayasi appreciates the beauty of nature but it is only in Vasanti that he achieves the culmination of all his prayers. He admits "You bring to my mind something, which is infinitely more than this nature – more than the Sound and stars." (Ibid : 32) Hence he gets the real realization only after his separation from Vasanti. With the absence of Vasanti he feels a Vaccum within and takes resolution not to renounce the world. When Illa appears he finds in her the image of Vasanti. He is rather nervous at the idea of separation because the image of Vasanti remains with him as the only possible source of salvation. The confession comes from him — "O my child, the sorrow of your little heart has filled, for ever, all the nights of my life with its sadness."(Ibid : 44)

By the fourth part Sanayasi gets complete enlightenment. Mentally he withdraws however his fear of retreat remains. Hence in order to put an end of all doubts he discards all his paraphernalia of Sanayasi with the same vehemence with which he renounces the world in the beginning of the play. Avoiding all possibilities of retreat he pulls down all paraphernalia and starts his journey in search of Vasanti — the symbol of love, joy and beauty. Sanayasi who in the first scene was presented inside the cave, comes on the village path with a fresh interpretation of human life. He, who once cuts the knots of the world, now seeks shelter in phenomenal world. He makes proclamation — "Let my vows of Sanayasi go. I break my staff and my alms bowl.
This stately ship, this world, which is crossing the sea of time, — let is take me up again, let me join once more pilgrims. On the fool, who wanted to seek safety in swimming alone and gave up the light of Sun and stars, to pick his way with glowworm’s lamp! The bird flies in the sky, not to fly away into the emptiness, but to come back again to this great earth. I am free. I am free from the bodiless chain of the Nay. I am free among things, and forms and purpose. The finite is the true infinite, and love knows its truth. My girls you are the spirit of all that is — I can never leave you.” (Ibid : 45-46)

After the revelation of the death of Vasanti, his passionate cry — “she can never be dead” (Ibid : 51) obviously reflects his vision of the external glory of human life that is the source of infinite joy. The conversation of Sanayasi from an ascetic to a devout being is quite convincing No doubt the plot has a little loose constructions, sill there is inherent unity corresponding with the various states of the development of the conscience of Sanayasi. The change that comes over him at different times is sufficiently motivated.

Thus, ‘Mukti’ does not lies in the detachment from mankind, rather in the work for mankind as God is in the recess of human heart and in the midst of nature. Sanyasi’s isolation from the mundane world to have an understanding and communion with God is a false practice, rather to meet and realise God one has to work in company with mankind. Herein lies his real freedom, his real God who laments for the sorrow of mankind and at the same time enjoys for their better condition. Thus, he is his supreme father, supreme mother and supreme companion. From this drama, it is seen that Tagore’s concept of god is a pantheistic God.

_Gitanjali (1912)_

It is first Published by the Indian Society, London in 1912. The work includes 103 poems translated into Published English by the author from the original Bengali. Only 53 of these poems occur in the Bengali work under the same title published in 1910. The rest come from several other works — 16 poems from Gitimalya (1914), 16 from Naivedya (1901), 11 from Kheya (1906), 3 from Sisu (1903), Chaitali (1896),
and Utsarga (1914) and one song from the play Acalayatan (1918). The English work, therefore, can be considered as an anthology of Tagore’s poems written over one decade. “It was Tagore’s own manuscript translation, Gitanjali that in 1912 captured the mind of first William Rothenstein and then, in quick succession, W.B. Yeats, Ezra pound, Andre Gide and the members of the Swedish Academy.” (Dutta & Robinson 1997 : 3) Thus it created a terrific stir not only India but also all over the world when Gitanjali was published.

T. Sturge Loore proposed the name of Rabindranath Tagore and he wrote a to the secretary of the nobel committee of Swish Academy in the following language – “As a bellow of the Royal society of Literature of the United kingdom, I have the honour to propose the name of Rabindranath Tagore as a person qualified, in my opinion, to be awarded the Nobel Prize in literature.” (Loore 1913 : 4) After that the Swish Academy sent a telegram on 19th November, 1913 to the house of Tagore and said – “SWIDISH ACADEMY AWARDED YOU NOBEL PRIZE LITERATURE PLEASE WIRE ACCEPTATION SWEDISH MINISTEP.” (Swedish Academy 1913) on 10th December, 1913 Tagore was awarded Nobel Prize for his wonderful and immortal creation Gitanjali. At that time when a gold medal was given to Tagore, with it they gave him a memorandum in which was written – "Awarded to Rabindranath Tagore, for the depth and high ideals of his writings and the beauty and freshness with which he, in such a distiguished way, has made his own poetical works of a part of the arts even in the western world." (Swedish Academy 1913) He preached such unique religious message for the whole world by the help of his book Gitanjali that the whole world would take him as their newly discovered God. "With the panic enthusiasm that has so frequently characterized popular pursuit of idols that have been set up for us, the British and American public flocked around the newly discovered master and smothered him with historical adulation." (Ghosh 1980 : 32)

The arrangement of the poems in Gitanjali is neither in chronological order of their publication nor according to any sequence in the growth of mood of idea. “The Gitanjali songs are mainly poems of bhakti in the great Indian tradition.” (Iyengar 1962 : 110) They are self contained, independent lyrics, though they have slender thematic connection, all of them being addressed to a God who reveals himself in myriad forms and shapes, in the beauty of nature, in the every day
situations of human relationships. "The recurring idea in Tagore's religious poetry is that the Infinite can be known only through the finite." (Naravane 1995 : 163). This idea is the keynote of Gitanjali. Tagore adopts the framework of medieval Indian mystic poetry where the infinite seeks its expression in the bondages of the finite. It is not that man alone longs for God but God too longs for man. The recurring images in these poems are derived from familiar situations the crossing of the river, the call of the boatman, the flight of cranes, dark clouds gathering in the sky, the lingering shadows of the evening, lovers waiting for the beloved and so on. All these metaphors, coming as they do from the rural experience of the poet as well as from the religious poetry of the pre-British period, have acquired a cosmic dimension.

There is close similarity between the drama Raja and Gitanjali. "And if you are fairly well-read in Tagore you would connect this with the hymns to light in Gitanjali and the every opening line of the play Raja." (Bose 1962 : 43) The human body is the temple of the soul, the human soul is the temple of God. The human soul is naught unless it is inhabited or filled by the spirit. British and death are but the filling and the emptying of the soul by the spirit and the individual — insignificant as he may seem to be — verity partakes of God's endless life, His immortality.

Thus hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure
This frail vessel thou empties again and again, and
Fillest it ever with fresh life. (Tagore 1913 : 1)

The lifeless flute comes to life when the Lord of Brindavan plays upon it — forever piping songs forever new. The human soul is, not only God's temple, it is also Krishna's flute. Life's vicissitudes are but new melodies played by the Lord. The poet therefore concludes.

At the immortal touch of thy hands my little heart
Losses its limits in joy and gives birth to utterance ineffable.
Thy infinite gifts come to me only on these very
Small hands of mine. Ages pass, and still thou
Pourrest and still there is room to fill. (Ibid : 1)
In this play house of the Infinite the poet never questioned neither in shyness nor in fear even as an innocent child “Who art thou?” He enjoyed great pleasure only in playing with his playmate. This joyful playing gave poet an eternal pleasure.

When my play was with thee I never questioned
Who thou wert. I knew nor shyness nor fear, my life was boisterous. (Ibid: 63)

The poet could not disregard his feelings that earth, water, sky, foliage, they all spoke to him. But he was unable to unearth the saying. He was ignorant of those saying of the earth. He felt that there was pull at curtain but it remained undrawn. The poet was dumb-founded, pondering over the matter. The poet conveyed his innocent romantic feelings-

On those days I never cared to know the meaning of songs thou sangest to me. Only my voice took up the tunes, and my heart danced in their cadence. (Ibid : 63)

The mystic devotional music from the king of eternity came to him as a tune of self realization.

I heard in my playroom are the same that are echoing from star to star. (Ibid : 25 – 26)

Thus the poet came out on the chariot of the gleam of light leaving his track on many a star and planet. The poet was ashamed of the delay in understanding the awakening call to him.

The day was when I did not keep myself in readiness for thee. (Ibid : 25)

Hearing the whispering melodic tune from his mystic Lord as his awakening call, the poet melt into tears of thousand streams at the end of his realization journey. His emotional fountain of feeling flooded us with the assurance of His real place of existence.

My eyes strayed for and wide before
I shut them and said Here art thou! (Ibid : 7)
The poet was now confident that he searched God in world outside in vain. The itinerant soul of Tagore bowed in adoration hearing from his inner spirit an intricate simple tune of eternity. This great attainment turned poet in searching the God in finite instead of searching Him in infinite. "God-man (nara-narayana) is thy definition, it is not a delusion but truth. In thee the infinite seeks the finite, the perfect knowledge seeks love and when the love of the formless (the individual and the universal) are united love is fulfilled in devotion." (Prodhan 2002 : 57 – 58)

On such realization the poet felt that time had come to end the childish play. His heart is now full with spiritual light of wisdom. The pleasure of his playmate drew his attention on Him. The poet was deeply absorbed in a spellbound feeling expressed below –

No more noisy, loud words from me – such is my master's will henceforth I deal in whispers. The speech of my heart will be carried on in murmuring of a song (Tagore 1913 : 58)

The English poets of eighteenth century were only the great poets but they were not great composers of songs with mystic tunes like that of Tagore. Song Offerings is honoured for its poetic excellence and mystic tunes with an epic value. It has given this creative faculty an universal acceptance to the people of the world and also in world's literal festival. Tagore was not only a great poet, but also a great composer, tuner and singer. The rare genius poet Tagore now longed to join the voice to eternity.

My heart longs to join in thy song but vainly struggles for a voice .........................
Ah, thou hast made my heart captive in the endless meshes of thy music, my master! (Ibid : 2)

The poet desired to mingle the joy of music with the pervading white luster of the sky. The poet knew that the music of the earth never die out, so he wanted to set up a melodic alliance between earth and sky.
Only let me make my life simple and straight, like a flute of reed for thee to fill with music (Ibid : 4)

The poet became very emotional to stand before his king of the soul as a signer.

The blossom has not opened; only the wind is sighing by I have not seen his face, not have I listened to his voice; Only I have heard his gentle footsteps from the road before my house (Ibid:8)

The Song-Offering gives us the evidence that Tagore was ins and outs a singer as well as mystic poet. He bowed his head for his devotional salute to his Lord of Music.

I am here to sing thee song ...... When the hour strikes for thy silent worship at the dark temple of midnight, command me, my master, to stand before thee to sing. (Ibid : 9)

The benign nature is but the melody of God. He narrated nature as his dearest dumb friend. Its beckoning language is the oldest language indicating the evolution of life. Nature is the first manifestation of evolution of life. The poet found out an intimate relation between nature and mankind. He deeply felt that the nature and the human being had their origin from oneness, the Infinite. The life of mankind is derived from the unmovable dumb nature. The poet explained trees as the harp of the universe. Their wordless melodies take us to thousands and millions years before history of evolution of life.

The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dance in rhythmic measures. (Ibid : 46)

To Tagore nature was also a manifestation of eternal consciousness. This unique view of mystic poet was expressed from a deep meditation point of view.

It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and break into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers. (Ibid : 46)
The wonderful poet of the world revealed his trusting emotion with an excellent poetic imagination. The eternal consciousness of the integrity took for eternal voyage.

It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean cradle of birth and of death, in ebb and in flow. (Ibid : 46)

The Supreme Being is drawn in picture on the canvas of the mind of Tagore with the reference of nature. Nature was painted by the poet with delightful delicate painting with symbolic and metaphoric words to conceive the entity. As for example-

Could heap upon clouds and it darkness. Ah love, why dost thou let me wait outside at door all alone?
I keep gazing on the far-away gloom of the sky’ (Ibid : 11)

Thus God – intoxicated nature with its spiritual fervour give us the message of optimism through a messenger, Rabindranath Tgore – a great mystic child of nature.

The poet struck a mystic note of communion between his soul and immanent soul of the universe. In sharp pain of separation the poet described his conviction of attainment as below –

Yes, I know, this is nothing but thy love, -
The morning light has flooded my eyes – this is thy message to my heart. Thy face is bent from above, thy eyes look down on my eyes, and my heart has touched thy feet. (Ibid : 38 – 39)

Feeling the Infinite as his indwelling spirit, Tagore coloured his poems and songs with mystic emotions. His verbal and lyrical expression beat our heart very spontaneously.

Thy Sunbeam comes upon this earth of mine with arms outstretched and stands at my door the livelong day to carry back to thy feet clouds made of my tears and sighs and songs. (Ibid : 45)
In his realization journey, the poet Tagore felt a sudden sharp pain of separation from the Infinite. "In Gitanjali period Rabindranath is thinking a great deal about grief but the grief is entirely his own." (Ayyub 1995 : 65) In his poetic fantasy the pang of separation has been described as a blessing for spiritual attainment. He took it in optimistic point of view. He aspired for separation and wanted to be devoid from mystic Lord.

If it is not my portion to meet thee in this may life then let me ever feel that I have missed thy sight-let me not forget for a moment, let me carry the pangs of this sorrow in my dreams and in my wakeful hours. (Tagore 1913 : 52)

This is the essence of the tune of pangs of separation in Song-Offerings. A strong emotional feeling of a separated soul pervaded all through the song-offerings. This devoid mystic tune of Tagore is different from the devoid soul of Vaishnava cult. In padavali we see the pang of separation is the only for the alliance with the lord. But as a romantic modern poet Tagore's devoid soul was eager only for separation. There was no fervent prayer for the union. Separation with the Lord was a positive desired object of Tagore's mystic emotion. He is the only poet of the world who gave us the essence of separation as a message of realization in an affirmative way. Pangs of separation gives us over flowing optimistic ideal of a new style of worship instead of throwing us in void or in the feeling of nothingness. Tagore followed the love theory of Vaishnava cult. In padavali we note that the eternal soul divided Himself only for the enjoyment of self realization. Self-realization is His desired object. It is the dalliance of eternal soul with the soul of human being. The eternal call of spontaneity helps to elevate our sense of own existence.

Thou settest a barrier in thine own being and then Callest thy severed self in myriad notes. This thy self-separation has taken body in me. (Ibid : 47)

This unique dimension of love thought is the accomplishment of eternal value of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. This realization of highest value in life and in its existence us to eliminate the poor contradictions and disharmonies as evils of this world. The feeling of divinity or goodness in man came through love and helped to
develop his personality as well as social existence. This is the ethical and aesthetic view of Tagore’s love light and spirit of love.

What token left of thy love?
It is not flower, no spices, no vase of performed water.
It is thy mighty sword, flashing as a flame, heavy
as a bolt of thunder. (Ibid : 33)

In above quotation Tagore illuminates his rendering of devotion and his inmost offering of love to God in an articulation of divinity and in a bold language of sublimity which we do not find else-where in any literature — so Tagore’s song-offerings are really offering of the finite to Infinite — oblations to the creator at the alter of the world. The deity to whom the songs are offered is the striving spirit of creation’s end from the source — from the finite to the Infinite.” (Pandit 1987 : 26 – 27) His conception and style of offering love and its affiliation intensify the yearning of the finite for Infinite Rabindranath as an explorer of real life surprisingly explored spiritual love as His mighty sword approaching to him as a fleshing flame and as a bold of thunder. Gitanjali’s spiritual and significant bunch of love poems and songs have global appeal which have the power to cross the rigid boundaries of any particular soil because of its mystic love-mood. It is unfair to find erotic than of esoteric implications in poems of Gitanjali. In this respect Rabindranath still remains unique for the mystical character of Gitanjali which need not be examined from time to time. Of course, the whole of Gitanjali is composed on the string in a leitmotif of spiritual mood and love obeisance to God — Almighty.

This philosophical-cum-religious essence of love is not mere assumption but a realization. Love is a spiritual cultivation in and through which an individual can implicitly feel the communion with God. Expansion of cosmic consciousness only can be attained through joyous practice of love. Love embodies our spiritual realm of experience and also opens the avenues of intimate communion with God through renunciation.

Tagore, the man of rare genius, has taught us a unique inspiration and impetus for living in a different manner. Freedom of life and salvation can be achieved only be conquering the earthly bondages of life. Millions of desires,
thousand of bondages keep us away from salvation. Overwhelmed with passion man becomes foolish and blind in the vortex of life.

All desires that distract me, day and night,
are false and empty to the core.
.......... in the depth of my unconsciousness
rings the cry – ‘I want thee, only thee’ (Ibid : 21)

Tagore with his profound wisdom bowed to Him for His strong merciful refusals to save him from perils of his overmuch desire God’s refusal of such uncertain desires is a touch stone and an elixir to attain freedom (mukti) Tagore enriched us with the true way to attain everdesired salvation. Poet’s devotional appeal radiated with a tune of his trusty proclamation in the poem below.

My desires are many and my cry is pitiful, but ever
didst thou save me by hard refusals; and this strong mercy has been wrought into my life through and through.
- saving me from perils of overmuch desire
Day by day thou art making me worthy of thy full acceptance by refusing me ever and anon, saving me from perils of weak, uncertain desire. (Ibid : 8 – 9)

Rabindranath tried to probe deep into real values which are comprehensive attitudes in perfecting man to broad humanist directions. Mere propensity in meeting material necessities of life creates the limited conditions of selfish existence. Tagore felt himself blessed as God was king enough in giving him the power to overcome different selfish motives. According to Tagore God by His refusal of fulfilling poet’s over much of earthly desires, helped him in coming out of the contradictions of earthly desires. It is an ascetic renunciation of a saint poet who enabled us with a unique message to get rid of bondages of life and to be nearer to God. Tagore was a man who has attained divine grace through austere religion practice.

Deliverance is not for me in renunciation. I feel the embrace of freedom in a thousand bonds of thought. (Ibid : 48)

Bondage of life was explained in Tagore’s mystic renunciation as a blessing and heavenly aid. The perfect process of worship is to overcome the earthly bondage of excessive passion for attainment of deliverance and freedom. God gives
us numerous trammels to inspire our confidence. Eternal salvation comes through the power of accepting joys and sorrows of life – in equal footing. The poet declared that bondages of life make a person fit for successful living and also help to raise the mind above daily trifles. According to Tagore the definition of freedom of life is –

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,
Where knowledge is free. (Ibid : 20)

Absolute freedom (Mukti) can be attained in the midst of innumerable suffering. Sufferings, instead of shunning, should be harmonized in our life. One should try to transform the same into divine beauty and heavenly bliss through supreme realization. Those who have strength of mind to face the troubles of life can live in jubilation in the midst of misery.

Profound joy and optimism for salvation can be achieved through the sacrifice of mankind. One should not live in narrow domestic wall. Wings of our love shall spread towards every body as Lord of Creation Himself is bound with mankind forever. Deliverance attained through trammels leads us to the gateway of eternity. Showers of mercy from Lord of silence came when the poet prayed –

This is my prayer to thee, my lord – strike, strike at the root of penury in my heart. (Ibid : 20)

The poet in unique style invoked His blessing to save him from narrowness of mind. He elevated us from bad faith of earthly life. Egoism, selfishness and self-conceit are the penuries for salvation. Renunciation is the noblest practice to achieve eternal salvation. This massage has been revealed in a heartful poetics:

He whom I enclose with my name is weeping in this dungeon.
I am ever busy building this wall all around;
and as this wall goes up into the sky day by day
I lose right of my true being in its dark shadow. (Ibid : 17)

Rabindranath’s art of invoking death is matchless in the field of poetic expression. He evoked death as beautiful and felt the call of death as a message sent by his loving deity ‘Death’. He believed, death is the fulfillment of life’s stream of
continuity. The unbearable grief of death taught Rabindranath that life is not a stable permanent fixture. We are not the prisoners to live forever within a solid stone wall of everlasting life. Death is the threshold of old to new life. It is a calm and peaceful sleep. Death is not the gulf between life and its absence, but is just like changing of garment from old to new one. This realization enabled Rabindranath to welcome the deity of death.

Death, thy servant, is at my door. He has crossed the unknown sea and brought thy call to my home. The night is dark and my heart is fearful – yet I will take up the lamp, open my gates and bow to him my welcome. It is thy messenger who stands at my door. (Ibid : 56)

According to Rabindranath human being’s inner artist is apathetic to worldly interest. From this apathy of worldly interest Tagore described life and death as two sides of an eternity. This realization about the deity of death came from his sense of beauty of life. A real artist keeps himself distant from worldly interest and that is why in artist’s happiness there remains no attachment. Death is not void or nothingness, it brings peace and happiness of alliance with Supreme Being. Tagore depicted death and its voidness from his indifferent look of life which is the real work of a true aesthetic artist.

Even so, in death the same unknown will appear as ever known to me. And because I love this life, I know I shall love death as well. (Ibid : 62)

Thus death is not a delusion of voidness but it is another chapter of fulfilment of life. In personal life Tagore stood face to face before the merciless blow of death from the very beginning of his childhood. He lost his mother merely at the age of fourteen. He could not then realise fully what death meant for him. But at the age of twenty four the death of his ever remembered friend and dearest sister-in-law, penetrated him too deeply and made a severe wound in his heart forever. He became utterly bewildered of voidness. He recalled this unbearable blow of death ever and anon. But the absence of those two near relations were not enough to dive down into the stream of his deep realization. Almighty began to throw him in merciless griefs of delusion of death again and again. Tagore lost one after another his father, his dearest wife, children, nephews and even his beloved only grandson. All those were
premature death. The continuous blows of pathos gave Tagore the strength of painting the glorious face of death with a brush of self-confidence. Rabindranath embraced with deep love the intense sorrow of death as an inevitable truth in the life’s circle. The shroud of death ties an inter-relation between old and the new. He could not uplift his level of consciousness with the sorrow of separation. He felt death as an invigorating existence of divinity. It is a painful sight in which we see how the poet recourse from personal grief to

In desperate hope I go and search for her in all the corners of my room, I find her not.  
My house is small and what once has gone from it can never be regained. (Ibid : 57)

It is an intensely individual experience of poet’s life yet it brings us very close to universal religious experience very naturally.

Rabindranath Tagore, the great mystic poet of the world, in his song offerings elevated us to a different process of worship. According to Tagore’s philosophy the ideal standard of religious practice is to realise the existence of God in human heart. Service to mankind is the only elixir of feeling the existence of God in a sensuous perception. The elegance of alliance with Divine existence can be perceived extremely through kind nursing of the people in distress. In his book The Religion of an artist Tagore expressed this religious impulses – “If I feel reluctant to speak about my own view of religion it is because I have not come to my own religion through the portals of passive acceptance of a particular creed owing to some accident of birth. I was born to a family who were pioneers in the revival in our country of a religion based upon the utterance of Indian sages in the Upanishads. ............ I could not persuade myself to imagine that I had religion simply because everybody whom I might trust in its value.” (Tagore 1953 : 15)

The message of Tagore is to serve the mankind and it is the only and the best method of worship. So if we dedicate ourself in the service of mankind that service will touch the feet of the Infinite. Tagore enriched us with a special message of the practice of worship which spread its wings in a poetic uniqueness. The poet is invoking us for shunning useless rituals.
Leave this chanting and singing and telling beads! Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut? Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee! (Ibid : 6)

Rabindranath never liked the external aspect of religion. His belief of religion was for internal aspect which elevates our thoughts, feelings, intellectuals and emotional elements. He only preferred the brotherhood realization enabling to be united with God. Tagore conviction was that the external rituals divert mind from the goal to other directions. He had a great faith that true mode of worship did not consist in the cloistral meditation. With a sweetly personalized profile and in a pleasurable manner he tied a divine union between love and life in afore quoted poem. Rabindranath explained that religion is nothing but the upliftment of virtue of mankind. Service to the mankind helps to develop such intrinsic virtue of mankind. Religion itself is not a magic nor a miracle. The ideal practice of religion is that miracle of perception which always provides the power of upliftment. Tagore taught us that salvation is nothing but self realization. Love for humanity enlightens our sleeping consciousness and helps us to crash the limitations around us.

Though the service to mankind as a whole, according to Tagore, is the best way to attain God but particularly service to the poor and the distressed people is the noblest way to serve the Infinite. The Infinite blesses first the poorest, lowest and the last. Our obeisance to God can not reach His feet because we are ignorant of His real place of existence. The poet gave the real place of His glorious presence in a very simple tune –

Here is thy footstool and there rest thy feet where live the poorest, and lowliest, and lost (Ibid : 5)

Absolute stretches His hands towards the person who dedicate themselves as His perpetual servant for serving the poor and the miserable. His sweet smile of love reflects in the miserable mankind. The poet indicated the essence of revelation of God in a very heartful spiritual poem below –
He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground
and where the path maker is breaking stones.
He is with them in sun and in shower, and his
garment is covered with dust. Put off thy holy
mantle and ever like him come down on the dusty soil!
come out thy meditation and leave aside thy
flower and incense! ..................
Meet him and stand by him in foil and in sweat of thy brow. (ibid : 6 - 7)

This ritual is accepted as an universal creed of the world. It is a very
appealing process and simplest rituals to become nearer to God. The process of
worship, as expressed in such poems, is that every human being, in whatever walk
of life he may be, has in his soul the abode of God. The poet gave heavenly
message that divine communion can be attained only with love and love for
humanity. The process of worship Tagore illuminated to us has universal religious
acceptance. It is not Tagore’s counseling but a solemn trusty proclamation of his
relation for blooming our inner eye. His conviction was that as God may come down
from heaven, so also man who performs real rituals can be designated as God. In
Rabindranath’s epic of upliftment in Song - offerings the poet elevated our mind
about the divine heritage of man with poetic elegance. He depicted dedicating
people for service of mankind – as an external friend of God. It is the inner essence
of the doctrine of religion which Tagore observed Song-offerings.

Open the doors, let the conch-shells be sounded!
In the depth of the night has come the king of our
dark, dreary house. (Ibid : 32 : 33)

The mystic poet Rabindranath Tagore as a messenger of eternal peace and
happiness enables us to live eternally within the stream of humanity of uplifting the
human virtues in perspective of true spirit of religious practice.

Tagore’s conception of the Jivandevata becomes more clear and systematic
in his later stage of life when he conceives his Jivandevata to the superme Goddess.
This idea ran through all his poetry, and to give this mystery a local name he called
it ‘Jivandevata’ – a God of Life who seeks the finite to kindle it with its life – breath so
that in the inflowing love the two become one.” (Verma 1982 : 24) His lady love is
none else than the Goddess of life. Tagore regards his Goddess of life as the
Supreme Being and surrenders his whole being, body, life and mind to her. He offers the vanity and pride of his life before the supreme Lord of his life. He addresses the master of his life and says –

My poet’s vanity dies in shame before thy sight. 
O master poet, I have sat down at thy feet – only let me make my life simple and straight, like a flute of reed for thee of fill with music. (Tagore 1913: 4)

According to Rabindranath’s realization of the Supreme is experienced in the feeling element of man. He realizes enlightenment in the sudden flash of light in the form of intuition. Hence music, art, philosophy etc. are the ways for the realization of God. Tagore states –

I know thou takes pleasure in my singing I know 
that only as a singer I come before thy presence. 
I touch by the edge of the far-spreading wing of 
my song thy feet which I could never aspire to reach. (Ibid : 2)

Jivandavata is also a great musician. He sings the eternal song and the world is illumined by the light of music. Tagore says –

I know not how thou singest, my master? I ever 
listern in silent amazement. 
The light of thy music illumines the world. The 
life breath of thy music runs from sky to sky. The 
holy stream of thy music breaks through all stony 
obstacles and rushes on. (Ibid : 2)

As diseases disturb the harmony of the functions of our physical life and our intellectual errors injure the harmony of relationship between our thought and the universe of reason, egotism obstructs spiritual harmony and true freedom. Egotism is a great danger to our development as real personalities. Our desires limit the scope of our self-realisation. Tagore says –

Thy desire at once puts out the light from the lamp it touches with its breath. It is unholy – take not thy gift through its unclean hands. Accept only 
What is offered by sacred love. (Ibid : 5)
Tagore conceives of death as the quest of honour. He asks what presents shall we offer when he comes? The poet says that he will offer all his virtues and achievements of his life and will not allow him to go empty handed when death will come to him, he will offer all treasure he has acquired in his life time.

On the day when death will knock at thy door what wilt thou offer to him?
Oh, I will set before my guest the full vessel of my life – I will never let him go with empty hands.
All the sweet vintage of all my autumn days and summer nights, all the earnings and gleanings of my busy life will I place before him at the close of my days when death will knock at my door. (Ibid : 59)

We have lost our hold in the Infinite, that is the reason why we are afraid of death. It is through death that God has made us know to our innumerable brothers. Though we feel uneasy and sorry to leave our accustomed home God leads to different places. God alone is our eternal companion. When come to know of God we do never feel lonely, we ever enjoy the bliss of his companionship Tagore says –

Thou hast made me known to friend whom I knew not
Thou hast given me seats in homes not my own.
Thou hast brought the distant near and made a brother of the stranger.
I am uneasy at heart when I have to leave my accustomed shelter, I forget that there abides the hold in the new, and that there also thou abidest.
Through birth and death, in this world or in others,
Whatever thou leadest me it is thou, the same,
The one companion of my endless life who
ever linkest my heart with bonds of joy to the unfamiliar.   (Ibid 41 – 42)

Tagore says that the world invited him in its festival. He has enjoyed the beauty of nature and has also done his best in this world. He has greeted the earth and at the evening of his life, he signs his last song revealing his love for this beautiful universe.

I have had my invitation of this world’s festival and thus my life has been blessed. My eyes have seen
and my ears have heard.
It was my part at this feast to play upon my
Instrument and I have done all I could. (Ibid: 10)

The realized and perfect individuals take births and rebirths for God is ever
bound to us in his cosmos. The worldly ties are creations of God and therefore,
salvation consists in one's bondage with God and his creations. It is not a state of
freedom or escape but a realization of deepest intimacy of oneself with God and his
nature. Salvation is to be realised in bondage. Tagore writes –

Deliverance? Where is this deliverance to be found?
Our master himself has joyfully taken upon
him the bonds of creation, he is bound with us all for ever. (Ibid: 6)

God has created this beautiful universe for us for being bound with it in love.
The bliss, truth and presence of God are available to the individual in this world one
has not to run away from the world to find God for this universe is the place of God's
meeting with man. The joy that one receives from the sight and the music that one
bears the joy of God's union. To be disconnected and severed from God is to be
away from Him. Thy joy of the senses comes from God. Tagore says –

Deliverance is not for me in renunciation – I feel the
embrace of freedom in a thousand bonds of delight.
Thou ever pourest for me the fresh draught of thy
wine of various colours and fragrance, filling this
earthen vessel to the brim. (Ibid: 48 – 49)

The sensuous contact of man with nature is spiritual and divine. It is from God that
various forms and colours come us. God pervades and enters in us through our
senses. One has not to close one's senses. On the contrary, one has to open and be
receptive to the pleasure God gives to us. We shall, therefore, never close our
senses and get deprived of the bliss that comes to us from God. Tagore says –

No, I will never shut the doors of my senses. The delights
of sight and hearing and touch will bear thy delight.
Yes, all my illusions will burn into illumination of joy,
and all my desires ripen into fruits of love. (Ibid: 49)
The realization of God is of the greatest value to man. Life should be 'God-centred' and not self centred. When man realizes God, he becomes a gnostic being. Rabindranath says –

From the blue sky an eye shall gaze upon me, nothing whatever, and utter death shall I receive at thy feet. (Ibid : 64)

But this state is not death in this usual sense of the term. It is the dynamic divine life of bliss.

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 keep all untruths out from my thought, knowing that thou art that truth which has kindled the light of reason in my mind.
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. (Ibid : 3)

Egoism obstructs our spiritual harmony with God and offers a great danger of our development as real personalities. Our desires limit the scope of our self realization.

Thy desire at once puts out the light from the lamp it touches with its breath. It is unholy – take not thy gifts through the unclean hands. Accept only what is offered by sacred love. (Ibid : 5)

Tagore has informed us the existence of God in our innermost perception and in our entity. Nature is also the manifestation of God but the difference is that we cannot exchange our thoughts and feelings with earth, sky, planets and water etc. and cannot exchange our good deeds with them. We feel the existence of God only in mankind as we can establish relationship with mankind with wisdom, love, intelligence etc. It is true that Infinite reveals Himself in the smallest part of His
creation though mankind is the highest declaration of His blooming soul. Divine 
transpired Himself in human soul. Human being are the greatest expose of the 
Divinity. A child can understand his best relationship with a woman only as a mother. 
So also the existence of God is only and highly understandable in mankind and not 
in other creatures. With wisdom we can realise the existence of God in our soul. But 
wisdom only can not show the sensuous why of seeing or touching Him. Wisdom, 
intelligence, love and work can attain their fulfillment by rendering service to 
mankind. Here lies the novelty and excellence of Tagore’s ideal practice of religious 
thoughts. The divine spirit animates all the living beings and all the objects in this 
universe.

The same stream of life that runs through my veins 
night and day runs through the world and dances in 
rhythmic measures.  (Ibid : 46)

Through these lines Tagore expresses his pantheistic creed.

When Gitanjali was published, the whole world was stunned with amazement 
owing to lofty religious thoughts that can never be expressed ever before. "This book 
created on un precedentated sensation in the intellectual circles of the west." (Roy; 
1961 : 64) The uniqueness of Tagore’s worthship of ‘Brahma’ as depicted in Gitanjali 
is absolutely different from all-powerful ‘Brahma’ of Upanishads. Tagore felt 
presence of ‘Brahma’ in the hope and aspirations of the individual and the entire 
human race which is quite different from the concept of rituals of Upanishads. The 
God in Gitanjali is neither a metaphysical abstraction nor a spiritual incarnation, God 
reveals Himself condescending in the midst of lowliest and the lost. Hence, “People 
of the world designated Tagore as Christ of India, prophet of India, saint of India for 
his book of verse Gitanjali — “Song offerings.” (Chatterjee 1999 : 30)

Thus Tagore, apprehending Divinity within himself and permeating everything 
throughout the entire universe, conceived the Divinity not as a super self-contained 
entity luring humanity to escape earth’s countless attractions but as an indwelling 
universal Mind attested by budding roses and chirping birds. He is unfailing 
companion and friend of friendless. Temples, mosque and church are not His 
dwelling place, He is always with workers and down-troddens who, finding no
alternative, have to take shelter under the open sky. As God exists everywhere, His
roof is the open blue sky. He is unseen, unlimited, uncountable and He is the only
one Supreme Entity whose’s presence is felt by strong perception not only in the
midst of nature but also in human mind. Here is hidden Tagore’s pantheistic creed.

The Gardener ( 1913 )

It is first published by Macmillan in October 1913 and the book is dedicated to
W.B. Yeats. This work contains prose translation of eighty five poem from fifteen odd
works written and published over a span of nearly thirty years. It is a more or less
haphazard collection of poems and a few songs arranged without any plan or order.
This is the first work of his where Tagore admitted that his translations are not
always literal and the originals are sometimes abridged and sometime paraphrased.

The poem opens with the exchange between the queen, the icon of Goddess
and her devotee who can foreshake all his duties, his identity to serve the queen. He
says – I will give up my other work.

I throw my swords and lances down in the dust
Do not send me to the distant courts, do not bid me undertake new
conquests. gardener of your flower garden. (Tagore 1994 : 81)

He will make a beautiful path covered with green fresh grass and when the
queen goes out for outing the blooming flowers will great her. He tries his best to
make queen happy. The following is his future plan.

I will keep fresh the grassy path where you walk in the morning.
Where feet will be greeted with praise at every step by the flowers eager for
death. (Ibid : 81)

Thus his aim in life is to be a gardener in the universal garden of queen where he
looks after the every buds and flowers to be consecrated to the queen.

The old age is not an end of life, rather it is a transition from old to new, from
end to beginning. Through death man can meet his eternal ferryman who will help
him to cross the river between mundane and super mundane world. Hence one
should not be frustrated about old age, after enduring pain and pang of life he will
enjoy eternal bliss in contact with God. So old age is never completion of life, dead end of life.

It is a trifle that my hair is turning grey.
I am ever as young or as old the youngest and the oldest of this village. (Ibid: 83)

Man is eager to meet God, similarly God is also willing to meet man and expects human love. God does not show his super human feature but as a normal human being He comes to this mundane world and knocks at the door. But the dwellers of this world can not recognize Him because of their ego, selfishness.

Who is it that comes slowly to my door and gently knocks ?
I vaguely see the face, not a word is spoken, the stillness of the sky is all around. (Ibid : 84)

The ego asserts, this is mine, that is mine and it is very conscious of its possessions. In this way it binds one with the material universe. But there is a contradiction in the life of man. Man is finite – infinite being. A part from his ‘Aham’ man has also the divine soul within him. Radhakrishnan says “As I link in the natural change of events man is subject to the law of necessity, as a member of the spiritual realm of ends he is free. It is this contradiction and morality that calls for explanation. The individual aspires after perfect truth, perfect goodness and perfect beauty. But in the finite world he can only approximate to, but never completely possess them.” (Radhakrishnan 1961 : 5) The hidden spiritual soul within man always aspires for the supreme perfection but man remains for ever a limited being. In his short span of life, man always aspires to become God- the highest ideal of his life. But the ideal remains always at a distance. There is constant strife between the Aham and the soul in man. Tagore always feels this struggle between the lower self and the higher self within him. The high self within him exclaims –

I am restless. I am a thirst for far way things
My soul goes away in a longing to touch the skirt of the dim distance.
O Great beyond, O the keen call of thy flute:
I forget, I ever forget that I have no wings to fly,
That I am bound in this sport evermore (Ibid : 84)
The self remains restless for the attainment of the Supreme Being. It has felt the music of the Divine Being in his heart. And his whole being wants to go beyond the limits of his own self and be one with the supreme, the lord of his life — his jivandevata. In this connection Suniti Kumar Chatterjee Says — "The Devata concept of Rabindranath, so bewildering and baffling for us to understand (and even Rabindranath himself spoke about his own bafflement), was something which was with him to his last days." (Chatterjee 1971 : 184 -185)

He bears the voice of the Supreme Being in the blue sky and everywhere. He regards to think that he is limited by his own finite self and he cannot go beyond this. He states —

O farthest end, o the keen call of thy Flute;  
I forget, I ever forget that the gates are shut everywhere in the house where I dwell alone. (Ibid : 85)

Rabindranath Tagore compares the liberated soul and the finite self with two birds. The liberated soul is like a bird moving in the sky, it sings the song of wood. The finite self is like a bird in the cage, which cannot move and fly on the vast blue sky or sing freely the songs of the wood. It only sings the word it has learnt from others. But has a desire for union with the free being. In the words of Tagore

Their love is intense with longing,  
but they never can fly wing to wing.  
Through the bars of the cage they look and  
Vain is their wish to know each other.  
They flutter their wings in yearning and  
‘sing come closer my love.’  
The free bird cries it cannot be,  
I fear the closed doors of the cage,  
The cage bird whispers, ‘Alas;  
my wings are powerless and dead. (Ibid : 85)

As the two birds — the bird in the cage and bird in the sky can never fly together the soul in bandage wants to be one with the free soul, but it is impossible for it to do so.

As the bars of the cage confine the bird the greeds for material things make the life of man confined within the material world. Those who are attached to these
things never transcend the limit of matter. They are guided and controlled by the ‘Aham; the ignorant ego. The liberated soul spends its life in the service of mankind. As in the lover there is nothing impure or unclean in the body of the beloved, to the soul dedicated to the Divine Being there is nothing untouchable in the world, the body of the Divine Being. The liberated being never desires an escape from this world but tries to improve it. Such a soul does not depend on any external causes, his actions are expressions of his inner inspiration. His actions are like those of the Divine Being. They are devoid of self-interest. As the children’s activities are never inducted by any self-interest, the illumined being does not act for his own purpose. His works are inspired by his inner joy and inspiration.

Death, for Tagore, draws the veil on many of our earthly possession. It offers an opportunity for the change of life and for securing a never physical body. Therefore, death is neither a negation of one’s existence nor is it evil. On the contrary, the soul after and before the next birth, realizes those spiritual experiences, which were denied to it in its embodied condition. When the soul is free from the conditions of the body, life and mind it realizes its union with God in its fullest freedom. It gets those spiritual experiences, which were not possible to have in its physical abode. Death offers the bliss of the meeting of the soul with God – a meeting of the alone with the alone. Death is, therefore, the occasion of marriage of the soul with God. Tagore asks for the happy wedding ceremony with the fullest decoration and happiness in death. There should be a beautiful decorated chariot for the wedding of the soul with God is a rare spiritual occasion. Tagore says –

Why do you whisper so faintly in my ears,
O Death, my death?
When the flowers droop in the evening and
Cattle come back to their stalls,
You stealthily come to my side and speak
Words that I do not understand.
Is this how you must woo and win me with the
Opiate of drozy murmur and cold
Kisses, O Death, my death?
Will there be no proud ceremony of our wedding?
Will you not tie up with wreath your tawny coiled locks?
Is there none to carry your banner before you,
and will not the night be on fire with your red
torch lights, O Death, my Death?
Come with your conch – shells sounding,
come in the sleepless night,
Dress me with a crimson mantle,
grasp my hand take me.
Let your chariot be ready at my door
with your horses neighing impatiently.
Raise my veil and look at my face proudly
O Death, my Death, (Ibid : 123)

God is immanent spirit, which controls and guides everything in this universe.
Tagore finds his God existing in every form of life. His idea of God is very nicely expressed in his short poem.

At midnight the would-be ascetic announced:
This is time to give up my home and seek for God.
Ah, who has held me so long in delusion here?
God whispered 'I' but the ears of the man were stopped,
with a baby asleep at her breast lay his wife,
peacefully sleeping on one side of the bed.
The man said 'who are ye that have fooled me so long?
The voice said again 'They are God but he heard it not.
The body cried out in its dream, nestling close to its mother.
God recommended stop, fool, leave not thy home but still he heard not.
God sighed and complained, why does my servant wander to seek me,
forsaking me ? (Ibid : 120 – 121)

Thus, Tagore discovers God within the life of man. Not only human being, but every objects of nature is the manifestation of God – the Supreme Being. The realization of God is also possible within the soul and nature. Tagore also rejects the principle of renunciation of the world for the attainment of Divine Being.

Fruit – Gathering ( 1916 )

The book is published by Macmillan in 1916 and it is translated by Nandalal Bose, Surendranath Ker, Abaninandranath Tagore and Nabendranath Tagore. This book contains divergent thoughts of Tagore – some are religious and some are the graphic picture of nature. Despite his constant variation in thought and expression Fruit-Gathering presents the same old mystic Tagore with only one voice. The sight of trees, stars and rivers give rise to ecstasy in Tagore who immediately feels the presence of God. He sings
Your speech is simple, my master
but not theirs who talk of you.
I understand the voice of your stars and the silence of your trees.
(Tagore 1994: 161)

When God calls devotee he cannot stay in the home. His heart throbs with the passion to meet the eternal stranger who also craves loves from him. He feels in his heart the footprint of God, hence he is coming out the road where his God waits for him.

Alas, I cannot stay in the home and home has become
no home to me for the eternal stranger calls, he is going alone the road.
The sound of his foot fall knocks at my breasts; it pains me!
The wind is up, the sea is moaning
I leave all my cares and doubts to follow the homeless.
Tide, for the stranger calls me, he is going along the road. (Ibid: 158)

When a man separates from God, he realizes the true identity of God who creates him. As long as he is in company with God, he cannot feel God. Life has two aspect – finite and infinite. To know the Infinite it is necessary to isolate the finite from the Infinite. A child cannot see the mother as long as he is in mother’s womb. To feel and to see her vis-à-vis the child has to come out of his mother’s womb.

The child finds its mothers when it leaves her womb.
When I am parted from you, from out form your household
I am free to see your face. (Ibid: 160)

The devotee feels ashamed when he is decked with the jeweled chain. That is why he forsakes this necklace but whenever he is trying to do so it suffocates him. Hence he prays to God to help him so that he can abandon this garland of thrones and may wear the garland of flower bestowed by Him.

It decks me only to mock me, this jeweled chain of mine.
It bruises me when on my neck, it strangles me when
I struggle to tear it off.
It grips my throat, it choked my singing.
Could I but offer it to your hand, my lord I would be saved. (Ibid: 160)
Songs are the only means for expressing the intimate relation that exists between the finite and the Infinite. A mystic does not describe the Supreme Reality but bursts into songs. Tagore refers to music intuition. Indeed, in one place, he compares the world order to a piece of music. The silent speech of God can be understood by men who have strong faith on God. Man's speech is mere a babbling and God expresses himself through the voice of stars and silence of trees. This shows God's all pervading spirit.

Your speech is simple, my master, but not theirs who talk you.
I understand the voice of your stars and silence of your trees.
I know that my heart would open like a flower, that my life has filled itself at a hidden fountain. (Ibid : 161)

Tagore conceives of the divine nature of man. Man is His highest creation and manifestation. Man to him is the most supreme value that gives a finish to the entire evolutionary process. He deems man to be the representative of the creator. Man is a person who has to manifest the divine qualities from him. Man is superior to any object of creation for man has a distinct mission to fulfill.

To the birds you gave songs, the birds gave you songs in return.
Your gave me only voice, yet asked for more, and I sing. (Ibid : 187)

Rabindranath conceives of the finite being as love objects of the Divine. Without the finites, the eternal love drama comes to a standstill. There is eternal thirst in God's heart for the finites. In Fruit Gathering, Tagore says

I came and you woke and the skies blossomed with lights ...........
Yet I know the endless thirst in your heart
for sight of me, the thirst that cries at my
door in the repeated knockings of sunrise. (Ibid : 188)

Tagore looks upon the ultimate Reality as Mind. The Infinite Mind is the creator and Men are the finite representations.

In a poem in Fruit-Gathering, he tells the story of Raghunath, who proud of his wealth, came to the great Sikh teacher Govinda offering him a poor present of a pair
of gold bangles with costly stones. One of the bangles slipped from the hands of the teacher and rolled down into the water of the Jamuna. Radhuanth jumped into the stream and after having searched in vain until the day light faded away he came back to the teacher tired and dripping. He panted and said –

I can still it back if you show me where it fell.
The teacher took up the remaining bangle and throwing it into the water said, It is there. (Ibid : 161)

Tagore refers to the renunciation of the teacher and of Buddha and the disinterested work commended in the teaching of the Gita in support of his view.

When evil comes, the poet asks us not to lose heart and fly away in sheer cowardice. He direct us to face evil and pain. One should rely on one’s strength and the gloomy dark days of path and sorrow should not droop the fluttering banner of soul. This is his earnest prayer to God. He sings –

Let me not pray to be sheltered from dangers
but to be fearless in facing them.
Let me not beg for the shilling of my pain
but for the heart to conquer it. (Ibid : 188)

Though the poem has different thoughts of Tagore but it is generally based on mysticism. The entire universe is the dwelling house of God which is lightened by moon and stars. That is why the poet says –

My wings are full of the desire of the sky.
I go to join the shooting stars of midnight, to plunge into the profound shadow (Ibid : 159)

Thus Tagore’s God is not transcendental, rather He is always with the man who is toiling for survival.

Lover’s Gift and Crossing (1918)

The book is first published by Macmillan in 1981 and it has two parts—Lover’s Gift consisting of 60 poems and Crossing consisting of 74 poems. Among the poems
in Lover’s Gift, some come from Balaka and Ksanika and the rest come from Citra, Samaran, Kalpana, Kheya and several other books. The poems in Crossing and mainly religious and they come from Naivedya Kheya, Gitanjali, Gitimalya and Gitali. Many of the poems in English are paraphrases of the original Bengali and some of the poems have been so radically changed in the translation that it is quite difficult to locate the source.

God’s love is eternal, God invites his lover to his garder which is decorated with fervid flowers. But the lover is so blind, not physically but mentally, that he takes the false gift, he is allured by gaudy and false flowers in lieu of real gift. “But a gift that can be grasped is merely a frail flower, or a lamp with a flame that will flicker.” (Tagore 1994 : 195)

As the bud blossoms into the flower and the flower mature into the fruit, life ripens into death. The poet always regards death as the bridge to immortality Here is the poet’s bold assurance.

I know this life, missing its ripeness in love, is not altogether lost
I know that the flowers that fade in the dawn, the streams
that strayed in the desert, are not all together lost.
I know that my dreams that are still unfulfilled,
and my melodies still unstruck, are clinging to
Some lute-strings of thine, and they are altogether lost. (Ibid : 223)

The poet conceives that death is the force of mobility because of death things around us move on, grow and decay. Had there been no death, everything would have remained in the same static and untransformed form and the universe would have become narrow, obstructed and hardened. It would have been difficult for living beings to bear the burden of eternal stagnation. Death has lightened the tremendous pressure of this bare identity and granted to the universe a wide scope to move on. It is true, the Ultimate Reality, for the poet is the changeless one but his manifestations are all in time. These phenomenal changes do not in any way disturb the perfection of the noumenttal Reality. In his lyrics, the poet admirably expresses is ideas on the reality of the dynamic life force. Even the picture of a dead person is not static and dead. In it, Tagore perceives the onward march of the life-force through the gateway of death.
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\begin{align*}
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Are you a mere picture, and not as true as
those stars, true as this dust?
They throb with the pulse of things,
but you are immensely aloof in your stillness, painted form.
The day was when you walked with me,
your breath warm, your limb singing of life.
My world found its speech in your voice,
and touched my heart with your face.
You suddenly stopped in your walk in the shadow-
side of the Forever, and I went on alone.
Life like a child, laughs, shaking its rattle
of death as it runs; it backons me on, I
follow the unseen; but you stand there,
Where you stopped behind that dust and those stars;
and you are a mere picture.
No, it can not be. Had the life-blood utterly
Stopped in you, it would stop the river in the flow,
and the foot-fall of dawn in her cadence of colours.
Had the glimmering dusk of your hair vanished
in the hopeless dark, the wood land shade of
Summer would die with its dreams ............ (Ibid : 209)

Death is beautiful and sweet and it has made life so easy. Life is like a miser, holding
everything under the grip. It is death which has sweetened this ignoble and miserly
attitude of life.

Tagore says that the world invited him in its festival. He has enjoyed the
beauty of nature and has also done his best in this world. He has greeted the earth
and at the evening of his life he sings his last song revealing his love for this
beautiful universe. The poet loves death and it is as dear to him as life

Is it the destroyer who comes?
For the boisterous sea of tears heaves in the flood tide of pain.
The crimson clouds run wild in the wind lashed by lightening and the
thundering laughter of the Mad is over the sky.
Life sits in the chariot crowned by Death.
Bring out your tribute to him of all that you have.
Do not hug your savings to your heart, do not look behind,
Bend your head at his feet, trailing your hair in the dust.
Take to the road from this moment.
For the lamp is blown out and the house is desolate.
The storm winds scream through your doors, the walls are rocking,
and the call comes from the land of dimness beyond your ken.
Hide not your face in terror; tears are in vain; your door chain have snapped.
Run out for your voyage to the end of all joys and sorrows.  
Let your steps be the steps of a desperate dance.  
Sing victory to life in Death.  
Accept your destiny, O Bride!  
Put on your red robe to follow through the darkness the torchlight of the Bridegroom! (Ibid : 225)

The finite being cannot have his renewed existence unless he passes through death. At every turn, the finite has to die, every time his form is to be set by death. If he stops at a place, his existence also comes to nothingness. The finite being has a great mission to fulfil, he has to express the infinity that is latent in him. If death were the final, man could realize his ultimate end. The bliss which makes this enjoyable also makes the next one covetable. Tagore says —

When I woke the could gathered in the sky and dead leaves flitted in the wind  
Through the patter of rain I hear your nearing footsteps and the cry to come out with you into the secret of death.  
I walk to your side and put my hand into yours, while your eyes burn and water drips from your hair. (Ibid : 224)

Rabindranath Tagore finds in death the visit of a new life which is nobler, sweeter and happier than the present one. But the question arises, is the next life final? Are we to believe that through the portals of death, we come to a new universe, heaven, where desires are fulfilled and ends are realized? The poet rejects the conception of a readymade heaven or hell. Heaven is here in this world, it is not a superabundance realm. It exists in the din and bustle of comos. He writes —

Where is heaven? You ask me, my child – the sages tell us it is beyond the limits of birth and death, unwaged by the rhythm of day and night; it is not of this earth. But your poet knows that its eternal hunger is for time and space and it shrives even more to be born in the fruitful dust. Heaven is fulfilled in your sweet body, my child, in your palpitating heart. The sea is beating its drums in joy, the flowers are a tiptoe to kiss you. For heaven is born in you, in the arms of the mother dust. (Ibid : 211)

Songs are the only means for expressing the infinite relation that exists between the finite and the Infinite. A mystic does not describe the Supreme Reality
but bursts into songs. Singing, for a mystic, is the surest way of knowing and expressing Him. The only offering that Tagore can make to the Almighty is that of songs.

While I walk to my house at the end of the day the travellers comes to ask me
What hast thou for king's tribute?
I do not know what to show them or how to answer, for I have merely this song.
My preparation is large in my house, where the claim is much and many are the claimants.
But when I come to my king's house I have this single song to offer it for his wreath. (Ibid : 236)

The poet feels that he has done his duty by serving God as a muscian.

It has fallen upon me, the service of thy singer.
In my songs I have voiced thy spring flowers and given rhythm to thy rustling leaves.
I have sung into the hush of thy night and peace of thy morning.
The thrill of the first summer rains has passed into my tunes, and the waving of the autumn harvest.
Let not my song cease at last, my Master, when thou breakest my heart to come into my house, but let it burst into thy welcome. (Ibid : 239)

At the end of life's journey, the poet feels that his songs have brought him to his destination, to the feet of God.

But now when in the evening light I see the blue line of the shore,
I know my songs are the boat that has brought me to the harbour across the wild sea. (Ibid : 237)

God is known in ecstasy and intuition. He can be best realized in love. The salvation of the finite being lies in the realization of God. The intuitional knowledge of the Supreme Reality is fully apprehended in love. Love constitutes the true nature of God and without it, His existence passes into nothingness. Indeed the fruition of God-head lies in such a relation of love. The poet says –

Much have you give me,
Yet I ask for more –
I come to you not merely for the draught of water, but for the spring
Not for guidance to the door alone but to the Master's hall; not only for the gift of love but for the lover himself. (Ibid : 233)
The poet feels that his salvation lies in loving the Infinite. Sometimes as the lover and sometimes as the beloved, he offers his love to God. He thinks that the mission of his life is to live in His love. He sings

Let thy love play upon my voice and rest on my silence
Let it pass through my heart into all my movements.
Let thy love like stars shine in the darkness of my
Sleep and dawn in my awakening.
Let it burn in the flame of my desires
And flow in all currents of my own love.
And at last, when life ends, he returns love to God.
Let me carry thy love in my life as a harp
does its music and give it back to thee at last with my life. (Ibid : 233)

Is the poet’s love of the Infinite only a feeling? Does love negate all actions? His conception of love is not mere sentimentality. It is both a feeling and an action. To love God is not to bid adieu to all actions and take recourse to emotions. The poet opines that love without activity is no love. The human action is the play of love and he who loves God must also his activities in Him. The human conduct plays an important role in the philosophy of Rabindranath. He writes —

With his morning songs he knocks at our door bringing his greetings of Sunrise.
With him we take our cattle to the fields and play our flute in the shade.
We lose him to find him again and again in the market crowd.
In the busy hour of the day we come upon him of a sudden, sitting on the wayside grass.
We march when he beats his drum,
We dance when he sings. (Ibid : 235)

Love is the only means of realizing the Supreme Reality. But to have love is to kill one’s ego. So long as the ‘I’ and the ‘me’ are prominent in man, love cannot dawn in him. ‘Aham’ or ego-consciousness blurs the vision and makes us narrow and bigoted. No special room is necessary for God’s dwelling if the dwell place is fabricated by the thread of love of man.

None needs be thrust to make room for you
When love prepares your seat she prepares it for all.
Where the earthly king appears, guards keep out the crowd but
When you come, my king, the whole world come in your wake. (Ibid : 234)
The poet says that the material ‘Me’ of the individual can not be saved, for it is riddled with selfishness and inconsistency only the pure soul which is free from the bondage of vices is conserved in the Absolute. The ‘I’ with a name and form is ruthlessly discarded while his values are all taken. The freed soul marches onward and leaves behind the ego. Shahjahan built the famous Tajmahal to pertuate to memory of his beloved wife. He had a big empire but neither the empire nor the memory of his wife could bind his soul to this earth. The ‘I’ of Shahjahan suffered from the separation and hence required a Tajmahal but the egoless Shahjahan was above all wants and wishes. The ‘aham’ of the emperor was burdened with memories but his freed soul rose above these material and mundane affections. Nothing on earth could prevent the egoless soul of the emperor from marching onwards to the region of God, the Eternal. The poet writes –

Through empires crumble to dust,
and centuries are lost in shadows
the marble still sighs to the stars,
I remember.
I remember – but life forget,
for she has her call to the Endless;
and she goes on her voyage unburdened,
leaving her memories to the forlorn forms of beauty. (Ibid : 195)

There is no denying the fact that the poet’s Absolute owns the finites of the world. His absolute needs the finites and needs them most and they are not set against Him. He is to totality of a hold on reality and as such the finites have their being in Him. But if the Absolute owes the finites, does He not on that account own the evils of the finites? Why is evil relevated to the finite realm only? Is evil then a piece of illusion or Maya? Evidently not. Indeed it is hard to reconcile the poets Absolute with the existence of evil in the finite-realism. The poet expresses his happiness over the advent of pain as a corrective in his life. He songs –

Thou hast done well, my lover, thou hast done
Well to send me thy fire of pain.
For my incense never yields its perfume till it burns
and my lamp is blind till it is lighted.
When my mind is numb, its torpor must be
Stricken by thy love’s lightening;
And the very darkness that bless my world burns
like a torch when set a fire by the thunder. (Ibid : 220)
God is not only perceived in mankind but also in nature. The green nature is the apron of God with which He covers Himself. His presence is felt in the grass, flowers that scatters fragrance for God.

Stand upon the green mantle she has flung upon thy path and let me feel in her grass and meadow flowers the spread of my own salutation. (Ibid : 233)

Thus, Tagore's love of God is pantheistic and humanistic. The divine in man is the divine in God. Rabindranath, the singer of the divine, describes God in multiple ways. The all-merciful and the all-compassionate God renders endless gifts to men and mortal who are always unsatisfied and is eager to get more. He is never willing to give and sometime He comes in disguise of a beggar and the small gift that He gets from man is turned into gold that startles them.

I felt I was poor, and form door to door went with my hunger.
The more they gave me from their careless abundance the more I became aware of my begger's bow!
Till one morning I woke from my sleep at the sudden opening of my door and you came and asked for alms.
In despair I broke the lid of my chest open and was startled into finding my own wealth. (Ibid : 231)

Rabindra Sangeet

Today the fragments of the sky admist the July clouds (Rabindra Sangeet)

The poet is listening to the divine in rain clouds. He feels the joyous sound of conch shell in his heart. But the poet is in doubt whether it is a malifluous tune of flute or song of tears of eyes. God with His unseen hands draws the poet to his real house but Tagore can not understand who calls and pulls him to some unknown goal with such a song of grief. The poet sees her in the sky who is always speechless and who shower Her benediction to him from the sky.

Today the fragments of the sky admist the July clouds are filled with nectar,
What sweet sound of the festive conch-shell rings in my heart!
Is if strain of the flute of laughter, is it the song of the tear of the eyes?  
I know not who calls and pulls me to some unknown goal with such a doleful song! (Tagore 2004 : 139)

Thus God’s existence is all pervading, this song is hidden with pantheism.  
‘Tagore drank deep from the water of this spiritual fountainhead. It was the vision of a Brahman who permeated with His immanent presence both the starry heavens and the inner heart of man.” (Bose 1974 : 21)

Master of music, charm us into the world of music (Rabindra Sangeet)

God is a singer and the universe is his song. The infinite and the finite are one song and singing are one. Rabindranath says, the universe in the form of a song is never isolated from the eternal singer. The song is not made out of any external stuff. It is his very heart bursting into a melody. The entire comic process exists in Him, in the form of a complete song but its manifestation is not all at once. The poet is eager to learn the universe from the divine musician.

O Master of music, charm us into the world of music.  
We hunger for music, we beg this of Thee.  
Thou wouldst then test my skill on the veena  
in the midst of the roaring winds. (Ibid : 2004 : 35)

Through this song the poet expresses God’s omnipresence. Here God is described as an eternal singer who gives His message through his song and man should feel it and listen it folded hands and rapt attention.

O my friend, Thou art standing there beyond life and death. (Rabindra Sangeet)

God is beyond life and death and the poet addresses God as friend through this song. He sees luminous throne of God in the recess of poet’s heart where God takes His seat. With a great hope the poet expands his hands to meet God and the silent dark night has stretched out its load of dark hair at the feet of eternal God. The whole universe is God’s Veena. When strings of veena is touched, it comes out an enchanting music that floods the whole universe. The poet loses his identity in its path and he longs to be friend of the divine singer.
O my friend, Thou art standing there beyond life and death.
There I can see Thy great luminous
throne in the forlorn sky of my heart.
Deeply thrilled, I gaze at its stretching my arms with great
The silent night has spread its burden of dark hair at thy feet.
What a song has flown down from Thy Venna
and flooded the universe tonight!
The world mingles with the resonance of Thy music
as I find my self lost in its pathos. (Ibid : 37)

Thus God is the poet’s eternal guide. God, according to Tagore, seeks man,
offers His love and waits for a response of love from man and is delighted when He
gets it.

As I travel farther and farther, heart and soul into Thy Indinity (Rabindra
Sangeet)

Though this song the poet is seeking bliss in the infinite. When the poet
travels farther and farther, from heart to soul, he does not find no sorrow, no death
and no separation. Man’s life is full of misery, misfortunes and suffering and man
always tries to get rid of it. The poet’s life is no exception, when he meets with God,
he forgets his cares, anxieties and misfortunes in life, enjoys inexplicable pleasure at
the presence of God.

As I travel further and further, heart and soul, into Thy Infinity, I find no sorrow,
no death and no separation. If I can embrace Thy self in my life, then remorse and
worldly burdens will all vanish in a twinkle. (Ibid : 79)

Thus, death and life cluster around God. Death and life are the two phases of
God who dwells in the whole universe.

Thus hast to cleanse my life with Thy kindness (Rabindra Sangeet)

Through this song the poet wants to drive out all his evils from his heart so
that he can meet God. Hence he pray God to clean his life with the kindness of God.
His body is smeared with dust and he prays to God to take him on this lap. God and
man ever remain bound up in an indissoluble tie and the truth of the one lies in that of the other.

Thou hast to cleanse my life with Thy kindness
How else shall I reach Thy feet?
All my body was smeared with dirt.
Today my eager heart cries out for Thy sublime lap,
Leave me not lying in the dust more. (Ibid : 86)

Through this song Tagore gives highest tribute to God. God is his eternal rescuer who removes all his pains and pangs whenever he is in trouble in his life. When man with pure heart surrenders himself to God, God is bound to come to help him.

Make my head bow to the dust on Thy feet (Rabindra Sangeet)

Here the poet surrenders his ego to meet God. He says that God should bow down his head so that he can touch the feets of that Supreme entity. He profanes him by self-praise and he is always busy about himself like selfish man. Hence he prays to God to dissolve all his pride in form of the tears of his eyes. The poet wants supreme peace and supreme beauty that will be given by God alone. It is his earnest desire to God to reign in the lotus petals of his heart and keep him out of sight.

Make my head bow to the dust on Thy feet,
Make all my pride drown in the tears of my eyes.
By self praise I only disgrace myself,
I keep springing around myself fruitlessly all the time,
Make all my pride drown in the tears of my eyes.
Let me not parade myself in the work I do.
Let Thy will be fulfilled in my life.
I seek Thy supreme peace, I seek Thy supreme beauty within,
Please reign in the lotus petals of my heart,
Hiding me out of view. (Ibid : 84)

Thus egoism, selfishness are the main obstacles to merge with God. Whenever man totally surrenders himself to God, God must be compelled to come to him. Then man realizes the mute existence of God in every sphere of the cosmos.
There is sorrow, there is death (Rabindra Sangeet)

In the cycle of life, there is life and death, sorrow and happiness, in man’s life there is a pang of separation. But the stream of life flows for ever. The Sun smiles when it comes out in the morning and the moon and stars too laugh when they come in the night. The spring’s arrival is expressed through different colours, the waves rise and down, the flowers bloom, wither and at long last drop in the dust to bloom again. Thus in the every sphere of man and nature there is life and death and the supremes God who manipulates everything superbly. The poet wants to take shelter at the feet of whole that is manifestation of God, that is the dwelling place of God. Herein consists Tagore’s panthism.

There is sorrow, there is death
One burns in the agony of separation
Yet there is peace, there is joy, yet the infinite is ever awake,
Yet the stream of life flows eternally
The sun smiles, the moon and stars too.
The spring comes to the bower in myriad hues,
The waves melt away, the waves rise again,
Flowers wither and drop, flowers bloom again
No, no there is no decay, no death, not the least penury
My mind seeks its rest at the feet of that whole. (Ibid : 101)

I shall do today my worldly duties, bowing to Thee (Rabindra Sangeet)

The theme of this song is seeking divine watch fullness in all work of the poet. The poet performs his duties bowing his head to God who has fixed upon his eyes in the centre of his heart. He request God to dwell in his heart so that he can drive away all evil thought from his mind. In the midst of the din and bustle of the day the poet hears the eternal music that is so enchanting and melifluous. The poet feels the presence of God in every sphere of the universe. His prayer to God is that whatever he sees, whatever he speaks, whatever he does must be God inspired and God-centred in lieu of self centred.

I shall do today my worldly duties, bowing to Thee,
Please keep Thy eyes fixed upon mine in the centre of my heart
My mind always remembers that Thou abides in me,
May all my sinful thoughts die burning in the fire of
unbearable shame.
In the midst of all noise in the day, May I hear Thy eternal music,
May I feel Thy unceasing presence amongst all.
Let me wish well, every moment, by my sight
and speech, by all my work, by all my thoughts,
with all my heart. (Ibid : 83)

If ever the door of my heart remain closed (Rabindra Sangeet)

The poet is ignorant of God and if the door of his heart remains closed, he
prays God to break the doors and enter into his heart. It would be a great blow if He
goes away. The body of the poet is compared as Veena which does not vibrate with
His loving name. But it will shower enchanting music, soon, hence he requests God
to wait. The soul of the poet remains slumber by the burden of life but it will soon
awake by the call of God. So he request God to wait for sometime.

If ever the door of my heart remains closed,
Lord, break opens the door and enter my life, not
turn back.
If ever the strings of my veena do not vibrate
With Thy loving name, even so kindly keep in waiting.
Turn not back, O Lord!
If ever my slumbering soul fails to respond
to Thy call, awaken me with the pain of Thy
thunder – do not turn back, O Lord
If ever I invite with ardour someone else
On Thy throne, my eternal king, please
turn not back. (Ibid : 60)

God is the poet’s Supreme guide who comes to his hut to illuminate his mind.

Thus Rabindranath uses hundreds of names in addressing and describing his
God. From these, we get a fairly good idea of Rabindranath’s God. God is the
creator of man and of the universe and He controls and directs the course of life and
events for man and for the whole universe. "One Brahma (the creator) is all
pervading and is in you. At least once in everyday you will try to realise Him." (Sarkar
1974 : 9) God’s greatness, majesty, and supremacy are proclaimed in several of
names. Truth, beauty, love, goodness, happiness, peace and light are realities
closely related to God.
The heart of man is God's preferred dwelling, although Rabindranath speaks of God as dwelling also in the temple of the world, and in an abode of happiness clothed in light and goodness. God, for him, is the one who makes all things new. God's presence is essentially a presence as love and it is this love that renews and re-orders everything.

The basis of every relationship between God and man, as Tagore sees it, is that man is created by God, Man owes his every existence to God and it is God who sustain his life. Tagore's God is super human being. "Tagore's Superman is a saint and seer and not the Big brother, tyrannical founder of socialistic republics." (Ghose 1961 : 27) Several names point to a very close relationship of God to the heart of man. There are some very endearing names. God has become for Tagore, The Beloved of his heart. Often in this period, Tagore uses the name Father for God, signifying that for him, the relationship between God and man is predominantly that of a later to his son or daughter.

Man cannot do without God. He needs God's help and blessing constantly. Man's need for God takes on concrete forms. He needs God's love, His pardon, light, strength, protection and God's consolation in pain and affliction. Man's life is a God-given vocation and man should do everything to carry out God's will, even in the moments of doubt and uncertainty, which are not wanting in life. But to be able to carry out God's will, man needs God's assistance.

God is man's sure guide and refuge and man's joy and hope are in God. For man, God is the unfailing companion and the friend of friendless. Once life's task is complete, the response for man is in God. The most significant conclusion that Rabindranath arrives at during this period is that in God, the longing of man's heart is satisfied Thus, Rabindranath Tagore was a great pantheist who can understand the footstep of God in the every sphere of the universe. "He looked upon God as a dynamo to illumine the human mind, an Omnipotent power to look up to for guidance a source of inspiration in everyday life and a Supreme Being to whom everything is Dedicated." (Venkatachaliah 1961 : 19) To that Supreme soul Tagore gives his body, mind and most of his writings. He is that Supreme entity for whom the earth is
moving around the Sun, the stars scatter light, flowers bloom, every living creature exists in this mundane world. Herein lies Tagore's supra-pantheistic creed that is reflected in many works of Tagore. We cannot understand Tagore because he is roaming in the plane of lofty idealism. His deep-rooted thought can be realized by self but cannot be expressed properly to any body else. "Tagore who was a poet of many moods and varied emotions, human and divine, composed, a part from spiritual songs, exquisite lyrics and love songs of great charm as well. But he was pre-eminently a spiritual poet who felt the constant presence of the Divine in ever so many ways." (Mukherjee 1994 : 47). God now, is no more only in a general way, Lord, Master, King and so on. He is all these in a very personal way to Rabindranath in his own life. Many 'Superlatives' that rabindranath uses for God, are an emphatic way of saying that he has not found the God whom he has been seeking but also found in that God, the fulfilment and realization of that ideal 'someone' he had been longing for – the Supreme Good, the Fullness of Truth, the perfect Happiness.

Tagore's concept of God as one God of All and that one God is the God of the whole universe and of all people. "Think of the Divine Consciousness that is latent within every soul. It is like the ocean. But the veil of attachment and hatred like the veil of night, must be lifted in order to experience the ocean of the Divine self." (Lalitananda 2008 : 151) Tagore also speaks of God as present in all human beings, his presence is specially with the poor and the lowly, for whom God has predilection. "He wished to know the creator in company of the tillers of the soil, the poorest of the poor, the strugglers for survival, the low caste of the society by lending them his helping hand." (Bose 1961 : 34)

God's relationship to man is essentially one of love, of continual self-donation. God's love which leaves man free, is patient and forgiving. It does not condemn, punish or abandon man but awaits a change of heart in him. It is a love that comes down to the level of man and stays unfailing close to him. But we, common people, think that he is far away from us and can not realise his presence. "It never knocks on your doors. You never hear its footsteps. When it comes it comes so silently, without making any noise." (Sadhana 2007 : 55) God needs man and therefore He courts man and delights in his love.
Man is God's servant, God's representative. "Man is carved in the image of God. The human body is not a mere body. In the body there is divine light which has been placed there by great God." (Raina 2008 : 13) The tasks entrusted to him by God are not too heavy for him and man should give praise and glory to God, by fulfilling his life's tasks with enthusiasm and hope, as God's own work. Man must consciously give to God. His rightful place, which is at the centre of man's life and activity and surrender himself freely to God.

Examining the names that Rabindranath uses for God, What strikes us as new, is that a number of times he refers to God as a 'Person' and he repeatedly uses the expressions 'Supreme' and 'Infinite' while describing this person. Thus Tagore's God is only one God revealed to all human races. "The truth is there is only one. Call it by whatever name you want to call it. There is just one. Since we believe in God, therefore everything else also we have to recognise as God Himself." (Sivananda 2008 : 17) While god is the God at all, He is also in a very personal way the God of each one and many names bear witness to such a very personal relationship of love, friendship, respect and obedience that Rabindranath himself has with God. There are also names that contain and express majesty, power and other qualities of kingship in God. "Everything is his ......................... Awareness is the key and it should be practiced all the time." (Coontoor 2008 :34) Thus in Tagore's philosophy God's omnipresence and omniscience are acknowledged.

Thus we see that about the relationship between God and the universe, the God of Tagore is the Almighty Creator of the universe and therefore everything in the universe has its origin and existence in God. "God is the Niyanta. The Sun can not shine without Him. Fire can not burn without Him." (Sivananda 2007 : 16) He has not only created the universe, He also continues to rule over it, controlling, protecting and guiding it safely to its destiny. God is always with us in various forms and various colours. "God appears to be far from us but in reality He is very near, close to us. Just as butter is present in milk but remains invisible until churned out, so too, though God is near us, one has to seek him in order to see Him." (Atmashraddhananda 2008 : 8) Everything in the universe belongs to God, who is the Lord. In the works of Tagore, we find that this world is God's own temple. "The truth is that God dwells in everyone of us and everything of us can realise God and
His presence if we will only take the trouble of doing so. God shows Himself to us when we made the mind sportless clear.” (Bhardaj 2007 : 14) The aim of the universe is to reveal the Infinite. It is the manifestation of God’s truth, His infinite power and beauty and other qualities. Here we can firmly says Tagore as a great pantheist whose thoughts are unique, unparallel and unchallengeable in the sphere of mysticism.