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“Indianness in Pre and Post Independence Indo English Poetry”

(Thesis Submitted for the degree of D.Litt.)

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Declaration

I, hereby, declare that dissertation for the degree of D.Litt entitled “Indianness In Pre And Post Independence Indo-English poetry” is my own original work. This work has not in part or full been submitted to any University, for the award of a degree or a diploma.

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PREFACE

The present book is a modest venture into the poetry of the most gifted, authentic and leading Indo-English poets of pre and post Independence and their poetic genius richly associated with Indianness. Toru Dutt, Ravindra Nath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Sarojini Naidu are the noted Indian poets of pre Independence who not only interpreted India and Indianness to the world but also raised the status of Indo-English poetry to the height by giving it a quality and character of Indian flavour. Their songs inspired thousands of people when the country was passing through the throes of struggle for Independence, they are inspiring today also and will continue to inspire and delight the readers to convince that the values and validity of spiritual ideals of India are final and true. No doubt, the pre Independence poets created the firm foundation of Indo-English poetry but it is the poets of post Independence era that provided a new look, new turn and new vision to the poetry according to the demands of present day world. Nissim Ezekiel, A.K.Ramanujan, Kamala Das, Jayant Mahapatra and K.N.Daruwalla are the illustrious and distinguished poets of post Independence to advocate cultural synthesis- a synthesis between the ancient and modern culture of India mainly aiming at rational, logical, secular and humanistic attitude of life and development of human sensibility. Having the base of Indianness, their poetry is a direct and bold experiment of matter and manner to confront and protest, to awaken and illumine. It is they who discovered and expressed India and Indianness in a modern way with modern thoughts.

Several enthusiastic books and critical essays have appeared since the publication of great poetical works of Toru Dutt, Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu, Nissim Ezekiel, A.K.Ramanujan, Kamala Das, Jayant Mahapatra and K.N.Daruwalla, but in the entire range of these critical pre and post Independence Indo-English poets, rarely do the readers find a book that provides a detailed study of Indianness expressed in their poetry. This book is a humble attempt to bring before the readers their poetic output steeped in Indian sensibility exploring the basic Indian values-love, truth, peace, immortality of soul, theory of rebirth, theory of karma, omnipresence of God, religious faith of Indians, myths and legends, Indian landscapes, life and living of Indian people, struggles of human life, efforts to reach the Supreme Reality and realization of ‘Self’. To know about the greatness of India and Indianness is the urgent need of today’s time when people are running blindly behind the money and materialism. Because of this blind and blank race, there is disillusionment, disharmony and devaluation all around. Materialism can never provide lasting peace and pleasure. It is only the Indian values of truth, love, non violence, contentment, self discipline and Indian philosophy of ‘Tat tvam asi’ through Karma Yoga, Bhakti yoga and Gyan yoga that can lead to inner ecstasy and peace. The day is not far when India will come forward as Jagad Guru to
lead the whole world from ignorance (maya) to knowledge (Brahm Gyan), from darkness to light, from destruction to peace. It is sad to notice that many of the Indians under the sway of modernization and westernization have lost their faith in Indian philosophy, especially the youth who ought to have the major responsibility of retaining ‘Indianness’ in its original form. The young generation does not show much interest in their culture, values or the sacred teachings of Holy Scriptures. Their life and living is just limited to the artificiality of fashion world, fast foods and glitterness of western culture. This book will surely shake them from their sleep and make them aware that “you are not mere creatures, mere human beings but the children of Aryans, the children of Divine Power and have to keep the torch burning of the great ancient culture of Satyam Shivam Sundram”. This book not only present the magnificent glory of Indian and Indianness but also the glorious achievement of Toru Dutt, Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu, Nissim Ezekiel, A.K.Ramanujan, Kamala Das, Jayant Mahapatra and K.N.Daruwalla, the leading poets of Pre and Post Independence in touching the depth of Indianness.

To find out the spirit of Indianness embodied in their poems, I have taken up Toru Dutt’s ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’, Tagore’s ‘Geetanjali’, Sri Aurobindo’s ‘Savitri’, Sarojini’s ‘The Golden Threshold’, ‘The Bird of Time’, ‘The Broken Wing’, ‘The Feather of Dawn’ and all the primary and major works of Nissim Ezekiel, A.K.Ramanujan, Kamala Das, Jayant Mahapatra and K.N.Daruwalla. The first chapter deals with the fundamental aspects of Indianness based on Vedantic philosophy. The rest of the chapters go in accordance with the theory enunciated in the first chapter. All the chapters have been written in the light of The Bhagavad Geeta and Shri Guru Granth Sahib.

The concluding chapter is not merely summing up but also points out the spiritual message contained in the book that “Divinity can be realized in this very life if the quest of Infinite is blended with true love, bhakti and shradha” along with the moral preaching ‘of an indomitable struggle to live on by passing through fears and failures, pains and sufferings’. Above all, this book will shun the belief that there is not much to say about Indianness in post Independence poetry. Rather it will surely convince the readers that India and Indianness is rooted in the poetry of both pre and post Independence poets, only the way is different, the manner and mode of expression is different approximating to the demand of time. Even in the bold expression of confronting the confusion and bewilderment, the post Independence poets never forget their Indian roots and are in tune with the pre Independence poets that ‘Ancient Indian Wisdom is 100% correct’.

To conclude, Pre Independence poets are like ‘moderates’ and Post Independence poets like the ‘extremists’ but the aim of their poetry is one- to spread, seek and maintain the goodness and glory of India and Indianness.
FIRST CHAPTER

INDIANNESS DEFINED
The very word ‘Indianness’ is divine in its nature and infinite in its appeal. Not a single word can express its depth, richness and rationality. It springs from the sacred soul of India spreading the message of love, truth, peace and universal brotherhood. In the mysterious depth of Indianness, is hidden the nectar of Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads, Ramayana, Bhagavad Geeta and Guru Granth Sahib to quench the thirst of everyone who comes in search of peace and perfection. Indianness has that spiritual power which can transform a human being into divine being and this spiritual power is the living energy of India and Indianness. Anyone who follows the ideals of Indianness is surely on his way to Liberation because Indianness opens the channel of communication towards eternal union with God which is the ultimate aim of every human being.

Indianness reflects the sublimity of Indian philosophy, the nobility of Indian values, the charm of Indian norms, customs and traditions, the splendour of Indian myths, legends, history and folklore, the dignity of Indian womanhood, the greatness of Indian literature, art and music, the colourfulness of Indian festivals and fairs, the passionate patriotic zeal of Indians, the prosperous beauty of Indian landscapes and so on. When written about Indian subjects, Indianness expresses Indian sensibility, the sensibility that is identified with land and the people. Indianness and Indian sensibility creates Indian touch, Indian atmosphere, Indian flavour, Indian ethos, Indian content, Indian consciousness, Indian situation and Indian imagination. Broadly speaking Indianness conveys the spirit of India and richness of Indian culture. And the culture of India is steeped into its religious and spiritual ideals of “Satyam Shivam Sundram” that “God is Truth, Truth is always good and Goodness is always Beautiful.” India’s cultural history of several thousand years shows that the subtle but the strong thread which runs the multiplicity of Indian life is not woven by any stress or pressure of power groups but through the vision of Seers, the vigil of Saints, the speculation of philosophers, the imagination of poets and artists. The enlightened saints and sages have handed down a timeless culture that stands for the welfare and upliftment, not only of India, but of the whole humanity. That is why; the culture of India has a prominent place among the cultures of the world.

The characteristic feature of Indianness is philosophy of India which is totally absorbed in religious thoughtfulness. Religion forms the very core of Indianness. Indian mind is first religious than anything else. Here, in India, religion is not any intellectual conception nor it means any caste or creed, ritual or worship rather religion is an art of ideal living by cultivating high human values and reaching the goal of Perfection. So religion means ‘Realization’ – to realize God in one’s own self. In true sense, religion is truthfulness in thoughts, words and deeds. The religious philosophy of India advocates “practicing religion and realizing the Bliss”. Religion occupies the most important place in the lives of Indians. It is perhaps, because India has been the birthplace of many great religions of the world as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Hinduism is the very root of Indian culture whereas Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism are outcome of spiritual philosophy of Hinduism. The Vedas constitute the essential foundation of entire spiritual philosophy of integral experience and provide a deep insight into the immence and transcendence of Almighty God. The fundamental concept of Indian religious life is to communicate with Supreme Power and achieve Absolute Freedom. It is interwovenness of Atma and Parmatma - an intuitive vision of God declaring
“Tat tvam asi” that “human being everywhere and always is a part and parcel of Divine being and to realize this Divinity is the ultimate aim of human life”. According to Hinduism, there are three main courses to attain salvation- the Karma Marg or the way of good deeds, the Gyan Marg or the way of true knowledge and the Bhakti Marg or the way of devotion. The unshakable faith in the presence of Unseen Reality is the base of Hinduism. Hindus believe that God is Universal and Infinite Spirit. He pervades the entire cosmos. He is the Supreme Power responsible for everything and every activity going on in this universe. He is said to be functioning in three ways of creation, redemption and judgement- Brahma as the creator of universe, Vishnu as the preserver of the universe and Shiva as the destroyer of the universe. Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva are to be Divine forms of Supreme Reality of one Almighty God. The principle which keeps the working of universe in a regular and systematic manner ever since its origin is the Supreme Power of God. The Bhagavad Geeta, which is the epitome of all that is great and glorious in Vedas, speaks “God is the source of all, to know Him to know all, the Supreme (Lord) is Unborn, Eternal. He is also the lord of the world. Though He has no birth, all existences derive from Him. He is in truth, the Eternal God Himself, more ancient than all else and all manifested Glory is from Him.”[1] So the whole universe is His manifestation. He creates the universe as well as controls the creation. Though Hindus firmly believe in one omnipotent God but this belief does not bar the Hindus from worshipping various gods and goddesses signifying the different forms of Divine. Idol worship and rituals is the basic concept of Hinduism. It is the rigid faith of Hindus that Idols and symbols are an expression of the Real and help the human spirit in its efforts after the Divine Soul. The performance of rituals in the worship of gods and goddesses evolved in temples and shrines help them to purify the soul in search of Truth (God) Existence of soul forms the principal foundation of Hinduism.

The Vedantic philosophy of Hinduism teaches that Soul is the greatest Truth- the ‘Ekam Sat’. The visible body is not the whole reality but there in it is an unseen but ever active master of the house-the Dehi (soul). Lord declares in Geeta, “I, O Gudake’sa (Arjuna), am the ‘Self’ in the hearts of all creatures” (X/20) [2], clarifying that God Himself is present in every human being in the form of Soul. But people are unaware of it because of ignorance (Avidhya). Their soul is enveloped by ignorance (maya), sorrow and fear. Once this ignorance (mayajaal of kaam, krodh, lobh, moh, ehankar) is get ridden through sadhna (Jnana yoga, Karma yoga, Bhakti yoga), the soul unfolds its true nature of Bliss. Hinduism does not only speak of the existence of soul but also shows the firm faith in the immortality of soul. Being a divine spark of Eternal God, soul is also eternal in nature, What dies is the physical body not the soul. The soul is divine, immortal and eternal. To know the secret of soul’s divinity is Spiritualism, the Renunciation. Hinduism is the symbol of India’s spiritual vision. Spirituality means the interwovenness of human soul with Divine soul or to realize God

within. Until this realization happens, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth continues. Rebirth is the central teaching of Hinduism. Hinduism believes that rebirth is a stepping stone for final redemption from the cycle of death and birth, because actions of the present have definite impact and bearing on the future. Besides the theory of rebirth, immortality of soul, renunciation, omnipresence of God, idol worship and rituals, the other principles of Hinduism are- regard for cow, regard for fasting for respective gods and goddesses, regard for pilgrimage, cultivation of knowledge, ahimsa, respect for parents, gurus and scholars, emphasis on pure vegetarian food, good deeds and moral values, regard for chastity and truth by conquering passions, desires and animal instincts. So Hinduism represents an Ideal, an ideal not only for India but for the whole world.

Buddhism can be considered on offshoot of Hinduism because Lord Buddha did not announce any new religion. He was born, grew up and died as Hindu. His teachings show that he was restating with a new emphasis on the ancient ideals on Indo Aryan civilization. Hinduism mainly speaks of ‘Atma and Parmatma’ whereas Buddhism lays stress on karma but the ultimate aim at the end is same that is to achieve Liberation (moksha). Buddhism declares that everyone can attain Nirvana by conquering time and overcoming samsara (karma and the way to it is the moral path which results in Illumination. Buddhism preaches the four noble truths- (1) life is essentially suffering, (2) the thirst for pleasure, power and being is the cause of suffering, (3) the suffering can by ended by the conquest of this thirst,(4) Nirvana or moksha is the ultimate aim of human life. And to achieve this aim, Buddhist philosophy teaches the eight fold path- right view, right words, right resolution, right action, right living, right effort, right thinking and right concentration. The four noble truths and eight fold paths direct towards highest self abnegation and form the basis of all mortality which ultimately leads to perfect freedom or Nirvana. Nirvana is the heaven of peace and rest- the result of the extinction of desires, free from all grieves and impurities. Buddhism says, ‘Realize all this (world) is an illusion’ while Hinduism advocates, ‘Realize that within the illusion is the Real (God).’ The ways may be different but, reaching is same. Jainism, the religion founded by Lord Mahavira, mainly stresses upon the principle of non-violence believing that an all pervading uniform soul is present in all objects, animate or inanimate. Like the Hindus, the Jains too believe in the law of karma and the theory of transmigration of soul. Jain philosophy teaches and preaches that the final aim of human life is to obtain ultimate salvation which can only be achieved by following three fold paths of right belief, right knowledge and right conduct. This threefold path is called ‘Tri Ratan’ or ‘Three Gems. Jainism firmly speaks of the way of self restraint, social discipline, tolerance and reciprocity. It teaches against any kind of exploitation, inequality and oppression. Jainism is known as Nirgranth Dharma because it is a way of life that found its truth in the universe and not in a single scripture. Sikhism, the most recent religion of India was founded about 500 years ago with the teaching of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and other mine gurus. It is a religion of universal faith- the faith of humanity, the faith of all people. The holy scripture of Sikh religion ‘Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji’ is the living spirit of Gurus. It mainly speaks of glory of God, glory of the Name of God, glory of those who meditate upon the Name of God. It firmly advocates that there is One God, One humanity and One faith. It lays stress upon the theory of karma, theory of rebirth, immortality of soul and realization of soul, declaring that everyone can realize God within the soul in this very life through truthful living and meditating upon the Name of God. The five principles as the shape of practical morality have
been given prime importance in Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji- the first is singing the Glories of God, second is Contentment, third is Humility, fourth is giving Alms, and fifth is the control of five senses. Sikh philosophy declares that it is Sewa (service of humanity) and Simran (meditating upon the Name of God) only that can purify the soul from ignorance (anger, lust, greed, attachment and ego) and lead to Salvation.

Beside these, the other religion which came from outside but made their home in India are Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism. The word ‘Islam’ means ‘surrender to the Will of God’. The Muslims believe that God (Allah) is All Merciful and Compassionate- Al-Rehman and Al-Rahim. The muslims are strictly monotheistic and stress upon the fact that to search for God through images is sin. For them the creed of Islam is a simple statement in two parts “la ilaha ilallah wa Mohammadir rasul al lah (there is no God but Allah, and Mohammad is the Prophet of God) “. Islam is at its best to teach heartfelt submission to God, gratitude to God, pledge of allegiance and loyalty to God. The eternal teachings of Holy Quran truly guide people for a just and right living with full faith in God. Though Islam is totally opposite to the principle theory of Hindu philosophy of atma and parmatma but both Islam and Hinduism are at their best to teach that true religion is to serve God in truth and purity and obey His laws reverently in all affairs of life. Christianity believes in the sovereignty of God, grace of God, forgiveness of sin, and love towards all creatures of God. Islam is at its best to teach heartfelt submission to God, gratitude to God, pledge of allegiance and loyalty to God. The eternal teachings of Holy Quran truly guide people for a just and right living with full faith in God. Though Islam is totally opposite to the principle theory of Hindu philosophy of atma and parmatma but both Islam and Hinduism are at their best to teach that true religion is to serve God in truth and purity and obey His laws reverently in all affairs of life. Christianity believes in the sovereignty of God, grace of God, forgiveness of sin, and love towards all creatures of God. In Zoroastrian sense a believer is one who, irrespective of his political allegiance and earthly origin becomes the follower of Ahura Mazda in the pursuit of justice and peace. Judaism, the religion of Jews shows firm faith in one God called Yahweh or Johovah who is always kind to His people but punishes them if they go astray. Judaism stresses upon humility, good conduct, justice and mercy of God, rather than rituals and sacrifice.

So all the religions are human attempts to seek the Grace of Almighty God who is All Powerful, Infinite and All Pervading. The various ways, Names and functions given to Him are nothing but expressions of one God. Religions may very but the aim is one that is the liberal attitude of Indianess. Whatever an Indian does, irrespective of any religion submits at the feet of Lord considering that all the acts, soul, intellect, body expressions, senses, intuitions and mind are but further expressions of God’s omnipotence and omnipresence. Indianess asserts that the spirit of universal religion runs through the various religions in the form of God. In the heart of everyone and everything the same Truth reigns, is the eternal dictate of spiritual philosophy of India. The Blessed Lord says in Geeta, “I am in every religion as the thread through the string of pearls. Wherever thou see’s extraordinary power raising and purifying humanity, know that I am there.” It is because of the presence of God in everyone, Indianness believes in the principle- ‘the entire world is nothing but a family’: ‘Vasudev Kutumbkam.’ This doctrine of infinite oneness of soul forms the strongest feature of India’s greatness. Indeed Indian philosophy is the philosophy of religious harmony and tolerance making all religions unite rather than divide. All the religions in India are united by the common thread of love and humanity. Indianess advocates that man should be friendly and full of compassion. Humanity is rooted in the blood of Indians. They live their lives within the limit of dharma. Dharma confirms the way of life with the principles of decent cultural behaviour. The moral values like love,
truth and goodness rule over the land of India, making the firm foundation of true religious spirit. And to develop this true religious spirit, Indians enjoy the observance of prayer, worship, meditation, fasting, alms giving, pilgrimages and practice of self denial. Hospitality becomes the religious duty and chastity is recognized as virtue. Moral life constitutes the essence of Indianness. Mysticism, bhakti and yoga are the hallmarks of Indian culture, Vedantism is its philosophy, Ganga, Yamuna, Brahmaputra and Saraswati are its sacred rivers. Thousand of seekers practised meditation over many years on the pious land of India, so even the air vibrates with the spiritual energy. The western countries attach importance to materialism of steel, of factories and of machinery, while India attaches importance to the things of spirit- to God and soul, prayers and meditation. To the West, this world is be all and end all of life whereas India believes in other worldliness, in the life beyond death, and that is spirituality.

The one doctrine by which India is best known to the outside world is its spiritualism. Spiritualism means “the process of knowing God”, knowing the secret of “Tat tvam asi”, that human life everywhere and always is a part and parcel of Divine being and to realize this divinity in one’s own self is what spirituality means. Spirituality is concerned with spirit or soul- the experience of godliness within the soul. Spiritual does not mean merely the religious or ethical side but the highest ideal of manhood or womanhood. The spiritual element of a person has something to do with the line of higher thought and vision. The higher the thought, more spiritual a person is. So spirituality is the science of God consciousness. Human birth is the only birth in which a person can realize divinity and India is that country in the whole world which has the power to transform a human being into divine being. And this spiritual power is the living energy of India, the living energy of Indianness. Indeed, India does not mean simply a country, a political or historical entity nor is it a mad race behind the materialism rather India is a name of spiritual journey, an eternal journey to the Abode of Bliss. The people who are running behind the materialism are not Indians even if they are born in India, on the contrary the one who seeks for inward journey of self- realization is Indian in true sense may be he is living in any part of the world. Because of this power of spirituality, India is the best throughout the world. The fate of India is the fate of humanity as Truth is in the favour of India. Vedas are truth; Geeta and Guru Granth Sahib are truth- the words of God. No scripture in the whole world are as great as Vedas, as great as Guru Granth Sahib- the symbol of truth. The divine teachings of Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana, Bhagavad Geeta, and Guru Granth Sahib are not mere teachings but the eternal teachings of God showing the path of spirituality, teaching that God Himself is present in every human being in the form of soul and to realize this godliness is the ultimate aim of human life. Spirituality is the state of perfect being, perfect consciousness and perfect freedom. Spiritual means a person possessing knowledge of ‘true self’. It is an awakening of hidden within, as spirituality awakens us from the futility of worldly attachments and relationships. The internal confidence makes one so happy that worldly desires start fading away. One can be totally free from desires only when one is full within. It is true freedom, true happiness, true bliss- a mystical union with God and the person is liberated from all ego and desires, from name and form and becomes a heavenly person. The holy scriptures give the detailed description of spiritual uplift. The three noteworthy features of spirituality are Reality, Awareness and Freedom. The first and foremost principle to reach the way of spirituality is to have firm faith, that God is the Supreme Reality of the universe. He pervades all-
the Lord of the universe, the Lord of all beings. No being, no place or no time is without His presence. He Himself performs the world drama and does whatever He wants. Svetasvatra Upanishad states, “God is the Soul of the Universe. He is immortal. His is the ruler ship. He is all knowing, all pervading, the protector of the universe, the Eternal ruler, none else is there efficient to govern the world. He who at the beginning of creation projected Brahma and who delivered the Vedas, into Him seeing liberation I go, unto that effulgent one, where light turns the understand towards the Atman.”

(3) Without His order (Hukum) nothing can happen, not even a particle can move. All are under His command. He is the only Giver, the only cherisher of the universe. By His grace only, man enjoys all sorts of comforts, nourishments and necessities of life. God Himself is present in every human being in the form of soul. The Bhagwad Geeta tells three main yogas to realize soul- Jnana Yoga (knowledge of reality), Bhakti Yoga (the love and adoration of Supreme Person) and Karma Yoga (subjection of will to the divine purpose). And when the goal of Perfection is achieved, all of these yogas are merged into one another. Yoga means discipline- a bond to connect with inner self, a science to purify inner self. Each form of yoga has its own philosophy; Bhakti Yoga is based on devotion, Karma Yoga on work, Gyan Yoga on knowledge, Hath Yoga on physical exercises, Sahaj Yoga on meditation and so on. The techniques may be different, but the goal is the same that is to get closer to God. The synthesis of all paths in a comprehensive spirituality as expounded in Bhagavad Geeta is all derived from Upanishads. The Katha Upanishad says, “utistata jagrata prapaya varan nibhodata”- “arise, awake and stop not till the Goal is reached.” And this goal is the state of Perfect Freedom, the state of salvation, the state of sat chit ananda, the state of awakening. This awakening is true happiness, the true knowledge of knowing God within. Indeed God is within us. There is nothing to become, nothing to transform. We are the Truth which we are seeking. The paths of bhakti, karma, gyan are a means of knowledge to guide what we are. Guru Granth Sahib mainly stresses upon Simran (meditating upon the Name of God) and Sewa (serving the humanity) to reach the goal of Perfection. Whatever may be the path, goal is the same that is to realize Divinity in pure soul. The one who reaches the highest stage of knowledge becomes brahma, the divine being, an embodiment of knowledge, peace and purity. The spiritual knowledge brings to man true bliss, the eternal life, true freedom- freedom from the cycle of births and rebirths because the soul has got permanent unity with Supreme Soul (God). There are three important pillars that have supported and will continue to support the tent of spiritualism-

**The Transcendent Pillar**- the Rishis of India through their mystical and intuitive grasp of true nature of reality were successful in discovering Divinity through metaphysical identity. This metaphysical identity is both what is revealed and what does the revealing. This is the identity that has been helping the people of India first to continue their moral values and spiritual growth and secondly to guide others to gain spiritual strength.

**The Life Pillar**- means that the individual can return to his creator at the spiritual level and this return journey to his creator is considered in India the purpose of life. In India, religion means realization- to realize what we really are. This is not a physical journey but a spiritual journey through [3] Quoted from ‘The Bhagwad Geeta’ ed. S. Radhakrishnan (Eng. Trans), Harper Collins Publication, Delhi, 1993. Page 23.
prayers, meditation and good deeds. Every person has to pursue four goals in life- Artha (food, clothes and shelter), Kama (the pursuit of love and pleasure), Dharma (the awareness of cosmic scheme, morality and righteousness) and Moksha (self realization- union of jivatma and parmatma). And fulfilment of these four goals leads to the completeness of an Indian’s life.

The Truth Pillar- Truth is God and God is Truth is the fundamental philosophy of India and Indianness. India believes in ‘Satye Mev Jayate’- ‘Truth always wins’. The imperative of truth has been a guide and inspiration for the people of India throughout their long history, the basis of India’s spiritualism. The spiritual India never ceases to be. It is always free and always with peace with itself. Foreign invaders, who ruled and robbed India, could never destroy or change this eternal India. They instead found in its spiritualism and transcendent vision a higher affirmation for their own culture, religion idealism and way of life.

The glory of India lies in the immense patriotic fervour and zeal of all Indians, their love and devotion to serve their country with head and heart. Patriotism is a great moral and spiritual ideal. It means a noble sentiment of love, pride and sacrifice for the sake of country and its people. The holy passion of patriotism flows in the blood of Indians. They may be belonging to any religion, caste or creed, but they are Indians first and Indians last. They worship Bharat Mata as their own mother. This deep love for motherland is because the mother conceived here is not an ordinary religious deity but a living entity, the mother country in which they are born, they live and move. The history of India’s freedom shines through immortal courage of the heroic personalities like that of Subhash Chandra Bose, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Udham Singh, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gopal Krishna Gokhle, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vivekananda, Ravindra Nath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu and many more who lived in the age of national upsurge and sacrificed their whole life for their beloved country India. They regarded their country as the breath of their being. They were the true spiritual heroes, self denying tapasvies who merged their being in the being of their country. It is in India, nowhere else in the whole world that we come across of such passionate intensity of patriotism. If any crisis comes on their motherland, Indians are ready to sacrifice everything, even their lives to save Bharat Mata at any cost. Then they forget all the differences and all the difficulties. The entire nation arises as one. Indian history is filled with such examples may be at the time of National struggle for independence or after attacks by Pakistan and China. The credit of victory goes to each and every citizen of India. Every Indian contributes his feelings, his work and his services with head and heart at the time of national crisis. There is no selfish motive behind it because their patriotism is never mean rather like true sons and daughters of Mother India, all Indians become the saga of sacrifice, valour and heroism when there is need. No other country of the world has witnessed growth and functioning of so many religions, castes, creeds, faiths at one and the same time oh history as India does. And what is more interesting is the fact that in spite of so many diversities, there is underlying current of unity that is of being Indian. All the religions in India are united by a common thread of love and morality. The constitution of India is equal for every person in case of justice, liberty of thought expression, beliefs of faith and worship because India’s philosophy is the philosophey of “Vasudev Kutumbkam”. Whether a person
is Hindu, or a Muslim, a Sikh or a Christian he is an Indian first and Indian last. Verses from Quran, Christian hymns, shabad kirtan from Guru Granth Sahib, salokas from Upanishads all are sung with equal importance in India reflecting united India in a true sense. India not only loves Indian citizens but citizens from the whole world because the whole world is a family with is the central teaching of Indianeness. India believes in the presence of God in everyone so love flows in the heart of Indians. The recent example when thousands of people died because of earthquake in Japan on 11th march 2011, Indians started praying for the welfare of homeless and wounded Japanese people, continuous payers were held in temples, gurudwaras, churches and mosques for their safety and security. This is India and Indianeness. In today’s time, when any foreign militant group tries to create an atmosphere of disintegration, disunity and mutual differences in India, their efforts are useless because the great unity of India has the base of spiritual pillars and no power can shake it. The world is amazed at the continuity and vitality of Indian culture and civilization. Centuries have rolled by, millennia have come and gone yet the Indian culture goes on forever. India is proud to be the cradle of the oldest civilization in the world. Four Vedas were written here, 18 Puranas were compiled here and 2 epics were played and written on this pious land. India is the land of Geeta and Guru Granth Sahib, the land of Gayatri and Ganga. The eternal Himalayas form its crown and Ganga waters its soil. So sacred India is! The temples, the palaces, buildings, forts, museums, gardens etc represent the brief account of the past of India’s greatness. No yatra is complete until a pilgrim has visited Dwaraka, Rameshwaram, Kashi, Kanyakumari, Haridwar, Mathura, Ayodhya, Amaranth, Badrinath and Kedarnath. Untold generation of pilgrims visited these holy places and wedded India into a single nation in a spiritual sense. Such is the long panaroma of Indian history. Indian culture stands for peace, non-violence, truth and love for whole humanity. Gandhi ji made a new experiment in the world when he won freedom for India through the weapons of truth and non-violence. The hospitality of India is world famous. Creativity is pivot of its longevity, secular and co-operative is its nature. Many social and political revolutions took place in India but no person, no fact and no revolution could affect India in its fundamental way. Deathless it stands and will stand long till the spirituality remains as its base and background.

India is a land upholding the great values of truth, love and peace. Truth is its soul, love is its language and non-violence is its message- the message of peaceful co-existence- live and to let live. This is the message which India wants to spread throughout the world; this is the message which guarantees security, health and happiness for all humanity. Out of the glorious values of love, truth and non-violence, India creates a new outlook on life, new ideology and a new background from which it starts a ceaseless struggle against the modern materialistic age. India wants to emphasize that by the methods of peace, truth and love, the worst evils of the world can be remedied and the greatest difficulties can be overcome. The constant emphasis on its values is the essential characteristic which distinguishes Indian culture from the other modern scientific cultures of the world. The values of India are not simple values but the eternal values found in the eternal Vedas. The Vedas are the unique repository of Indian values and Indian knowledge. The values of Vedic age, of the age of the Upanishads, of the philosophical systems of Ramayana and Mahabharata, of Smiritis and Puranas, of Geeta and Guru Granth Sahib, of medieval saints and reformers are the same in spirit though different in forms. Their super structure may change from time to time but
their inner content remains constant and enduring from time immemorial. Indians have called their
values by the name of Human Values or “Manav Mulayas” as they suit the needs of every human
being irrespective of age, sex, colour and race. Without any attempt at conversation, people are
converted to them. These values aim at producing moral character of a human being as well as
intellectual sweetness of temper contributing the development of a truly religious person. Truth is
the most elevated and contemplated value of India. It is the value on which the whole edifice of
India’s philosophy is built. Satya mev Jayate- Truth always wins is the main principle of India’s
philosophy. Truth means purity of thoughts, sincerity of words and righteousness of deeds. The
man who treads upon the path of truth and performs all his duties honestly with his mind attached to
God is spiritually elevated and morally exalted. If truth is the soul of India, love is its heart. The
language of India is love, the culture is love and even the philosophy of India is love. Here in India,
every relation is bound with the thread of love may be human to human, human to animals, human
to birds and even human to nature. It is unthinkable that a man should live in India and not become
a part of it. Wondrous is the strength of love. It is like godliness leading directly towards spirituality
because a loving heart does not have the poisonous emotions of hatred, jealous, anger, ego and
dissatisfaction. As love is the language of India, non-violence is the message which India wants to
spread throughout the world. It is the key ideal of all India’s greatness- spiritual as well as moral.
Non-violence in actual sense is purity of thoughts, words and deeds. It is the highest form of humanity
as well as highest form of humility. Gandhi ji won freedom for India through the unique weapon of
non-violence and turned a new chapter not only in the history of India but also in the history of world.
Indian philosophy stresses to be pure by heart, words and deeds- the purity of mansa vacha karmna-it
is the sanity of outlook- the Sattavikta. If thoughts are pure, the words and deeds will be
automatically pure. It is not the life that matters but the noble deeds. Human birth is the most precious
birth so it should not be wasted in eating and sleeping, earning and spending, enjoying and
merrymaking rather it must be utilized in fruitful course of actions. For this Indianness teaches to
have firm faith in God and firm faith in one’s own self. Yoga is the hallmark of Indian values to
illumine the path of self reverence, self knowledge and self discipline. To remain active and dutiful
is the basic value of India because it is the work that makes life worth living. Indian philosophy
insists upon to become real karma yogis- the true servants of God by following the moral principles
of contentment, compassion, humility, forgiveness, fearlessness, charity for all, malice for none
and above all selfless service for whole humanity. To get freedom from anger, lust, greed, malice
and ego, Indian philosophy stresses upon meditation. By meditating the Name of God with love
and devotion and by serving others with head and heart, the soul gets purified from all ills and evils
that in turn is the way to God realization.

India is recognized throughout the world because of the great ideal of Indian womanhood
and the ideal of Indian womanhood is Sita and Savitri. India is the holy land where Sita and Savitri
lived and proved their ideals of purity, sincerity, service and sacrifice. India is the land where women
are respected and blessed as Lakshmi, Durga and Saraswati. Lakshmi symbolises prosperity
(dhan), Durga symbolises power (shakti) and Saraswati symbolises knowledge (gyan). Indeed
Indian woman is a light house of wisdom, a dynamo of power and a harbour of inspiration. The
pages of Indian history shine through the names of great Indian women- saints and scholars, poets

and warriors, and their valuable contribution to Indian culture and philosophy. An Indian woman can be Gargi, Ghosa and Apala whose divine hymns are included in Vedic literature. She can be Sita, Savitri, Damayanti, the role model of ideal Indian wife; she can be freedom fighter Rani Lakshmi Bai; she can be the greatest politician and administrator Indira Gandhi; she can be the most graceful singer Lata Mangeshkar; she can be the dynamic police officer Kiran Bedi; she can be the powerful astronaut Kalpana Chawla and so on. There is hardly any sphere of field in which Indian woman has not shown her worth. Indian womanhood has blessed India with incarnations, prophets, saints and sages, patriots and warriors, who in turn established India with its glorious power of spirituality. Indeed, Indian woman means a statue of love, service and sacrifice. She serves her family with head and heart and she can make any sacrifice for the welfare of her family members. Devotion flows in her blood. She is always devoted to her family may be as a daughter, as a sister, as a wife, or as a mother. Because of her loving and devoted nature, her service and sacrifice, she stands as a model in front of the world. Above all, the most dignified aspect of an Indian woman is that she spends her life within the limits of Indian values. She is the backbone of Indian society, an inspiration of man. Sacrifice is her nature, giving is her religion, patience is her fasting and love is her life. She tells man what loving and sharing is all about. Her devotion towards her husband, her affection towards her children, her character towards society, her compassion towards world is all the strength in itself to tread upon the path of dharma. Through her life of simplicity, service and sacrifice she projects the best of Indian culture- the universality and essential divinity of human nature.

Indianness is absorbed in Indian myths and legends. India is a country of temples and in these temples lays the sanctuary of gods and goddesses to whom every Hindu’s heart is devoted. And there are hundreds of myths and legends related to Gods and Goddesses and other great personalities of India. Indian mythology is filled with the references and illustrations of Vedic Gods and Goddesses. The worshipping of Varuna, Surya, Indra, Vayu, Agni and Prithvi is a continuation from Rigvedic period. The worship of several Gods and Goddesses has given birth to numerous religious sects of Hinduism of which three are more important- Vaishnavism- Lord Vishnu; Shavism- Lord Shiva and Shaktism- Mother Goddess. The Mother Goddess is worshipped in the form of Uma, Kali, Durga, Bhavani and Annapurna; who are supposed to be the different incarnation of Almighty God. Goddess Laksmi is the symbolic representation of prosperity and fortune and is worshipped by different names as Sri, Kamla, Dharani, Mahalakshmi etc. Goddess Saraswati is worshipped as Goddess of knowledge, wisdom and science, the mother of Vedas, the inventor of Devangiri letters etc. Hindus worship and offer their heartfelt prayers to Ma Saraswati, Ma Durga, Lord Ganesha, Radha- Krishna, Parvati- Shiva, Sita- Ram, Lakshmi- Vishnu, Lord Brahma and Lord Hanuman in different ways. Prayers are also offered to main popular deities- Surya, Varuna, Prithvi and moon in particular manner. Indian mythology shines through the legendary heroes and heroines- Sita, Savitri, Damayanti, Urmila, Urvashi, Dhruva, Prahlad, Lakshman, Shravan Kumar and many other saints and sages- the rare ideals of Indian culture.

India does not enter into us through its mountains and rivers, through its forests and fields but through its people and their way of living. India means millions of people who are spread out all over its vast land and spending their lives with their simple norms, customs and traditions. These
customs and traditions act as a source of spiritual and moral enrichment. Indianness is soaked in these norms and customs. They are different according to different states, religions castes and creeds and are performed at different occasions of life. Every celebration in India starts with full faith and prayers to Almighty God because religion is the keynote of India. One can enjoy the happy moments whether it is the Naamkaran ceremony in a Hindu family or a Chola ceremony in a Sikh family, religious worship is at the first. The concept of joint family, strict marriage rituals, commitment to the ideals of family, pride in one’s work and profession, love for nation, firm faith in God and above all the willingness to acquire more and more knowledge of man, God and universe are some of the unique aspects of India’s cultural and traditional outlook. The hospitality of India is world famous. Almost all the social customs of India are based on moral values and are still respected all around. These customs and traditions are the behaviour pattern of everyday life which has been handed over to them from one generation to another generation automatically. It is in India only where guests are respected and served as God based on the principle of Atithi Devo Bhav. It is in India only where people touch the feet of their teachers, parents, sages and saints as a mark of respect and dignity given to elders. Not only the human beings, but even the rivers, mountains, trees, animals, birds and stones are worshipped with reference to some particular myth and legend. India is a land of Geeta, Gayatri, Ganga, Gobinda and Gou (cow). Ganga is the heart of India, the spirit of pilgrimage which symbolises the spiritual journey. Hindus worship cow believing it as the incarnation of innocence and humility- that thirty three crore gods and goddesses reside in cow. It is in India only where farmers before harvesting offer their heartfelt prayers and worship to Surya- the Sun God, Varuna- the God of Rain, Prithvi- the Goddess of Earth and Brahma- the creator of all, the four great deities responsible for rich harvest. It is in India only where applying the Henna (mehendi) is a sacred ceremony at the time of marriage; it is in India only where lullabies are sung by mothers for their children and so on. These norms, customs and traditions are steeped into the basic Indian values of love, assimilation, tolerance, give and take etc. Reciprocity is the main principle of Indian way of living. Indian people welcome and absorb with open arms the culture and behaviour pattern of other people without losing their fundamental values. Variety full decorations at marriage occasions along with the crowd of people wearing colourful dresses, dancing, singing and performing different customs, rites and rituals according to their states, religions, caste and creed makes India great and glorious. Not only marriage ceremony, but all the ceremonies and celebrations at every occasion is worth seeing and worth enjoying because all the ceremonies, rituals, beliefs and customs are based on the moral values of ‘Atithi Devo Bhav’; ‘Sarva Bhavantu Sukhina’; ‘Santosh Param Dhan’ etc.

India is a land of fairs and festivals. There is feast, fair and festival for every reason and for every season. These fairs and festivals are the part and parcel of great cultural heritage of India and act as a stimulus to take an intelligent interest in Indian customs and traditions. Such a stimulus is the best means of preserving the spirit of Indianness and its values and thereby making India self conscious, united and prosperous. They also lend variety, zest, colour and grandeur to day to day life. It is really enjoyable to see people throwing colours on each other at the time of Holi, the beauty of lightening and crackers on Deepawali, the happy moments of the prayers and celebrations on Gurupurabs, the boat racing at Onam, offerings made to snakes on Naagpanchami, the swaying of
swings in midst of blooming flowers on Basant Panchami, devotional worship and rituals during Kumbh Mela, Navratris and Chhath Puja and many more festivals and festivities present the traditional outlook of Indian culture. Rich Indian food stuffs increase the vitality of these fairs and festivals. The delicious foodstuffs, colourful dresses, jewellery, decorations, folk dances, folk songs and folk music provide a splendid recognition to Indian festivals and celebrations which ultimately creates a lively atmosphere making everyone happy and charming.

Indian literature and art, dance and music form the very base of Indianness reflecting the ideals of Satyam Shivam Sundram. Indian literature is one of the richest literatures in the world presenting the systematic progression of Indian culture. The eternal Vedas provide the very root of Indian literature may be the Indianness itself. All the four Vedas- the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sam Veda and the Atharva Veda are the noblest documents not only of pride and value to India but to entire humanity. The word ‘Veda’ is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘Vid’ means to ‘know’, hence the Vedas are the store house of knowledge, the knowledge that is spiritual, the knowledge that is eternal- the revealed knowledge of God Himself training everybody to analyse, investigate and realize the essence of life that is oneness of human soul with Divine soul. It is believed that the Divine light of God came to Divine Rishis which in turn established in the form of Divine hymns (mantras) of Vedas- the Rig Veda through Agni Rishi, the Yajur Veda through Vayu Rishi, the Sam Veda through Aditya Rishi, and the Atharva Veda through Angira Rishi. All the four Vedas are based on integral experience of intuition or seeing and revealing the eternal truth of knowing and realizing God. They firmly declare that God is the source of all- the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer of the universe and man lives by the supreme power of Almighty God. The Rig Veda, the oldest Veda, rather the oldest book of the world, the earliest great work of Aryans, is a collection of praises and prayers of different gods and goddesses in Vedic Sanskrit. The Vedic Gods presented in Rig Veda are the Divine forms created by Almighty God and got appointed in their places to perform their ordained duties. Yajur Veda gives guidance and direction for the performance of these prayers and rituals. The Sam Veda is the mother of Indian music and is a charming collection and description of the rhythmic tunes for the recitation of divine hymns of Rig Veda. The rites and rituals of Atharva Veda forms the greatest source of information about the religious, political and economic life of humanity. The Gayatri mantra and the essence of all Vedas is the most splendid mantra representing the whole power and purity of Almighty God. Besides Vedas, the Upanishads and Puranas are the important part of Vedic literature, totally dealing with Indian philosophy of Karma, Maya and Mukti. If the house of Indian literature has been constructed on the foundation of Vedic literature, the structure has been raised on the material supplied by the two great epics- Ramayana and Mahabharata. The principal heroes and heroines of these two great epics are not merely the characters but Gods and Goddesses who descended on this earth for the destruction of hells and false and upkeep of dharma. The divine teachings of Bhagwad Geeta on bhakti yoga, karma yoga and jnana yoga are the nectar of divinity. Along with these scriptures, Shri Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of Sikhsim, contains the highest flight of spirituality to reveal our inner self, our true nature, our relationship with God and the world. With this knowledge only we can live a life of perfect peace, harmony and bliss. Hindi, Sanskrit, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannad, Punjabi and Urdu are the languages which mainly form the base and
background of Indian literature. Sanskrit is the most ancient language, the language of Vedic literature where as Hindi is the living soul of Hindustan. The artistic creation of India is its heartbeat because a symbolism is created to express various qualities of super human soul and super human figures. The religious urge and search for eternal beauty is amply illustrated in the wall frescoes, panels, sculptures and paintings of various temples, caves, stupas and palaces. A glance at these fine specimens of art makes one to think whether they are made by men or God. Indian music and dance forms break the limitations of mind and open a foundation of peace, happiness, patriotism, renunciation and inner satisfaction. The whole of Indian literature, art, music and dance are the Step Stones to touch the depth of spirituality.

Nature has bestowed its fullest possible gifts on India and has decked the entire landscape with the best of beauties that nature could possibly bestow. Though strange but true, while many countries of world remain enveloped under the thick sheet of snow and fog, suffer from scorching heat of sun, the cities become muddy and slushy due to torrential rains, volcanic eruptions threaten their existence, India enjoys change of seasons according to the cycle of time as Basant, Grishma, Varsha, Sharad, Hemant and Shishir. The very loved flowers of Gods and Goddesses like lotus, champakali, maulsri, hanskali, bela and chameli etc grow in abundance in India filling the whole atmosphere with sweet fragrance. Such is the marvellous beauty of India! Rich in flora and fauna, the beauty of Indian birds and animals is worth seeing. The Gir lions, the majestic Tarai tigers, gracious Mysore elephants, magnificent one horned Assam rhinoceros and rare Himalayan musk deer attract the attention of naturalists and others from all over the world. Renowned Indian poets as well as English poets have lamented Indian birds and beauty of Indian landscapes, mountains, rich green plains, lovely sea beaches, holy rivers and dense jungles which add richness and variety to the beauty of Indian landscapes. Endowed with such gifts of nature, Indian people are bound to be aesthetic, sensitive, conscious, congenial and cultured.

India is not just a land mass but a living soul of humanity. It is the land of worship; the land of Geeta and Gayatri; the land of Ram, Krishna, Buddha, Mahavira and Guru Nanak who taught the people that God is in us and with us and to realize this truth is the ultimate aim of human life. India was

Is never devoid of sages and saints, philosophers and thinkers, patriots and warriors, poets and artists, scientists and musicians who have exerted considerable influence on the growth and development of Indian culture. The love for India and the need for native roots prompted many Indo-English poets to produce some genuine poetic pieces of Indianness. Poetry is a creative and aesthetic art, an art to express experience, beauty and emotions. Poetry begins where science ends. Science can not reveal the mystery of truth, but it is the poetry that has all power to touch on ultimate truth because poetry comes from heart and goes directly to heart rather it is the language of heart and soul to communicate the experience. Indo-English poetry means “the expression of Indian poetry through the medium of English language”. So Indo-English poetry is the poetry in second language. There are many languages in this vast world but in comparison to other languages,
English has the privilege of being nationally understood and appreciated. Many intellectuals adopted English to reinforce their knowledge to develop a world’s outlook and perspective. Those who wrote in English were sure that English was merely the creative medium and whatever it contained was Indian. In the beginning, Indo-English poetry appeared in terminology as Indo-Anglian or Anglo-Indian but later “Indian poetry in English” became the new name acceptable to writers and readers. Thus Indo-English poetry is a poetry to define a Indian identity through English”. Here the medium is English, body is English but the manifest spirit is Indian. Indo-English poetry began its journey from the day H.L.V.Derozio published his poems in 1827. It was born with a romantic influence with the sprinkling of Indian material as we notice in the works of Kashiprasad Ghose, Ram Sharma, R.C.Dutt, M.M.Dutt, Toru Dutt, Manmohan Ghose. There is no argument that the growth of Indian writing in English was one of the obvious result of British Rule but the recognition to Indo-English poetry as a distinctive phase of Indian culture and Indian philosophy was earned by Pre Independence Indo-English poets mainly Toru Dutt, Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Sarojini Naidu. Toru Dutt was the first Indian to interpret the spirit of east to the west, the first Indian to handle English with ease and command and the first Indian to express and narrate Hindu myths and legends, Hindu ideals, thoughts and traditions in English medium. Her splendid work ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ is a landmark in Indo-English poetry. It is on the solid achievement of Toru Dutt that the edifice of Indo-Anglian poetry is built. With the onset of twentieth century, scene changed more and more. Many new ideas filled the atmosphere. The national movement for independence inspired poets to write patriotic poems and songs that dealt with the rich traditions and glorious past of this country. Ravindra Nath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Sarojini Naidu were the eminent products of this period. The greatest lyrist and a man of versatile genius, Tagore, was the first Indian poet who gained for India a permanent place on the world literary map by winning noble prize for Geetanjali in 1912. Tagore tried to synthesise Indian mystical thought with new knowledge of west. The yogi poet Sri Aurobindo rose like a sun on the horizon of Indo-English poetry and created a world of sublime poetry which is mystical. His ‘Savitri’ is an ocean of spiritual experience expressed in the language of epic. Sarojini Naidu, the nightingale of India is remembered as a poetess of Golden Threshold, The Bird of Time and Broken Wing. She has poetized the India of temples, Indian mythology, simple joys, and concerns of Indian people, the beauty of Indian landscapes, seasons and flowers. In this genuineness of concerns, feelings and involvement, the romantic strain in poetry continued till independence. The time changed, the situations changed and even the values of life changed with the freedom and partition of India. The rapid urbanization and disintegration of village community, change in cultural and social values, the western influence of existentialism, positivism, surrealism etc compelled the attention of writers and poets of Post Independence to confront the confusion, bewilderment and disillusion of the time and acquire a new view of human destiny. The post independence poetry is poetry of vital language, concrete experience, the value of discipline, free from propaganda and private voice. No doubt, the pre independence poets created the firm foundation of Indo-English poetry but it is the poets of post independence era who provided a new look and vision to the poetry according to the demand of present day world. Nissim Ezekiel, A.K.Ramanujan, Kamala Das, Jayant Mahapatra and K.N.Daruwala are the distinguished poets of the post independence period for advocating cultural synthesis- a synthesis between the ancient and modern culture of India mainly aiming at rational, logical, secular and humanistic attitude of life.
and development of human sensibility. It is they who discovered and experienced India and Indianness in a modern way with modern thoughts. Jayant Mahapatra’s poetry is firmly rooted in Orissa’s soil, Puri, Konark, Cuttack and Bhubaneswar’s landscapes; A.K.Ramanujan’s mind seems to be busy in exploring the values and cultural ethos of Hinduism (Tamil Brahmins); Nissim Ezekiel handles the folk beliefs of India in superb manner, Kamala Das longs for true love expressing ‘Vrindan lives in every woman’s heart’ and K.N.Daruwalla beautifully portrays the variegated landscapes of North India- its rivers, hills, plains and pastures. Besides these great poets, P.Lal, R.Parthasarathy, Shiva K.Kumar, A.K.Mehrotra, O.P.Bhatnagar and many more have also contributed to the enrichment of modern Indo-English poetry of post independence period.

Toru Dutt, Ravindra Nath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Sarojini Naidu are among those great intellectuals of pre independence period who felt all the fundamental values of India by heart and their poetry became the living image of Indianness. They kept the torch of Indian culture burning and successfully handed it over to posterity like those of modern Indo-English poets- Nissim Ezekiel, A.K.Ramanujan, Kamala Das, Jayant Mahapatra, K.N.Daruwalla and many more for carrying it further. Soaked in Indianness, the noble poetry of Pre and Post Independence, Indo-English poets is a splendid treasure of India’s rich composite heritage.
SECOND CHAPTER

RELIGION
Religion is a way to God, a knot to tie with God, a door to reach God. Religion or dharma is truly the "moral code of being", the righteousness, that determines the mode of behaviour, whereas adharma is unrighteousness and non-conformity to nature. When there is religion, there is life; without religion, life has no meaning. The word 'religion' is so vast in itself that it reflects through various ways - Truth is religion, Love is religion, Compassion is religion, Duty is religion, Forgiveness is religion, Purity of thoughts, words and deeds is religion, Longing for universal welfare is religion and so on. It all means that humanity is religion and religion is humanity. When a person is equipped with all human values, only then he can be called a religious person. In simple words, religion is love to God and love to humanity - a bridge between man and God because religion unites and never divides. It unites human to human, human to God and human to all creatures of God. It is light of knowledge, the very base of human life. Without base, there is no existence, so it can be taken as in the form of human existence. The philosophy of India is steeped into its religious and spiritual ideals. Here in India, religion does not mean any caste or creed, any ritual or worship, nor it is just hearing and singing the discourses and teachings of scriptures and holy books rather to live according to those teachings and develop the virtues is religion in true sense. That is why an "ideal living" is synonymous of religion. In fact, religion is an art of descent cultural behaviour, an art of ideal living by cultivating high human qualities and reaching the goal of Perfection - that is oneness of human soul to Divine soul. Religion is the core of India and it occupies the most important place in the lives of Indians. An Indian mind is first religious than anything else. It is perhaps because India has been the birth place of many great religions of the world as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Hinduism is the very root of Indian culture whereas the other three are the outcome of Vedantic philosophy of spiritualism.

Hinduism - is probably the oldest religion of the world which was revealed thousand years ago in India with the coming of Aryans, one of the most civilized and cultured race of the world. Hinduism is a way of life filled with religious ideals and moral beliefs, an outcome of the teachings of Vedic literature. Being Hindus, the poetry of Toru Dutt, Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu, Nissim Ezekiel, A.K.Ramanujan, kamala das, Jayant Mahapatra and K.N.Daruwalla is a genuine revelation of the fundamental concepts of Hinduism.

Omnipresence and omnipotence of God - Hinduism firmly believes that God is Universal and Infinite spirit. He pervades the cosmos. He is present in all creation. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. Toru Dutt, the pioneer of Pre Independence Indo-English poetry shows her firm faith in the Supreme Power of one Almighty God through the story of 'Prahlad'.

“There is one God- one only-mark!
To Him is all our service due” [1] (Prahlad)

These authoritative lines from the mouth of Prahlad to his proud father Heerun Kasyapu, the tyrannical king, reveal the universal truth that God is one, and only one, the Supreme Power to create and regulate the whole universe. Shri Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of Sikhism explains, “Ik Onkar Satnam Karta Purukh Nirbhau Nirvair Akal Murat Ajuni Saibhang Gurparsad” – “There is

but one God, the Supreme Being, His Name is Eternal Truth, He is the Creator of Universe and Immanent Reality, He is devoid of fear and Rancour, He is Form Eternal, Unborn and Self Existent, He is realized by the grace of the Guru.” (2)

The Bhagavad Geeta which is the epitome of all that is great and glorious in Hinduism speaks, “God is the source of all, to know Him is to know all” — “The Supreme (Lord) is the Unborn Eternal. He is also the Lord of the world. Though He has no birth all existences derive from Him. He is in truth the Eternal God Himself, more ancient than all else and all manifested glory is from Him.” (3) Toru Dutt’s line “There is one God- one only, to Him is all our service due” is totally similar to the Indian philosophy of Geeta and Guru Granth Sahib that God is the only Truth, the origin of all. The whole universe is His manifestation, the body of one God. There are no two or three Gods to cherish the creation. God is the only Creator, the only Cherisher, the only Giver and the only Doer. He does not only create but also preserve and protects His creation. Everything and everyone is under His control. The mystic power of God drives the earth, the sky, the sun, the moon, the wind and everything. No one else is that efficient to govern the world eternally. God is the only Ruler, All Knowing and All Pervading. Different Names of God are just His Divinely forms and attributes. Even the gods and goddesses work under the Supreme Power of one Almighty God. Toru Dutt explains the sovereignty of Almighty God through her brilliant poem ‘Prahlad’. Prahlad is the story of King Heerun Kasyapu who has no faith and respect for God or God’s Name. He never likes that anybody should take the Name of God in front of him and orders that all men should worship him and him alone. He has no respect for Vedas, Brahmins, sacrifices, rites and rituals. When he engages Sonda marco, a tutor to teach his four loving sons- Rahd, Onoorahd, Prahlad and Sunghrad, he orders the tutor not to teach anything about God or soul to his sons. All the three except Prahlad are quick to learn the lesson. When the four are called to the court and are asked to explain what they have learnt, Prahlad, the true devotee of God, replies with a blow to tyrant king that God’s knowledge is the true knowledge, all other knowledge is useless and blank-

“That is true knowledge which can make us
mortals, saint like, holy, pure......................” (4) [Prahlad]

God Himself declares in Geeta, “I am the origin of all; from Me all (the whole creation) proceeds. Knowing this the wise worship Me endowed with conviction.” (X/8) (5)

Heerun kasyapu gets very furious at Prahlad’s reply and orders to bow down before him otherwise he will be killed but Prahlad remains unshaken because of his firm faith in God and he boldly declares-

(2) Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Ed. Bhai Chatar Singh Jeevan Singh, Amritsar publication, page- 1
(4) Toru Dutt’s ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’, page-158.
“The Gods who made us are the life
of living creatures, small and great
And shall we there high gods blaspheme” (6) [Prahlad]

These lines of Toru Dutt spoken through the mouth of Prahlad beautifully depict that God is the creator of every being, great or small. He Himself is present in every creature in the form of ‘self’ and He Himself is present outside. Whole universe is His form and manifestation.

Many similar reference we find in Shri Guru Granth Sahib, “sarab jyot mai jaki jyot dhar rahio suami ot pot”- “His light shines in all lights. He supports all like warf and weft in the fibre.” (7) Toru Dutt expreses the same omnipresence “Hath He a shape or hath he name. I know not this, nor care to know, Dwelling in light, to which the sun is Darkness. He Sees all below, himself unseen’. (Prahald)(8)

Hearing the words of full faith from Prahlad, the tyrant Heerun Kasyapu orders the life guard to punish and torture Prahlad in different ways. Prahlad is taken to a dungeon cell, he is thrown down from hill, he is buried alive in the sand but all the methods fail. At last when Prahlad is chained to a pillar for the stroke of death, the proud King mockingly inquires if God was in the crystal pillar against which Prahlad leans. Prahlad’s answer is ‘yes’. There upon the King gives a hard blow to the pillar, which comes tumbling down and out of it a stately sable warrior of immense stature springs who has a lion’s head and a body of a human (Narsim- avatar of God). With a terrible shout he strikes the tyrant Heerun Kasyapu on the helm and rips him down and hails Prahlad as King of the entire realm in his place and then vanishes in a thunder clap. In this way, the true devotee is protected and saved by God, whereas the tyrant gets his end in terrible way. Toru Dutt expresses the Supreme Power of Almighty God through the words of Prahlad-

“There is one God- only one- Mark!” [Prahlad](8)

Very similar to this is the philosophy of Shri Guru Granth Sahib, ‘eko ek hari aap, puran pur rahio prabh biap’ - “God Himself is the only, only and only one-the Perfect God pervades all.”(9)

Ravindra Nath Tagore shows firm faith in the immanence of God. God is omnipresent and is inseparable from His creation. The whole world is animated by an invisible divine spirit. He sees “one undivided changeless life in all lives, one inseparable in the separate.” Thus the immanence of God fills him with wonder and excitement. He sees the spirit of God everywhere, in every object of nature and in every being. His Geetanjali is full of such examples.

Tagore says, “I know not how thou singest my master!
I ever listen 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. (3/Geetanjali) (10)

(6) Toru Dutt ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 157
(7) Shri Guru Granth Sahib 5/294
(9) Shri Guru Granth Sahib, page-287.
Tagore here talks of Almighty God as a superb musician, the Master musician who enlivens the whole sky by the life breath of the divine melody. His music is all powerful like the currents of stream which vibrates through the entire universe and which goes on conquering all the obstacles in its way. Nothing is without His presence. All hearts and places and all forms, colours and expansions belong to God. Everything belongs to God who is omnipresent. In the mood of ecstasy, Tagore expresses his love to God’s supremacy-

“Light my light, the world filling light,
the eye kissing light,
the heart sweetening light.” 57/Geetanjali (11)

Tagore says- “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 shower——”11/Geetanjali (12).

Tagore wants to convey that every human body is the temple of living God and the only way to please God is to love humanity.

Tagore again and again emphasises that God is omnipresent and everything bears the touch of this divinity-

“And entering my heart unbidden even as one of the common crowd, unknown to me, my king thou didst press the signet of eternity upon many a fleeting moment of all my life” 43/Geetanjali (13). The lines beautifully show that the immanence of God is felt everywhere though we may not be able to see it with our naked eyes. He is present at all places and at all times.

“Have you not heard his silent steps? He comes, comes ever comes. Every moment and every age, every day and every night he comes, comes and ever comes........

In the fragrant days of sunny April through the forest path he comes, comes and ever comes.
In the rainy gloom of July nights on the thundering chariots of clouds he comes, comes and ever comes.” 45/Geetanjali (14)

Here Tagore expresses that God is immanent, we can feel His presence everywhere. Even nature is the seat of divine spirit. The changes that take place in nature are the manifestation of His divine presence.

Shri Guru Granth Sahib reveals the glory of God-

“ban tan parbat hai parbrahm
Jaisi agya taisa karam” 5/294 (15)

(13) Ravindra Nath Tagore’s ‘Geetanjali’- 43/190.
(14) Ravindra Nath Tagore’s ‘Geetanjali’- 45/197.
“In forest, in blades of grass, and in mountains is present the Supreme Being. As He commands, so His creatures act.”

“paun pani baisantar mahi
char kunt dah dise samahi” 5/294 (16)

“In wind, in water, in fire and in all the four quarters and in all the ten directions, everywhere He is contained.” 5/294

In Bhagavad Geeta, Lord Himself describes His omnipresence and omnipotence- “I am the taste in the waters, O Son of Kunti (Arjuna), I am the light in the Moon and the Sun. I am the syllable Aum in all the Vedas; I am the sound in ether and manhood in men.” VII/8 (17)

“I am the pure fragrance in earth, brightness in fire. I am the life in all existences and austerity in ascetics.” VII/9

Tagore sings with proclamation that God is omnipresent and omnipotent. He comes through the forest path in the form of sweet perfume and sometimes in the form of rain and thunder. God dwells in everything or everything is the manifestation of Divine spirit of Almighty God. God not only creates but also sustains and protects His creation. The mystic power of God drives the whole universe-the earth, the sky, the sun, the moon, the wind and everything and every being.

With a twinkling of eye, God can restore life to dead or change the sorrow into joy. Everything is in His hands. Tagore reveals this philosophy- “It is the golden touch of His feet that makes my joy to shine.” 45/Geetanjali (18)

Tagore again and again refers and stresses the divine immanence of Almighty God throughout the universe- “The same stream of life that runs through my veins, night and day, runs through the world and dances in the rhythmic measures.”

“It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.” 69/Geetanjali (19)

Firm belief in God and soul’s longing to unite with God are the central theme of Sri Aurobindo’s mystic poetry. Throughout the whole of the spiritual epic ‘Savitri’, we feel the pulsating presence of God. Sri Aurobindo convinces that God is Universal and Infinite spirit. He is the only Truth, the origin of all. He pervades the cosmos. The whole universe is His manifestation. From Him the whole creation proceeds. He is present in all creation, the Supreme Power responsible for every being, everything and every activity going on in the universe. “He is the maker and the world He made He is the vision and He is the seer
He is Himself the actor and the act
He is Himself the knower and the known.”

Savitri, Book 1 Canto 4 (20)

(18) Ravindra Nath Tagore’s ‘Geetanjali’- 45/197.
(19) Ravindra Nath Tagore’s ‘Geetanjali’- 69/283.
These are the golden lines to express God’s glory through the mouth of Savitri’s father Aswapathy, an illumined soul. The lines beautifully stress that God is everything. This physical universe is the visible form of Almighty God. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient functioning in three ways of creation, redemption and judgement. Everything is working and moving under the influence of the omnipotence and omnipresence of God. Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy is very similar to the philosophy of Shri Guru Granth Sahib- “eko hukum vartei sabh loiee ekas te sabh opat hoiee” 1/233 (21)

“The will of the one God alone pervades in the entire world as all creation is born of Him.”

“sargun nirgun nirankar sunn samadhi ap apan kia nanka ape hi phir jaap” 5/290 (22)

“The formless one is the possessor of the three qualities of maya but at the same time above these qualities and is Himself in profound contemplation. He has Himself created all the creation and He Himself remembers Himself (while) sitting within all the living beings.”
God Himself speaks His glory in Geeta, ‘Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind and understanding and self sense- this is the eight fold division of My nature’ 4/VII (23). Sri Aurobindo’s line-“He is the Maker and the world He made” very well goes according to the Indian philosophy of God’s omnipotence and omnipresence. In fact God is the source of all.

Both the matter and the spirit are the manifestation of Almighty God. Out of these, the matter (mortal body made up of five elements- earth, water, fire, air and space) is inferior (His lower nature) where as the spirit (soul- the divine spark of God) is superior (His higher nature). All beings thus spring from the union of these two and God is the source of entire creation. He Himself is present in every one in the form of ‘Self’ and He Himself is present outside as nature, and creatures- the whole universe. Sri Aurobindo expresses this mystic concept-

“The immanent lives in man as in his house.” Book 1, Canto IV. (24)

“God found in Nature, Nature fulfilled in God.” Book 1, Canto III. (25)

It explains that the world exists through Him and all existences are due to His Supreme Power. Even the light in the sun, moon and stars; the brightness in the fire, the flow and taste in the water, the coolness and hotness in changing weather, the fragrance of flower, the greenery of trees, the chirping of birds- all beauty of nature is because of God. Sri Aurobindo expresses the omnipresence of God-

(21)Shri Guru Granth Sahib- 1/223.
(22)Shri Guru Granth Sahib- 5/290.
(24)Sri Aurobindo’s ‘Savitri’, Book 1, Canto IV, Page-65 (3) Sri Aurobindo’s ‘Savitri’, Book 1, Canto VI.
“A blaze of His sovereign glory is the sun
A glory is the gold and glimmering moon
A glory is His dream of purple sky
A march of His greatness are the wheeling stars
His laughter of beauty breaks out in green trees
His moments of beauty triumph in a flower
The sea’s chant the rivulet’s wondering voice
Are murmurs falling from the eternal harp” (Book 1, Canto IV.) (26)

There is not a single particle on the earth, where God is not present. Sri Aurobindo’s Savitri in every nook and corner evinces the presence of God- Then by a touch, a presence or a voice
The world is turned into a temple ground
And all discloses the unknown Beloved” (Book II Canto 12) (27).

“And garbed in beggar’s robes there walks the one” (Book II Canto 5) (28).

“He was here before the elements could emerge
before there was light of mind or life could breath” (Book I Canto 4) (29).

Very similar thoughts are found in Shri Guru Granth Sahib- “aad sach jugad sach hai bhi sach nanak hos bhi sach” 5/285 (30) - “True one (God) was in the primal age (since the ages began), the True one is now also, the True one will also be in future.”

Sarojini Naidu, the legendary heroine of Indo-English poetry, shows the unshakable faith in the presence of Unseen Reality in many of her poems. In ‘Harvest Hymn’, she presents a group of peasants praying to Almighty God to favour them by His blessings, grace and bounty because their very existence depends on His mercy. “Lord of universe, Lord of our being,

Father eternal, ineffable OM
Thou art the seed and the scythe of our harvests
Thou art our hands, and our hearts and our home
We bring thee our lives and our labour for tribute
Grant us thy succour, thy counsel, thy case” (Harvest Hymn) (31).

Each and every word expresses the greatness and glory of Almighty God along with the spirit of immense faith of Indian people in God as “God is the goal, the sustainer, the witness, the abode, the refugee, the source (creator), the destroyer, the supporter, the resting place and the imperishable seed” IX/18 (32).

(26) Sri Aurobindo’s ‘Savitri’ Book I Can to IV page 60.
(27) Sri Aurobindo’s ‘Savitri’, Book II Canto 12, Page-278.
Sarojini’s expression ‘Lord of Universe, Lord of our being’ beautifully conveys the omnipresence and omnipotence of Almighty God. It clarifies that God permeates the world in His unmanifested form. When God likes, He creates and when He likes He absorbs within Himself the entire creation. The cycle of the world thus keeps rotating. All are under His command. The world does not run by logic or reason but it is the Infinite Force of Almighty God that is creating and commanding the universe. Referring to the syllable ‘OM’ for Supreme Lord, Sarojini Naidu shows her firm faith in Hindu philosophy because to Hindus ‘OM’ is the highest and most sacred symbol of God. Vedantic philosophy stresses that OM is not a word, but it is God Himself. Repeating ‘OM’ continuously is the only true worship as the constant repetition of this sacred word helps to fix the ideal in the mind. The Blessed Lord says in Geeta, “He who utters the single syllable Aum (OM) which is Brahmam, remembering Me as he departs, giving up his body, he goes to the highest goal” 13/VIII (33). The basic idea is that Aum represents the universal and infinite spirit of God, the eternity of God. God Himself expresses the mystic power of OM, “a ham giram asmy ekam aksaram’ X/25 (34) ‘of utterances I am the single syllable Aum”. So ‘OM’ stands for the Absolute Supremacy of God. Sarojini Naidu shows her firm faith in the Supreme Power of Almighty God through devoted prayers-

“Speak, Master and reveal to me
Thine inmost laws of life and death” (The Soul’s Prayer) (35)
“Open, O vast unknown
Thy sealed mysterious portal” (Welcome) (36)

It has been recognized by the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Geeta and other scriptures that man lives by the working of a power greater than him and that power is the power of God. God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. He is the real source of life, Everything is because of Him. He is present in each and every particle of this universe, even in petals, leaves, flowers and fruits means, we can feel the presence of Almighty in the sanctuary of nature also. Sarojini expresses this faith as-

“O perchance we may glean a far glimpse of the Infinite Bosom
in whose glorious shadow life is unfolded and unfurled” (Solitude) (37).

God Himself expresses His omnipresence in Geeta- “And entering the Earth, I support all beings by My vital energy and becoming the sapful soma (moon) I nourish all herbs (or plants) XV/13 (38). Guru Granth Sahib repeatedly describes the omnipresence of God as-”dharan meih akas paeal sarab lok puran pratipal”- “He is present in all spheres, the earth, the heaven and the nether regions. He is the sustainer in all the regions.”

“ban tan parbat hai parbrahm jaisi agya taisa karam”- “In forests, in blades of grass and in mountains is present the Supreme Being. As He commands, so (His creatures) act.”
“paun pani baisantar mahi, char kunt dah disre samahi”- “In wind, in water, in fire and in all the ten directions (everywhere) He is contained.” 5/293 (39)

Before independence, though the main emphasis was on spirituality but it does not mean that we do not find God and soul in Post-independence Indo-English poetry. Modern Indian English poetry shows Godly concerns and faiths with a complexity of emotions and consciousness.

Nissim Ezekiel sometimes talks to God with a familiarity as-
Ezekiel expresses the omnipresence and omnipotence of God.
“God is presence here and his people are real” (Latter Day psalms. (40)
“The mills of God are never’s slow” (Philosophy) (41)
“No Lord
not the fruit of action
is my motive” (The Egoist Prayers) (42)
At the same time, Ezekiel addresses to God with all seriousness as-
“God grant me privacy
secretive as the mole
inaccessibility
but only of the soul” (Morning Prayer) (43)
Yet in another poem, Ezekiel presents God as the Supreme Doer. He shows that everything is in God’s hands. He does whatever He wants. He Himself performs the world drama. He is the only Doer, the only Judge. He judges all the actions of all beings and rotates them according to their past and present deeds. The conclusion of Ezekiel’s “An Atheist speaks”-
“He
divided us-
one part longing for wisdom
and other for folly———”
“He
made maya
with nothing behind it (An Atheist speaks) (44)
“One part longing for wisdom and other for folly” throws light on the philosophy that good and virtuous people are busy to make their life fruitful and purposeful whereas sinners do not care for the value of their human birth and just wasting their precious human bodies in doing sins and evil deeds. Guru Granth Sahib says-

Kai kot hoe pujari, kai kot achar biohari”– “Many millions are worshipper (of God). Many millions are performers of religious ceremonies, rituals and worldly duties.”
“Kai kot bhae abhimani, kai kot andh agiani”– “Many millions are proud. Many millions are in blind ignorance (totally ignorant).

(40) Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Latter Day, Psalms
(41) Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Exaet Nama page. 129.
(44) Nissim Ezekiel ‘Hymns in Darkness’, collected poems, page-287.
“Jit jih lavoh tit tit lagna, nanak karte ki janai karta rachna”- “whatever God appoints (the created ones) to work, they are doing that. (Guru) Nanak (says) God alone knows the (schemes) of His creation.” 5/275 (45)

Ezekiel’s expression ‘He made maya nothing behind it’ shows that worldly pleasures bear no real fruit. They are temporary like the shadow of tree. Ezekiel creates the authentic atmosphere of peace through the peculiar expressions of Indian flavour-

“All are welcome whatever caste
if not satisfied tell us
otherwise tell others
God is great.” (Irnani Restaurant Instructions) (46).

“Listen to the voice of God” (The Great). (47)

Both the expressions ‘God is Great’ and ‘Listen to the voice of God’ present Ezekiel’s faith in God and God’s power. Ezekiel shows Indian people’s firm faith in God in day to day life through one of its finest

poem ‘Night of the Scorpion’ published in ‘The Exact Name’. He gives a realistic description that how Indians depend on God for every grace and comfort. Here the protagonist might be the poet Himself or an imagined person who speaks in the first person. The mother is stung by a scorpion one rainy night. The mother occupies a prominent place in Indian home. All love and respect her so all members of the family and neighbours are very anxious to bring her quick relief-

“The peasants came like swarm of flies
and buzzed the Name of God a hundred times
to paralyse the Evil one” (Night of the Scorpion) (48).

They are simple and well intentioned people who believe in the efficacy of prayer to God. Prayer can ward off the evil influence. The mother suffers intense agony for twenty hours and what the pain automatically subsides, she is happy that none of her children has been bitten- “my mother only said

Thank God, the scorpion picked on me
and spared my children” (Night of Scorpion) (48)

Ezekiel’s expression ‘Thank God the scorpion picked on me and spared my children’ conveys the immense faith in God as well as the self effacing love of an Indian mother. In very similar manner, Sarojini Naidu expresses the immense faith in God through an Indian maiden’s fear on a long and lonely way who prays to God-

(47) Nissim Ezekiel, ‘A Time to change’
Unless Thou succour my footsteps and guide me
Ram re Ram, I shall die” (Village Song) (49)

“Ram re Ram” is a typical exclamation used by Indian women folk in the moments of excitement and fear. The repetition of Ram re Ram intensifies the Indian flavour of Hinduism. Here, Ram is not an individual God but the Absolute One, All Pervading God. Sarojini’s expression ‘Ram re Ram’ and Ezekiel’s saying ‘Thank God’ are similar in tone and manner. Nissim Ezekiel wants to convince that God is the Supreme Power responsible for everything, every being and every act happening in this universe. Without His Grace, Salvation is never possible. Ezekiel says-

“Salvation belongeth unto the Lord
Thy blessing is upon
all the people of the earth” (Latter Day Psalms) (50).

In a poem like Morning Prayer, he prays-

“God grant me certainty
In kinship with the sky
Air, earth, fire, sea
and the fresh inward eye” (Morning Prayer) (51).

Here, Ezekiel prays to God grant him kinship with the sky, air, earth, fire and sea (the five basic elements of the matter of which human body as well as universe is made up of) and also the kinship with the fresh inward eye. The ‘fresh inward eyes’ symbolises the knowledge of spirituality – ‘Sat chit ananda’, ‘Brahm Gyan’ that is only possible through the Grace of God along with the efforts of human being.

Ezekiel refers the greatmens of God, the universe, and the basic elements through the act of poetic creation “And God - like make a universe from chaos of fire and air and earth and water” (Creation) (52).

A.K.Ramanujan’s rootedness in his Hindu experience speaks the glory of omnipresence of Almighty God through oneness of human soul-

“Actually see the one in many’
Losing a life time of double vision” (Entries for a Catalogue Fears) (53).

The lines throw light on the deep Vedantic philosophy of presence of God in everyone, the concept of Brahma in every object in the cosmos. No place, no being or no time is without the presence of God. Guru Granth Sahib says-

“eko rav rahiya sab thayeei
eko vasaya mann mahi” 1/433 (54).

(52) Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Sixty Poems’-38.
(54) Shri Guru Granth Sahib, page- 1/433.
“The one God pervades everywhere. He alone dwells in every soul.”

“Ek pita ekas ke hum balak”- “God is our common Father. We all are His children.” 5/611 (55)

“Kudrat kar ke vasaya soi” - “God created nature and pervades it.” 1/83 (56)

“Sagar rup varan mann mahi, kaho Nanak eko salah” – “He alone should be praised who pervades all forms, colours and hearts.” 1/223 (57)

“Sagal samagri ja ka tana, apan jas aap hi suna”- “The whole creation is His body (Being manifest in all human beings). He Himself performs His praises and also hears the same.” 5/293 (58)

A.K.Ramanujan’s expression, ‘Actually see the one in many” beautifully shows that God is present in all, He is present everywhere.

Lord Himself declares in Geeta- “aham atma gudakesa, sarvabhutasayasthitah”- “I O Gudakesa (Arjuna) am the ‘self’ seated in hearts of all creatures.” X/20 (59) This presence of God in everyone forms the base of Indian philosophy of universal brotherhood- Vasudev Kutumbkam- which Ramanujan wants to present through his poetry.

Kamla Das sings the glories of God and His power in her poem ‘The Inheritance’ referred in the collection ‘The Old Play House’

“Oh God
Blessed be Your fair name, blessed be the religion
purified in the unbeliever’s blood” (The Inheritance) (60)

The only line “Oh God, Blessed be Your fair name” is quite enough to describe the glorifying supremacy of Almighty God as God is the only Truth, the origin of all. The whole universe is His manifestation. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient functioning in three ways of creation, redemption and judgement. He controls the creation and working of the universe. The form, the place, the acts, the words, the deeds and the doings are all because of God and His power. Guru Granth Sahib says-

“vade kiya vadiaiya kichh kehna kehan na jaye
so karta kadar karim de jiya rijak sambhaiye” 1/474 (61)

“The golden glories of the great God cannot be described. He is the creator, the Almighty and the Beneficent one who provides sustenance for all living beings.”

“anath nath gobind gopal, sarab ghata karat kirpal” 1/474 (62)

“He is the patron of the helpless, Gobind (protector of the world) and Gopal (sustainer of the world). He is the Feeder of all creations.”


(59)The Bhagwad Geeta, X/20, page-262.


God Himself speaks in Bhagwad Geeta, “I am the father of this world, the mother, the supporter and the grandsire. I am the object of knowledge, the purifier. I am the syllable Aum, and I am the rk, the sama and the yajus as well.” IX/17 (63) It is because of these great attributes, Kamla Das sings the glories of God by using the expressions, ‘Blessed be Your fair name.’ It is because of the grace of God that one treads upon the path of religion and it is religion that makes one pure. Even the unbelievers get sacred and purified from all ills and evils after being religious. Kamala Das’s line “Blessed be the religion purified in the unbeliever’s blood’ expresses the faith in God and faith in being religious.

Jayant Mahapatra discovers the Supreme Power of God in Gandhi’s last words ‘Hey Ram’, the best of all poems-

“Hey Ram
in these two words
was the briefest of silence
a touch of silence of immensity” (Requiem) (64)
Here Ram is not an individual God but the Absolute one, All Pervading God. Guru Granth Sahib says, “ram naam sab jag ka tarak” 4/1311 (65), as Ram nama mantra stands for Supreme Reality.

The word ‘Ram’ stands for one who is always present in the hearts of yogis and makes them feel happy. Ram also symbolises omnipresence of God- ‘Jo har kan kan mei rama hau hai’. “‘Ra’ is taken from the Astakshari mantra- Om Namo Narayana and ‘Ma’ from Pancha akshari mantra Namah Shivaya”. Ram Nama contains the power of all mantras and can purge us from all ills, evils and sins. Chanting Rama’s Name produces a rhythmic sound that soothes and relaxes all mental and physical system. It has a power to liberate from ego and desires and lift our spirit. This mantra can be chanted anywhere, anytime and by anyone because the Name of Ram is absolute Truth. Tulsi Das, Ram Das, Kabir Das and Mahatma Gandhi are among those who thoroughly enjoyed the sweetness and power of Ram Nam as they all believed that, meditation upon ‘Ram-Ram’ works as a mantra and opens a channel towards the purity of soul, a way to realize God within. Jayant Mahapratra’s poem ‘Grass’ also shows immense faith in God and His omnipresence. As the poet is moving in a sad and stressed mood throwing his head on his shoulders, he hears a hymnal sound reverberating in the atmosphere. He looks below at the grass which seems to be chanting a hymn in the glory of the omnipresent God. It eases and consoles him-

“I watch a little hymn
turning the ground beneath my feet
a tolerant soil making its own way
in the light of the sun” (Grass) (66)

Many similar reference we find in Shri Guru Granth Sahib- “ban tin parbat hai parbhram, jaisi agia taisa karam”- “In forest, in blades of grass and in mountains is present the Supreme Being” 5/293 (67). As he commands, so His creatures act.

K.N. Daruwalla expresses faith in God through a character poem, ‘The Epileptic’ referred in his first book ‘Under Orion’. This poem is not only about a woman with two children and the third in her belly, who suffers a fit of epilepsy on a rickshaw but also about her husband, the rickshaw puller, the maulvi and the people who visit the mazar. The fit is sudden-

“suddenly the two children
flew from her side
like severed wings
Thank God, the burden in her belly
stayed where it was” (The Epileptic) (68)

Someone advises the woman’s husband to take her to the mosque at Bansa so that the disease may be cured with the help of religious faith- “Take her to the mosque at Bansa, he said,

On the night preceding
the first Friday of the month
Insha Allah! she shall be cured” (The Epileptic) (68)

‘Thank God’ and ‘Insha Allah’ clearly show the immense faith in Supreme power of God as well as in the Grace of God. In fact, everything is in God’s hands. Guru Granth Sahib says-

“marai rakhai eko aap, manukh kai kichh nai hath”

“The one God Himself cause death or saves, nothing is in man’s (hand) power” 5/281 (69)

**Existence of Soul:** Indian philosophy mainly stresses upon the existence and immortality of soul rather existence of soul forms the principal founding of Indianness. The essence of Vedas is that Soul is the greatest truth- “the Ekam Sat”. The visible body is not the whole reality but there is in it an unseen but ever active master of the house- the Dehi (Soul). In Bhagavad Geeta Lord states- “I O Gudake’sa (Arjuna), am the ‘self’ in the hearts of all creatures. I am the beginning, the middle and the very end of beings” X/20 (70). It clarifies that God abides in our body in the form of soul (atma) that is why it is common saying that Atma and Parmatma are one. The real nature of Atma is pure consciousness, ‘the divine spark in and through that we see the universe’. And to realize this divinity, to realize this soul within is the ultimate aim of human life. Toru Dutt speaks Soul Realization as ultimate knowledge, the true knowledge through the words of Prahlad-

“That is true knowledge which can make
us mortal saint like, holy, pure” (Prahlad) (71).

Indeed, the knowledge of soul is the true knowledge because it is the phase of Lord Himself which constitutes the individual self in the body. The physical body made up of earth, water, fire, air and space is the lower nature whereas Soul- the pure consciousness is the Higher Nature of God by which this world is held. Guru Granth Sahib says- “Sabh mei jio, jio hai soiee, ghat ghat rahiya samayiee”- “Within everyone is the soul and soul is God Himself who pervades all and everywhere” 5/563 (72).

(72) Shri Guru Granth Sahib, 5/563.
It clarifies that the real nature of atma (soul) is Godly nature- Pure Consciousness, the Truth, the Knowledge, the Light, the Love, the Divine music (anhad naad). When a person realizes this Divinity within, he lives in the state of Sat Chit Ananda then there is no more death, no fear, no sorrow and no worry. So the soul of a man is a emanation of Supreme Being. God is within us in the form of ‘self’ but we are unaware of it because after coming in contact with worldly matters and affairs, the soul gets covered with the envelope of ignorance, sorrow and fear. Ego, lust, greed and anger are soul’s empirical bondages. Once these extraneous associations are got rid of through Sadhna (bhakti, karma, gyan) the soul unfolds its true nature of Bliss and Peace. In Toru Dutt’s poem ‘The Legends of Dhruva’, Toru Dutt describes this highest state of God realization to win and not to care for the worldly kingship. In the poem ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ we see Dhruva as an ambitious and indigant child trying to win his father’s love but Suruchee cannot tolerate it as she wants that the King’s love, power and position be reserved for her own son Uttama. Dhruva’s mother Suneetee the less favoured queen of the King, consoles and advices her son not to feel bad at the misbehaviour of Suruchee, as all these worldly kingships are temporary, try to win God and Godliness that is permanent kingship and permanent happiness. Then Dhruva declares his firm resolution-

“I shall try
the highest good, the loftiest place to win
which the whole world deems priceless and desires” (The Legend of Dhruva) (73)

Toru Dutt wants to convince that soul realization is godliness, permanent happiness, lasting peace and perfection and that is true kingship. In fact he is true king, who lives in the state of peace and perfection of soul realization. Every human heart has hunger to achieve it but very rare one get this goal to be achieved.

In a very similar tone to Toru Dutt, Ravindra Nath Tagore expresses the longing of devotee’s heart for soul realization having thought and known that soul is part and parcel of Almighty God-

“Life of my life, I shall ever try to keep my body pure,
knowing that thy living touch is upon all my limbs,
I shall ever try to keep all my untruths out from my thoughts,
knowing that thou art that truth which has kindled
the light of reason in my mind.
I shall ever try to drive all my evils away from my heart
and keep my love in flower, knowing that
thou has thy seat in the inmost shrine of my heart” 4/Geetanjali (74)

‘Life of my life’ and ‘thou has thy seat in the inmost shrine of my heart’ clearly show that soul is really not a part but is Infinite God Himself. Lord Krishna declares in Bhagavad Geeta, “I O Gudake’sa (Arjuna) am the self seated in the heart of all creatures.”X/20 (75) The soul is the greatest truth, the other Name of God, basis of all life and logic. It is Indestructible spark of Divine, the Eternally Perfect and the Eternally Blessed.

(75)The Bhagwad Geeta, X/20, page-262.
Guru Granth Sahib says “mann tu jyot savrup hai, apna mul pachhan”- “O my soul! You are the divine spark of God, recognise your worth.” Body is perishable, not the soul. What dies is man’s body not the soul which is immortal, the Divine Light of God Himself. In very beautiful words Tagore describes the existence and eternity of human soul-

“Thou hast made me endless, such is the pleasure
This frail vessel thou emptiest again and again
and fillest it ever with fresh life” 1/Geetanjali (76)

It explains that we all are the reflection of God. Each soul is actually the Infinite God, only realization is needed, seeing is needed.

“Light, oh where is light?
Kindle it with the burning fire of desire” 27/Geetanjali (77)

Tagore expresses that Divine Light is present in man’s own heart but he does not know it and wastes his life unnecessarily for Divine Light outside which is already dwelling in him as the form of his own soul. He can realize it if he has intense desire to meet God.

Tagore again and again emphasizes that human soul is as eternal as God Himself. Human body is the dwelling place of the soul and soul is the temple of God. God fills human soul with inexpressible joy and divine music-

“At the immortal touch of thy hands my little heart loses its limits in joy and gives utterance ineffable” Geetanjali (78)

It clarifies that the great soul which is beyond age, death and sorrow, beyond hunger and thirst, is within us, only we have to realize it.

To attain the permanent joy, peace and perfection, we must seek our soul, we must know our soul. This seeking and knowing soul is not an outward procedure. It is an inner journey. It knows through becoming, receiving through, being true within (through efforts of bhakti, karma and gyan).

Sri Aurobindo’s Savitri is an epic of Soul, and he stresses that the world is the manifestation of Almighty God and therefore meaningful. He also stresses that man is not just an ‘image of clay’ but he is really a son of God.

“The immanent lives in man as in his house” Book I, Canto IV (79).
His final destiny is to become God, to realize God within his own soul.

“A mutual debt binds man to the Supreme
His nature we must put on as he puts ours
We are sons of God and must be even as he
His human portion, we must grow divine” Book I, Canto IV (80)

(76) Geetanjali/1, page-31
(77) Geetanjali/27, page-136
(78) Geetanjali/01, page-31
Sri Aurobindo says that God has incarnated His creations in His own image. Man has hidden sparks of divinity in Him but he is ignorant of it. The malaise of worldly life will be cured if man moves Godward here on earth-

“Earth is the chosen place of mightiest souls
Earth is the heroic spirit’s battlefield
The forge where the Arch mason shapes his work” Book I, Canto IV (81)

Indeed, human birth is the only birth in which man can realize his soul and earth is the only place where this goal of divinity can be achieved through bhakti, karma and gyan. Sri Aurobindo says- “Our life is a paradox with God for key” Book I, Canto IV (82).

If this human life is wasted in trifles then nothing can help us. Shri Guru Granth Sahib teaches, ‘bhaiee parapet manukh deh huria, gobind milan ki eho teri baria’- ‘O man, you are blessed with human body, it is the only chance to meet and see God’. So it is the duty of every human being to try to attain Divinity for his own betterment as well as for bettering the future of mankind. Sri Aurobindo spreads this message when a voice summons Savitri to her mission in life-

“Find out thy soul, recover thy hid self
In silence seek God’s meaning in thy depths
Then mortal nature to the divine” 540-1 (83)

This is a universal message of soul realization, the ultimate aim of human life, not only for Savitri but for all humanity. The rotation of births and deaths goes on and on until a man discovers his soul. Savitri who is a realized soul, a divine figure from the beginning declares with authority that she has a divine strength within her. She says-

“I have discovered my glad reality
Beyond my body in another’s being
I have found the deep unchanging soul of life” 493 (84)

‘Beyond my body is another being’ expresses the existence of soul. Geeta says- “The Supreme Spirit in the body is said to be the witness, the Permitter, the supporter, the experiencer, the Great Lord, the Supreme Self” XIII/22. The lines beautifully express the existence as well as eternity of ‘unchanging soul’. The Bhagwad Geeta states, “Know thou that by which all this is pervaded is indestructible of this immutable being, no one can bring about the destruction” II/17 (85).

“He is never born, nor does he die at any time, nor having (once) come to be will he again cease to be. He is unborn, eternal, permanent and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain” II/20 (86)

Sri Aurobindo explains the immortality of eternal soul in very similar way-

“Death’s grip can break our bodies, not our souls” (87).

It clearly shows that soul is everlasting as a Divine form and derives its existence from God. That is why death cannot effect upon it. What dies is our body, not the soul.

Sarojini Naidu shows her firm faith in existence of soul. The very title of her poem ‘The Soul’s Prayer’ points towards the existence of soul as soul is the Supreme Reality.

“In childhood pride I said to Thee
O thou, who mad’st me of Thy breath
Speak, master and reveal to me
Thine inmost laws of life and death” (The Soul’s Prayer) (88)

Sarojini’s soul prays to God to reveal to her the inmost laws of life and death in order to make her life complete. Her expression ‘O thou, who mad’st me of thy breath’ is completely based on Vedantic philosophy of “Tat tvam asi” means that every human being is a part and parcel of Divine being. Guru Granth Sahib says- ‘eh saria meria Hari tum mei jyot rakhi tat u jug mei aaya’ (89)- ‘O my body, God infused His light into you and then you appeared in the world’. It clarifies that God Himself dwells in every living creature in the form of soul. That is why it is said Soul is the greatest Truth. In words of Kabir Das, ‘Here is the Truth, Go where you will to Benaras or to Mathura, if you do not find your Soul, the world is unreal to You’ (90) or ‘O Sadhu, God is the breath of all breaths’(90). Sarojini Naidu unfolds this basic concept of soul as-

“Life of all myriad lives that dwell in Thee” (Ghanshyam) (91)
“Lord of our being” (Harvest Hymns) (92).

This means that we all are the parts of One Supreme Reality. Lord Krishna declares in Geeta, ‘Brahma (or the Absolute) is indestructible, the Supreme (higher than all else) essential nature is called the Self. Karma is the name given to the creative force that brings beings into existence. It is the phase of the Divine which constitutes the individual ‘Self’. Brahma is the immutable self existence on which all that lives, moves and has its being rest. ‘Self’ is the spirit in man and nature. Karma is the creative impulse out of which life forms issue”(93). Sarojini’s poem ‘The Soul’s Prayer’ reveals not only the existence of ‘Self’ but also the immortality of ‘Self’. She wants a soul that could remain unconquered God gladly grants her soul’s prayer and answers-

“thy unconquered soul shall know
all passionate rapture and despair.” (The Soul’s Prayer) (94)

‘Unconquered Soul’ clearly expresses the immortality of Soul and Eternity of Soul. All the Vedas and Upanishads speak of this fundamental fact that, “The Universe is Brahma but the Brahma is Atman” or “That which is the finest essence- this whole world has that as its ‘soul’. That is reality. That is Atman. That art thou Svetaketu (Chandogya Upanishads)”. “The Vedas teach that the Soul of a man is immortal. The spirit of man is an emanation of the Eternal being and had no more beginning than God Himself” (95). Sarojini Naidu confirms this fundamental fact in her poem ‘A Challenge to Fate’ when she says that fate can kill her but it can never have the power to control her soul-

(90) Quoted from ‘Kabir’ translated by Ravindra Nath Tagore, ‘A Book of India’, page-334
(95)Bhagwad Geeta, ed. C.Rajagopalacharya, page-22.
“O fate, in vain you hanker to control
my frail, serene, indomitable soul.” (A Challenge to Fate) (96)
The word ‘indomitable’ for soul shows Sarojini’s firm faith in the immortality of soul. Sarojini again
and again asserts the fundamental truth of existence and immortality of soul-
“And the pride of a soul
that has conquered fate” (The Bird of Time) (97)
“Instil into your mortal flash
Immortal breath” (The Desire of Love) (98)

‘Immortal breath’ is actually immortal soul in our mortal body. Body is perishable, not the
soul. And to realize the soul is the base of Vedantic philosophy. “Atman is the sole reality. To know
this to know everything. There is really no plurality. There can be no becoming. Change is mere
names.” (99) Sarojini Naidu throws light on the whole philosophy of Vedanta- “Tat tvam asi” into
these two lines-
“And all our mortal moments are
A session of the Infinite” (To a Buddha seated on Lotus) (100)

It confirms that each soul is really not a part but actually is the Infinite Brahma. In simple terms
jvatma (soul) is the part of parmatma, the infinite, so why the soul is immortal. Blessed Lord explains
the immortal nature of soul in Bhagwad Geeta, “He is uncleavable. He cannot be burnt. He can be
neither wetted nor dried. He is eternal, all pervading, unchanging and immovable. He is the same
forever.” 24/II (101)

Nissim Ezekiel when prays to God for privacy, certainty, his kinship with five basic elements, he
does not forget to pray for Perfection and Salvation (soul realization)-
“God grant me privacy
God grant me certainty
In kinship with the sky
air, earth, fire, sea
and the fresh inward eye.” (The Morning Prayer) (102)

The expression ‘fresh inward eye’ is the state of sat chit ananda- the soul realization. The soul cannot be realized by lectures and dogmas, by artificial rituals and mechanical worship. It is an inward journey. Everyone has to put his own efforts of bhakti, karma and gyan then only one can reach to the goal of ‘inward eye’. God declares in Geeta, “To those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I grant the concentration of understanding by which they come unto Me” X/10 (103). “Out of compassion for those same ones, remaining within my own true state, I destroy the darkness born of ignorance by the shining lamp of wisdom” X/II (104). ‘Shining lamp of wisdom’ is actually the inward eye, then there is no darkness, no illusion, no fear, no ignorance, only light is there- the light of love and music, light of true happiness and joy. Nissim Ezekiel again describes the way to Soul realization and to live in supreme ecstasy-

“Know your mantra, meditate
release your kundalini
get your shakti awakening
and float with the spirit
to your destination.” (Healers) (105)

‘Mantra’ indicates to meditation upon the Name of God, ‘Kundalini’ is the hidden energy (which can be released through proper ‘sadhna’ under the guidance of true guru. ‘Your destination’ is the ultimate aim of human life- the soul realization. ‘Float with the spirit’ expresses the godly life of realized soul. Animals live for their bodies (stomach), human beings live for their body, heart and mind, but there are very rare people, the divine beings, who live in soul, by soul and for soul. Their soul is one with the supreme soul that is why they “float with the spirit”. Bhagwad Geeta describes the ecstasy of realized souls, the perfect beings- “Having become one with Brahma, and being tranquil in spirit, he neither grieves nor desires. Regarding all beings as alike he attains supreme devotion to Me.” XVIII/54 (106) Nissim Ezekiel conveys the joy and ecstasy of soul when it has got permanent united with Divine Soul-

“How delight the soul with absolute sense of salvation” (Island) (107)

Indeed soul is divine in nature, but it gets covered with the worldly maya jaal (kaam, krodh, lobh, moh and ehankar). Ego or ehankar is the greatest barrier. As soon as ego gets dissolved, ignorance destroyed and the soul unfolds its true nature of divinity- the permanent ecstasy. Human birth is the only birth in which man can realize his soul and ‘shabad’ (God’s Name and God’s teachings) is the only support which can help to attain this goal of soul realization.

A.K.Ramanujan refers to the existence of soul in his poem ‘A Hindoo to His body’. In this poem, memory is used to fuse the present and the past. It is used in an objective manner in a wider frame of time. Here a Hindoo asks his body not to leave him (referring to his soul) beyond after death. It was the body which brought him into the world and endured him different feelings. The speaker asks his body to let him (his soul) go with him-

“Let me go with you and feel the weight
of honey hives in my branching and the
burlap weaves of weaver birds
in my hair.” (A Hindoo to his body) (108)
The lines convince the fusion of body and soul, the fusion of present and past. A.K.Ramanujan also conveys the presence of ‘Supreme Soul’ in the form of soul in every human being. Ramanujan says-
“Actually see the one in many.” (Entries for a catalogue fears) (109)
‘One in many’ throws light on the Vedantic philosophy of Tat tvam asi, explaining that though the God is one and one only, but His divine spark is present in every one in the form of soul. Only the liberated souls can realize this reality of ‘one in many.’
Kamala Das brings before the readers the deep philosophy of ‘anhad naad’ and ‘sat chit ananda’ through her poem-
“Only the souls know how to sing.” (The suicide) (110)
This only line is quite enough to describe the state of divinity. “The Lord abides in the heart of every creature and when the veil of that secret sanctuary is withdrawn; we hear the divine voice, receive the divine light, act in divine power” (111). Each soul is actually the spark of Infinite, the reflection of God but it is covered by the veil of ignorance (Avidhya and maya) representing the desires of lust (kama), anger (krodh), greed (lobh), attachment (moh), jealous and hatred (rag dvesha) and pride (ehankar).

When this veil is removed with the effects of bhakti, karma and Jnana, the soul unfolds its true nature of Bliss and Consciousness. Ego or I is the greatest obstruction on the path of achieving sat chit ananda. Through purity of thoughts, words and deeds, through meditation and understanding, we can get over the barrier of ‘ego’ and become simple, natural and innocent which leads to love. And nothing remains to be learned when one has learned to love. Love to God and love to His creatures can only direct to true bhakti and bhakti is the direct way to mukti. This mukti or liberation is permanent joy, the ‘anhad naad’ which ‘only soul knows to sing.’ Body is not concerned with this joy of anhad naad. As God is the greatest musician and soul is a part of God, so naturally soul knows the language of music. When soul unfolds its true nature of divinity, then there is heavenly music all the time, heavenly pleasure all the time and heavenly light all the time. Guru Granth Sahib describes the state of sat chit ananda- when the soul gets permanent unity with supreme soul; there is divine music (anhad naad) all the time-
“hari mangal gao sakhi greh mandar banaya”- “O my dear soul, sing song of joy (His praises) because now my house (heart) has become a palace for Him.”
“hari gao mangal nit sakhie sag dukh na viape”- “Always sing songs of joy, my soul, and then you will not face sufferings or grief.” (112)
Living in constant awareness of one’s spiritual nature while interacting with the world means to experience happiness every moment. It is merging into the ocean of music (nada) provoking and stimulating more and more So “only souls know how to sing”, not the body.

Jayant Mahapatra’s deep Hindu faith prompts him to look within and to know about his ‘soul.’ He puts it as-

“This evening I look at that part of myself
which remains with me, but I do not know
what it is, hard to recognise it anymore.” (Of this evening) (113)

Indeed, people are unaware of their soul. They cannot recognise the worth of its divinity. It is because they are in the grip of worldly desires and worldly affairs. Unholy desires and aspirations work as thieves and intruders and creep into human heart stealthily and one day overwhelm him completely and thus human soul is divorced from Divine and the man remains blank and unknown to the existence of soul, the eternity and divinity of soul. Sometimes Jayant Mahapatra asks-

“words looking for what in the dark of the soul” (Last Night of the Poem) (114)

‘In the dark of the soul’ refers to the soul covered by the envelope of evils of the world- the grip of pride, ego and vanity. The darkness (ignorance) of soul never allows man to come near to God. Mahapatra does not forget to refer the existence of ‘soul’ when he describes the blood red moon-

“Later the moon would rise, blood red
Lightening the soul’s edge like a flame” (The Storm) (115)

‘Lightening the soul’s edge’ explains the awakening of soul’s divinity.

K.N.Daruwalla beautifully opens the secret of soul awakening or soul realization when he describes the pilgrims entering the temple-

“stone palpitating warm, a passion hewn out of the night, as temple bells cry out reverberant, each enters a mystery and soon the soul- chrysalis opens” (Pilgrim to Badrinath) (116)

‘soul- chrysalis opens’ refers to - heavenly illumination. The ‘self’ has been purified by washing it with Jnana (knowledge) and the crystal clear water of vairaga (detachment from worldly affairs). The bhakti, karma and Jnana remove the veil of ignorance (maya) from the soul. Now the soul becomes one with the Supreme. It is an equaimous state of soul and mind when the thoughts are at rest. The external is slowly shut out and the internal begins to manifest. We see God within the contemplation, meditation, also in the field of action realizing God as existing in everything and in every being. Lord Krishna describes this divine state of consciousness, “Through devotion he

what My measure is and who I am in truth, then having known Me in truth, he forth with enters in Me” XVIII/55 (117). In fact, human life is the only life in which one can achieve this goal of godliness and become “manav se mahamanav”. Divinity can be realized in this very life, what we require is a pure heart and pure mind along with an abiding quest to know God. K.N.Daruwalla throws light on the ultimate goal of every human life through his poem ‘The Glass Blower’ in ‘A Summer of Tigers’ in which he speaks of his ancestors not merely as metallurgists but also as mystics who wanted-

“The goal was transuting the earthly
into the celestial” (The Glass Blowers) (118)
The lines are completely devoted to spirituality. Every human being is earthly being and to transform himself into a celestial being is Liberation from the cycle of births and rebirths. The movement from concrete description to reflection is quite common in Daruwalla’s poetry. He shows the mystic unity of atma and parmatma through the glass blower with different kinds of perception-

“This veil that veiled nothing- O glorious deception
and glass cool into colour of space, did they cry out
This is no object, it is thought, perception” (The Glass Blower) (118)
He does not stop there and moves from the clay to the soul-

“with clay altered to replicate
the luminous transparencies of the soul” (The Glass Blower) (118)
The reference of clay suggests ‘physical body’ and transparencies of soul suggest ‘ethereal soul.’

**Renunciation:** It is the symbol of India’s spiritual vision. Renunciation means the ‘interwovenness of atma and parmatma’- ‘to realize God within the soul’. And to realize this truth of the existence of soul and God is the ultimate aim of human life. There is but one Reality- the infinite, indivisible ‘self’ which is knowledge, the knowledge of Absolute Bliss. Toru Dutt describes this true knowledge through the mouth of Prahlad as-

“That is the true knowledge which can make
us mortals saint like, holy pure” (Prahlad) (119)
The true knowledge is the knowledge of spirituality. Spirituality means a person possessing the knowledge of ‘true self’, of a positive soul. One who reaches the highest stage of this knowledge becomes Brahma. Actually we all are the part and parcel of God. We have to realize this godliness. Until it happens, the cycle of births and rebirths continue. Human birth is the golden opportunity to attain the true knowledge of divinity and shabad (meditation upon God’s Name and God’s teachings) is the only support to achieve the goal of renunciation. Renunciation awakens us from the fertility of worldly attachments and relationships. It helps in keeping our greed for materials and resources in check and achieve the transcending of desires and ego, likes and dislikes to reach the state of

desirelessness. In fact, Renunciation is the state of Perfection and Liberation. It is mystical union of soul with Supreme Soul. The feeling of ecstasy or bliss associated with this true union is stable, lasting and ultimately satisfying. The self realized person enjoys unlimited happiness as he concentrates on the Supreme Soul. He lives in harmony with himself as well as harmony with the universe. This true knowledge of self realization makes a mortal human being, ‘pure, holy saint like’ which Toru Dutt expresses in her poem “Prahlad.” In her another poem “The Legend of Dhruva”, Toru Dutt points out the goal of renunciation which Dhruva resolves to achieve—

“I shall try The highest good, the holiest place to win
which the whole world deems priceless and desire” (The Legend of Dhruva) (120)

Toru Dutt not only points towards the goal of renunciation but also tells the way to achieve it—

“Thus here each soul
is its own friend if it pursue
The right and run straight for the goal
But its own worst and direst foe
if it choose evil” (Savitri) (121)

It clarifies that if we adopt a true way of living by cultivating high human values like truth, love, compassion, dutifulness and contentment, then only we can tread upon the path towards spirituality. We have to sacrifice all sorts of evils like greed, lust, anger, egotism, jealous, hatred and false esteem. For that we need to train ourselves, our attitudes and our prejudices. Everything is in our own hands. Geeta says, “Let a man lift himself by himself, let him degrade himself, for the self alone is the friend of the self and the self alone is the enemy of the self” VI/5 (122). Right thoughts and right deeds can only lead to the way of renunciation. Renunciation is the highest spiritual status, the knowledge of Absolute that brings about the fulfilment of nature of man. By knowing the Absolute, everything is known. Sorrows, fears, delusions remain no more. Because it is the state of virtuous life, the state of inner heaven that enables a man to live joyfully and experience a profound peace of mind in the midst of worldly affairs. Toru Dutt spreads the solid Statement to everyone that Renunciation is the ultimate aim of human life and every human being should make effort to achieve this goal of ideal living—

“virtue should be the aim and end
of every life, all else in vain” (Savitri) (123)

Here ‘virtue’ symbolises spirituality or renunciation. Toru Dutt seems to be a prophet to deliver the message of Vedantic philosophy that everyone should struggle to be virtuous and be liberated in this very life. To be virtuous means to be godly. Knowing and seeing God in His transcendental form is a metaphysical experience within the human body. The manifestation of inherent divinity is in reality, the revelation of the ‘divine self’ of man. It is upon this trans sensuous experience of godliness that is man become truly happy, truly learned and truly religious.

(122) The Bhagwad Geeta, VI/5, page-189.
Ravindra Nath Tagore expresses this ecstasy and joy of devotee’s heart in the perfect union of atma and parmatma—

“Thus it is that thy joy in me so full. Thus it is that thou hast come down to me
O thou lord of all heavens, where would be thy love if I were not?
Thou hast taken me as thy partner of all this wealth. In my heart is the endless play of thy delight. In my life thy will is ever taking shape.
And for this, thou who art the king of kings hast decked thyself in beauty to captivate my heart.
And for this thy love loses itself in the love of thy lover and there art thou seen in the perfect union of two” 56/Geetanjali (124).

The perfect union of two is realizing God within the self. The ‘self’ cannot be known by intellect or understood by the mind. The only way to know the self is to realize Him. The deep driving quest for Truth is within all of us and by delivering and realizing the ‘self’, we come to know that God is within us, joy is within us, knowledge is within us, light is within us, music is within us, only we have to realize it. Then there is no fear, no tension, no births and deaths and we become liberated in this very life. Tagore describes the divine ecstasy of devotee’s heart after knowing God within.

“Light, my light, the world filling light, the eye kissing light, the heart sweetening light!
Ah the light dances, my darling at the centre of my life
The light is shattered into gold on every cloud my darling and it scatters gems in profusion.
Mirth spreads from leaf to leaf, my darling and gladness without measure. The heaven’s river has drowned its banks and flood of joy is abroad.”57/Geetanjali (125)

It clarifies that one who realizes God attains the Supreme state of divine ecstasy. Indeed true joy and wisdom lies in the complete union of God and man. The divine light of godliness illumines the soul within and fills the world with joy and beauty. Tagore expresses the unlimited joy of realized soul—

“The great pageant of thee and me has overspread the sky. With the tune of thee and me all the air is vibrant and all ages pass with the hiding and seeking of thee and me.” 71/Geetanjali (126)

Complete dedication to God makes the realized soul one with and inseparable from Him. It renders him musical and effusive—

“When all the strings of my life will be tuned, my master, then at every touch of thine will come out the music of love.”

Even the sensuous pleasures, when sent by God, are welcome to the realized soul—

“No, I will never shut the doors of my senses. The delights of sight and hearing and touch will bear thy delight.” LXXIII/Geetanjali (127)

(125) Ravindra Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali/57’, page-244.
(127) Ravindra Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali/LXXIII’,
Sri Aurobindo’s ‘Savitri’ is an epic of soul, an epic of renunciation. It is born out of Sri Aurobindo’s own yogic consciousness. Sri Aurobindo himself was a spiritual figure, his creation ‘Savitri’ is a spiritual figure and the aim of Savitri is spirituality.

“To bring God down to the world on earth, we came
to change the earthly life to life divine.” (Savitri- Book XI) (128)
The lines beautifully convince that renunciation is the ultimate goal of every human life. Sri Aurobindo expresses this beautiful concept through the words of Savitri

“A lonely freedom cannot satisfy
A heart that has grown one with every heart
I am a deputy of the aspiring world
My spirit liberty I ask for all.” (Savitri- Book XI) (129)
Aswapathy’s and Savitri’s yogas are Aurobindo’s yoga as well as of every man and woman’s yogas. What is true of Aswapathy is also true of Sri Aurobindo’s to a great extent-

“His is a search of darkness for the light
of mortal life for immortality.” (Savitri- Book I Canto 4) (130)
“The spirit shall take up the human play
This earthly life become the life divine.” (Savitri- Book XI Canto 1) (131)
In Aurobindo’s epic Savitri, the characters are no mere human figures but sadhaks or avatars. Aswapathy, Savitri’s father is the conscious soul of the world or an individual sadhak aspiring for union with God for the removal of ignorance. In his quest for the Eternal, through Sadhna, he soars higher and higher till his soul achieves liberation from his earlier bonds and is in as illumined state to receive the secret knowledge of renunciation-

“A wide God knowledge poured down from above
A new world knowledge broadened from within.” (132)
Aswapathy’s self merges with the Supreme Soul. He is the enlightened individual who puts on Divinity and tries hard to bring about a divine consciousness or awakening in the world. He aspires divinity no longer for himself but for all, for a universal realization and new creation. He spreads the message that every man can repay the debt of God who incarnates himself in human form but cultivating Divinity in our life-

“A mutual debt binds man to the Supreme
His nature we must put on as he put ours
We are sons of God and must be even as he
His human portion we must grow divine.” (133)

Savitri is the issue of Aswapathy’s Sadhna, of his immense divine consciousness. She is the incarnation of Divine Mother who is determined to know herself fully and realize her inward divinity. She conquers death showing her radiant divinity to him and gets back Satyavan’s soul from Lord Yama. She along with Satyavan will live on earth, the field of her realization as her only aim is-

“To bring God down to the world on earth we came
to change the earthly life to Life Divine.” (134)

The line ‘earthly life to Life Divine’ clearly convinces the Vedantic philosophy of renunciation, the ultimate aim of life.

India is a land of renunciation, a land of introspection, a land of spirituality. Here in India, ‘the Vedas teach that the spirit of man is an emanation of the Eternal Being and had no more a beginning than God Himself and to seek and find this Godliness within is renunciation.” (135) “Religion does not consist in erecting temples or building churches or attending public worship. It is not to be found in books or in words or in lectures or in organizations. Religion consists in realization, to realize religion is that of renunciation.” (136) And this religion is attained by what we in India call Yoga. The worker is called the karma yogi, the one who seeks union through love is called bhakti yogi; the one who seeks through philosophy is called Jnana yogi. Sarojini Naidu’s poems are exceptionally admirable to explore the deep philosophy of spiritualism based on Bhakti Marg. How beautifully she conveys the longing desire of devotee’s heart to communicate with Supreme Being-

O take my yearning soul for mine oblation
Life of all myriad lives that dwell in Thee
Let me be lost a lamp of adoration
in thine unfathomed waves of ecstasy." (Ghanshyam) (137)

And “the Supreme is not a God who sleeps in serene abstraction while hearts heavy laden cry out for help but a saving God of love believed and experienced as such by the devotee. He bestows Salvation on those who believe in Him.” (138) God declares in Geeta, “This is my word of promise that he who loveth Me, shall never perish.” Sarojini shows how God answers the prayer of His devotee and reveals the truth-

“I am of thee, as thou of Me, a part
look for Me in the mirror of thy heart.” (The Quest) (139)

The lines are steeped into the mystic deep philosophy of Vedanta that every human being is a part and parcel of Divine Being. Many similar references are found in Bhagwad Geeta and Shri Guru Granth Sahib. Lord says in Geeta, “I, O Gudake’sa (Arjuna) am the “self” seated in the hearts of all creatures.” X/20 (140) Guru Granth Sahib states, “Kahe re bann khojan jayee, sarab nivasi sada alepa tohi sang samayee.” (141) Indeed, God Himself is present in every human being in the form

of soul, but we are not aware of this reality. Our soul is covered with ignorance (maya jaal), some people are totally ignorant they live life like animals just to satisfy their body needs, some people whose understanding and wisdom is developed, they live to satisfy the needs of their heart and mind, but there are very few people who realize their soul (divine light) and then they live in soul, they live in God. We all have to realize our soul, the union of atma and parmatma, then only we can live a useful and purposeful life devoted to God. Sarojini Naidu expresses the attainment of spiritual happiness through bhakti marg-

“My glad heart is drunk and drenched with Thee
O inmost wine of living ecstasy
O intimate essence of eternity.” (A Salutation to the Eternal Peace) (142)

This is the state of sat chit ananda, the divine ecstasy With love of God, comes the love of everyone in the universe, breaking all the bondages and barriers With sincerity of thought. Sarojini conveys that the realization of divinity comes through the dissolution of the ‘self’ in the ecstasy of togetherness, the complete merger of human being into Divine Being-

“But my heart was so full of your Beauty, Beloved
They laughed when I cried without knowing
Govinda! Govinda!” (Song of Radha, The Milk Maid) (143)

Here is the superb illustration of renunciation, the mystic union of atma and parmatma. Sarojini has glorified the realization of Infinite (Govinda) in the soul of Radha.

“Renunciation is a state of blessedness of the person who has established in the unity with Universal self. He is ‘jivan mukat’ in this very life and now he is not disturbed by any pain or pleasure, sorrow or happiness. Renunciation is the very base of our life. This little self must die. Then we shall find that we are in the Real and that reality is God. He is always in us and with us. Let us live in Him and stand in Him. Life on the plane of the spirit is the only life and let us try to attain this realization.” (144) Nissim Ezekiel who is known as the father and law giver of post independence Indo-English poetry seems to present the way that how to achieve this renunciation and realization-

“Know your mantra, meditate
release your kundalini
get your shakti awakening
and float with the spirit
to your destination” (Healers) (145)

'mantra' is shabad (God’s Name and God’s teachings). Human birth is the only birth in which man can realize Divinity and Shabad is the only support which can help to attain this ultimate aim of Divinity. Kundalini indicates the ‘shakti’ which is hidden in the brain and gets released with yoga. This awakening of shakti is realization of divinity. ‘Float with the spirit’ denotes to live in soul and lastly ‘destination’ points out ‘soul realization’ that is the ultimate aim of human life. So with few words, Nissim Ezekiel has conveyed the mode and achievement of renunciation. Again Ezekiel convinces the soul’s ecstasy after renunciation—

“How delight the soul with absolute
sense of Salvation.” (Island) (146)

The Hindu Dharma assumes that Soul is the greatest Truth, the fundamental reality. And to realize ‘soul’, to live in soul is Liberation, the “sense of salvation”. Then there is no more life and death, no more cycle of births and rebirths as soul gets permanent unity with Supreme Soul. A.K.Ramanujan presents Hindu perception of Reality and faith in spiritualism through his poem ‘Second Sight’—

“You are Hindoo, aren’t you?
You must have ‘second sight’” (Second Sight) (147)

The ‘second sight’ points out Hindu’s faith in Spirituality. Hinduism is the symbol of India’s spiritual vision. Indeed Hinduism is a way of life filled with religious ideals and moral beliefs, an outcome of the teachings of Vedic literature- the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas, the Vedangas, the Tantras, Ramayana, Mahabharata and The Bhagwad Geeta. So Hinduism is Vedic religion and the Vedic religion is Godly religion. The Vedas are not just the scripture but the revealed knowledge of God Himself, the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by sages and saints by making eternal communication with God. As the religious truths of Vedas are eternal, Hinduism is an eternal religion (Sanatan Dharma) because its ways of life fall in line with the highest ideals of man’s spiritual cravings. Hinduism firmly confess to achieve the goal of spirituality by cultivating high human values like truth, love, compassion, self control, service and sacrifice. That is why A.K.Ramanujan uses the words ‘you must have “second sight”’ because a Hindu in their eye is a man who possesses ‘second sight’ (awakening to spirituality).

Kamala Das’s poem ‘Advice to Fellow Swimmers’ is a powerful lyric with a strong philosophical tone to emphasize the goal of spirituality. She considers life as an overflowing stream which ends up in the ocean that is infinite. Kamala Das wants to convince through the symbol of swimming that one’s ultimate aim should be to overcome one’s own ‘self’ that will truly escape from suffering bringing joy and peace—

“Go swim in the great blue sea
where the first tide you meet in your body
the familiar pest,
but if you learn to cross it
you are safe, yes beyond it you are safe
for even sinking would make no difference then.” (Advice to Fellow Swimmers) (148)

Here Kamala Das compares body to a familiar pest that is troublesome. The body is troublesome as it is matter bound and hence subject to many limitations. If the temptations of the body are overcome, the soul attains freedom. The expression 'even sinking would make no difference then' conveys the message that the pain, suffering, fear and death affect no more on the liberated soul. Many passages in Kamala Das’s autobiography confirm her great devotion to Lord Krishna, “He dwelt in my dreams. Often I sat cross legged before a lamp reciting mantra in His praise”. Almost all the poetical volumes of her contain references to Krishna and Radha. Her poems show that when she discovers a vast gap between the real world and the world of her dreams, she becomes pessimistic in her outlook upon life and applies the myth of Radha Krishna as a symbol of her salvation. In her poem ‘Radha Krishna’ in ‘Summer in Calcutta’, she shows total aversion for physical love which is the only love that man wants. In another poem ‘Radha,’ Kamala Das identifies herself with Lord and says-

“And And virgin crying everything in me
is melting, even the hardness at the core
O Krishna, I am melting, melting, melting
Nothing remains
You “(‘Radha’) (The Descendant) (149)

This is the complete merger of human soul into Divine Soul. Her poem ‘Ghanshyam’ is highly moving to highlight her deep love and devotion for Lord Krishna and the spiritual happiness gained through this deep devotion-

“Ghanshyam,
You have like a koel built your
Nest in the arbour of my heart
My life, until now a sleeping jungle
is at last astir with music.” (‘Ghanshyam’) (Tonight, This Savage Rite) (150)
The expressions are very similar to Tagore’s highly personal quest for Divine-

“Ah thou hast made my heart captive in the
endless meshes of thy music, my master.” III/Geetanjali (151)

Jayant Mahapatra’s poetry is firmly rooted in Orissan soil, Puri, Konark, Cuttack, Bhubaneswar form as it were, and he has emphasized India’s spiritual philosophy through these poems. Mahapatra underlines the importance of Puri and what it means to Hindus in our country. The poem picturesquely depicts the morning scene in the holy town of Puri where people of Orissa wish to be cremated in order to attain salvation-

“her last wish to be cremated here
twisting uncertainly like light
on the shifting sands.” (Dawn at Puri) (152)
because the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri-

“Points to unending rhythm
dying in this place
will take to silence.” (Dawn at Puri) (154)

And this is the ultimate desire of a human being which will enable him to attain ‘nirvana’. Mahapatra's Indian summer poem portraits the ‘temple priests’ chanting hymns very loudly in order to create the impression of holiness. The loud chanting of priests seems to “India opening its mouth.” It implies that the priest’s chanting hymns aloud articulate the spiritual spirit of India -

“At the roughing of the sombre wind
priests chant louder than ever
the mouth of India opens.” (Indian Summer Poem) (155)

K.N. Daruwalla points out the goal of renunciation in his poem ‘The Glass Blower’ in ‘A Summer of Tigers’. With his myth making imagination, he speaks of his great ancestors not merely as metallurgists but also as mystics-

“The goal was transmuting the earthly
into the celestial.” ‘The Glass Blower’ (A Summer of Tigers) (156)

**The theory of Rebirth:** is the central teaching of Hindu philosophy. “For the one who is born, death is certain and equally certain the birth for him who dies.” (157) Death is not the end but it is the open gate for a new life. Toru Dutt speaks aloud the fatalistic doctrine of this popular Indian philosophy of birth and rebirth in the following lines-

“Death comes to all at soon or late
And peace is but a wandering fire.” (Savitri) (158)

It explains that one thing very certain in this material universe is death. Death is a great equalizer. It reduces everyone - the powerful and the weak, the rich as well as the poor, the healthy and the sick, the old and the young. Death over comes everyone and everything. It gives no warning and strikes everyone at anytime. But death is not a stoppage of life cycle rather a new life is waiting for us. Lord declares in Bhagwad Geeta, “Just as a person cast off worn out garments and puts on others that are new even so does the embodied soul cast off worn out bodies and take on others that are new.” II/22 (159)

Toru Dutt beautifully interprets this renewal change of life through her poem ‘Prahlad’-

“To die is but to lose my breath,
Is death annihilation? No
New worlds will open on my view
when persecuted hence I go

(158) Toru Dutt, ‘Savitri’, page-47.
The right is right, the true is true.” (Prahlad) (160)

“And if this body turn to dust
he can new life again instil.” (Prahlad) (160)

It explains that death comes with a hope of new life, new birth and new body. The embodied soul moves from one body to another according to its past evolution and its need for future. Ravindra Nath Tagore expresses this mystical approach of births and rebirths in the very first poem of Geetanjali-

“Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure. This frail vessel thou emptiest again and again and fillest with fresh life.” 1/Geetanjali (161)

Here Tagore refers to the theory of reincarnation of soul after death. Soul never dies; it enters a new body after death. So the cycle of life, death and again life continues.

“Through birth and death, in this world or in others, wherever thou leadest me it is thou, the same, the one companion of my endless life whoever linkest my heart with bonds of joy to the unfamiliar.” (Geetanjali/63) (162)

The lines are philosophical to point out that soul is eternal. However the human body meets its end sooner or later but soul goes on forever entering new body and living new life. Tagore presents human body as a weak vessel that does not stand the test of time and meets its end. As a vessel can be emptied and filled time and time again so in the same manner human body is again and again dissolved and reincarnated in fresh life. Thus the soul is reborn in new shape. Tagore expresses this deep concept of renewal and rebirth-

“From the traveller whose sack of provision is empty before the voyage in ended, whose garment torn and dust laden, whose strength is exhausted remove shame and poverty and renew his life like a flower under the cover of thy kindly light.” 24/Geetanjali (163)

Tagore compares himself to a traveller who feels tired and exhausted after day long journey. He is beset with difficulties. His dress is torn and soiled, his strength too has gone. Yet he hopes that God will definitely help him and his dropping spirit would be reinvigorated by the grace of God. God will remove all hurdles and will renew his energy like a newborn flower. Here flower is used as the symbol of the birth, death and rebirth cycle. The lines are under the influence of Bhagwad Geeta where life- death- rebirth is a cycle which goes on and will continue forever. So death should not be considered as the end of life. Man fears death thinking that there is a vast difference between this life and the life beyond death. Tagore says that we should never forget that Divine is always present in every birth.

God reveals Himself through all the multitudinous aspects of His creation. Tagore directly talks and prays to God-

“I forget that there abides the old in the new and there also thou abidest.
Through birth and death, in this world and in others, wherever 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.” XCII (164)

The lines beautifully reveal Tagore’s faith in reincarnation of soul and the fundamental oneness of mankind and nature.

Sri Aurobindo, in his spiritual epic ‘Savitri’, unfolds the vision of birth, death and rebirth. Aswapathy, Savitri’s father when achieves a total spiritual transformation, makes a passionate appeal to Divine Mother to redeem the star crossed race of man. The Divine Mother answers-

“A seed shall be sown in death’s tremendous hour
A branch of heaven transplant to human soul.” (Savitri) (165)

The lines depict the birth of Savitri. Savitri, the incarnation of Divine Mother is born to play the cosmic role of struggle and redemption. Savitri is immortal by birth. Only the immortals, dwelling on the deathless heights of time and space are masters of living and are free from the bonds of the cycle of births and rebirths. Otherwise death is certain for one who is born. The rotation of death and rebirth continues till the human beings get permanent unity with Divine Being through efforts. Sri Aurobindo throws light on the certainty of death-

“Out of darkness we still grow to light
Death is our road to immortality.” (Savitri) (166)

It expresses that death is the spirit’s opportunity and birth, death and rebirth conspire to fulfil God’s secret plan. Death and birth are the compulsory part of life till one achieves the goal of Liberation or Immortality. Sri Aurobindo presents the mystic philosophy of birth, death and rebirth-

“The cycles all rebuild and ever aspire
All we have done is ever still to do
All breaks and all renews and is the same
huge revolutions of life’s fruitless gyre.” (Savitri) (167)

The forces that integrate creation are our own broken lives which require to be renewed. The universe has appeared and disappeared in times without in the long past and will continue to be dissolved and reformed through unimaginable ways. Sarojini Naidu expresses the theory of rebirth and renewal in many of her poems. In all addresses to death, she only welcomes life-

“Death stroked my hair and whispered tenderly
Poor child, shall I redeem thee from thy pain
Renew thy joy and issue thee again
enclosed in some renascent ecstasy.” (Death and Life) (168)

Hence, death is just an open gate to welcome new life, new birth and new hopes. Physical body is limited to time, space and causation but soul is beyond time, beyond space and beyond causation. The changes in the body do not mean changes in the soul. Death is sought out with good entreaty by Sarojini Naidu-

(166)Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book VII Canto 2, page-482.
“Welcome, O tranquil death
Thou hast no ills to grieve me
who com’st with freedom’s breath
from sorrow to retrieve me.” (Welcome) (169)
The human being makes himself fit for immortality by passing through a series of births and deaths. Sarojini Naidu conveys this cycle of to be born again and again in one of her poem ‘Invocation’ in which the beloved hopes that her lover will forever shine and she passing through the cycles of life and death, will expiate for her sin and folly-

“So shall my soul, redeemed, reborn
again thy side.” (Invocation) (170)
It is so, “that all life ends in death, that all progress in perishable, that nothing is permanent in the temporal sense of term. But in every perfect realization of life, the eternal becomes actualized and the development in time is only the means to this essential aim.” (171) Sarojini Naidu therefore exhorts man to-

“Instil into your mortal flesh
Immortal breath
triumphantly to conquer life
and trample death.” (The Desire of Love- The Temple) (172)
“All our mortal moments are
a session of infinite.” (Lord Buddha seated on Lotus) (173)
Hence the ‘body’ is mortal and ‘self’ is immortal. The cosmic process of death and life continues till one realizes the immortal ‘self’. Whenever there is life, death must follow as its shadow. God Himself answers the prayers of Sarojini Naidu and opens the secret of life and death-

“Life is a prism of my light and death the shadow of my face.” (The Soul’s Prayer) (174)
The holy book of Sikhism, Shri Guru Granth Sahib, repeatedly lays stress on the concept of rebirth, “avan jaan ek khel banaya, agya kari kini maya” means “God has created this amphitheatre, in which life and death is simply a play. He has created maya as His obedient functionary.” (5/295) (175)
It clarifies that the cosmic process of birth, death and again rebirth is always going on with the order of Almighty God. Death is as truth as God Himself. One should, therefore, reflect on the inevitability of death, and life’s impermanent nature and resolutely fix his mind on God. It is only by God’s grace that man can escape from the grip of vices and become liberated in this very life. Sarojini Naidu expresses the universal truth of life and death in a philosophical tone that death is not a full-stop of life but only a brief significant pause in the continuous flow of life-

(174)sarojini naidu, ‘The Bird of Time’, page-123.
“where the halcyon night hold
in trust the dear songs of the morning
and in the silence is but a rich pause
in the music of life.” (Solitude) (176)

The ‘silence’ or death to Sarojini is an unquestionable reality but this physical end of our being is not something permanent. It is to be taken as a brief state of oblivion and sleep. It is the open gate to welcome new birth. “All our lives past, present and future form as it were an infinite chain without beginning and without end. Each link of which is one life with two ends, birth and death, what we are and do here is being repeated again and again with little variations.” (177) The following expression of Sarojini’s poem ‘Past and Future’ is very impressive to show the conception of rebirth—

“The new hath come and now the old retires.” (Past and Future) (178)

This only line is quite enough to explore the theme and theory of regeneration and rebirth same as in the opening line of Tagore’s Geetanjali— “Thou has made me endless, such is thy pleasure. The frail vessel thou emptiest again and fillest it ever with fresh life.” (179) Hindu philosophy firmly asserts that, “The eternal does not move from place to place but the embodied soul moves from one abode to another. It takes birth each time and gathers to itself a mind, life and body formed out of the materials of nature according to its past evolution and its need for the future.” Katha Upanishad says, “Like corn a mortal ripens and like corn is he born again.” (180) Sarojini Naidu’s poetry reveals her impenetrable faith in the superiority of divinity over doom and of life over death—

“Death is in truth the vital seed
of your imperishable bloom.” (The Royal Tombs of Golconda) (181)

The rotation of death and life is always going on not only in the life of human beings and animals but also in nature—

“Thro’ the luminous hours’ere the lotus of dawn shall reblossom.” (Solitude) (182)

Flowers bloom, then decay, then again buds come with a message of reblossom, after the darkness of night the day breaks with new light, after sorrow, there is always a hope of happiness. This decay, this darkness, this sorrow symbolises death, and the light, the happiness and reblossom point out the concept of birth and rebirth.

Nissim Ezekiel presents the theory of rebirth mingled with the theory of Karma. His poem ‘Night of the Scorpion’ is based on ordinary human event of day to day Indian life when a mother is stung by a scorpion one rainy night. All members of the family and neighbours are very anxious to bring her quick relief. They are simple and well intentioned people who believe in the efficacy of prayer that prayer can ward off every evil influence. They search for the scorpion but all in vain. They think that if the scorpion moves, its poison will also move in the mother’s blood. They pray—

(181) Quoted from The Bhagavad Gita ed. S. Radha Krishnan, page-108.
“With every movement that the scorpion made his poison moved in mother’s blood, they said may he sit still, they said may the sin of your previous birth be burned away tonight, they said may your suffering decrease the misfortune of your next birth, they said.” (Night of Scorpion) (184)
The expression ‘previous birth’ and ‘your next birth’ clearly show the rotation of birth and rebirth. The lines also throw light on the beautiful humanism guiding the simple Indian peasant’s lives.
A.K.Ramanujan presents the picture that one who is born, death is certain- “Fathers, uncle, seven folklore brothers, sisters so young so lovely that snakes loved her and hung dead ancestral flowers from her ceiling, brother’s many wives, their unborn, still born babies, numberless cousins, royal mynahs and parrots in the harem everyone died.” (The Hindoo) (185)
The lines show that death is the compulsory part of life. Death and decay consume everyone. None is spared. Death consumes all. In his poem ‘A Hindu to His Body’, Ramanujan convinces that body is as important as soul because the soul manifests itself through the body and the cycle of birth and death is accomplished through body only. So when the body leaves his ‘self’, he would not like that his ‘self’ should remain behind. That is why he asks his body to go along with the spirit after his death so that he can physically feel the sensation of life manifested in the fructification of nature (in the sap of trees) after death-

“You brought me, do not leave me behind. When you leave all else my garrulous face, my unkissed alien mind, when you muffle and put away my pulse.” (A Hindoo to His Body) (186)
The poet wants to continue journey of life even after death and it is

conveyed most convincingly through images—
“to rise in the sap of trees
let me go with you and feel the weight
of honey hives in my branching.” (A Hindoo to His Body) (187)

The lines vividly depict the Indian belief of oneness of life—life of human beings and life all around manifested in objects of nature. The poet imagines his rebirth and new habitation of his body a tree and thus having entered the physical ‘self’ of tree, he would like to feel the sensation of the weave of weaver birds on the leaves which would be his hair in his new ‘avatar’.

Many of kamala Das poems are concerned with death and decay and they indicate a solemnity of tone, gravity of mood, defeat and emptiness on the mortality of human body—

“Ask me why life is short” (The Stone Age) (187)
“What life was worth on this earth” (A Request) (188)

But Kamala Das hopes that death should not be welcomed as a horrible thing rather it should be welcomed as an open gate for new light—“——— I think of death understanding it to be like night fall, just a temporary phase, which brings no loses, for what was there before sun down will be here tomorrow when light shall reveal it.” (Death brings no loss) (189)

These forceful expressions clearly point out the theory of death, life and rebirth. Kamala Das convinces that death is just a ‘temporary phase’ which brings no loss rather it opens the channel for new tomorrow, new light and life.

To Jayant Mahapatra, death is a deliver which helps mankind in recalling the past and dreaming for the future and at the same time making them conscious of the present. There is no defiance of death and no fear, a sense of detachment prevails. When he tells about the traditional attitude to death in his poem ‘Talking to Death’—

“Because everyone believes that it moves us
And yet no one believes until we find ourselves.” (Talking of Death) (190)

Jayant Mahapatra’s poem ‘The Mountain’ symbolically deals with the process of growth and decay, life and death. Here the ‘mountain’ stands for eternity facing the natural happening of Almighty God—both silence and pleasure, nectar and poison, life and death. Through silence and pressure, it is adding, subtracting and multiplying in the abysmal heart—

“each day falling to pieces under the straddling sunlight it gives clear proof that one might still reconstruct one’s life.” (The Mountain) (191)

The optimistic tone speaks the glory of ‘renewal’ hidden in decay.

Mahapatra enters into the ‘Shadow Spaces’ of life to discover a new meaning and new life. He concludes with a sign of hope-
“How quickly we learn
that within the pain of living and the reality of dying
there is a magic moment
that’s a part of one’s mythology
and can go on to fill the world with glories” (Shadow Spaces) (192)

In a philosophical way, Mahapatra expresses the rotation of coming and going, life and death as an unending chain of God-
“And a man begins to begin again
in the centre of this past
and sees no end of it.” (Samsara) (193)

Many of K.N.Daruwalla’s poems are concentrated on the theme of Death. Daruwalla conveys a sense of pain and loss through the images of darkness and cold in his poem ‘Elgy I (Under Orion). The death is caused by an accident and has left people quite bewildered-
“we saw your flight bending
to a darkened skyline
it was all so death clear
that when it came
the simplicity of the whole thing
left us quite bewildered.” (Elgy I) (194)

‘Death Vignette’ in ‘Crossing of Rivers’ is a poem about a city which has grown hard because it has been so much with death. Daruwalla presents the picture of dead bodies that travel to the cremation grounds in many ways- “In creaking ekkas
perched on the tool box
of a truck
hoisted on sweating shoulders
they come, death rigid
and shrouded in white
those born of the void
inheriting the void.” (Crossing the Rivers) (195)

Daruwalla focuses that death does not distinguish between the white and the black, rich and poor, healthy and sick, old and young. Death comes without asking the date without fixing the time-
“the Rein harts

De Bussys, clau de martins
the Smiths and the Lawrences
British and French and Dutch
interred in the same loam
mourned by the same tolling bells
they remains bristling with like crucifixes.” (Pestilence in Ninerth Century, Calcutta)(The Keepers of the Read) (196)
Daruwalla discusses and points out that death is not stoppage, rather
The cycle of death and life, birth and rebirth continues forever and ever-
“But you need time, perspective
for the action to evolve and space
that is essential for tragic momentum.” (Winter Poems) (197)
Every living being has to go through the cycle of birth and death. The cycle ceases only when one has realized Supreme Being, the unity of atma and parmatma. Human birth is the only birth in which man can realize God in his soul and God’s Name and God’s teachings are the only support by which a man attains this ultimate goal of Liberation. Lord declares in Geeta- “From the realm of Brahma downwards all worlds are subject to return to rebirth but on reaching Me, O son of Kunti (Arjuna) there is no return to birth again.” VIII/16 (198)

Theory of Karma: The theory of rebirth totally depends upon the theory of Karma. Man’s own deeds are responsible for the destiny of his life cycle. The man takes birth in various forms and acts in different ways according to his own deeds. God is the only judge of whatever we do. Death and life, birth and rebirth all are in the hands of God. The Blessed Lord says in Geeta, “All beings O Son of Kunti (Arjuna) pass to nature which is My own at the end of the cycle and at the beginning of the (next) cycle, I send them forth.” IX/7 “Taking hold of nature which is My own, I send forth again and again all this multitude of becomings which are helpless being under control of nature (prakriti)” IX/8 God rotates the creatures upon the law of karma. So According to Indian philosophy, it is the deeds that count not the creed. Whatever we do, we get the same in return. Whatever we sow, we reap the same. Toru Dutt describes this deep philosophy of karma and its fruition through the mouth of ‘Savitri’-
“He for his deeds shall get his due
As I for mine; thus here each soul
is its own friend. If it pursue
The right, and run straight for the goal
But its own worst and direst foe

If it chooses evil-------------" (Savitri) (199)

The lines beautifully convince the law of karma. He, who does well to others, shall get goodness in return, and one who is indulged in evil acts, ruin is waiting for him. Guru Granth Sahib declares, “aape beej aape hi khahe Nanak hukmi aave jahe” (Japji Sahib 20) “Whatever one sows, he reaps, (Satguru) Nanak says man takes birth and dies by God’s order.” (200) The Bhagwad Geeta states, “Goodness attaches one to happiness, passion to action, O! Bharata (Arjuna) but dullness, veiling wisdom attaches to negligence.” XIV/9 (201) One who always thinks good (for the welfare of all), says good and does good is blessed by God. But on the contrary, the one who is always busy in thinking ill of others, doing evil acts every time, how can he hope to get peace, love and happiness? Good deeds make life successful and fruitful, evil actions lead to destruction. Tulsi Das says, “boya ped babool ka aam kahan se khaye.” Life is like a field and our own actions are seeds. What type of seeds we put in our fields, we will get the same fruits. Destiny is in our own hands. God not only rotates from birth to birth according to our own actions but also provides us sorrows or happiness, comfort or punishment, richness or poverty according to the actions of our past and present birth. The Blessed Lord says in Geeta- “The soul in nature enjoys the modes born of nature. Attachment to the modes is the cause of its births in good and evil wombs.” XIII/21 (202)

It clarifies that the form and body of our birth depends upon our own karmas. Passing through thousands of births, our soul wanders about secured by the fetters of our own karmas. We become miserable or happy on account of our actions done by ourselves and form the reaction of those miseries, we assume lower births and then again we accumulate a new series of actions and consequently suffer misery over again. It is by purification of karma, we can attain that blissful state where misery is unknown. Therefore, we must strive to do what is virtuous and forbear from doing what is unrighteous. God is the only judge. He is seeing and judging all our thoughts, words and deeds. Even our thoughts and feelings are under His watch. Toru Dutt describes the theory of karma in her poem ‘The Legend of Dhruva’. Ambitious Dhruva when hears bitter words from Suruchee, that king’s love is fully reserved for her own son Uttama, goes with heavy heart to his mother Suneetee. The helpless and less favoured queen Suneetee, when hears all this, tries to console his son Dhruva explaining the Indian philosophy of karma-

“The deeds that thou hast done
The evil, happily in some former life
Long long ago, who may alas! annual
or who the good works not done supplement’
The sins of previous lives must bear their fruit.” (203)

In Tagore’s opinion work is true worship of God. It is the deeds that lead us to God not the artificial rituals. In ‘Geetanjali’ he reveals his firm conviction that God cannot be found by chanting hymns in the lonely dark corner of a temple or in the telling of beads. He says-

(200)Shri Guru Granth Sahib, page-3.
(201)The Bhagwad Geeta, XIV/9, page-319.
“Deliverance? Where is this deliverance to be found? Our Master Himself has joyfully taken upon him the bond of creation; he is bound with all forever.” (204)
“Come out of thy meditation and leave aside thy flowers and incense! What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained? Meet him and stand by him in toil and in sweat of thy brow.” (205)

Tagore finds spiritual significance in the common place activities and dutifulness. He finds God in humble cottages and not in temples. He condemns caste and creeds which divide mankind and points out that narrow religious outlook militates against the oneness of mankind. He stresses that love and service of mankind is the greatest worship of God. We have suffered due to our blind submission to artificial and blank social and religious restrictions which teach us jealous and hatred. Tagore says that man is the image of God. So we should love every creature, the naked and hungry, the sick and the stranger. Tagore sings-

“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 even like him come down on the dusty soil.” (Geetanjali/XI) (206)

Tagore emphasizes that everyone can realize God in the world but what he needs is purity of thoughts, words and deeds, love for every being, attitude of humility and non attachment. He prays to God-

“I shall 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
And I shall be my endeavour to reveal thee in my action
knowing it is thy power gives me strength to act.” Geetanjali/IV (207)

Such type of prayers can only make us true karma yogi then God will be with us in and out, here and there, in every thought, and in every action. Such type of prayers can only cut the fetters of past and present karmas and make us liberated in this very life. Though this is the prayer of Tagore’s heart but we all have to pray like this if we want to get the grace of God in our life.

As a matter of fact, Hinduism lays stress on karma believing that whatever we sow, we will reap during this life or next, That is the reason the destiny is the result of our own ‘karmas’ that we do or did in our past life. This endless chain of our karmas shapes our present and future life. Sri Aurobindo expresses this concept of evolution in the following lines of epic ‘Savitri’-

(204) Ravindra Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’
“All the possibilities in man
are waiting as the tree waits in its seed
His past lives in him, it drives his future’s pace
His present’s acts fashion his coming fate
The unborn Gods hide in his house of life.” (Savitri) (208)

It clarifies that our present earthly existence is only an episode in a long endless tale of successive births. But it is bound and determined by our karmas in our past and previous lives. Our destiny in the present is determined by our karmas in past births-

“An inquisition of the priests of Night
In judgement sit in the adventurer soul
And the dual tables and the karmic norm
Restrain the Titan in us and the God,

painless with its lash, joy with its silver bribe


guard the wheel’s circling immobility.” (Savitri) (209)

Savitri, the spiritual figure by birth, a divine by previous and present karmas, is determined to change her destined destiny. She gathers all her spiritual power to bring book the life of Satyavan. Savitri is conscious of the goal of her life. She assures the god of Death-

“Then man was born among the monstrous stars
dowered with a mind and heart to conquer thee.” (Savitri) (210)

Death argues that Divinity cannot dwell in the soiled heart of man. He compels Savitri to accept the futility of her birth but Savitri replies-

“Yet man shall by me
since in humanity waits his hour the God
trample thee down to reach the immortal height
transcending grief and pain and fate and death.” (Savitri) (211)

The chain of karma, that binds man, is a very powerful and is not to be broken easily. But Savitri calls up all her inner spiritual reserve to break this chain of karma and make free Satyavan from the clutches of death, pain and ignorance. The occult battle of arguments continues, at last Savitri wins over death through her spiritual power of love, truth, chastity and sincerity. The god of Death has no option but to submit to Savitri’s resolution. Savitri as an embodiment of universal love claims freedom and immortality not only for Satyavan but for all humanity- “A lonely freedom cannot satisfy

A heart that has grown one with every heart

I am a deputee of the aspiring world
My spirit’s liberty I ask for all.” (Savitri) (212)

All the prophecies are fulfilled with double benediction-
“thou shalt raise the earth soul to light
and bring down God into the lives of men.” (Savitri) (213)

Only spiritual figures can become free from karmic cycle and also make others free otherwise
theory of karma the theory of birth and rebirth goes forever and ever.

Sarojini’s belief in the essential divinity of each individual is shown in one of her songs ‘The Bird of Time’ when she asks so as to where did it learn to sing the different notes from-
“In the sigh of pity, the sob of hate and the pride of soul that has conquered fate” (The Bird of Time) (214)

According to Sarojini, fate can be conquered if one does not escape from the hard realities of life and learns to pass through the moments of failures and frustrations with peace and joy because the sorrowful today which seem long, strange and bitter will pass away followed by new hopes, new joys and new faces-
“Nay, do not weep, new hopes, new dream, new faces
the unspent joy of all the unborn years
will prove your heart a traitor to its sorrow
but make your eyes unfaithful to their tears.” (Transience) (215)

Sarojini’s poem ‘The Soul’s Prayer’ is especially remarkable in this context and it gives lesson to every human being to make life successful like a true karma yogi, for that one should accept both pain and pleasure alike because pain and pleasure are not opposite but two aspects of one Reality-
“Give me to drink each joy and pain
which thine eternal hand can mete
For my insatiate soul would drain
earth’s utmost bitter, utmost sweet.” (The Soul’s Prayer) (216)

Sufferings shall purge and purify Sarojini’s soul of all that is gross and unholy. Thus purified, her soul would understand the eternal truth that God is the source of life and death, pain and pleasure according to our own karmas. Realization of this truth alone can result in spiritual peace. Sarojini speaks of the highest spiritual bliss where she realizes the immortality of soul-
“And thou, sweet sorrow, terrible and dear
most bitter and divine?
O’ I will carve thee with deep agony
into a deathful shrine?” (The Poet to Death) (217)

Sarojini’s songs match the highest philosophy of Geeta where she desires to be born again to realize the Almighty God-
To attain the side of God, one must have ‘deliverance from mortal pride (ego or I), that is spirituality then there will be no rotation of birth and rebirth, no fetters of karmic cycle.

Nissim Ezekiel, the father of modern Indo-English poetry, also throws light on the rotation of births and rebirths according to karmic concept. He depicts the simple faith and concerns of Indian people in his poem ‘Night of Scorpion’. A village youth whose mother is stung by a scorpion is presented on a rainy night. The villagers gather and search for the scorpion but all in vain. The people think if the scorpion moves, its poison will also move in mother’s blood, so they pray and say to mother-

“May the sins of your previous birth
be burned away to night, they said
may your suffering decrease
the misfortune of your next birth, they said.” (The Night of Scorpion) (219)

Both the expressions- ‘the sins of your previous birth’ and ‘misfortune of your next birth’ very well show that a man is bound to his karmas. God rotates the cycle of births and rebirths according to one’s karmas. The sorrows and sufferings, the comforts and joys all are the outcome of one’s own karmas. God is the only judge. Reward and punishment is in His hands. Guru Granth Sahib says-

“Tu aape gurmukh mukat karaye, tu aape manmukh janam bhvanye”- “O God, it is only you who liberate virtuous people and it is only you who rotate vice ones in births and rebirths (according to their karmas).”

A.K.Ramanujan reconciles himself to the Hindu notion of karmas. The poet could-

“See karma in the fall of a tubercular sparrow in the newspaper death in Burma of seventy one men, women and children.” (Entries for a Catalogue Fears) (220)

In his poem ‘Extended Family’, Ramanujan considers himself a small link in the chain of continuous times which goes on and on and never stops. He jumps abruptly from his unborn grandson to his great grandson to indicate that his own “self” is in flux-

“My future dependent on several people yet to come.” (Extended Family) (221)

The use of one word of two word lines is very effective in conveying the deep philosophic message of the tentative blend of flux in continuity that a person is a small link in the long chain of history which goes back to the times immortal and which extends up to yet to be born future based on karmic cycle.

(219)Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Exact Name’, page-130.
Like a Vedic sage, Kamala Das speaks in mystical tone the theory of karma in the following lines-
“———- I am sinner
I am saint, I am beloved and the
betrayed.” (An Introduction) (Summer in Calcutta) (222)
It is in our own hands, to become sinner or saint. She cries over the shattered hopes and blank
dreams-
“The tragedy of life
is not death but growth
the child growing into adult
and growing out of needs.” (Composition- The Descendant) (223)
It is the deeds that count, not the years, not the cast or creed. It is the deeds that make our karmic
cycle. It is the deeds that form our destiny. So if the life is spent without virtuous deeds, it is failed
and of no use.

From the ruins of Konark temple, Jayant Mahapatra takes down the memory to our ‘maritime
ancestors’ whose glorious act brought glory and greatness for the state. Apart from Mahanadi and
Konark temple, river Daya too is a silent witness to our ancestor’s heroic acts all through the ages.
But time has withered away everything. The ancestors and their heroic deeds have lovable certainty
and enduring pride, but present situations depict the empty sadness and sense of uselessness.
Mahapatra is hurt to see that man has forgotten the purpose of life which his ancestors had. He
broods over the meaningless life and futility of such an existence-
“It is my own life
that has cornered me beneath the stones
of this temple in ruins in blaze of sun.” (Relationship) (224)
Mahapatra expresses his helplessness to see the anxiety of seeing his country’s pathetic plight-
“At times as I watch
it seems as though my country’s body
floats down somewhere on the river
left alone, I grow into
a half disembodied bamboo
its lower part sunk
into itself on the bank.” (Freedom) (225)
Though dissolution hits his countrymen, they do not seem to give themselves to despair. They still
harbour hope; to look for light where there is pitch darkness. The poet reveals this typical Indian
attitude of hope and light through his own expressions-

“I want the graveyard to flower without the corpses
and the sunlit street
to shine without its shadows
I want the flames to warm the empty heart
of love, not burn a city with pitiable hatred.” (Freedom- Random Descent) (225)

He voices against the sufferings of poor, weak and down trodden of land and hope the best for every one-
“I only want to renew myself
like this old river’s quiet
that has emerged victorious
over a hundred layers of religion
in the airlessness of the dead.” (Random Descent) (226)

Such expressions come from the heart of true patriot, true karma yogi.

K.N.Daruwalla discusses the theory of karma and destiny in his poem ‘The Professor Condoles’. A young man, who goes to his professor with the news of his brother’s death, sees the accident as a great tragedy. For the professor, however tragedy is something different. The professor’s discussion of the nature of tragedy continues all the while shifting between condolence and a spirited discussion on death and tragedy. In this changing time, Daruwalla indicates the evocative picture of tragedy in relation to the theory of destiny-

“evil came rasping like a magnesium flare
in a night canopied with mirrors
and heavy with destiny, loaded
with the past.” (Winter Poems) (227)

The lines ‘heavy with destiny, loaded with the past’ clearly express that our present life is a reflection of a long endless tale of successive births. Only ‘Soul Realization’ can break the laws of destiny or the chain reaction of our karma along with the theory of births and rebirths.

**Idol Worship and Rituals:** “Hinduism is a search after Truth. Idols and symbols are expression of the Real and help the human spirit in its efforts after the Divine. India is a country of temples and in these temples lies the sanctuary of gods and goddesses to whom every Hindu heart is devoted. Not only in temples but almost at every Hindu’s home there is ‘Puja Ghar’ where the worship of gods and goddesses is held with full faith and devotion every morning and evening. People pray, bow, meditate and sing hymns before the idols and symbols. It may be the idol of Ganesha ji, Lord Ram and Sita,

Lord Krishna and Radha, Lord Hanuman, Ma Durga, Lord Shiva and Parvati, Lord Vishnu and Lakshmi ji and many more with different name, with different forms. It is believed that a sincere act of Idol worship and rituals make them to the natural realization of God’s presence and fills the mind with soothing, moral and spiritual thoughts. It is the firm faith of people that the performance of idol worship and rituals evolved in temples and in domestic rites not only puts them in a positive and peaceful frame of mind but also fortifies their self confidence and generates new energy to face the daily ordeals of life. These idols and symbols, rites and rituals indeed help the human beings to develop inner purity and growth of soul.

Toru Dutt expresses the faith of Hindu heart in prayers and rituals through her poem ‘Savitry’ when she refers Aswapathy’s prayers to Lord Shiva for a child (a perfect child in form of goddess Savitry)-

“By prayers made morning, nigh and noon
with many a vigil, many a fast
would Shiva has own gift recall
or mar its perfect beauty ever?
No, he had faith- he gave her all
she wished and feared and doubted never.” (Savitry) (228)

According to the story, Aswapathy, the king of Madra is childless. He does tapasaya, observs fasts and performs thousands of rituals, prayers and sacrifices. After his hard meditation and penance of eighteen years, Goddess Savitry gets pleased and blesses him with a daughter. Since she is born from Goddess Savitry, he names her ‘Savitry’. She is virtuous and beautiful and has all the attributes of a goddess. Toru Dutt’s lines show the Indian people’s faith in prayer, worship and retals.

Sarojini Naidu has succeeded in capturing the very spirit of Idol worship in her poem ‘Kali- The Mother’ a hymn to Kali, the eternal mother of Hindu worship-

“O terrible and tender and divine
O mystic mother of all sacrifice
We deck the sombre altars of thy shrine
With sacred basil leaves and saffron and rice
All gifts of life and death, we bring to thee
Uma! Haimavati! “ (Kali- The Mother) (229)

Goddess Kali, the personification form of Parvati has been brought under various names like Durga, Annapurna, Jagadpurna, Jagdamba, Jagadgauri, Uma, Ambika, Ganesh Janani etc. She is worshipped throughout the country under different names, in different forms and by different groups of people. Here, in Sarojini’s poem, there is a choral chant in which various types of people participate. The worshippers have decorated the altars of the shrine with sacred basil leaves and saffron and rice. Like the mother of Indian joint family, Kali whose creation and the child the cosmos is, represents the prevalence of law and continuity. She embodies a feminine world of

space and time in which hers is participating presence amidst the flux of confluent forces. She is the mystic mother of all sacrifices. Her love and compassion are one side, as all the other love relationships based on kinship, friendship and social obligations flow from reciprocity but hers alone can afford to be unilateral because in her are fused the multiple forms which the soul assumes. Sarojini presents the faith of the worshippers, laying stress on the cosmic principle as Goddess Kali stands for the feminine principle at work in the cosmos. The worshippers offer their prayers-

“Maidens: We bring thee buds and berries from the wood,  
Mothers: And the sweet travail of motherhood!  
Widows: And we the bitter vigil of despair!  
All voices: All gladness and all grief we bring to Thee Ambika! Parvati! “  

Sarojini’s presentation of the chanting of hymns brings about a sort of trance and the divine is tuned into a living presence for the time being. A catharsis or relief is introduced for the emotion of fear and a consciousness of social solidarity is produced because God is always present in such type of rituals, worships and faiths. The Blessed Lord says in Geeta, “I am the ritual action, I am the sacrifice, I am the ancestral ablation, I am the (medicinal) herb, I am the (sacred) hymn, I am also the melted butter, I am the fire and I am the offering.” (231) In Sarojini’s poem, at first the worshippers recount her various gifts in their communal chant then they chant to her each and offer their devotion-

“Scholars: We bring the secret of our ancient rites,  
Priests: We bring the treasures of our ageless creeds,  
Poets: And we the subtle music of our hearts,  
Patriots: And we the sleepless worship of our deeds,  
All voices: All glory and all grace we bring to thee Kali! Maheshwari! “  

Sarojini has communicated the Hindu faith in worshipping gods and goddesses in temples and holy places through her poem ‘Kali, the Mother’. The worship of Kali is the most spectacular and most popular of all worship lasting for ten days (Navratries). On the tenth day, the image of Kali is taken out in procession for immersion in the river. After the immersion, which marks the climax of the celebration, people greet each other and sweets are distributed. Though the worship of Kali is very popular in whole India but special expression of faith and ceremonies are held in Bengal and being born in a Bengali family, Sarojini has successfully captured the Hindu ideal of fusion by observing a simple and direct relationship between the folk reverence for Mother and the sacramental ecstasy of the group worship in her poem ‘Kali, the Mother’.

It is true that idol worship is strictly prohibited in Sikhism and Islam, but Hindu culture is dominated by idol worship because according to Hindu philosophy, “Man is an anthropomorphic and is inclined to conceive God in vivid and pictorial form. He cannot express his mental attitude except through symbolism and art as they help the human spirit in its efforts after Divine.” (233) Sarojini’s poem ‘Lakshmi, the Lotus Born’ is another good example of Hindu’s faith of rituals and idol worships. The poem was composed on Lakshmi Puja day in 1915. Here, the poetess worship Lakshmi in a traditional manner-

(231) The Bhagwad Geeta, IX/16, page-245.  
“Prosper our cradles and kindred and cattle
And cherish our heart fires and coffers and corn
O watch o’er our seasons of peace and of battle
Hearken, O Lotus born! “ (Lakshmi, the Lotus Born) (234)

Lakshmi is worshipped and known in the whole world as Goddess of prosperity, wealth and happiness. It is believed that Lakshmi, the wife of Lord Vishnu (the supreme God Narayana), the goddess of fortune was born from the Lotus. She rose like a pearl from the ocean and her beauty surpassed the splendour of morning. The Padma Purana and Vishnu Purana describes, “When Hari (Vishnu) was born as a dwarf, the son of Aditi, Lakshmi appeared from the lotus as Padma, when he was born as Rama, of the race of Bhrigu, she was Dharani, when he was Raghva, she was Sita, when he was Krishna, she was Rukmani. In the other descents of Vishnu she was His associate. If He takes a Celestial form, she appears as divine, if a mortal; she becomes a mortal too transforming her own person agreeably to whatever character it pleases Vishnu to assume.” (235) Sarojini’s hymn ‘Lakshmi the Lotus Born’ is an invocation of the worshippers who seek the blessings of the goddess of fortune and prosperity.

Another lively example of Indian Vedic heritage and faith of Indian people in worshipping gods and goddesses is Sarojini’s poem ‘Hymn to Indra, Lord of Rain’. In Hindu Mythology Indra is the Lord of Rain and can rouse the voice of thunder. He can bid the storms awake from their sleep. As a protector and enricher, he nourishes forests and plains by a bountiful supply of water. The Rig Veda says, “He who made fast the tottering earth who made still the quaking mountains, who measured out and extended the expenses of the air, who propped up the sky, he, My people is Indra.” (231) Sarojini’s poem is marked with deep insight into the spirit of Hindu religion and ancient lore when both men and women offer their prayers to Lord Indra for a down pour-

“Thou, who with the bountiful torrent and river
Dost nourish the heart of the forest and plain
Withhold Thy gifts, O omnipotent Giver
Hearken, O Lord of Rain.” (Hymn to Indra, Lord of Rain) (237)

Same expressions, we find in the second stanza of her poem ‘Harvest Hymn’ in which the people invoke to Varuna, Lord of Rain without whose showers all growth would be checked-

“Lord of rainbow, Lord of harvest
Great and beneficent, Lord of main!
Thine is the mercy that cherished our furrows,
Thine is the mercy that fostered our grain

(236) Quoted from ‘The Rig Veda’ (An Anthology), Ed: Wendy Doniger O’Flaherty, page-160.
O sender of rain and the dewfall, we hail thee
We praise thee, Varuna with cymbal and pipe.” (Harvest Hymn) (238)

For Lord Varuna, the Rig Veda says, “He waters the soil, the earth, the sky

O Varuna, born of strength.” 4/282 (239)

Sarojini’s poem ‘Harvest Hymn’ is in the form of praise giving song offered to different deities Surya (the Sun), Varuna (the Lord of Rain), Prithvi (Earth) and finally Om (the Lord of Universe). All sincere devotion and worship is a seeking after the Truth, the Supreme God, may be in the form of these deities, symbols, forms and idols. In Sarojini’s poem ‘Harvest Hymn’, men and women praise, thank and express their gratitude to Surya (the Sun) with religious and devotional tone—

“O’ giver of mellowing radiance, we hail thee
We praise thee O Surya, with cymbal and flute.” (Harvest Hymn) (240)

The gratitude to Sun is gratitude to God as Sun is the form of God Himself. Blessed Lord says in Geeta- “That splendour of the Sun that illumines this whole world, that which is in moon, that which is in the fire, that splendour know as mine.’ XV/12 (241) So these prayers, these thanks giving songs, these rituals to gods and goddesses help a human being to get into a subtle region and experience, a little uplift far away from the hurly burly atmosphere of this world. These devotional prayers to God in the form of idol worship and rituals make one, self purifying, self improving and spiritually enriching experienced.

K.N.Daruwalla’s poem ‘Crossing Chorhoti’ in ‘Landscapes’ takes us into the world of rituals and prayers. Throughout the poem, the poet refers to strong chilly winds and the poem occasionally acquires the intensity of a prayer to Lamas, the Buddha and the Mother Goddess Dolma-

“Goddess I am seeking shelter
from the approaching storm
I seek the cavern aspect
of your embracing form
which smothers in lap darkness
yet lights the spinal reed
from your womb all proceed
into you all recede.” (Landscapes) (242)

The divine presence is evoked once again when the poet describes

(239) Quoted from ‘The Rig Veda’ (An Anthology), page-211.
(241) The Bhagwad Geeta, XV/12, page-330.
‘Fifty Indian peaks' with-
“Snow and the spray hangover
of icefalls and the blue of distance
as if some god had with a palette knife
honed the landscape with ethereal colours." (Landscapes) (243)

It shows that Indian mind is religious first then anything else. Prayers and rituals are a part of his life
as he feels the presence of god everywhere.

**Buddhism**: can be considered as an effort of Hinduism. It appeared in India with Lord Buddha,
the noble prince of Sakya clan, Siddhartha by name. When old age, suffering and death came to
his notice, he resolved to seek release from these sorrows not only for himself but for all mankind.
It was an ambition but noble adventure. He left his father’s palace, and his beautiful wife and son.
Mounting his white horse in the stillness of the night while all in the palace slept, he rod forth in
‘search of the way’, the way to Liberation. After many years of rigid penance, painful struggle and
deep meditation, light came to his inner sight and he became the great apostle of the enlightenment.
The words of Lord Buddha, under the Bodhi Tree, when he got enlightenment, were —"Give Me O
Mendicants! The deathless amita (eternal life) has been found by Me. I will now instruct. I will preach
the Dharma." (244) Buddhism is the fulfilment of Hinduism. The Buddha did not announce any new
religion. He was born, grew up and died as Hindu. His teachings show that he was restating with a
new emphasis on the ancient ideals of Indo Aryan Civilization.

Whereas Hinduism mainly speaks of atma and parmatma, Buddhism lays stress on Karma.
But the ultimate aim is one that is to find ‘Moksha’. Buddhism is said to be religion without ‘soul’,
without ‘God’ but it stresses that everyone can attain Nirvana by overcoming Samsara (karma) and
the way to it is the moral path which results in illumination.

Sarojini Naidu’s poem ‘To a Buddha seated on a Lotus’ from ‘Golden Threshold’ is a beautiful
attempt to throw light on Buddhist philosophy. Though she has written only a single poem on
Buddhism, but this single poem is quiet enough to reflect the whole philosophy of Lord Buddha. At
first Sarojini presents the picture of Lord Buddha shown in the idol seated cross legged on a lotus
which forms his throne, his eyes are half open in prayer and his hands if blessing his devotees—

“Lord Buddha on thy lotus throne
With praying eyes and hands elate
What mystic rapture dost thou own
Immutable and ultimate
What peace, unravished of our ken
annihilate from the world of men." (To a Buddha Seated on Lotus) (245)

The 'mystic rapture' and 'peace' of Lord Buddha's face shows the deep bliss, the profound exultation which he has attained through Nirvana, the mysterious oneness with Divine, which has been the quest of sages, rishis and munis of India, “which our eyes cannot violate” nor “the world can disturb or destroy”. Buddha showed the path which leads to cessation of all sufferings and attainments of knowledge and emancipation. “This is the tradition associated with Theravade Buddhism and Ashoka’s mission. For them Buddha is a man, not a God, a teacher not a saviour.” (246) “There is another side of Buddha’s life when he is concerned with the sorrows of men’s eager to enter their lives, heal their troubles and spread good of the many ‘bahu jana sukhaya- bahu jana hitaya’. Based on this compassion for humanity a second tradition matured in North India under the Kusanas and Guptas. It developed the ideals of salvation for all the discipline of devotion and the way of universal service.” (247) Infact, it was only Gautam Buddha who began to teach with his inspired voice, to all corners, the four great truth and the eight fold paths of right view, right aim, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

The four great truths, which are the outcome of eight noble paths, preached by Buddha will help us in understanding Sarojini’s poem based on Buddha’s philosophy-

1. **Life is essentially suffering:** Sarojini presents a contrast between the fever and fret of human life and tranquillity expressed by the idol of Lord Buddha. The human life is ‘turbid, noisy and unquite’ in which everything is transitory with no fulmillment- sorrow in hot pursuit of sorrows and dream following dream without being realized.

   “The wind of change forever blows
across the tumult of our way
Tomorrow’s unborn griefs depose
the sorrows of our yesterdays
Dream yield to dream, strife follows strife
And death unweaves the web of life.” (To a Buddha Seated on Lotus) (248)

2. **The thirst for pleasure, power and being is the cause of all sufferings:** depicts the realistic picture of the sorrowful condition and sordid realities of human life. There is blind race to collect more and more money and material things. Desire is multiplied by desires. People are worried to get name and fame and satisfy their ego and egocentric desires. This creates a vicious circle of sufferings-

   “For us the travail and the heat
The broken secrets of our pride
The strenuous lessons of defeat
The flower deferred, the fruit denied
But not the peace supremely won
Lord Buddha of thy Lotus throne.” (To a Buddha Seated on Lotus) (248)

3. **The suffering can be ended by the conquest of this thirst:** Thirst of desires is the cause of all suffering. This suffering can be ended and salvation can be attained by the relinquishment of all worldly ties, worldly pleasures, removal of desires and reverence of attachments because sensual desires can never be satisfied by the enjoyment of desires. True happiness lies in the emotional detachment towards desires, actions and surroundings as everything in this universe is impermanent. Despite the failure, the heavenward' hunger of our soul always persists-

“With futile hands we seek to gain
Our inaccessible desire
Diviner summits to attain
with faith that sinks and feet that tire
but nought shall conquer or control
the heavenward hunger of our soul.” (To a Buddha Seated on Lotus) (248)

4: **Nirvana is the last aim of our life according to Buddhist philosophy:** Sarojini’s expression ‘the heavenward hunger of soul’ directly points out towards the ultimate aim of human life that is Nirvana. According to Buddhism, “Nirvana is the extinction of desires, the craving for something. It is not subject to decay, disease or death. It is from all grieves and impurities. It is a blissful reward of a long course of exertion, a heaven of peace and rest.” (249) In simple terms Nirvana is spiritual existence attained through Jnana or bodh. It is absolute illumination. Sarojini asks Lord Buddha to tell her the way which leads to Nirvana-

“The end, elusive and afar
Still lures us with its beckoning flight
And all our mortal moments are
A session of the infinite
How shall we reach the great unknown
Nirvana of thy Lotus throne———” (To a Buddha Seated on Lotus) (250)

Sarojini conveys the whole Vedantic philosophy of Tat tvam asi in these two lines ‘all our mortal moments are a session of the infinite’ and ‘Buddhism is the offshoot of Hinduism’. The ways may be different but the aim is one that is Liberation. Buddhism says, “Realise all this as illusion”, while Hinduism preaches, “Realise that within the illusion is the Real.” (251) In simple terms Hinduism believes in providing release from the repercussion of karma. Buddhism promises redemption from suffering (dukha) by annihilation of the ego and desires. Buddhism firmly advocates two very important attributes- the impermanence and the absence of ‘self’. Everything in this universe is impermanent, changing and therefore transient, so one should never have emotional attachment towards one’s actions and surroundings. Secondly the true cause of all suffering is egoistic ‘Self’. This ego or I is the driving force behind all desires, ambitions, search for power and glory. Hence, all suffering can be ended by annihilating of self or ego. That will be the state of true happiness.-salvation.

Sikhism the most recent religion of India began with the teachings of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and other nine gurus. Shri Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of Sikhism is universal scripture, mainly stressing on spiritual vision, metaphysical concepts and ethical percepts. It teaches to everybody that Sewa (serving the humanity) and Simran (meditating upon the Name of God) are direct way to God.

Jainism, the product of Hinduism, mainly speaks of non-violence, non-materialism, self control, peaceful coexistence, love and simplicity. That means all the four great religions of India- Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism have the base of spirituality steeped in the Vedic heritage of India. In India, religions may be different but the aim is one. This is the liberal attitude of Indianness to believe in the principle, “The entire world is but a family.” Tagore longs to have such ‘heaven’ of universal brotherhood after Independence free country where there are no petty consideration of caste and creed, no division of religion and region-

“Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,
Where knowledge is free,
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls,
Where the words come out from the depth of truth,
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection,
Where clear stream of reason has not lost its way into dreary desert land of dead habit,
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening thought and action,
Into that heaven of freedom My Father, Let my country awake.” (Geetanjali) (252)

In such a state of universal religion and universal brotherhood, people would be truth loving, peace loving by nature and would work tirelessly to attain Perfection. Sri Aurobindo also speaks the spirit of universal perfection through the mouth of Savitri-

“A lonely freedom cannot satisfy
A heart that has grown one with every heart
I am a deputy of the aspiring world
My spirit’s liberty I ask for all.” (Savitri) (253)

Indeed, Indian philosophy is the philosophy of universal welfare. Here in India all religions castes and creeds are united by the thread of love. The philosophy of India advocates that we all are the children of one God. God Himself is present in every one in form of soul. So there is no difference between me and you. This presence of God in everyone forms the base of unity in diversity of India. Sarojini’s poem ‘The Call to Evening Prayer’ is quite significant to express India’s spirit of religious harmony and tolerance. It invites to prayer the followers of all great religions of the world- Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Hinduism- the various invocations to God-

“Allah ho Akbar! Allah ho Akbar!
From mosque and minar the muezzins are calling
Ave Maria! Ave Maria!


Devoutly the priests at the altars are singing
Ahura Mazda! Ahura Mazda!
How the sonorous avesta is flowing
Narayana! Narayana!
Hark to the ageless divine invocations!" (The Call to Evening Prayer) (254)

Such is Sarojini’s account of her faith in sacredness of all religions and her attempt in making all religions unite rather than divide. In fact, all religions are human attempts to reach the Ultimate Reality who is All Powerful, Infinite and All Pervading. The various names and functions described to Him are nothing but different expressions of one Truth. The temple bells, the muezzins call, the worship of pujarees and priests are one and same to communicate with Supreme. This poem not only shows the unity in diversity of India but also conveys the phenomenon of prayer which all the religions of the world have not only accepted but have best effort to reach God, to link himself with that Supreme Power who creates and preserves the universe.

Nissim Ezekiel presents the religious harmony of India in this very line- “All are welcome whatever caste.” (Irani Restaurant Instruction) (255)
This only line is quite enough to show the liberal attitude of India that India welcomes all, absorbs all and makes them into one that is of being Indian. Here in India, every religion, every caste and creed is given same value. Nissim Ezekiel preaches like a super human being and longs that every man and woman must be true human being first and then anything else so that everyone could live an ideal life based on high human values and achieve perfection-
“I do not want the perfect charity
of saints nor the tyrants endless power
I want a human balance humanly
acquired, fruitful in the common hour." (A Poem of Dedication) (256)
To become a true human being is the real aim of religious philosophy of India.

Third Chapter

SPIRITUALISM
India is a land of spirituality. It is because of the sacred light of spirituality, India is worshipped as ‘Punya Bhumi’ through out the world, Spiritualism means “the science of knowing God”, knowing and realizing the secret of ‘Tat tvam asi’ that human life every where and always is part and parcel of Divine Being. Guru Granth Sahib repeatedly preaches and stresses, ‘mann tu jyot savroop hai, apna mul pahchan’, “O heart you are the divine spark of God, Recognize and realize your worth”.

Spiritual science or Adhyatam is concerned with understanding of Absolute Reality which the Vedas call Brahma, and which we call God or Parmatma. Brahma is absolute truth, one without second, eternal omniscient and self illuminating and realizing Brahma within is Spirituality, the state of Sat Chit Ananda or Pure Truth – Intelligence, Bliss. It is arriving at inner core of oneness, an expression of ‘true self, when the veil between this world and the eternal is lifted. In simple terms, spirituality can be defined as the realization of divinity in one’s own self, converting to universal consciousness of Absolute Reality. It is an inward journey to the Abode of Bliss, the knowledge of enlightenment the best expression of what a human being is in truth. It is a glorious and mysterious experience of ecstasy – the merging of finite into the Infinite. It is known to them only, who have realized it. According to Radha Krishna, “The Lord abides in the heart of every creature, and when the veil of that secret sanctuary is drawn with , we hear the divine voice, receive the divine light and act in divine power”. (1)

Vivekananda defines spirituality, ‘To be free of external and internal nature. Nature must fall at your feet and you must trample on it and be free and glorious by going beyond. No more is there life, therefore no more death. It is bliss unspeakable, indestructible beyond everything, what we call happiness and good, here are but particles of that eternal bliss and that eternal bliss is our Goal”. (2)

The human life is the most precious gift of God and it is in this life only that one can achieve the goal of Perfection and become ‘manav se Mahamanav’. Infact, the divine spark of God is within the body in the form of ‘Self’ but gets covered with the veil of ignorance (maya), as soon as the veil is removed, Divinity can be realized. What we require is a pure heart and mind along with an abiding quest to know God. Our holy scriptures the Bhagavad Gita and Sri Guru Granth Sahib which are the outcome of Vedantic philosophy of India, give the detailed description of spiritual uplift. To understand the real meaning of spirituality, we have to deal with all the three important pillars of spiritualism.

**Reality** – The first and foremost principle to reach the path of spirituality is to have firm faith that God is the Supreme Reality of the universe. He is the supreme power responsible for the creation, preservation and dissolution of this universe. He pervades all, the Lord of the universe, the Lord of all beings. Svetasvatra Upanishad states, “God is the soul of universe. He is immortal. His is the rulership. He is all knowing, all pervading, the protector of the universe, the eternal ruler. None else is there efficient to govern the world eternally. He who at he beginning of creation projected Brahma, and who delivered Vedas, unto him seeking liberation, I must go, unto that effulgent one, where light turns the understanding towards Atman (VI)”. (3)

It firmly advocates that God is all in all. No being, no place, no time is without this presence. He is formless yet He lives in all and to know Him to know all.

Toru Dutt, the pioneer of Indo English poetry presents the supreme power of Almighty God through the mouth of Prahlad when he boldly argues with his father –
“There is one God – one only – mark!
To Him is all our service due” (4)

It clarifies that there are not two or three Gods to create and cherish the creation. God is the only Cherisher of the world. Different Names of God are just His divinely forms. Guru Granth Sahib says – “brahma vishnu mahesh ek murat, aape karta kari”. (1’908)
“God is one; He Himself creates and performs all. The so called Brahma (creator), Vishnu (sustainer) and Shiva (destroyer) are also contained in Him” (5)

“Tu jug jug eko sada sada tu eka ji, tu nihchal karta sojee”. “God is one and the same since ages. He never changes continues to be and is ever stable”. (Rehras Sahib) God is the Master of all living beings. He creates every being and then Himself gets seated in Him in the form of ‘self’. Every creature is God’s reflection,Toru Dutt depicts the glory of God’s omnipresence and omnipotence – through the story of Prohlad when King Heerun Kashyap gets greatly enraged and orders Prahlad to bow down and worship him, or he would be killed, but Prahlad remains unshaken in his resolve and boldly declares –
“The Gods who made us are the life
Of living creatures, small or great
And shall we these high Gods blaspheme?” (Prahlad)(6)

The expression God as “the life of living creatures” very well explains that God Himself is present in all living beings in the form of ‘Self’. According to Taittiriya Upainshed, the Supreme Lord is, “from which these beings are born, by which they live and they into which when departing, they enter”. (7)

The Bhagavad Gita, the epitone of all Vedas, speaks the Glory of God, when God Himself explains His omnipresence and omnipotence to Arjuna – “I, o Gudakesa (Arjuna) am the self seated in the hearts of all creatures. I am the beginning, the middle and the very end of all beings”. (-8)

In Toru Dutt’s poem, ‘Dhruva’ Suneetee, the mother of Dhruva teaches and advises his son to love all and to do good to all because God Himself is present in His every creature –
“Intent to do good to the human race
And to all the creatures sentient made of God” (Dhruva) (9)

“The creatures sentient made of God” clearly shows that every being is the part and parcel of Almighty God. Lord Himself declares in Bhagvad Gita, ‘Under my guidance, nature (Prakriti) gives birth to all things, moving and unmoving and by this means, O son of Kunti (Arjuna) the world revolves”. (10)

4- Toru Dutt, ‘Prahlad’, ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan, page 158
5- Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 908
6- Toru Dutt, ‘Prahlad’, ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 158
7- Quoted from ‘The Bhagvad Gita’ ed. S Radha Krishnan page 22
8- The Bahagvad Gita X/20, page 262
10- The Bhagvad Gita IXI10, page 242
“Know that all beings have their birth in this, I am the origin of all this world and its dissolution as well”. (VII/6) (11)

Toru Dutt beautifully conveys the omnipresence and omnipotence of God that God not only creates and supports the universe but He is also the active power of the world. Everything and every activity is under His command. In the poem ‘Prahlad’ on being asked by Prahlad’s Father Heerankashyap, where his God was, and what he looked like, why he did not come down to help his devotee, the youthful Prahlad looked round, bewildered but yet full of faith in God, makes a stirring speech –

“Yes father, God is everywhere
And of he chooses this very hour
Can strike us dead, with ghastly fear,
And vindicate his name and power” (Prahlad) (12)

Many similar references we find in Sri Guru Granth Sahib - “haran bharan jaka netr phor tis ka mantr na janai hor” (5/284) (13)

“"In the twinkling of eye, he can destroy or create. No one except Him, knows His inner secrets". It clarifies that God is the Supreme Power. It is the command and will of God by which the whole world drama is played. The life of every being and everything is in God’s hands. Toru Dutt presents that Prahlad shows no hesitation in opposing his tyrannical and ungodly father because he has full faith in God and His omnipresence –

“Yes father, God is everywhere
And of he chooses this very hour
Can strike us dead, with ghastly fear,
And vindicate his name and power” (Prahlad) (12)

The lines describe that there is one and one God only who is present as Nirgun (in the form of Shabad) and he appears as Sargun (Nitya and nimit avtaras). Though he is without any shape or colour (visible form) yet ordains many colours and shapes (forms) with a concealed purpose and into whom in the beginning and in the end, the universe dissolves. He is everything the Creator, the Doer, the Protector, the Cherisher, the Destroyer too. He existed in the past, He exists now and will ever exist in future. Every act of this world is under His command may be the life of living beings or the existence of nature. He as well as His command pervade everywhere.

Tagore’s Geetanjali is collection of devotional songs of God, for God and about God. The relationship between God and man has here been looked at from different angles – master and servant, lover and beloved, boatman and traveller, musician and listener, father and son, seer and seen. Tagore beautifully presents the omnipresence of Almighty God –

“I know not how thou singest my master!
I ever listen in silent amazement
The might of thy music illumines the whole world”. ‘Geetanjali’ (15)

11- The Bhagvad Gita VIII6, page 215
12- Toru Dutt, ‘Prahlad’, ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan, page 159
13- Sri Guru Granth Sahib, page 284
The lines glorify that God is present in the whole universe in the form of ‘Shabad’ (anhad naad). Shabad is God and God is Shabad. Many similar references, we find in Guru Granth Sahib – “eko naam ek narayan tribhavan eka jyoti” (1/992) (16)

“There is but one Shabad, one God and one Divine light prevailing in all the three spheres (the sky, the earth, the nether world)”
“ek Onkar avar nahi duja, nanak ek samayiee” (1/930) (17)
“There is one Almighty God, He is Shabad, and the whole universe is absorbed in Shabad only”.
“Jeta kita teta nau, vinn naave nahi ko thau”. (1/4) (18)

“Whatever God has made is an expression of His Name, there is no place in creation where His Name does not pervade”.
“sab tera shabad vertai upovan hariya” (4\62)
“O Cherisher God, your Shabad only prevails through out the universe”. (19)

It clarifies that there is nothing without God not even the sun, the moon, the stars, the human beings, the animals, the trees, the plants, etc. God is present in every thing moving or none moving with His power of Name. It is the power of Name (Shabad) only which controls all the working of the universe. Sri Guru Granth Sahib says –
“Onkar Brahma utpat onkar kiya jin chit
Onkar sai jugg onkar veidd nimaiye” (1\929) (20)

“So Shabad in the all governing force of Almighty God to sustain the universe. Hindus call this vibrating and prevailing sound Om, the Jains call it Onkar, the Christian call it ‘Laagosh’, in Islam this Shabad is called as ‘Kunn’ and in Sikhism it is called ‘Ik Onkar’. God is present through out His creation in the form of Shabad. It is a divine sound, the vibrating Shabad whose heavenly music enlivens all the world. In Tagore’s Geetanjali, the expression ‘the light of thy music illumines the world’ beautifully convinces the boundless admiration of devotee for God, as the greatest musician, the devotee is wonder struck and overwhelmed for the Master (God) skill in music. Tagore strongly rejects the idea of artificial rituals, worship and superstitions: He firmly declares that every human soul is the dwelling place of God so love to humanity is love to God – in one of the songs of Geetanjali, Tagore asks the ritualistic worshipper –
“whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors shut? Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee?” ‘Geetanjali’ (22)

It conveys the omnipresence of God that all beings and all things in the visible world are but forms and manifestations of one Divine life. It is He who manifests Himself in various shapes and forms in man, human life and nature. It is an instinctive conviction of unity, of oneness, of likeness in all things which forms the cardinal characteristic of mysticism. In very opening lines of “Geetanjali”

16-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page, 992
17-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page, 930
18-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page, 04
19-Sri Guru Granth Sahib, page 642
20-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 929
21-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page, 929
22-Geetanjali poem 11 ‘Leave this Chanting’ page 57
Tagore sings of the immanence and glory of God that God is every thing the creator, the doer, the cherisher, the protector, the destroyer. Every being, every thing, and every activity of the universe is under the watch and control of Almighty God. Tagore pays his obeisance to God in a spirit of humbleness that it is the grace of God, the will of God that human soul is eternal and immortal he says –

“Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure. This frail vessel thou emptiest again and again and fillets it ever with fresh life”. ‘Geetanjali’ (23)

The poet emphasizes that every human soul is part and parcel of God, it never dies and enters a new body after death. God Himself dwells in the human body in the form of soul this is the grace of God to Man. By God’s Grace only we have got human body a mind to think, a heart to feel, a soul to realize, a body to move, hands to work, eyes to see, ears to hear, nose to smell, legs to walk, a mouth to speak and so on. By His grace only we enjoy all the comforts and nourishments to live on. By His grace only we enjoy the beauty of nature – the warmth of sun, the coolness of moon, the twinkling of stars, the breezing of air, the showers of rain, the chirping of birds, the colourfulness of flowers and fruits. There are thousands of varieties of clothes to wear, thousands of variety of homes to live on. God gives and gives and ask nothing in return. Tagore describes the divine virtues of God as great Giver,

“Thy infinite gifts come to me only on these very small hands of mine. Ages pass, and still thou pourest and still there is room to fill” ‘Geetanjali’ (24)

It reflects that God is all merciful, benevolent showering endless gifts to man but the hands of man are too small to handle divine gifts properly. Very similar thoughts we find in Guru Granth Sahib-

denda de lende thak paiye” (1/2) (25)

God’s gifts are infinite, what man requires is great wisdom to handle and enjoy these gifts.

“Thou art the sky and thou art the nest as well
O thou beautiful, there is the nest in thy love
That encloses the soul with colours and sounds and odours” ‘Geetanjali/67’(26)

The lines beautifully convince that God is the source of all. He is the Supreme Person, Supreme Giver, and Supreme Sustainer. Lord Krishna Himself declares in Geeta, ‘I am the ‘self’ seated in the hearts of all creatures” (X/20) (27)

“Of lights (I am) the radiant sun X/21 of purifiers, I am the wind” (X/31) (28)

“Of rivers I am the Ganges” (X/31) (29)

“I am the pure fragrance in earth and brightness in fire. I am the life in all existences and the austerity in ascetics” (VIII/9) (30)

23- Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem- 01 “Thou has made me endless” page 31
24- Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem- 01 “Thou has made me endless” page 31
25- Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 02
26- Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 67 page 277
27- The Bhagvad Geeta X/20 page 262
28- The Bhagvad Geeta X/31 page 265
29- The Bhagvad Geeta X/31 page 265
30- The Bhagvad Geeta VIII/9 page 216
All the four Vedas support the fact, “He is the God who is in fire, in water who pervades the entire universe, He who is in plants, in trees, to Him we make our obeisance again and again”. The whole Guru Granth Sahib ji is filled with glories of God. It teaches and preaches, “God is very near yet is far away from us. He understands, sees and judges us and our actions. He is deathless. He never takes births. He is diffused throughout in his creation”. “God is only one. He existed even before the ages began. He existed in the past; He exists now and will ever exist in future”. (31)

Tagore’s poetry is par excellence to reveal the omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience of Almighty God –
“Have you not heard these silent steps? He comes, comes and ever comes. Every moment and every age, every day, and every night he comes, comes and ever comes”. ‘Geetanjali/45’ (32)

Sri Aurobindo’s “Savitri” in every nook and corner convinces the presence of God and soul’s strong desire to merge with the Maker. Throughout the whole of this holy epic we feel the pulsating presence of God the one, the perfect, the Divine Aswapathy, Savitri’s father, after his life long penance and prayers, dedication and Sadhna receives secret knowledge in an illumined state. He sees the mystery of creation unfolded before him and feels the presence of omnipotent and omniscient God every where –
“He is the Maker and the world he made
He is the vision and He is the seer
He is Himself the actor and the act
He is Himself the knower and the known” ‘Savitri Book 1 canto 4’ (33)

It explains that God is all in all. He Himself creates the universe. There is not a single particle where God is not present as stated in Guru Granth Sahib –
“aapino aa sajio aapino rachio nau
duiiee kudrat sajiye kar aasan ditho chau” (1/463) (34)

“God Himself created Himself and assumed the Name, and then secondly He created nature where in He lives and beholds it with delight”.
“Kar aasan ditho chau” (1/463) (35)

“Seated within the universe, God watches His creation with delight” –
“sargun nirgun nirankar sunn samadhi api
apan kiau nanka ape hi phir jap” (5/290)

“The formless one is the possessor of the three qualities of maya but at the same time above these qualities and is Himself in profound contemplation. He has Himself created all the creation and He Himself remembers Himself (while) seating within all the living beings” (36)

31-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 294
32-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 45 page 197
33-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’, Book 1, canto 4 page 61
34-Guru Granth Sahib page 463
35-Guru Granth Sahib page 463
36-Guru Granth Sahib ,page 290
It clarifies that God is the source of all. Both the matter and the spirit are the manifestation of the Almighty God. Out of these, the matter (mortal body made up five elements – earth, water, fire, air and space) is inferior (His lower nature) where as the spirit (soul the divine spark of God) is superior (His higher nature). All beings thus spring from the union of these two and God in the source of entire creation and like a golden thread with golden beads string on it supports this entire creation "sagal samagri tumre sutra dhari". (5/266)

“All the creations are strung on your string care supported by you laws”. (37)

Sri Aurobindo describes the limitless virtues of Almighty God who is the only Master of all beings. He existed even before the ages began, He existed in the past, He exists now and will ever exist in future”-
“he was here before the elements could emerge
Before there was light of mind or life could breathe”. ‘Savitri Book I canto. 4’ (38)

It explains that God is the Supreme Power to create and sustain the universe. He is one through out the ages. Same expressions are repeated again and again in Guru Granth Sahib – “tu jugg jugg eko sada sada, tu ekoji tu nihchal karta solee”. “God is one and the some since ages, he never changes, continues to be and is ever stable”. “ad (l) sach sach jugad (l) hai bhi sach nanak hosii bhi sach” (5/285)(39)

“True one (God) was in the beginning, the true one was in the primal age (since the ages began), He true one is now also and the true one will be future” Shri Ausbindo repeatedly preachs in Savitri that God is Omnipresent, not even a single plant or petal is without the presence of God”.
“God found in nature, nature fulfilled in God’ ‘Savitri Book I canto. 3’ (40)

God is present in every thing – in all nature – in air, in water, in fire, in space, in all elements. The whole universe is His body as is stated in Guru Granth Sahib – “kudrat kar ke vasaya soi” (1\83) “God created nature and pervades it”. “paun pani baisanta mah, char kunt dah dise samah”, (41)

“In wind, in water, in fire, and in all the four quarters and in all ten directions (every where), he is contained”. (5\293) (42)

Sri Aurobindo conveys the basic principle of vedantic philosophy that God Himself dwells in every human heart in the form of soul. “The immanent lives in man as in his house”. (43)

As stated in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, “ghat ghat antar brahm lukaya, ghat ghat jyot sabaiyee”. (1\597) “God is hidden in every heart and ever heart is illumined by Him”. (44)
Sri Aurobindo convinces beautifully that every human being may be rich or poor, is the reflection of God Himself –
“And garbed in beggar’s robe, there walks the one”. (45)

Lord declares in Bhagavad Gita, “I am the self seated in the hearts of all creatures.” (X/20) (46)

It is the phase of the Lord Himself which constitutes the individual ‘self’ in the body. The physical body made up of earth, water, fire, air and space is the lower nature of Almighty God, where as soul, the pure consciousness is the higher nature of God by which this world is held. The world is the play ground of God. God Himself creates the world and Himself enjoys the play drama of His creation seated in His creatures. Sri Aurobindo presents this deep philosophy of Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience of Almighty God –

“Then by a touch, a presence or a voice
The world is turned into a temple ground
And all discloses the unknown beloved” ‘Savitri’ Book II canto 12 (47)

There is no being, no place without God, Guru Granth Sahib repeats and repeats the omnipresence of God –

“ap(l) kathai ap(l) sun nai har, ape ek ap(l) bisthar” (5:292) “He Himself speaks and hears Himself, He is transcendent and He is immanent” (48)

“Tu karta sab kichh janda jio jya andar vartai” (3:314) “O God you are the knower of everything as you dwell in each heart”. (49)

Sarojini Naidu expresses her firm faith in all pervading God –

“Life of all myriad lives that dwell in thee” (Ghanshyam) (50)

It convinces that God is the Lord of whole universe the Lord of all beings. It is this power only that Whose power causes us to realize Him and see Him. He is the Supreme power, Supreme light, Supreme knowledge, Supreme love and Supreme music. All universe is because of Him. Even the god and godness work under the command of One Almighty God. There is no equal to Him and no more than Him. Sarojini Naidu presents the image of God in the infinite capacity –

“Lord of the Universe, Lord of our being
Father eternal, ineffable OM
Thou art our hands and our harvest and our home” ‘Harvest Hymn’ (51)

45-Sri Aurbindo, ‘Savitri’ Book II, canto 5, page 75
46-The Bhagavad Gita X/20 page 262
47-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book II canto 12 page 75
48-Sri Guru Granth Sahib, page 292
49-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 314
Infact, ‘God is the soul of the universe. He is immortal, he is the rulership. He is all knowing, all pervading the protector of the universe, the external ruler. None else is there efficient to govern the world eternally. He who at the beginning of creation projected Brahma and who delivered Vedas, unto Him is seeking liberation. I go to unto that effulgent one where light turns the understanding towards the Atman”. (‘Shevetashvatara Upanishad VI’) (52)

Sri Guru Granth Sahib says, ‘sab kichh tis ka oh karne jog, tis bin dusar hoa na hog’ “Every thing belong to Him and He is omnipotent. There neither has been nor will ever be anyone except Him”. (53)

The Bhagavad Gita preaches “The Supreme is the unborn eternal; He is also the lord of the world. Thou he has no birth, all existences derive from Him. He is in truth the eternal God Himself more ancient than all else and that all manifested glory is from Him”. (54)

Sarojini’s references ‘the ineffable OM’ stands for the Absolute Supremacy of Almighty God as ‘OM’ stands for the sacred sound symbol of Brahma, the Supreme Being, the Paramatma “Aum stands for the Inexpressible Absolute”, “The manifesting word of God is OM. (55)

Hence ,OM represents the whole universe, the Almighty God. Sarojini’s expressions “Father eternal”, “ineffable OM” beautifully reflects the omnipresence of God in the syllable ‘OM’. Sarojini repeatedly conveys that we all human beings are the manifestation of Divine Being, an Absolute Power.

“O thou who mad’st me of thy breath” ‘The Soul’s Prayer’ (56)

It clarifies that every human being is a part and parcel of the Eternal Being, “From whom is the birth, continuation, and dissolution of the universe. He is Ishwar, the eternal the pure, the ever free, the Almighty, the all merciful, the all knowing, the teacher of teachers, and above all ‘Sa Ishavarah anirvachniya premasvarupah’. He is the lord, of his own nature, inexpressible love”. (57)

Sarojini Naidu sets forth her conviction that if a man has full faith in God and considers Him as the Ultimate Reality, the goal of his life, he becomes an embodiment of power and all his weakness are turned into invincible strength –

“We praise Thee, o compassionate Master of life, time and fate
Thou art the goal for which we long
Thou art our silence and our song
Life of sunbeam and the seed
Thou dost transmute from hour to hour
Our mortal weakness into power
Our bondage into liberty” (The Prayer of Islam) (58)

53-Sri Guru Granth Sahib, page 289
54-The Bhagavad Gita X/12 page 261
55-S Radha Krishnan, ‘The Bhagavad Gita’ page 232
57-Quoted from The Bhagavad Gita page 22
Sarojini glorifies the Supreme Power of God as quoted in Guru Granth Sahib “God is the Master of all creation. He consults; none. He Himself performs the world drama. He does whatever He wants. He acts according to His own designs, schemes and thoughts. He is the searcher of all hearts. There is none like Him”. (59)

“God is very near yet is far away He acts sees and judges us and our actions. He is one yet He is present in countless forms. He is deathless He never takes birth. He is diffused through out His creation”. (59)

Sarojini’s line ‘Thou art the goal for which we long’ directly points out the goal of spirituality, the ultimate goal of human life, “ours is the true religion because, it teaches that God alone is True this world is false. It teaches renunciation. Through renunciation is the way to goal, and not through enjoyment. (60)

Sarojini’s reference ‘Thou art our silence and our song’ explains our efforts to reach the Supreme Being ‘our silence’ refers to the knowledge through meditation the efforts of jnana yogi, ‘our song’ points out our prayers bhajan kirtan, worship and rituals – the efforts of bhakti yogi. Then the expressions ‘our mortal weakness into power’, our bondage into liberty’ beautifully deals with the theory of spiritual illumination – the divine power of liberated soul. Though the title of Sarojini’s above poem is ‘Prayer of Islam’ but it successfully conveys all the three basic pillars of spiritual philosophy of Hinduism – Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. Sarojini seems to be a powerful exponent to speak of the Universal Reality that God is the source of all creation –

“And all our mortal moments are a session of the Infinite”. (‘To a Buddha seated on Lotus’) (61)

She convinces that ‘the Eternal Reality not only supports existence but is also active power of the world –

“In whose glorious shadow
All life is unfolded or furled” (Solitude) (62)

Infact, God is the Ultimate Reality of the whole universe. “God is a principle, not person. He is the Infinite, Impersonal Being, ever existent, unchanging, fearless, and I and you are all his incarnations. This is the God of Vedanta and His heaven is everywhere”. (63)

Sarojini Naidu supports the truth of omnipresence of God to show that we can feel the presence of Almighty God through the beauty of nature –

“When from the climbing terrace of corn
I watch the golden orioles of thy morn” (In Salutation to the Eternal Peace) (64)

59-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 276
60-Vivekananda, ‘Hindu Religion’ Vol. III page 31
61-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Golden Threshold’ page 61
62-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Bird of Time’ page 132
63-Quoted from, ‘The Bhagavad Gita’ ed. S Radha Krishnan page 24
64-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Bird of Time’ ed. Edmund Gosse page 137
“o perchance, we may glean a far glimpse
Of the Infinite Bosom
In petals of splendour to worship the
Lord of the world”. ‘Solitude’ (65)

The lines are written to the tune of Indianness that God is present in every particle of the universe. Here, Sarojini is no less than Tagore or Aurobindo in presenting the mystic philosophy of omnipresence and omnipotence of God. Her thoughts very well go according to the philosophy of Bhagavad Gita when Lord says, “punyo gandhak prthivyam” – “I am the pure fragrance in the earth”. (66)

Indeed, God is sovereign mystery of this universe. “He is the light within us ‘hrdyantan jyothi’. He is the Supreme whose shadow is life and death” says, Rigveda” (67)

Guru Granth Sahib states “marei rakhe eko aap, manukh ke kichh nahi hath”. “The one God Himself causes death or saves; nothing is in man’s (hand) power”. (68)

Sarojini seems to be fully aware of this divine mystery of God. In her poem ‘The Soul’s Prayer’, God answers to her prayers and opens the secret of life and death –
“Life is prism of my Light
And death the shadow of my face” (The Soul’s Prayer) (69)

In many of his poems, Nissim Ezekiel presents people’s firm faith in God and God’s supreme power. In reality, there is nothing higher, nothing greater that God and God’s Name. God declares in Gita, “There is nothing whatever that is higher than I, o winner of wealth (Arjuna). All that is here is strung on me as of gems rows on a string”. (VII:7) (70)

Nissim Ezekiel glorifies God’s greatness as such –
“God is great” (Irkani Restaurant Instructions) (71)

“Listen to the voice of God” (The Great) (72)

“God is a presence here
And his people are real” (Latter Day Psalms) (73)

66-The Bhagavad Gita VII/9 page 215
67-Quoted from The Bhagavada Gita ed. S Radha Krishnan page 23
68-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 291
70-The Bhagavad Gita VII/7 page 215
72-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Sixty Poems’ Collected Poems page 21
“The mills of God are never slow” (Philosophy) (74)

It reflects that the mills of God are ceaselessly at work. God is the creator, the doer, the cherisher, the protector, the destroyer of the universe. Every being, every thing and every activity is under the control of Almighty God. Lord Himself says in Geeta, “know that all beings have there birth in this. I am the origin of all this world and its dissolution as well”. (VII/6) (75)

“I am the father of this world, the mother, the supporter and the grandsire. I am the object of knowledge, the purifier, I am the syllable Aum and I am the rk the sama, and the yajus as well. (IX17) (76)

Sri Guru Granth Sahib states, “God alone is the doer of all acts and there is none else. (Guru) Nanak (says) I am a sacrifice to him who pervades water, lands, nether regions and skies”. (77)

That is why Ezekiel prays to God to have a strong kinship with sky, earth, air, fire and sea – “God grant me certainty
In kinship with the sky
Air, earth, fire, sea –
And the fresh inward eye” (The Morning Prayer) (78)

Earth, air, water, fire and sky are the five basic elements from which the human body is made of. They are not only the elements of human body only but also come under the eight fold nature of Lord, as stated in Bhagavad Gita, “Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind and understanding and self sense – this is the eight fold division of my nature” (VII/4)(79). Ezekiel’s prayer for kinship with basic elements of nature shows his humanitition attitude for a balanced and good life. Ezekiel’s expression ‘And the fresh inward eye’ symbolizes the spiritual illumination, the ultimate aim of human life. Ezekiel is excellent in depicting typical Indian life and the immense faith of Indian people in God in his poem Night of scorpion – “The peasants came like swarm of flies
And buzzed the name of God a hundred times
To paralyze the evil one”. (Night of Scorpion) (80)

“Thank God the scorpion picked on me
And spared my children”. (Night of Scorpion) (80)

The lines do not only express the mother’s love for her children but also Indian people’s faith in God. Indian mind is first religious than any thing else ‘Thank God’, God will save us, ‘God will help us’, oh God, are the common expressions in day to day life.

A K Ramanujam presents the omnipresence and omnipotence of Almighty God by believing in the concept of Brahma in every object in the cosmos-

74- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Exact Name’ Collected Poems page 129
75- The Bhagavad Gita VII/6 page 215
76- The Bhagavad Gita IX/17 page 215
77- Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 276
78- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Unfinished Man’ Collected Poems page 122
79- The Bhagavad Gita VII/4 page 213.
80- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Exact Name’ collected poems page 130
“Actually see the one in many” (Entries for a Catalogue Fears) (81)
As stated in Guru Granth Sahib –
“eko ek ek hari aap
puran pur rehyo prabhbiap”. (5\289)
“God Himself is the only, only and only one
The perfect God pervades all” (82)

Kamla Das shows her faith in God by singing the glories of God, of God’s Name and of religion.
“Oh God,
Blessed be your fair name, blessed be the religion” (The Inheritance)(84)
Indeed, there is nothing higher, and greater than God and God’s Name – “sacha sahib saach nai” (1\2) (84)

“True is the Lord, true is His Name” “vada sahib ucha thao, uche upar ucha nao” God is
great and his seat is high. God’s name is the highest of the high”. (85)

Kamla Das expression ‘blessed be your fair name” glorifies the value of God’s Name. “Tere
naam aneka rup ananta, kehan na jaaye tere gun kete (1\358) “your names, forms and merits are
countless and indescribable o lord.” (86)

And Kamla Das’s reference, ‘blessed be the religion’ is really beautiful because in India
‘religion’ is realization of God within, through an ideal way of living so God is true, true is His name
and very true is one who is religious.

Jayant Mahapatra expresses the presence of God and His Supreme Power through his
short poem ‘Grass’. The poem is a symbolical interpretation of what ‘Grass’ means in the real
sense. The poet moves slowly in a sorrowful mood as he is in great stress. He is utterly confused,
should he negotiate to and accept grief as his destiny. As he is moving throwing his head on his
shoulders, he hears some thing reverberating in the atmosphere. He looks below at the grass
which seems to be chanting a hymn in the glory of the omnipresent Almighty God. It eases and
consoles him
“I watch a little hymn
Turning the ground beneath my feet,
A tolerant soil making its own way in the light of the sun” (Grass) (87)
This joyous spectacle unfolds before him ‘an ancestral smell of rot, remaining me of secret of my
own’.
K N Daruwalla depicts his deep concern with omnipresence of God through his poem ‘Landscapes’.
The divine presence is evoked with intensity of prayer when the poet describes “fifty Indian peaks”
with –

82-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 289
84- Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 2
85-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 4
86-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 358
“now and the spray hangover
of icefalls and the blue of distance
As if some God had with a palette knife
honed the landscape with ethereal colours” (‘Landscapes) 33’ (88)

Hence God is all in all. He is present every where and in every one. He is the source of all creation. Sri Guru Granth Sahib says, “He is without and within all beings. He is unmoving and also moving. He is too subtle to be known. He is far away and yet he is near”. (89)

These divine words of Sri Guru Granth Sahib clearly explain that we all are the reflection of Almighty God. He is seated in the hearts of all. All things moving or unmoving derive their existence from God, supported by Him and taken to Him, He is the breath of all breaths, the soul of all souls. The soul is the dwelling place of God but because of the veil of ignorance one is not able to realize the true nature of soul and Supreme Soul (atma and parmatma). Lord himself declares “Veiled by my creative power (yoga maya) I am not revealed to all. This bewildered world knows me not, the Unborn, the Unchanging” (VII:25) (90)

God is in us, only we have to realize Him. Seeking is necessary, craving is necessary.

**Awareness- Efforts to reach the Ultimate Reality -**

“Spiritualism is not a species of imaginative thinking but is the closest communication with Supreme” (91)

The Bhagavad Gita tells us the way that “we can reach the goal of Perfection, attain the saving Truth in three different ways, by a knowledge of Reality (jnana) or adoration and love (bhakti) of the Supreme Person or by subjection of the will to the Divine purpose (karma)” (92)

**Jnana yoga** or Brahm Gyan is the way to know God and can be obtained by deliberating upon the holy scriptures and living life according to them. The Vedas are the most valuable documents of India revealing the systematic and formulated knowledge of true life and living. All the four Vedas – the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samveda, and the Atharvaveda form the very base of spiritual knowledge. The Upanishads are the hall marks of religious philosophy and meta physics evolving the theories of karma, maya and mukti. The Puranas present the vedic truths in simplified form. The Ramayana and Mahabhartas are the glorious epics of Indian literature to guide a human being for the spiritual uplift. The Bhagavad Gita, the epitone of Vedantic philosophy, is the most perennial source of spiritual strength where as Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of sikhism, presents the most universal and practical knowledge of spirituality. The comprehensive Jain and Bodh literature help and guide a human being in his efforts to remove ignorance.

**Bhakti yoga** is whole hearted devotion to God. It is a continuous over flow of sublime love towards Almighty without any selfish motive or seeking the result. **Karma yoga** is doing one’s duties honestly and truthfully without expecting anything in return.

89- Sri Guru Granth Sahib, page 274
90- The Bhagavad Gita VII/25 page 223
91- Vivekananda, ‘Realigation’ vol. II page 174
The sacred teachings of all the holy scripture are a guide line for jnana yoga, bhakti yoga and karmayoga and in short all the yogas are meant to awaken the slept mind of a human being that man is not made of dust only but possesses in him a spark of divine fire. Self reverence, self knowledge and self control are the best, efforts to help a man to seek his sovereign power. That is true knowledge, the true aim of human life. Everything else is an illusion. Like a true sage and seer, Toru Dutt highlights that Godliness is the ultimate aim, all else in this transient world is a delusion –

“I know that in this transient world
All is delusion …………. nothing true,
I know its shows are mists unfurled
To please and vanish. To renew
Its bubble joys, be magic bound
In maya’s net work frail and fair
Is not my aim! (‘Savitri) (93)

Indeed, everything except God and God’s Name is perishable in this temporary world. What ever is seen is like a shadow of tree- the body, the wealth, the relations, the youth, the lust, the pride, the egoism, the worldly love all are perishable. Sri Guru Granth Sahib teaches and preaches “anik bhat maya ke het, sarpur hovat jan anet, “The attatchment with worldly things (mammons) is of various kinds (which misleads the man) (but) know this for certainly that (all these) are temporary” (5:264) (94)

The wealth of virtuous deeds is the only purposeful and permanent wealth that will accompany a man after death. Like a true jnana yogi, a true Brahm Gyani, Toru Dutt through the mouth of Savitri, guides towards the true aim of life and living –
“virtue should be the aim and end
of every life, all else is vain” (‘Savitri) (95)

In India, religion means an ideal way of living, living a virtuous life and attaining the goal of ‘self realization’. That is the highest goal, the highest knowledge. In Toru Dutt poem, Prahlad sings the glory of spiritual knowledge, the knowledge of God, the knowledge of divinity. This knowledge can transform any human being into divine being –
“That is true knowledge which can make us mortals saint like holy, pure
The strange thirst of the spirit slake
And strengthen suffering to endure
That is true knowledge which can change our very nature with its glow” (‘Prahlad’) (96)

Every human being can reach to the goal of spiritual ecstasy through jnana, bhakti or karma because “Human nature is not a fetter but can become the instrument of divine life”. (97)

94-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 264
95-Toru Dutt, ‘Savitri’, ‘Ancient Ballads and Legend of Hindustan’ page 68
96-Toru Dutt, ‘Prahlad’, ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 158
97-Vivekananda, ‘The Atman’ vol. II page 27
Man has divinity already but he has to discover it. Efforts are needed “No man can know ‘existence’ (sat) except through knowledge (chit)”. (98)

In Toru Dutt’s poem ‘The Legend of Dhruva’, when hurted by his step mother Suruchee and advised by his own careridden mother Suneetee, Dhruna resolves to attain permanent happiners through union with God – “I shall try
The highest good, the loftiest place to win
which the whole world deems priceless and desires” (The Legend of Dhruva) (99)

Toru Dutt has used the expressions ‘highest good’, ‘the loftiest place’, ‘priceless’ for spirituality because “spirituality is freedom, freedom from all fears, all worries, all pains, all ties and all bondages. It is, , the state of sat chit ananda, (Truth Love Peace). That is why it is called Mukti, ‘Perfection’, ‘God realization’. It is the blissful union with Lord, the realization of divine self. And to realize God is the ultimate aim of human life – ‘the highest good’. (100)

Says Sri Guru Granth Sahib – “Jini atam chiniya parmatm soiee” (1\421)
“He who realizes himself identifies himself with the Supreme” (101)

In reality, we call human beings are the struggling souls fighting with the forces of darkness, falsehood, limitations and mortality. The different yogas as jnana yoga the way of knowledge, bhakti yoga the way of devotion, karma yoga the way of action are the special ways of the inner discipline which lead to the liberation of soul – oneness of human being with divine being. Tagore’s Geetanjali is par excellence in expressing the yearning and longing of human soul to communicatie with Supreme Being through Bhakti Marg. The word Geetanjali is composed of from “Geet – (songs) and “Anjali” – (‘offering’) and thus it means “an offering of songs” Prayerful songs are offered to God in longing for unity.

“My house is small and what once has gone from it can never be regained
But infinite is thy mansion, my Lord, and seeking her
I have come to thy door” (‘Geetanjali LXXXVII 87) (102)

The poet prays to Lord to accept him without taking into consideration his ill spent past. He wants to be freed from chaos and confusion, ignorance and despair.

“Deliver me from my own shadows, my Lord, from
the night is dark and thy pilgrim is blinded
Hold thou my hand
deliver me from despair” (‘Crossing’) (103)

98-S Radha Krishnan ‘Indian Religions’ Delhi: Orient Paper Books 1979 page 100
99-Toru Dutt, “The Legend of Dhruva” ‘Ancient Ballads and Legend of Hindustan’
100-Vivekananda, ‘Knowledge‘ vol. V page 288
101-Sri Guru Granth Sahib, page 421
103-Ravinder Nath Tagore ‘Crossing’ Four Indo English Poets, ed. A N Diwedi page 48
The poet yearns for God’s Grace.

“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” (‘Geetanjali XIV’) (104)

The same sentiments are expressed in song XXXVI –
“This is my prayer to thee, my Lord, strike
Strike at the root of penury in my heart” (105)

This is total surrender to God who is our life creator, life maker and life protector. Humility, self surrender and self sacrifice are the pillars of bhakti and bhakti is the best way to mukti because it is not intended for an object in view as in jnana yoga or in karma yoga but it is loving God for God’s sake, love for love sake. No other want, no other desire. Bhakti does not mean just sitting in a lotus posture and meditating or singing God’s glories mechanically but it is more than that. We have to open our heart and pray to God by accepting his supremacy and remembering our nothingness.

Tagore expresses how a human soul longs to join in union with God, yearns to merge with Him because God is the only Truth, all else is illusion –
“That I want thee only thee, let my heart repeat without end,
All desires that distract me day and night are false and empty to the core” ‘Geetanjali/38’ (106)

Tagore conveys the idea that God is the only Beloved in this universe. Love to God is the only true love. All other love and all other relations in this world are false and temporary. There is a call in us, but we people have grown so deaf, that we are not able to hear that call of God. One who is able to hear the call and longs to meet God becomes the true lover. Then worldly relations and worldly attainment do not tempt him. The true lover (Longing human soul) grows impatient because her Beloved (God) calls with his flute –
“I am restless. I am thirsty far away things”
my soul goes out 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 spot ever more. ‘The Gardner’ (107)

“I am restless”, “I am thirst for”, “the keen call of thy flute” show the intensity of love of devotee’s heart. As when there is thirst, there is hunger, then only we long to have water and food in the same manner we have to develop a thirst for God, a hunger to have a glimpse of Paramatma, then only, we can hope to meet God. Guru Granth Sahib is filled with such prayers, such longings, “daras tere ki pyas mann lagi o God, I am thirsty to have your glimpse” (108)

104-Ravinder Nath Tagore Geetanjali\ XIV page 68
105-Ravinder Nath Tagore Geetanjali\ XXXVI page 166
106-Ravinder Nath Tagore Geetanjali/38 page 172
“hari darshan ko mera mann bahu tapte jio trikha vant bin neer
“My heart aches to have glimpse of God, it longs and cries in pain as a fish is out of water” (109)

By remembering God, by loving God and meditating upon His Name, such type of ‘bairag’
automatically gets unfold which leads to detachment to the world and attachment to God and God
only. Early morning is the best time to remember God, meditate upon His Name especially in the
company of other devotees who are singing the glories of God. God’s teachings through kath-
kirtan acts as a medicine to cure our ill feelings and evil deeds. ‘Ego’ is the greatest barrier in
cultivating love for God. The ego and egocentric desires form a thick layer of ‘Ignorance’ (maya
jaal) upon the soul of human being and do not allow him to remember God. How can God be seated
in the heart when the seat has been already occupied by I (ego)?

Tagore expresses that The devotee is worried for his ego –
“I came out alone on my way to my tryst. But who is this that follows me in the silent dark? I move
aside to avoid his presence but I escape him not. He makes the dust rise from the earth with his
swagger he adds his loud voice to every word that I utter. He is my own little ‘self’ my Lord, he
knows no shame but I am ashamed to come to thy door in his company”. (110)

The hindrances and hurdles that a man faces in the path of spiritualism are worldly desires,
temptations and worldly attachments.

“Freedom is all I want, but to hope for it I feel ashamed
I am certain that priceless wealth is in thee, and thou
are my best friend but I have not the heart to sweep
away the tinsel that fills my room” (Geetanjali 28) (111)

The poet has intense longing for reunion with God but it has not been fulfilled –
“I have not seen His face, nor have I listened to His voice only I have heard His gentle footsteps from
the road before my house”. ‘Geetanjali13’ (112)

The poet feels that desires for power and pelf drag him to the material world but merciful
God saves him from the whirlpool of desires by his denial.
“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 desires” ‘Geetanjali/14’ (113)

Here, the poet preaches that man should not become slave of worldly desires which prove
hindrance for those who intend to follow spiritual path. Tagore says that self purification is the prime
necessity for union with God. The poet, the true devotee, assures God that he will try utmost to keep
his temple clean and pure –

“Life of my life I shall ever try to keep my body pure, knowing that thy living touch is upon my limbs,
I shall ever try to keep all untruths out from my thoughts, 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
And it shall be my endeavour to reveal thee in my actions, knowing it is thy power gives me strength
to act.” (“Geetanjali/4”) (114)
The poet will continue his quest for spiritual union until the God breaks his silence and obliges him with His glimpse in his inner soul –

“The morning will surely come, the darkness will vanish and thy voice pour down in golden streams breaking through the sky” ‘Geetanjali/19’ (115)

Human birth is the only birth in which man can realize God, and meditation upon God and God’s Name is the only support which can help to achieve this goal of God Realization. God Himself is present in every human being in the form of soul (self) only efforts are needed to realize this divinity. By God’s Grace only we have got such a precious human body – the precious eyes to see, the precious ears to hear, a mouth to speak, precious hands to work, legs to walk, a mind to think, a heart to feel, a soul to realize. Can we buy these Things with money and material, from market or can anyone give us eyes or ears. It is God and God only who gives and gives and asks nothing in return. God blesses a human being with unlimited comforts and nourishments to live on but we people are so selfish, and so thankless that we get attach to the things not to the Giver. When a child is in the womb of his mother he prays to God to take him out from the fire of mother’s womb, and makes thousands of promises that after coming to world he will always remember God and meditate upon His name but after coming to the world, as he grows up, he forgets every promise made to God, he forgets every debt of human birth, he gets attached to the world, the worldly desires and worldly relations. The worldly gains and losses cover his soul with the veil of ignorance. Sri Aurobindo awakens every human being about our debt to God –

“A mutual debt binds man to the Supreme
His nature we must put on as he puts ours
We are sons of God and must be even as he
His human portion, we must grow divine
Our life is a paradox with God for kelp” (Savitri Book I canto. IV) (116)

The lines glorify that the Divine has accepted human nature and man in turn by growing into the Divine’s nature can fulfill the secret purpose of creation. Man can become the powerful instrument of God on earth only a little effort is needed –

“That to his divine measure we might rise” (‘Book I canto. IV’) (117)

It clarifies that man can be the master of all the creative energies of nature because he embodies the divine spirit. He comes here to help the earth to conquer its inertia, in conscience and ignorance. Sri Aurobindo writes that man is, “a play ground of the living infinite” (‘Savitri Book I canto. III’) (118)

It is the immortal spirit, immanent in man that creates the forms necessary for its increasing manifestation upon earth. Man can realize and manifest the divine when he recognizes his higher possibilities of spiritual life and comes out of the limited planes of physical vital and mental existence. But unfortunately we human beings are unaware of our divine existence, we forget who we are and from where we have come and for what purpose we live within the variegated life of material world, the world of eye and ear. Our actions remain limited to the outward, thus engrossed in worldly affairs, we became a puppet in the mighty hands of nature. Sri Aurobindo awakens our slept mind by his forceful words commented for a man directing towards spirituality –

115-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali/19’ page 91
117-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I canto. IV page 69
118-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri Book I canto. III’ page 32, page 33
“He knows not his own greatness nor his aim
He has forgotten why he has come and whence” (‘Savitri Book 3 canto. 4’) (119)

“He life is a blind man’s buff, a hide and seek
He seeks himself and from himself he runs” (‘Savitri Book 3 canto.) 4’ (120)

“He leaves the world to end where it began
His work unfinished he claims a heavenly prize” ‘Savitri Book 3 canto. 4 338’ (121)

“He lays his hands sometimes on the Unknown
He communes sometimes with eternity” ‘Savitri Book 3 canto. 4 340’ (122)

Sri Aurobindo firmly believes –
“And how shall the end be vain when God is guide” ‘Savitri Book 3 canto.4 339’ (123)

The line is beautiful to express the Grace of God. Devotion to God never goes waste. If we love God, God is always there to love us. Loving God and realizing Him is the ultimate aim of human life. Until it happens the cycle of births and rebirths continues. It is in human life only, one can sing the Glories of God, meditate upon His Name, do virtuous deeds and realize the divinity within his own ‘self’ and become liberated in this very life. Sri Aurobindo stresses upon the this awakening –

“His is a search of darkness for the light of mortal life for immortality’ ‘Savitri Book I canto. 4’ (124)

Aswapathy’s yoga and Savitri’s yoga’s are Aurobindo’s as well as of every man’s and woman’s of the whole human race. Every human being has to pursue the goal of spirituality because God has incarnated His creatures in His own image. Man has hidden spark of divinity in him but he does not realize himself. The ills and evils of worldly life will be cured if man moves God ward here on earth –

“Earth is a chosen place of mightiest souls
Earth is the heroic spirit’s battle field” (‘Book XI canto.) I’ (125)

Savitri conquers ignorance and death after waging a difficult war with yama, Lord of Death. She ignores all temptations, and inducements and argues with the Lord of Death to grant immortality to her husband Satyavana who represents humanity or mankind. Endowed with supernal love and firm will power, Savitri conquers death, darkness, ignorance and all evils. Despite her divinity she does not aspire for paradise felicity for ever, she makes earth the scene of her strivings the field of her realization – her aim is –

“To bring God down to the earth we came
To change the earthly life to life divine” (‘Savitri Book XI canto. I’) (126)

119-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book 3 canto. 4 page 335
120-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book 3 canto. 4 page 337
121-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book 3 canto. 4 page 338
122-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book 3 canto. 4 page 340
123-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book 3 canto. 4 page 339
124-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I canto. 4 page 71
125-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book XI canto. I page 675
126-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book XI canto. I page 692
Behind the words of Savitri, is Sri Aurobindo, the master of yoga, the liberated soul, whose work is to enlighten the whole humanity. A democracy of the divine liberating the human is his goal as in those words he puts into the mouth of Savitri –
“I am a deputy of the aspiring world
My spirit’s liberty I ask for all” (‘Savitri Book XI canto. I’) (127)

Only ‘realized souls’ can help and guide others to realize divinity, only enlightened souls can remove the darkness of other’s life as Sri Aurobindo, as ‘Savitri’s spirituality is the message of Indian philosophy and spirituality is the message of all saints and sages of India, the realized souls. Sarojini Naidu with her practical wisdom, portrays the realistic picture that how all human beings, with a brief span of their life have a desire to find this spiritual illumination –
“With futile hands we seek to gain
Our inaccessible desire,
Divine summits to attain,
With faith that sinks and feet that tire
But naught shall conquer or control
The heavenward hunger of our soul” (‘To a Buddha Seated on Lotus’) (128)

Same expressions we find in one of her another poem –
“Thou art the goal for which we long
Thou art our silence and our song” (‘The Prayer of Islam’) (129)

Indeed, God is the ultimate Guide of our life and every human being is a pupil seeking for Perfection. As in the case of Arjuna who prays to Lord Krishna, “I am thy disciple, illumine my consciousness. Remove what is dark in me. Give me that which I have lost, a clear rule of action” (130)

Sarojini prays to God –
“Speak master and reveal to me
Thine inmost laws of life and death
The inmost laws of love and life
Any mystic knowledge of the grave” (‘The Soul's Prayer’) (131)

And, “Open, o vast unknown
Thy sealed mysterious portal” (‘Welcome’) (132)

There is seeking in every heart to attain the Perfection –
“The end, elusive and afar
Still ! lures us with its becoming flight
And all our mortal moments are
A session of the infinite
How shall we reach the great unknown

127-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book XI canto. I page 705
129-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Broken Wing’ ed. Edmund Gosse page 168
130-Quoted from ‘The Bhagavad Gita’ ed. S Radha Krishnan page 23
Niravana of thy Lotus throne” (‘To a Buddha Seated on Lotus’) (133)

Sarojini seems to be a true jnana yogi in her poems ‘To a Buddha Seated on Lotus’ and ‘The Soul’s Prayer’ who wants to grasp all knowledge related to Nirvana, the secret of life and death. And like a true Karma yogi, Sarojini conveys the message that life is a challenge and reality so it must be accepted and lived despite all its sorrows and sufferings, pains and death, because it is sorrow that is transient and not the life and its joys –

“Till ye have battled with great griefs and fears
And borne the conflict of dream shattering years
wounded with fierce desires and worn with strife
Children, ye have not lived, for this is life” ‘Life’ (134)

“Nay do not weep, new hopes, new dreams, new faces
The unspent joy of all the unborn years,
Will prove your heart a traitor to its sorrow
And make your eyes unfaithful to their tears” ‘Life’ (134)

It is not an easy task to overcome the desires and conquer the ‘self’ Very few can pay the price for it. The path of spirituality is the path of tough trials. One has to sacrifice one’s ‘ego’, one has to sacrifice one’s desires, one has to surrender one’s thoughts, words and deeds to God in whose hands lies our life, luck and liberation. Sarojini’s great fascination can be seen in the expression of yearning of human, soul to communicate with the Supreme soul through Bhakti Marg. To explore the philosophy of Bhakti yoga she has taken the mystic deep love of Radha and Krishna. All her love poems and the long series of poems under the title of ‘Temple’ are steeped into bhakti. The image of Krishna is presented as Personal God. “There are two ideas of God in our scriptures – the one Personal and the Impersonal. The Personal God is that he is eternally separate from us and all souls and liberation consists in coming near to him and living in him. This impersonal being – every one is but a knowing our unity with this wonderful Impersonality” (135)

Personal God is His “Sargun Rup”, and impersonal God is His “Nirgun rup”.
Guru Granth says, ‘nirgun aap (i) sargun bhi ohi, kaladhar jin sagli mohi, “God is without the three qualities (of maya) yet he possesses all these qualities. His power has fascinated the whole world” (136)

The Supreme though Unborn and Undying becomes manifested in human embodiment when time demands. God Himself declares in Gita, “Whenever there is a decline of righteousness and rise of unrighteousness, o Bharata (Arjuna) then I send forth (create incarnate) myself. (IV\7) (137)

God Krishna is an incarnation (Sargun rup) into the human nature. “He is the Supreme who appears to the world as though born and embodied” (138)

135-Quoted from The Bhagavad Gita ed. S Radha Krishnan page 30
136-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 283
137-‘The Bhagavad Gita’ IV/7 page 154
138-Quoted from ‘The Bhagavad Gita’ page 28
Sarojini Naidu presents the picture of extreme love for Lord Krishna in her poem ‘Song of Radha the Milk Maid’, where Radha is shown so much lost in the thought of her Beloved Krishna, that she unconsciously utters –

“But my heart was so full of your music, Beloved
They mocked when I cried without knowing
Govinda! Govinda!
Govinda! Govinda! Govinda! Govinda!” (‘Song of Radha, the Milk Maid’) (139)

Here, Radha is not an individual. She may be any human heart longing to communicate with Supreme Being. The repetition of ‘Govinda’, ‘Govinda’ with the depth of feelings signifies the passionate yearning of devotee’s seeking complete absorption with God. Sarojini, here, does not think that physical love is the gate way to spiritual love but she is discussing love at a higher level. She wants to convince that by reciting Govinda! Govinda, with true love and bhakti, self can be merged with God. Bhakti in simple terms can be defined as whole hearted devotion to God. Bhakti is derived from the root ‘bhaj’ means to remember God, to meditate upon Him, to serve Him. It is a loving attachment to God, service to God. Radha is eager to be united with Lord Krishna by reciting ‘Govinda’, ‘Govinda’. –

“I carried my gifts to the Mathura shrine
How brightly the torches were glowing ………
I folded my hands at the attars to pray
“O shining ones guard us by night and by day”
And loudly the conch shells were blowing
But my heart was so lost in your worship Beloved
They were wroth when I cried without knowing
Govinda! Govinda!
Govinda! Govinda!” (‘Song of Radha the Milk Maid’) (140)

Radha knows that her absorption, in God can lead to joy and peace. There is no dryness no struggle, no repression, but only the mighty infinite love to God. “This mighty infinite love of God which enters into Bhakta’s heart leaves no place for any other to live there. How can it be otherwise! Bhakti fills his heart with the divine waters of the ocean of love. That is to say the Bhakta’s renunciation is that vairaga or non attachment for all things that are not God, which results from anuraga or great attachment to God. He sees no distinction. The mighty ocean of love has entered into him and he sees not man in man but beholds his beloved everywhere. Through every face shines to him, his ‘Hari’, The light in the sun or moon is all his manifestations wherever there is beauty or sublimity, to him it is all his” (141)

Sarojini brings to light this spiritual aspect of love –

“O love! My foolish heart and eyes
have lost all knowledge save of you
And every where – in blowing skies
and flowering earth – I find a new
the changing glory of your face
The myriad symbols of your grace” ‘The Vision of Love’ (142)

141-Vivekananda, ‘Vedantism’ Vol. III page 19
Sarojini has beautified the height of pure and true love. The universe is only a symbol, the truth and reality behind is the beloved God, Sarojini wants to convince that through pure and sincere love towards God, one can reach to the path of spiritual ecstasy. ‘Jin prem kiyo tin hi prabh piyo’ (Guru Gobind Singh ji) “The way to spirituality, to the knowledge of the highest comes through the heart, the human soul. The external working do not teach us any thing about the beyond, about the infinite, it is only the internal that can do”. (143)

Sarojini’s poem ‘The Flute player of Brindavan’ is an brilliant poetic piece to express the longing of human soul for the ecstatic union with the Divine Soul – “Still must I like a homeless bird wonder forsaking all The earthly loves and worldly lures That held my life in thrall And follow and follow answering Thy magical flute call” ‘The Flute Player of Brindavan’ (144)

Sarojini’s Radha appears to be ‘true bhakta’ completely devoted to her beloved God Krishna. There is no earthly benefit or worldly desire left in the heart of true bhakta. “Everything has thrown away what remains is the madness of love. It is the forgetfulness of every thing and the lover sees nothing in the world except that Krishna and Krishna alone, when this our face looks like Krishna when his own soul has become tinged with Krishna’s colour”. (145)

Sarojini’s expression ‘I like a homeless bird wonder forsaking all’ is very similar to Tagore’s intense longing, “o the keen call of thy flute, I forget I ever forget, or “I am restless, I am athirst for”. Sarojini presents the deep longing of devotee’s heart to communicate with the Supreme – “Without thy loveliness my life is dead Love, like a lamp with golden oils unfed come back, come back from thy wild wandering Sweet Ghanshyam, my King” (‘Songs of Radha) (at Dawn’) (146)

Here, Radha is shown waiting anxiously for Ghanshyam, longing for Ghanshyam. Complete self surrender to the beloved is the consummation of love. Love does not thrive on beauty or youth or glory or fame but on humility and selflessness Sarojini convinces how the devotee patiently and meekly waits for the passing shadow of her beloved Lord’s feet to honour it, to kiss it – “Let me gather, instead The entranced and flowering dust You have honoured with your tread For mine eyelids and mine head” ‘The Feast’ (147)

143-Vivekananda, ‘The First Step to Bhakti’ Vol. II page 37
144-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Flute Player of Brindavan’ ‘The Broken Wing’ ed.edmund Gosse page 161
“Where ever you tread
A carpet of ageless beauty
Is my heart for your feet outspread” (Immutable) (148)

Many similar reference of selfless devotion we find in Guru Granth Sahib – “sajan tere charan
ki hoi raha sad dhur” (5:95) (149)

Or ‘Kesha ka mai chavor jhulava, charan dhur mukh laiee” (150)

Sarojini brings before us the feeling of complete self surrender, sense of utter humility and
meekness of devotee’s heart –
“So where thou goest, I must go
My flute player, with thee?.....” (The Flute Player of Brindavan) (151)

It is mighty infinite love towards God, the devotee is ready to go wherever she hears the flute
call of her beloved Krishna. This is true love, true devotion, true bhakti, “None can understand but
who has become mad with love, drunk deep of the cup of love! Who can understand the throes of
the love of gopis – the very ideal of love – the love that wants nothing, the love that does not care for
anything in this world or the world to come”. (152)

In reality, love is a means of salvation, Between Atma and Parmatma, there is always an
eternal drama of love. The soul of a human being is the female yearning for union with her Lord
because “In relation to God, bhaktas are more like women. The Supreme Lord is the only man, all
others from Brahma, downward are women who long to be united with Him” (153)

In Sarojini’s powm, Radha, the symbol of true devotee is mad to hear the magic flute call of
Lord Krishna and anxious to know why he is so late. The exciting expectation of a blissful union
makes her confess –
“Why tarrieth he so long
O like a leaf doth my shy heart shiver
O like a wave do my faint limbs quiver” (Songs of Radha) (At Dusk) (154)

The whole being of dedicated devotee is suffused with love and she is eager to meet her
beloved lord. Radha’s madness in terms of erotic intimacy stresses on that woman’s love for man
or man’s love for woman at its interness is a kind of self transcendence, the realization of the Bliss.
Sarojini conveys the intensify of love of devotee’s heart –
“And my soul hungers for thy voice” (‘Caprice’) (155)

149-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 595
150-Sri Guru Granth Sahib pge 735
151-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Flute Player of Brindavan’ ‘The Broken Wing’ page 162
152-Vivekananda, ‘The Bhakta’s Renunciation Results from Love’ Vol. III page 76
153-Quoted from ‘The Bhagavad Gita’ ed. S Radha Krishnan page 60
154-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Feather of the Dawn’ page 40
155-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Broken Wing’ page 200
“Love all the vibrant air
Reechoes with your name” (Perplext) (156)

Infact, soul is the part and parcel of God Himself, so it needs God and God’s Name only. But God can be seen and realized when the soul is purified from all the evils of anger, hatred, jealous, greed, ego and lust. Radha’s soul is pure, who follows Lord Krishna’s like a wandering homeless bird answering his magical flute call, forsaking all the worldly love and cares—

“No peril of the deep or height
hall daunt my winged foot
No fear of time – unconquered space
Or light untravelled route
Impede my heart that pants to drain
The nectar of thy flute” (‘The Flute Player of Brindavan’) (157)

“The nectar of thy flue” is actually divinity, the highest goal of human life. God is the greatest musician, and we have to absorb this divine music of Shabad (harmony with God) in our soul may be through jnana yoga, karma yoga, or bhakti yoga then only our soul will be satisfied. “Whether we will it or not, we shall have to return to our origin which is called God or Absolute man alone attains to Perfection, not even the devas. Human birth is the greatest birth we can have, not even the angles or devas, attain to direct freedom without human birth”. (158)

Longing to drain the nector of God’s flute, Sarojini seems to be like that of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, “I desire not o Lord, wealth or retinue or a beautiful woman or poetic genius. I pray for spontaneous devotion to the Supreme in every birth of mine” (159)

Nissim Ezekiel seems to be a true “brahm gyani”, the true jnana yogi when he presents before us the way to know God according to the teachings of Vedas –

“Know your mantra, meditate
Release your kundalini
Get your shakti awakening
And float with the spirit
To your destination” (‘Hymns in Darkness’ ‘Healers’) (160)

156-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Feather of Dawn’ page 21
158-Vivekananda, ‘The Bhakta’s renunciation results from Love’ Vol. iii page 79
159-Quoted from ‘The Bhagavad Gita’ ed. S Radha Krishnan page 61
The spiritual knowledge of Vedas is what we call ‘Bram Gyan’ which is completely based on the integral experience of intuition or seeing. Its truth is its authority appealing to all, belonging to all without any distinction of caste, creed, colour, community or country. Both the scriptures the “Bhagavad Gita” the essence of all Vedas, and Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the ocean of spiritual knowledge are the universal scriptures teaching every body that human being is essentially divine no matter what he appears to be and the ultimate aim of human life is to realize divinity. Human birth is the only birth in which this aim can be achieved and Shabad (mantra) - God’s Name and God teachings is the only support which can help to achieve the aim. By meditating and meditating upon God and God’s Name and by following the divine teachings, the kundalini (hidden power of brain, the third eye, the “dasva dwar”) automatically get a released and one realizes divine in his own ‘self’. That divine power is the state of sat chit ananda, there is no fear of birth and death, sorrow and misery, tension or depression. The “soul floats in the ocean of knowledge, love and divine music” Within few words through the mouth of ‘Healers, Ezekiel has depicted the whole Vedantic philosophy of spirituality. Then some time Nissim Ezekiel appears as a true karma yogi teaching and guiding that the only way to salvation is to perform your duties well –

“Blessed is the man that walketh
Not in the counsel of the conventional
And is at home with sin as with a wife
He shall listen patiently to the scornful
And understand the sources of their scorn
He does not meditate day and night
On anything, his delight is in action” (‘Latter Day Psalms’) (161)

Here, we find a marked orientation towards spiritual philosophy and an acceptance of the reality of non rational phenomenon. The poet does not consider himself to be an alien or an outsider but exercises his will to claim God. There is no desire to escape, no negation of life, but affirmation and commitment, Ezekiel’s philosophy is to live in world and love the life.

“God is presence here,
And his people are real
I see their sins, I hear
His anger” (‘Poster Poems’) (162)

“I hear his anger” describe that God is the Supreme judge. Nothing can be hidden from His limitless eyes Man’s own thoughts and deeds are responsible for the destiny of his life cycle, the destiny of sorrow or happiness the destiny of fortune or misfortune. God punishes and rewards according to man’s own thoughts, words, and deeds. Every action of man is under the watch of Almighty God. Sri Guru Granth Sahib says –

“Jaisa kare su taisa pave
aape beej aape hi khave” (1\662) (163)

“Whatever one does, he will get the same in result whatever one sows, he will get same in result whatever one sows, he will get some in fruit”.

“dukh sukh prabh devan har, avar tiag tu tisch chitar”
O God is the dispenser of pleasure and pain (in accordance with your deeds) Abandon other (support and remember Him) (5\284) (164)

163-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 662
164-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 284
Nissim Ezekiel prays to God for self discipline –
“God grant me privacy
God grant me certainty
In kinship with the sky
Air, earth, fire, sea
And the fresh inward eye” (‘Morning Prayer’) (165)

The poet like a true devotee (Bhakti Yoga) not only asks for “silence” and “self discipline” but also his kinship with five basic elements – air, water, fire, earth and sky with which the human body is made up of, above all he prays for the ‘fresh inward eye’ that is spirituality, the state of pure knowledge, pure light, pure love and pure music.
The expression ‘the fresh inward eye’ is very similar to the poetic thought of “second sight” of Hindus when A K Ramanujam questions –
“You are Hindoo, are not you?
You must have second sight” (‘Second Sight’) (166)

‘Second sight’, here, refers the closer perception of Reality and faith in spiritualism. This is a general perception among the people about Hinduism as a faith and Hindus as believers. The focus is on the philosophic nature of Hinduism which can give the believers hope, faith and strength to face the hardships of life with courage and fortitude.
Many poems of Kamla Das contain the references to Krishna and Radha. Unrequited in love, Kamla Das becomes Radha seeking the divine love incarnate as Krishna. There is a highly moving poem ‘Ghanshyam’ which high lights the poetess, deep love for Krishna, longing to be united with Krishna

“Ghanshyam
You have like a koel built your
nest in the arbour of my jungle
Is at last astir with music” ‘Ghanshyam’ (‘Tonight, This Savage Rite) 1979’ (167)

Self surrender to God is arriving at the abode of Bliss within, a heavenly pleasure within, and that is sat chit ananda, the state of godly music (anhadnaad). Kamla Das’s devotional love to Lord Krishna has eventually made her happy and contented. Infact every one of us is a seeker of Godly love. There is seeking in every heart to communicate with God because God is the only truth, the only knowledge, the only true love, the only true music Kamla Das beautifully expresses this seeking –

“Vrindavan lives on in every woman’s mind
And the flute luring her………” (‘Vrindavan’) (168)

Kamla Das seems to be true jnana yogi, the brahm giani in her poem ‘Advice to Fellow Swimmers’ when she advises her fellow men to learn how to swim. The poem is a powerful lyric to express the philosophy of life. She considers life as an ever flowing stream which ends up in the ocean, that is the infinite –

165-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Unfinished Man’, collected poems page 122
“When you learn to swim
Do not enter a river that has no ocean
To flow into one ignorant of destinations
And knowing only the flowing as its destiny” (‘Advice to Fellow Swimmers’) ‘Collected Poems: Vol. I 100’ (169)

Swimming here easily symbolizes the struggle to ‘Self realization’, the ultimate aim of human life. Kamla Das wants to emphasize that one’s ultimate aim should be to overcome one’s own self so that ultimately it will an escape from suffering, it is liberation from the ‘Self’ (ego) that brings joy and peace –

“Go swim in the great blue sea
where the first tide you meet is your body
the familiar pest
But if you learn to cross it
You are safe; yes beyond it you are safe
For, even sinking would make no difference then” ‘collected poems Vol I 100’ (170)

“The expression even sinking would make no difference then” shows that sorrow and happiness pains and pleasure make no effect on the realized souls.

Though Jayant Mahapatra’s poetry is firmly rooted in the Orissan soil, Puri, Konark, Cuttack etc. but he does not forget to mention soul, silence and salvation. In poems titled ‘Dawn at Puri’, and Main Temple street, Puri, Mahapatra underlines the importance of Puri and what it means to Hindus in our country. Widows long for breathing their last at Puri lest they should attain salvation. As the poet puts it –

“Her last wish to be cremated here
twisting uncertainty like light
on the shifting sands” (‘Dawn at Puri’) (171)

Sometimes Mahapatra searches for an answer to his existence – “why I have come into the world”. In reality every human being has come to this world to realize Godliness. Until, this happen, the cycle of births and rebirths continues. Sri Guru Granth Sahib says, “bhaiyee prapat manukh deh huri, a gobind milan ki eh teri baria”. O man you have obtained the human body. This is your time (opportunity) to meet the Lord of this world”. After asking the question ‘why I have come into the world?’ Jayant Mahapatra states –

‘The truth was more than I could bear” (‘Freedom’) ‘Random Descent’ (172)

“To become myself, it is not possible that
It will be taken away from me, all that I loved” (‘Things that Happen’) (173)

173-Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Random Descent’ page 22
In other poem called “The Plot”, Mahapatra, like a jnana yogi, tries to comprehend reality and find the meaning of life. With a note of introspection, Mahapatra says –
“What is real and what is not, my life is something else, it is made up of silence that say more than was safe for one” (‘The Plot’) ‘Random Descent 77’ (174)

‘made up of silence’ symbolizes the goal of ‘Self realization’. Everything springs from silence and finally merges in silence in his world –
“My soul, dressed in silence, rises up and stands Above before you, can’t you see” ‘A Rain’ (175)

Indeed, we all have our origin from God, and we all have to return back and merge into God. This ‘return journey to our origin’ is the actual aim of human life. K N Daruwalla presents this philosophy of our origin and then the merging of finite into Infinite through his prayer to ‘Mother Goddess Dolma”. Here mother goddess symbolizes the Supreme power of Almighty God –
“From your womb all proceed Into you, all recede” (‘Landscapes’) ‘Mother Goddess Dolma’ (33) (176)

K N Daruwalla throws light on the philosophy of “Tat tvam asi”, through the pesception of glass that human being every where is a part and parcel of ‘Divine Being’. It is the veil of maya (kaam, krodh, lobh, moh, ehankar) that does not allow us to realize our divinity.
“This veil that veiled nothing – o glorious deception” (‘The Glass Blower’) ‘A Summer of Tigers’ page 10 (177)

Daruwalla does not stop here and moves from clay to the soul –
“With clay altered to replicate the luminous transparencies of the soul” (178)

He points out the ultimate aim of human life –
“The goal was transmuting the earthly into the celestial” ‘The Glass Blower’ ‘A Summer of Tigers’ (178)

**Freedom** - The last and ultimate state of spiritualism is realization of divinity in one’s own self. That is the stage of Freedom, , Perfection, ananda or Bliss, “In India, religion means “realization”, nothing else. No man’s seeing can help you. You have To see God yourself. He who seeks union through love is called bhakti yogi, , he who seeks it through philosophy is called the jnana yogi. And by becoming one with He who seeks through mnysticism is Called Raja Yogi that Universal Being is the ideal of our religion, Becoming the Rishi that is Freedom, that is Salvation”. (179)

174-Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Random Descent’ page 77
175-Jayant Mahapatra, ‘A Rain of Rites’ page 24
179-S Radha Krishnan, ‘The Bhakti Marg’, The Bhagavad Gita page 61
Toru Dutt teaches and preaches that without realizing God, our life is as blank and useless as a shadow—

“For life is a shadow vain
Until the utmost goal we reach
To which the soul points” ‘Buttoo’ (180)

Each soul is actually the spark of Infinite, the reflection of God. But in coming to the contact of worldly relations and worldly affairs, it gets covered by the veil of ignorance (avidhya – maya) representing the desires of lust (kama), anger (krodha), greed (lobh), attachment (moh) jealous and hatred (raag dvesha) and pride (ehankar) When this veil is removed with the efforts of bhakti, karma and jnana, the soul unfolds its true nature of Bliss and Consciousness, it is true knowledge, true happiness, true light, true music. Finite words can not describe this Infinite Bliss. Only a realized soul, knows the secret joy of this state of “sat chit ananda” Toru Dutt describes how Prahlad attaines the immortal state through his extreme devotion and faith to God, and becomes a “realized soul”. His soul gets permanent unity with God. Now when God is always with him to protect him, to guide him, to support him in any situation, then why should he has any fear? He faces every question, every challenge and every punishment given by his wicked father Heerun Kashyap and remains unshaken in his faith to God.

“That is true knowledge which can make
Us mortals, saint like holy, pure
The strange thirst of the spirit slake
And strength suffering to endure” (‘Prahlad’) (181)

Again we see that Toru Dutt’s poem ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ is excellent to glorify the spiritual state of Dhruva. The poem reveals the story of prince Dhruva, the son of famous king Uttanapado who has two queens Suruchee and Suneetee. The king loves Suruchee more than Suneetee. In affection he is partial to the son of Suruchee than to Dhruva. Hurted by this, Dhruva decides to leave the palace and resolve to devote his life in penance and prayer so that he could achieve the permanent happiness, ‘the highest good’ and ‘the loftiest place to win’ greater than his father’s status, greater than anything else in this world and that status is godliness which he attains at last. Toru Dutt expresses the spiritual greatness of Dhruva—

“By prayer and penance, Dhruva gained at last,
The highest heaven, and there he shines a star
Nightly men see him in the firmament” ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ (182)

‘The highest heaven’ reflects that Dhruva attained the highest state of godliness and had become an eternal and unfading star, which not only gives right direction to the pilgrims but it is so high that it is visible to the onlookers from every part of the world.

To know God,and to realize Godliness, one must have love for God and love for humanity along with an abiding quest to know God. Without thirst, no one can know the value of water, in the same manner without thirst of God, no one can imagine to tread upon the path of Godliness. It is by meditating upon the Name of God with love and devotion, by singing the glories of God in the company of ‘sadh sangat’, by hearing ‘katha kirtan’, by reading and reciting the divine teachings of Holy Scriptures, the hunger for God realization develops. Right thoughts with right deeds lead to inner contemplation. We feel the presence of God within. The ‘self’ has been purified by washing it with jnana (knowledge) and the crystal clear water of vairaga (detachment from the worldly affairs).

180-Toru Dutt, ‘Buttoo’, ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 158
181-Toru Dutt, ‘Prahlad’, Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan, page 158
182-Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’, ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 113
The bhakti, karma and jnana remove the veil of ignorance (maya) from the soul. Now the soul becomes one with Supreme soul (paramatma). It is an equaimous state of soul and mind when thoughts are at rest. The external is slowly shut out and internal begins to manifest. The God is revealed in and out, here and there, within the contemplation, meditation and also in the field of action, realizing God as existing in every being and in everything. Ravinder Nath Tagore reveals the immense joy and bliss of gratitude that a devotee experiences at the moment of his meeting with the Divine. The devotee is tired of endless waiting, even his friends have also left him alone, he falls asleep surrounding his mind to the maze of shadows and songs –

“At last, when I woke up from my slumber
And opened my eyes, I saw thee standing by me, flooding my sleep with thy smile. How I had feared that the path was long and wearisome and the struggle to reach thee was hard!” ‘Geetanjali’ (183)

Tagore wants to convey that God Realization is possible through total submission to the will of God –

“You came down from your throne and stood at my cottage door. I was singing all alone in a corner and the melody caught your ear. You came down and stood at my cottage door”. ‘Geetanjali’ (184)

It clarifies that God is pleased with our humble service and worship and not with great scholarship and skill, wealth and decoration. Very similar references we find in Sri Guru Granth Sahib describing the meeting of Lord Krishna and poor Sudama –

“Harj (I) aaye, harj (I) aaye, chhad sighasan harji aaye”

“God Himself stepped down from the throne to meet and greet, to bless and give”. Anyone who remembers God with devoted heart, sings the glories of God with love while performing all the duties sincerely surely gets the grace of God. Bhagwan bhajan ka nahi bhav ka bhukha hai. So the prayers, singing, and hearing, worship and rituals must be filled with loving devotion and faith. God understands every language, even an unspoken prayer, He knows what lies in the inmost recess of every heart, “ghat ghat ke antar ki janat” so our thoughts have to be pure, sincere and loving while singing and hearing the glories of God. By singing and singing God’s glories, the soul is purified from all ills and evils, all sorrows. All hungers, all doubts get vanished. God Himself comes to meet in any form, in any being. The presence of God gets revealed every where, in everything, in every being – Tagore describes how the devotee is overwhelmed at meeting God. He does not understand how to greet and what to offer –

“The king has come – but where are the lights, where are wreaths? Where is the throne to seat him? Oh shame, oh utter shame! Where is the hall, the decorations? Some one has said, vain this cry! Greet him with empty hands; lead him into thy room all bare!’ (‘Geetanjali’51’) (186)

“From now there shall be no fear left far life for me in this world and thou shall be victorious in all my strife.
From now I leave off all petty decorations. Lord of my heart, no more shall there be for me waiting and weeping in corners, no more coyness and sweetness of demeanour. Thou hast given methy sword for adornment”. (‘Geetanjali/52’) (186)

184-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 49 page 212
185- Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’/51 ‘The Night Darkness’ page 218
186- Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 52, ‘I thought should ask of Thee’ page 223
“Methy sword” is blessing of God’s Name as the shelter to support the life. The mystic experience of God’s realization is not attained just by mechanical chanting of God’s Name or just by reading the divine hymns or just by listening the religious discourses. The Supreme Bliss of God realization can only be possible to those who have great craving to know God, who yearn to hear and sing God’s Glories, who are always devoted to God and humanity through thoughts words and deeds and above all who are striving to unravel the mystery and attain Him. Blessed are they who have realized God within in the midst of world of duality. They are Brahm Giani, the knower of God. They live in joy, ecstasy. Tagore explains the state of “sat chit ananda” after realizing God—

“Thus it is that thy joy in me is so full. Thus it is that thou hast come down to me. O thou Lord of all heavens where would be thy love if I were not?
Thou hast taken me as thy partner of all this wealth. In my heart is the endless play of thy delight in my life thy will is ever talking shape.
And for this, thou who art the king of kings hast decked thyself in beauty to captivate my heart. And for this thy love loses itself in the love of thy lover and there art thou seen in the perfect union of two”.
‘Geetanjali\56’ (187)

When the perfect union of two (human soul with Divine soul) happens, then all doubts vanish, all the crookedness of heart is made straight, all bondages vanish, all the result of action fly when God is seen nearest of near, farthest of far. By knowing the Absolute, everything is known. It is the Bliss unspeakable, eternally pure. It is upon this transcendent experience that the man becomes truly religious. Man is the image of God so all joy and wisdom lies in the complete union of God and man. Lord Krishna describes this divine state, “having become one with Brahma and being tranquil in the spirit, he neither grieves nor desires. Regarding all being as alike, he attains supreme devotion to me” (XVIII/54) (188)

“Through devotion he comes to know me, what my measure is and who I am in truth, then, having known me in truth, he forthwith enters into me” (XVIII/55) (189)

Guru Granth Sahib states the divine glory of God realization “mere mann ananda bhaya jiyo vaji vadaiee, ghar lal aaya pyara sabh tikha bujhaiee” (5\875) (190)

Means “when one realizes God within, there is heavenly pleasure in and out, here and there.” Tagore expresses the mystic happiness of this divine joy, divine light, divine knowledge, divine music—

“Light my light, the world filling light, the eye kissing light, heart sweetening light!
Ah, the light dances, my darling at the centre of my life, the light strikes my darling, the chords of my love, the sky opens, the winds run wild, laughter passed over the earth” ‘Geetanjali/57’ (191)

Sri Aurobindo’s Savitri is a meditation is itself involving trials and struggles to gain spiritual victory, a victory of immortality over mortality.

“His is a search of darkness for the light of mortal life for immortality” ‘Savitri’ Book I canto. 4 (192)

187-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 56 ‘Thus it that’ page 240
188-The Bhagavad Gita, XVIII/54 page 371
189-The Bhagavad Gita XVIII/55 page 371
190-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 875
191-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 57 ‘Light my Light’ page 244
192-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ ‘A Legend and a Symbol’ Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram press 1972 Book I canto. 4 page 70
Sri Arubindo beautifully describes that continuous meditation upon the Name of God (Mantra or Shabad) with love and devotion removes all the filth of evils from heart and mind, it seizes hold upon all that is finite and brings into each the light and voice of its own infinite –

“When the mantra sinks in yoga’s ear,
Its message enters stirring the blind brain
And keeps in the dim ignorant cells its sound,

The word repeats itself in rhythmic strains
Thought, vision, feeling, sense, the body’s self are seized unalterably and he endures
an ecstasy and an immortal change,
He feels a wideness and becomes a power
And knowledge rules on him like a sea,
Transmuted by the white spiritual ray
He walks in naked heavens of joy and calm
sees the God face and hears transcendent speech” (‘Savitri’) 193

This is the state of Sat Chit Ananda, the Freedom, the Perfection. When purity of intention is developed by meditating upon the Name of God, by reading and reciting, hearing and contemplating upon God’s teachings, the passions directed towards material world, die producing tranquility of mind. It is the knowledge of God that brings about the fulfillment of the nature of man, characterized by peace and perfection (anhad naad). Guru Granth Sahib describes this state of mystic ecstasy – “ananda suno badbhagio sagal manorath purai, parbrahm prabh paya, utrai sagal visurai” ‘40’Anand Sahib’ “o my lucky friends, hear, this is the Anand (true song of greatest spiritual bliss) which fulfills all (my) objects and desires. I have realized God the Supreme Brahm, all (my) griefs have vanished”. (194)

Man’s life is a long, tough preparation for attaining God head In the epic Savitri, king Aswapathy is a seeker of the Divine. Through hard meditation, his genuine efforts come to fruition and he reaches the summit of spirituality from where he can have a clear glimpse of the eternal’s radiant glory, the merging of soul into Supreme Soul. Aswapathy first releases himself from the bondage of the mental and physical nature. He then realizes his true ‘self’ and discovers too that his inner self is also the self of the entire universe.

“Thus came his soul’s release from ignorance
His mind and body’s first spiritual change
A wide God knowledge poured down from above
A new world knowledge broadened from within” “Book III/canto. IV” (195)

It is spirituality’, the state of Perfection and freedom, the freedom from selfish desires, positively it is the state of concentration on the Supreme – The Blessed Lord says in Geeta – “He whose mind is untroubled in the midst of sorrows and is free from eager desire mid a pleasures, he from whom passion, fear and rage have passed away, he is called a sage of settled intelligence” (II:56) (196)

193-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book IV canto. 3 page 426
194-Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Ananda Sahib40
195-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book III canto. 4 page 337
196-The Bhagavad Gita, II:56 page 123
Savitri is the spiritual figure by birth, a blessing of God to Aswapthy’s Sadhna. With her spiritual power, she conquers death, darkness ignorance, all evils, and all manifestations of temptations offered to her by Yama, the Lord of death. When Yama wants to know her real identity, she assumes her cosmic form:

“A mighty transformation came on her
In a flaming moment of apocalypse over
The incarnation thrust aside its veil
eternity looked into the eyes of death” ‘Savitri’ Book X canto. 4 (197)

This is the climax moment when love conquers death and light overpowers night, it is the moment of the dawn of eternal. Only spiritual figures can bring this transformation.

“The Upanishads claim, ‘Brahm resides in the ‘self’ when a man realizes this fact fully he is wholly freed from transmigration. His soul becomes one with Brahma and he transcends joy and sorrow and life and death’. (198)

With an observant eye, Sarojini Naidu records that the weariness, the fever and fret of life, the mythic terror of death are meaningless to her or him who has drunk the nectar of ecstasy and essence of eternity –

“Shall I heed dull presages of doom
Or dread the rumoured loneliness and gloom
The mute and mythic terror of the tomb?”
For glad heart is drunk and drenched with thee
O inmost wine of living ecstasy
O intimate essence of eternity” (‘In Salutation to the Eternal Peace’) (199)

‘The inmost wine of living ecstasy’ is the state of liberation, the state of ‘sat chit ananda’.

“Searching through mind, we at last come to that oneness, the universal one, the internal soul of everything, the essence and reality of everything the ever free, the ever blissful and ever existing. Whatever we know, we have to know in and through Him... The idea of God in the Advaita is this oneness. Advaita means non duality, there are no two but one” (200)

Sarojini Naidu specifies this oneness of atma and Parmatma, the very essence of spiritual knowledge. In her poem ‘The Quest’ when Lord Krishna Himself reveals the final truth to disappointed Radha –

‘I am of thee, as thou of me a part
Look for me in the mirror of thy heart’ (‘The Quest’) (201)

In the state of Perfection, knowledge, love and action mingle together because God Himself is Sat Chit Ananda, Reality, Truth and Bliss. “To those seeking knowledge, He is eternal light, clear and radiant as the sun at noon day, in which there is no darkness, to those struggling for virtues, He is eternal righteousness, steadfast and impartial, and to those emotionally inclined, He is eternal love and beauty of holiness”. (202)

197-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book X canto. 4 page 664
198-Quoted from The Bhagavad Gita, ed. S Radha Krishnan page 20
200-Vivekananda, ‘The Bhakta’s Renunciation results from love, Vol. III page 77
201-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Feather of Dawn’ page 21
Sarojini’s great fascination lies in the third one – to reach the goal through bhakti marg. Infact, bhakti directly leads to mukti, it is the best one because “This Atman can not be realized by the power of speech, nor by a vast intellect, or by the study of Vedas. It is those who are true in heart, pure in deeds, whose senses are controlled, this ‘Self’ manifests it self. External worship, material worship is the lowest stage, struggling to rise high, mental prayer is the next stage, but the highest stage is when God has been realized. The Vedas teach that soul is divine, only held in the bondage of matter Perfection will be reached when this bond will burst and the word they use for it – is therefore Mukti, Freedom, freedom from bonds of imperfection, freedom from death and misery”. (203)

Sarojini, with her creative power, beautifully conveys the state of Bliss, Freedom and Perfection through Radha’s subconscious and mysterious repetition of Govinda! Govinda! It is complete merger of human soul into Divine soul –
“But my heart was so full of your music, Beloved
They mocked when I cried without knowing
Govinda! Govinda!
Govinda! Govinda! (‘Song of Radha, the Milkmaid’) (204)

Sarojini has touched the very depth of spiritual ecstasy when all other worldly desires are vanished, what is left only the realization of Lord in the self. It is perfect freedom – sat chit ananda, it is beyond of time and space. This enlightenment can be understood, measured and attained only by one’s own intense spiritual meditation and by self experience.

Human birth is the only birth in which man can realize God and ‘Shabad’ (God’s Name and God’s teachings) is the only support which helps in achieving this goal of “self” realization. It is by the grace of God only, that one is able to meditate upon the Name of God and tread upon the path of Salvation – Nissim Ezekiel says
“Salvation belongeth unto the Lord” (‘Latter Day Psalms’) (205)

That is why Ezekiel suggest in his poem “Healers”-
“Know your mantra, meditate
Release your kundalini
Get your shakti awakening
And float with the spirit
To your destination” (‘Healers’) (206)

It clarifies that by meditating and meditating upon the Name of God, soul gets purified, and “kundalini” is released and one gets spiritual power and lives through his awakened mind and spirit. Animals live to satisfy their body human being line to Satisfy their heart and mind but very rare people live through their soul. They are spiritual figures, the saints in true sense. They remain absorbed in meditating upon the name of God. In this kaliyuga, the only way to reach the goal of God realization is meditation upon the Name of God. Guru Granth Sahib teach kaliyug mei keeratan pradhana’.
“Singing the glories of God is at prime importance in kaliyuga” because by singing and singing the glories of God soul gets purified from all ill and evils of ego, lust, greed, anger and attachment, besides this by singing the glories of God the virtues like love, compassion, humility, forgiveness get automatically cultivated, then God is revealed in purified soul. Nissim Ezekiel says –
“The soul in solitude and God revealed” (207)

204-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Bird of Time’ ed. Edmund Gosse page 113
206-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ collected poems page 232
God realization is only possible when soul is purified, deeds are goods and sense are controlled, when one has realized God through constant efforts of bhakti, karma and gyan, he comes to know that God is nothing but his own pure and infinite ‘self’. By knowing God, nothing remains to be known. The knower of God realizes that the same Reality (God) is in everything, he finds the presence of God in life and death, in I and you, in here and there, in drop of water in the water of ocean, in small pebble and mountain, in one and many. It is the knowledge of the Absolute that brings about the fulfillment of the nature of man and this experience of fulfillment is characterized by peace and perfection - sab taraf parmatma – A K Ramanujam describes this spiritual vision of the omnipresence of God – the concept of God in every object in the cosmos –

“Actually see the one in the many
Losing a life time of double vision” (‘Entries for a Catalogue Fears’) (208)

Infact, God Himself is present in every one in the form of soul. Guru Granth Sahib says, ‘sab mei jyt jyt hai soi, ghat ghat rehya smajiee’ (5\563) (209)

Each soul is actually the spark of infinite, the reflection of God, but with passing of time it gets covered with the veil of ignorance. When this veil gets removed through efforts, the soul unfolds its true nature of Bliss and Consciousness. Material things of the world do not satisfy our inner soul. We may accumulate any amount of material wealth, and success yet we remain strongly unfulfilled, restless and in complete. There is a ‘call’ in us. Every one of us is a spiritual seeker within but we have gone so deaf that we do not even try to listen the call of the Infinite, the call of God. When purity of intension is developed and mind is attached to God, then the passions directed towards material world die, producing tranquility of mind which in turn gives rise to the inward silence in which the soul begins to establish and experience the presence of indwelling God. This is the essence of inward journey – soul’s detachment to the world and attachment to God, leading to salvation and this is the the true religion when soul finds joy in the Infinite, Kamla Das, with the example of a woman’s heart, present before us the ‘call’ of seeking soul. Infact every one of us is a woman lover, the only man, the only Beloved is Almighty God, that is why we seek for God’s love, we long to communicate with Him –

“Vrindavan lives on in every woman’s mind
And the flute, luring her (Varindavan) 210

God (Vrindavan) is in us, we have to become Radha and Meera (true devotee) to meet and find Him through the efforts of bhakti, karma and Gyan without bothering about the worldly ties and tensions because God is the only truth in the life. Kamla Das makes us aware –

“Only the souls know how to sing” (‘The Suicide’) (212)

This only line is quite enough to explore the deep philosophy of spirituality that a realized soul is always in the state of ‘anhad naad’. Guru Granth Sahib says, ‘nau nidh amrit prabh ka naam, dehi mei iska bisram’ (5\295) (212)
Means God is the second other Name of nectar whose dwelling place is in man’s own soul. “He is the truth, He is the self, he is the eternal subject of everything. He is one with us and that which is with us is neither knowable nor unknowable as our own self. You can not know your own self, you can not move it out and make it an object to look at because you are that and can not know your own self, you can not move it out and make it an object to look at because you are that and can not separate yourself from it”(213). Like Sarojini Naidu, Kamla Das becomes Radha seeking the divine love incarnate as Krishna then identifies herself with the lord –

O Krishna, I am melting, melting, melting
Nothing remains
You………………. (Radha Krishna) (214)

Her highly moving poem ‘Ghanshyam’ in the collection “Tonight, This Strang Rite” highlights the spiritual ecstasy achieved through her unflinching and deep devotional love to Lord Krishna –

“Ghanshyam
You have like a koel built your
Nest in the arbour of my heart
My life until now a sleeping jungle
Is at last astir with music” (‘Ghanshyam’) (215)

‘astir with music’ throws light on the divine music or “anhad naad” after God realization by constantly remembering the Glories of Lord Krishna and by cherishing His divine form within herself, Kamala Das seems to be transformed into a state of constant prayer, a spiritual offering. Lord Himself says in Gita –

“Theyir thoughts (are fixed) in me, their lives (are wholly) given up to me, enlightening each other and ever conversing of me, they are contented and rejoicing in me” (216)

Kamla Das’s deep devotion to Lord Krishna has eventually made her happy and contented saving her from a life of utter dejection and suffering.

Jayant Mahapatra presents the state of spiritual ecstasy through the dance art form of Madhuri Dixit. Mahapatra calls this poem ‘Madhuri Dixit’ as “the poem of soul” because for him, Madhuri in her dance combines the past and the present, the real and the mythical and above all the life and the art, he says –

“It is pity you can not see what we see
That in you is the eternal, and over you
The world keeps on moving as it has before perhaps Radha...” (‘Madhuri Dixit’) ‘Random Descendent 35’ (217)

Mahapatra believes that past glories can not be retrieved and our existence can be meaningful by participation in the totality of creation. He convinces that there is mystery underlying the myth of Konark in which is captured the unceasing rhythm of life. He accepts the myth and surrenders before it, believing that deliverance lies in the acceptance of myth –

213- Vivekanand, ‘The Bhakta’s Renunciation Results from love’ vol. II page 91.
214- Kamla Das ‘The Old Play House and Other Poems’ page 24
216- The Bhagavad Gita X:9 page 259
217- Jayant Mahapatra: Random Descendent page 50
“We are delivered by the myth
which exhorts our sleep and our loses
That wakes us like toys springing out of the box
Or dutiful monuments that celebrate
The victories of that darkness over us” (‘Relationship’) (218)

This poem ‘Relationship’ ends with the affirmation of the life force and the harmonious energies of continuing creation as represented by the temple dances it ends with a rhapsody in discovery of the eternal moment of happiness that lies in love of “self” as well as society and returns to the eloquent silence in which such recognition could be made.

K N Daruwalla with his mystic kind of perception throws light that no veil is left on the “realized soul”. He presents this theory through the image of glass –
“this veil that veil nothing ….” (‘The Glass Blowers’) ‘A Summer of Tigers’ (219)

With myth making imagination, Daruwalla highlights the spirituality as a goal of his ancestors. He speaks of his ancestors not merely as metallurgists but also as mystics, the spiritual figures –
“The goal was transmuting the earthly
Into the celestial” ‘The Glass Blower’ ‘A Summer of Tigers’ (220)

Very similar thoughts we find in Sri Aurobindo’s Savitri –
“To bring down to the world on earth, we come
To change the earthly life to life divine”

So both Pre and Post Independence Indo English poets have brought into light the spiritual philosophy.

Toru Dutt seems to be true Jnana Yogi while dealing with the Spiritualison-
“That is true knowledge which can be make
us mortal saint like, holy, pure” (‘Prahlad’)

Tagore’s ‘Geetanjali’ is a superb piece of devotional songs presenting detachment from the material world and full of ardour for Almighty God. It is a master piece of bhakti yoga. “In one salutation to thee my God, let all my senses spread out and touch this world at thy feet”. Sarojini is no less than Tagore in depicting the longing and yearning to communicate with Supreme Being. All her love poems regarding the deep mystic love of Radha Krishna and of the series ‘The Temple’ are like jewels and can be addressed as Geetanjali of Sarojini ‘Impede my heart that pants to drain, The nectar of thy flute. In very similar manner Kamla Das’s seeking soul finds spiritual ecstasy with her devotional love to Lord Krishna –
“my life until now a sleeping jungle
Is at last astir with music” (‘Ghanshyam’)

Nissim Ezekiel like a true saint and sage teaches and preaches the whole process of spiritual awakening in these few words –
“Know your Mantra, meditate
Release your kundalini
Get your shakti awakening
And float with the spirit
To your destination”. (‘Healers’)

“Float with the spirit’ “is self realization”.

219-K N Daruwalla, ‘A Summer of Tigers’ Delhi: Indus, 1995 page 10
220-K N Daruwalla, ‘A Summer of Tigers’ Delhi: Indus, 1995 page 10
Fourth Chapter

PATRIOTISM
Patriotism means a noble sentiment of love, pride and sacrifice for the sake of country and its people. It is spiritual ideal. The glory of India lies in the immense patriotic fervour and zeal of all Indians, their devotion and love to serve their country with head and heart. The holy passion of patriotism flows in their blood. They may be belonging to any religion caste or creed but they are Indian first and Indian last. They worship ‘Bharat Mata’ as their own mother. This deep love for the motherland is because the mother conceived is not an ordinary religious deity but a living entity, the mother country in which they are born, they live and move. The history of India’s freedom shines through the immortal courage of the heroic personalities like Mahatma Gandhi, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Jawahar Lal Nehru, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Vivekananda, Ravinder Nath Tagore, Sri Aurbindo, Bakim Chandra Chatterjee, Keshab Chandra Sen, Sarojini Naidu, Bhagat Sigh, Rajguru, Sukhdev, Udham Singh, Chandra Shekhar Azad, and above all Subhash Chandra Bose and many more who lived in the age of national upsurge and sacrificed their whole life for the sake of their beloved country India. They regarded their country as the breath of their being. They were the true spiritual heroes, the self denying ‘tapasvies’ who merged their being in the being of their country. It is in India no where else in the whole world, that we come across of self passionate intensity of patriotism.

As piration for freedom both political and spiritual- “India has always honoured thought and has refused to consider the men of sword or possesses of money. But it is not true that India has ever bowed patiently before the blast or been indifferent to the passage of foreign legions. Always she has resisted them, often successfully, sometimes unsuccessfully and even when she failed for the time being her method has been two fold to fight them and drive them out and to absorb those who could not be driven away. The urge to freedom, to be independent has always has been there and the refusal to submit to alien domination.” (1)

Toru Dutt, through the story of Prahlad, suggests a political sermon which is best to serve as a motto of revolution to drive out the forces of alien domination –

“Tyrants of every age and clime
Remember this ..... That awful shape
Shall startle you when comes the time,
And send its voice from cape to cape
As human peoples suffer pain,
But oh, the lion’s strength is theirs
woe to the king when galls the chain |
woe, woe, their fury when he dares | (Prahlad)(2)

Toru Dutt delivers the message of democracy in a rebellious spirit –

“............... What is rank or caste
In us is honour, or disgrace
not out of us” (Buttoo) (3)

Toru Dutt’s poetry cherishes her passionate love of liberty that promotes every body to aspire freedom both political and spiritual –

“Head of the human column, thus
ever in swoon will thou remain

3- Toru Dutt, ‘Buttoo’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 114
India’s struggle for Independence was at its peak during the time of Ravinder Nath Tagore. Tagore was an exponent of the Swadeshi Movement. The partition of Bengal in 1905 caused tremendous upheaval in the whole country. The swadeshi movement began as a protest against this grievous act of injustice and in the due course of time it developed into a national movement for freedom. Tagore took active part in it. He lectured, organized processions and toured extensively. Ravinder Nath asked people to reform villages, to eradicate social evils and to arouse mass consciousness. His poetry shows that he yearns Independence of India not only political but also spiritual-

"where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,
where the knowledge is free,
where the world has not been broken into fragments,
by narrow domestic walls,
where words come out from the depth of truth,
where tireless strivings stretches its arms towards perfection
where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
Into the dreamy desert sand of dead habit,
where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening
thought and action –
Into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake” (Geetanjali xxxv)(5)

The lines show that Tagore has a vision of India an independent free country, free from all evil practices, blind beliefs and superstitions. A free India where fearlessness would be the characteristic of the people and equality, fraternity and spiritual freedom with universal peace will reign supreme. Such type of songs worked as an inspiration and enthusiasm at the time of national upsurge. This patriotic appeal is inspiring today also to fill up the heart of Indians to become good and to do good for the country Here Togore longs to get India free from for the foreign yoke, but along with this political freedom, he wants that all Indians should get redemption from waywardness, slavery, and misery which makes life miserable of all fragmentations and segregations in the name of religion, caste, and false sense of superiority. He wishes that India should become free . and in free India all Indians should live with humanity rooted in sympathy and understanding, truth and love.

After the decline of Mughal Empire in 1707, the Marathas who emerged as the strongest power in India had no conception of united Indian nation. They thought of dominating over other parts of the country rather than welding them into a nation. In such conditions, it was a golden opportunity for European trading companies to interfere the economic as well as political affairs of India with the help of their purpose of trade. In 1765, after the battle of Buxar, the English East India Company had occupied the right to collect the revenue of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The British power was increasing day by day and within a period of about 50 years it had emerged as the supreme power in India. It was very tough job for Indians to tolerate such type0e of dictatorship of foreign rule which was intended only to serve the interest of the ruling class of Britain. Peasants

4- Toru Dutt, ‘France’ quoted from ‘Four Indo Anglian poets’ ed. A N Diwedi, Allahabad, Kitabistan 1986 page 25
had been disposed of their lands and artisans had been ruined. The British policy of annexation of territory had led to the dispossession of many Indian rulers. The British also followed a ruthless and discriminate policy of ‘divide and rule ’in India. They did not care for the sentiments of Indians who were insulted and humiliated in their own country so to fight against the exploitation and the contentious treatment of British rule, there began a heroic struggle to liberate India and Indians from the foreign yoke. Mangal Pande was the first heroic personality to raise the voice against the exploitation of Britishers.

After that, the revolt of 1857 was the first revolt which shook the very foundation of British rule. Though the revolt was suppressed but the count down had began aiming at National Independence, democracy, social equality and national development, here, India can never forget the patriotic valour of Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi and her companions who sacrificed their lives for the sake of country and became inspiration for the later generation. Though the revolt of 1857 was suppressed but the British policy of repression and the barbaric practice of racial discrimination provoked wide spread agitation among the Indians and contributed to the rise of National movement for Independence.

Sri Aurbindo was an ardent patriot and revolutionary who worked devotedly for India’s freedom. He is said to be the poet of patriotism and the prophet of nationalism. His famous poem ‘Baji Probhou’ is remarkable in this sense. The poem commemorates the glorious sacrifice of Baji who laid down his life for the freedom of the motherland which anticipated a sudden emergence of a tribe of Baji Probhou. exhorting his countrymen, Baji asks them to usher an era of freedom for the motherland –

“_____________ make iron of your souls
Yet if Bhavani wills, strength and sword
can stay our nation’s future from o’er throw”(Bagi Probhou)(6)

One another poem of Sri Aurbindo “Vidula” based on a story from Mahararstra is very significant for expressing his deep patriotism and love for freedom. It was first published under the title ‘The Mother to Her Son’. This poem presents Prince Sunjoy, dethroned by an enemy king, is so much frustrated and dejected that he surrenders before fate and lives the humble life of an ordinary man, a life full of humiliation. His mother inspires him to fight bravely against the enemies and win back the lost kingdom.

“Shrink not from a noble action, stoop not so unworthy deed, vile are they who stoop, they gain not Heaven’s door, nor here succeed…..
When thou winnest difficult victory from the clutch of fearful strife,
I shall know thou art my off spring and shall love my son indeed”

It is indeed, the call of Mother India to her children like sunjoy (‘The Mother to Her Son’)(7)
Sarojini Naidu, a great patriot of India, years for freedom in her poem ‘To India’ when our motherland was suffering under the rule of Britishers. The poem is addressed to Mother India who is invoked as –

“O young through all thy immemorial years!
Rise mother, rise, regenerate from thy gloom,
And, like a bride high mated with thy spheres
Beget new glories from thine ageless womb” (‘To India’)(8)

The ideal of Sarojini, here, is to see the land of her birth rise and regenerated, free and flourishing. Mother India is ageless therefore ever young. The wear and tear of time can not cast its divesting

influence on her immortal soul. Here, Sarojini’s thoughts seem similar to Vivekananda’s thoughts who also urged for India’s freedom in these words, “India brighter, greater, and much higher than she ever was. Our ancestors were great, we must recall that, we must learn the elements of our being, the blood that courses in our veins, we must have faith in that blood and what it did in the past and out of that greatness, we must build and India yet greater than what she has been”. (9)

In her poem ‘To India’ Sarojini Naidu longs to see India free and flourishing. ‘Through all her immemorial years India has remained young on the basis of her religious and spiritual greatness. Sarojini calls upon Mother India to wake up from the gloom of slavery under the cruel British yoke and show the light of freedom (Light of Spirituality) not only to her own children but also to other countries –

“The nations that in fettered darkness weep
Crave thee to lead from where great morning breaks
Mother o mother, where fore dost thou sleep?
Arise and answer for thy children sake.” (‘To India’) (10)

This is not the voice of Sarojini only but of all Indians as they are born in such a great and glorious country having the foundation of spiritual philosophy of Vedas steeped in the basic values of love, sacrifice and service, Sarojini’s expressions, ‘the nations that in fettered darkness weep, crave thee to lead them where great morning breaks’ clearly show how great India is! Its vitality lies in religious and spiritual ideals to give light to every one. “India the motherland an eternal mine of spirituality stands transfigured a beacon of hope to every one in search of Him who is the only real existence in the universe of vanishing shadows” (11). It is India only which has the spiritual power of Geeta, Gayatri, Guru, Ganga and Gou (cow) to lead over the other countries and no doubt, the day is not far when India will come forward as ‘Jagad Guru’ on the wings of spirituality to light the whole world and when such a great country was passing through the darkness of slavery under the British rule, Sarojini’s patriotic songs worked as an inspiration and deeply moved the hearts of Indians.

In one of her patriotic poem ‘Awake’ which is dedicated to Mohammad Ali Jinnah, a trusted friend of Sarojini Naidu. Sarojini speaks on behalf of the children of India and implores Mother India to awake from her sleep and to cut off the ties of bondages in which they are bound at present. They worship her and ready to serve her. The dark night of slavery is now about to end and its darkness is already bright with the hope of freedom –

“Waken, O mother! thy children implore thee, who kneel in thy presence to serve and adore thee! / The night is a flush with a dream of the morrow why still dost thou sleep in thy bondage of sorrow? / Awaken and sever the woes that enthrall us, / And hollow our hands, for the triumphs that call us! / “Are we not thine, o beloved, to inherit? / The manifold pride and power of thy spirit? / Ne’er shall we fail thee, forsake thee or falter, / Whose hearts are thy home, and thy shield and thine altar? / Lo! we would thrill the high stars with thy story, / And set thee again in the forefront of glory” (‘Awake’) (12)

11- Vivekananda,’India, the land of Religion’ Vol page 456.
The music of patriotism is filled in each and every word of above poem ‘Awake’. It is really a pure abiding and deep love of all Indians which ultimately leads to the beauty of Truth. It is a kind of patriotism of which any nation can be proud of Sarojini insists upon the fact that how Indians are eager for victory over their rulers and she must sanctify their hands by her blessings so that their holy cause may triumph. They are the true children of their beloved Bharat Mata and they have inherited her own pride, her own moral courage, along with the spiritual courage. Hence they do not only aspire for political freedom but also for spiritual freedom aiming at ‘divinely destined goal’ – “Bound by one hope, one purpose, one devotion Towards a great, divinely destined goal". (‘An Anthem of Love’)(13)

Though modern Indo English poets did not get a chance to witness or participate in the crucial time of India’s struggle for Independence but patriotism flows in their blood, as well as in their poetry Their soul cry to see the degradation of Indian values after independence. Their poetry longs to see India and Indians in good position wishes that all Indians should live with love and humanity We find Nissim’Ezekiel’s concern for goodness and humanity in his poem, ‘A Poem of Dedication’ when he says-

“I want a human balance humanly acquired, fruitful in the common hour” (‘A Poem of Dedication’)14

Nissim Ezekiel loves talking about India, commenting on its people, their lives, Indian villages, and cities. However, in spite of all that is wrong with the city, he wants to remain where he belongs, his beloved India,
“Confiscate my passport ord,
I do not want to go abroad
Let me find my song
Where I belong” (‘A Poem of Dedication’) (14)

Even if he has to leave the city, the city is with him wherever he goes-
“———- I left the city,
with intention to return, but cared it within me” (‘A Poem of Dedication’)(14)

Ezekiel’s entire poetry is suffused with Indianness. His commitment to India and to Bombay which is his chosen home is total. He clearly shows his attachments with his beloved India in his famous poem “Background Casually” -

“As others choose to give themselves
In some remote and backward place
My backward place is where I am (Background causally),(15)

He identifies himself with India and Indian places-
“I can not leave the island
I was born here and belong” (‘land Is ) (16)

Humanity is the core of his patriotism.

14. Nissim Ezekiel,’Sixty Poems’ Poge-40
15. Nissim Ezekiel,’ Hymns in Darkness Page-181
16.Nissim Ezekiel,’ Hymns in Daskness Page- 193
That is why he wants to be good and to do good for his people
“Deliver me from evil, Lord
Rouse me to essential good” (‘Psalm 151’) (17)

His patriotism is never pessimistic. He firmly believes-
“One day Ram Rajya is surely coming” (‘Patriot’) (18)

A K Ramanuja’s poetry clearly reflects that though he has been living in U S A for over two
decades and has striven his best to accommodate himself to his adopted country but he feels an
intense yearning for his Indian roots. He is so thoroughly Indian that even his dead body would not
associate with dust after burial and would not flourish into Jasmine and fruits in the alien soil. Being
a Hindu, his dead body would accept only burial-
“Or abroad
They’ll lay me out in the funeral
parlour, embalm me in pesticide
bury me in a steel trap, lock
me so out of nature
till I am oxidized by left-
over air, withered by own
vapours into grin and bone
my tissue will never graft,
will never grow in a culture
or be mold and compost
for Jasmine”………….. (‘Death and the Good Citizen’) (19)

Kamla Das feels proud to be an Indian-
“I am Indian, very brown, born in Malabar” (‘An Introduction’) (20)

In her famous poem ‘The Inheritance’, she emphasizes the glory and greatness of India-
“………….. Blessed be
Our sacred city, blessed be its incarnadined glory” (‘The Inheritance’) (21)

Through her poem ‘Advice to Fellow Swimmers’, Kamla Das advises her fellow men, to learn
how to swim. With the help of term “swimming”, she wants to advise how to struggle with life and its
hardships and then get liberated in this life. The poem is a powerful lyric with a strong philosophical
thought; she considers life as an ever flowing stream which ends up in the ocean that is the infinite
–
“When you learn to swim
do not enter a river that has no ocean
to flow into one ignorant of destinations
and knowing only the flowing as its destiny” (‘Advice to Fellow swimmers’). (22)

Kamla Das wants to emphasize the fact that one’s ultimate aim should be to overcome one’s own
’self’ so that ultimately it will an escape from suffering. It is liberation from the self that brings joy and
peace –
“Go swim in the great blue sea
where the first tide you meet is your body

21- Kamla Das, ‘The Old Play House and Other Poems’ Madras; Orient Longman 1973 page 20
the familiar pest,  
But if you learn to cross it  
You are safe, beyond it you are safe  
For, even sinking would make no difference then"(‘Advice to Fellow Swimmers’) (22)

Kamla Das compares the body to a familiar pest that is a troublesome thing. The body is troublesome in so far as it is matter bound and hence subject to many limitations. It the temptations of the body are overcome, the soul will attain freedom. Kamla Das wishes that every Indian should be free politically as well as spiritually.

India forms a significant part of Jayant Mahapatra’s poetry. His constant preoccupation with Indian soil – the favourite places such as Jagannath Puri, Cuttack, Bhubaneswar in Orissa, and many other parts of India dominate one prominent layer of his created work.

Mahapatra expresses his unbreakable relationship with Indian soil –  
“A man does not mean anything  
but the place”. (‘Somewhere My Man’) (23)

He feels that even a brief contact with the stone springing from the earth (Indian soil) will widen his horizon and make him aware of the immensities and vastness of the cosmos –

“At the touch of stone the immensity becomes your own gods, fathers, sons binding into earth, becoming one and centre”. (‘Listening – a Rain of Rites’) (24)

And when it comes to the description of land, we find a picture with detailed portrait of the physical, historical and political India, the picture that emerges is that of the homeland rather the portraits of India – from within his land about his people and his stance giving amplitude of reality, the reality of life and living of Indians with change of time. He constantly affirms his deep and passionate attachment for his motherland and his condemnation for the times –

“when I live  
my coming home defends my smile”(‘Going Out for a Walk’)– Close the Sky, Ten by Ten. (25)

Jayant Mahapatra describes how the time is changed, how the people have forgotten the ideals of India.

His quest continuous –  
“Under the rain, beyond the walls of  
I search for the lost inhabitants my country” (‘The Quest’) (26)

Mahapatra feels guilty how people have forgotten the sacrifice of the patriots for the sake of beloved Motherland India.

“The destiny I carry within myself conspires with my past to bear witness to my failure”.  
(‘Stand By Memory’ Burden of Waves and Fruit.) (27)

In this reference, he is overwhelmed to remember the legendary heroes Tipu Sultan and Shivaji, their struggle for freedom, their courage in the cause of justice against the invaders –

24- Jayant Mahapatra, ‘A Rain of Rites’, page 14
“History closes behind us its tale of disinherited princes (the clear music of freedom, a magic circle) of wild stripes that once flashed steel in the bright sun of Seringapatam”

(‘At the Summer Palace of Tipu Sultan, Seringapatam’) (28)

Then Mahapatra talks about the British presence in India and compares the past with the horror of present –

“We have lost those first days that had crowned themselves with thorns.,
We have lost all those stories about the rustle of the blood that caught its breath when the British seized our laughter.
This talk about India’s freedom struggle nurtured because of our own weakness” (‘Of Independence Day’) (29)

Mahapatra’s master piece ‘Relationship’ explores the relationship of ‘Self’ to the historical past, rich cultural heritages of India and its flow with theme honoured changes into present –

“We have come as dreams disguised that finned us down, artisans of stone. messengers of the spirit

Twelve hundred artless brown flowers in passions.
To the night in humble brotherhood/ aerial roots of a countries old banyan tree”

(‘Relationship’) (30)

Mahapatra attempts to evaluate the historical past juxtaposing it with the present by recreating the unforgettable painful phase of Indian history related with emperor Ashoka’s invasion on Kalinga and the ruthless massacre of thousands of Oriyas at Dhauli near the river Daya –

“It is hard to tell now
what opened the anxious skies?
how the age old proud stones
lost their strength and fell
and how the water of Daya
stank with the bodies of my ancestors
my eyes close now/

Because of the fear that moves my skin” (Relationship’) (30)

The river Daya is a witness to our ancestor’s heroic effort which has become sort of myth. The glory and proud of our ancestors exhibited in the heroic Kalinga war in 261 B. C. which turned Ashoka the great, into a deep religious man, is now a long lost trait. Mahapatra presents a sharp contrast in descending decline in values of life in our time. But he comes to the conclusion that he can overcome alienation and resultant depression by accepting his origin. He interrogates whether renewal can be achieved through dreams and then expresses that the past glories can not be retrieved and our existence can be made meaningful by participation in the totality of creation. Mahapatra wants to know the mystery of unceasing rhythm of life underlying the myth of Konark. He accepts the myth and surrenders before it thinking that deliverance lies in the acceptance of myth.

“We are delivered by the myth
which exhoists our sleep and our losses?
that wakes us like toys springing out of a box
opening out humiliating episodes
or dutiful movements that celebrate
the victories of that darkness over us” (‘Relationship’) (31)

29- Jayant Mahapatra, ‘A Whiteness of Bones’ page 54
30- Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Relationship’ Cuttak: The Chandrabhaga Society, 1999 page 30
31- Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Relationship’ Cuttak: The Chandrabhaga Society, 1999 page 30
The poem ‘Relationship’ ends with the affirmation of life force and a rhapsody in discovery of the eternal moment of happiness that lies in love of ‘self’ as well as society of his own people, the Indians.

Mahapatra longs to see his motherland India great, politically as well as spiritually –

“I want the flames to warm the empty heart of love, not burn a city with pitiable hatred
I want my government to hover like a butterfly over garden,
not be, as it is, a wasp or snake
I only want to renew myself like this old river’s quiet
that has emerged victorious over a hundred layers of religion
In the airlessness of the dead” (‘The Land that is not) “Random Descent”(32)

K N Daruwalla also feels sad and tensed to note the rampant corruption, exploitation, and hypocrisy after independence. Though India is free from the foreign yoke but there is chaos and disorder due to the trail of hatred, insensitivity, and misunderstandings and suspicion, Daruwalla exposes corruption specially the evil practices of bribery and wide spread malpractices in his poem “Craft”. He ironically exposes the debased attitude of the political establishment in independent India. The virtuous and meritorious are not free. The corrupt and debauch criminals and anti social elements are barking in the light of freedom. Daruwalla yearns for the goodness in India, that India, which was best, which is best and which will be best. He expresses that rain, falling torrentially will transform and refresher everything, Trees, plants, and hedges assume bright colors and fresh look because the coat of dust blurring their real beauty and radiance has been washed away. Daruwalla longs for “a cleansed feeling”, but unfortunately he can not experience such refreshing and rejuvenating feeling now which he enjoyed in past. He says, would it never come to him again –

“I can not find it
I have misplaced it somewhere
In the covers of my past” (‘Ruminations’) (33)

Through the striking poem ‘Hawk,’ Daruwalla presents the optimistic view for the betterment of his beloved India and Indians. The hawk is presented as the symbol of rebellions against the unjust social and political order. It stands for the champion of equality and justice. The hawk is shown fired with a missionary zeal, which prompts him to do his best religiously for the goodness of exploited and to reform the miserable condition of poor. The hawk would violently pounce upon the oppressors when they would spread far and wide. More and more hawks would follow him. The reign of tyranny, corruption, anarchy and exploitation would end and the society would usher into a just and peaceful order and India will be as great as it was in past –

“During the big drought which is surely going to come
The doves will look up for clouds and it will rain hawk” (‘Hawk’) (34)

Love, Service and Sacrifice for Motherland -

Mother represents the very womb of creation, the source of which we have derived our being. She is irreplaceable link in the chain of creation. Again she is the symbol of all pervading

32- Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Random Descent’ Bhubaneswar: Third Eye Communication, 2005 page 70
principle- spirit of offering and asking for no return India is the only country in the whole world which is represented with its traditional attitude of “Bharat Mata", the Mother India, where we are born, live and move, Indians have a strong force of loving and worshipping their motherland and all her noble attributes — her geographical features, her culture, her customs and traditions, her faiths, and concerns rooted in the belief “Janani Janam bhoomica swargadapi garjasiyasi". A rare peace, harmony and prosperity surrounds on such divine land. The thread of ‘Dharma’ bounds together all the people to serve and love their birth place.

Toru Dutt emphasizes this value of love in Indian’s heart because to her

“God is Love” (‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’) (35)

And true democracy, true freedom lies in loving all the people. This is philosophy of India and Indian people —

“Not in seclusion, not apart from all
not in place elected for its peace
but in the heart and bustle of his world
mid sorrow, sickness, suffering and sin
must he still labour with a loving soul?
who strives to enter through the narrow gate” (‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’) (35)

Toru Dutt is Indian by heart, full of love for her people that is why she advises all Indians to love and serve people because the service of God’s creatures is the service of God —

“Be meek, devout, and friendly, full of love
Intent to do well to the human race
And to all creatures sentient made of God,
Because “A goodly harvest must be thee arise” (‘The Legend of Dhruva’) (36)

These words of Suruchee spoken to her son Dhruva tell the glory of an Indians heart. Every Indian is devoted and loving to his motherland as well as its people because their love for the motherland is spiritual one based on the truth, service and sacrifice. It is never mean never mean selfish, rather it is completely soaked in the passionate feelings of service and sacrifice.

Ravinder Nath Tagore, the great patriot of India, with a loving heart envisions an ideal future for his motherland. When India was under the British rule Tagore wishes a dream of free India, not only politically but a country free from all ill suffering the tyranny practices like falsehood, dogmas, blind beliefs, a country of enlightened educated noble people who live by their ideal and noble actions —

"where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening thought and action—
Into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake" ‘35/Geetanjali’ (37)

Tagore prays to God to give him strength to serve his country people as true worship lies in service. He wishes that spiritual poverty from his heart must go away and he should be blessed with the strength to bear with equanimity both joys and sorrows of life. He also prays to God to fill his heart with love for humanity especially for the poor and down trodden —

“This is my prayer to thee, my Lord — strike, strike at
The root of penury in my heart,
Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows
Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service” ('Geetanjali\ 36') (38)

36- Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 113
38-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 36 ‘This is My Prayer to Thee’ page 166
Sri Aurbindo, the prophet of nationalism and patriotism contributed a lot through his prose and poetry during India’s struggle for Independence. Many of his poems and articles are suffused with his ardent spirit of patriotism. He contributed a series of articles to the columns of ‘Indu Prakashan under the title “New Lamps for Old”. His deep love for the country can be seen in a letter written to his wife Mrinalini Devi dated 30 August 1905, “In these hard days, the whole country is like a dependent at our doors, I have thirty crores of brothers and sisters in this country. Many of them die of starvation, most of them are weakened by suffering and troubles and is some how dragging on the existence. They must be helped. I look upon my country as the Mother. What would the son do when a demon sitting on the breast of his mother is drinking her blood?”

“I know I have the strength to uplift this fallen race, it is not the physical strength, I am not going to fight with the sword or with gun, but with the power of Knowledge” (39)

In 1905 Sri Aurbindo was drawn to the revolutionary politics in Bengal. Regarding to it, he wrote “Bhavani Mandir”, a Hand Book to Revolutionaries to exhort and awake his countrymen to put their all strength to liberate their motherland –

“What is a nation? What is our mother country? It is not a piece of earth, nor a figure of speech, nor a fiction of the mind. It is a mighty Shakti, come then, hearken to the call of the Mother”. Through the columns of ‘Indu Prakashan’, he paid a glowing tribute to the rishis yore that enriched their motherland in varying ways. In 1906 he began to edit ‘Bande Matram’ a new English daily, started by Bipin Chandra Pal. He also paid a warm tribute to Bakim Chandra Chatterjee “Who gave us the reviving Mantra, which is creating a New India, the Mantra, ‘Bande Matram’. (40) Sri Aurbindo’s ardent patriotism is revealed in his poem ‘Bakim Chandra Chatterjee’ when he admires the humanity and patriotism of these great writer –

“O plains, o hills, o rivers of sweet Bengal
O land of love and flowers the spring bird’s call
And southern winds are sweet among your trees,
Your poet’s words are sweeter far than these,
Your heart was this man’s heart, subtly he knew
The beauty and divinity in you” (‘Bakim Chandra Chatterjee’)(41)

Another short poem entitled ‘Invitation’ which Sri Aurbindo wrote in prison is a magnificent example of freedom and adventure –

“I am the lord of tempest and mountain
I am the spirit of freedom and pride
stark must he be and a kinsman to danger
who shares my kingdom and walks at my side” ‘Invitation’(42)

The lines convince show the feel of courageous, and freedom loving Indian heart. Infact, India represents a light house of wisdom, a dynamo of shakti, and a harbor of solace and peace. So why the heads of Indians automatically bow before the divine mother ‘Bharat Mata’, their mother land. Sarojini Naidu, who herself was an ardent lover of motherland, beautifully expresses the feelings of service, devotion and loyalty of Indians towards Mother India-

41- Sri Aurbindo, ‘Bakim Chandra Chatterjee, ‘Songs to Myrtilla’ Sri Aurbindo, collected poems and plays, Pondicherry, Sri Aurbindo Ashram, 1972 page 32
“Two hands are we to serve thee, o our mother
To strive and succor, cherish and unite
Two feet are we to cleave the wanting darkness
And gain the pathways of the dawning light” (‘An Anthem of Love’)(42)

Here is the affectionate voice of Indians to their beloved mother interwoven with the passionate voice of patriotism addressed to motherland. Like true sons of mother India, they will struggle to liberate her, to help her in the time of need and to care for her welfare and will also maintain national unity and integrity. Indeed, if any crisis comes on their motherland Indians are ready to sacrifice their lives to save ‘Bharat Mata’ at any cost. Then they forget all the differences. The entire nation arises as one. Indian history is filled with such examples. May be at the time of national struggle for Independence from Britishers or after attacks by Pakistan or China. The story is the same. The credit of victory goes to each and every citizen of India. Every Indian contributes his feelings, his services with head and heart at the time of national crisis. There is no selfish motive behind it because their patriotism is never mean rather like, the true sons and daughters of Mother India, all Indians become the saga of sacrifice, valour and heroism when there is need.

It is in India only where such deep love, deep devotion, unmatched patriotic upsurge and emotional intensity can be seen for the motherland. It is because Indian culture is secular and spiritual in nature which teaches the lesson of devotion and sacrifice to every Indian heart. The lasting human values like truth, love, morality, non violence, flow in the blood of Indians developing the spirit of universal brotherhood. Sarojini Naidu conveys the heartfelt devotion of Indians for ‘Bharat Mata’ through her patriotic songs because she herself was one of the greatest patriots of India and witnessed the time when India was struggling for its Independence from British rule.

The patriotic fervour finds its best expression-
“Waken o slumbering mother, and be crowed,
who once were empress of the sovereign past” (‘To India’)(44)

“Are we not thine, o beloved, to inherit?
The manifold pride and power of thy spirit” (‘Awake’)(45)

“Two hands are we to serve thee, o our mother
to strive and succor, cherish and unite” (‘An Anthem of Love’)(46)

“Waken o mother! thy children implore thee
who kneel in thy presence to serve and adore thee” (‘Awake’)(47)

Sarojini Naidu continually impresses upon our mind for two main things – the deep love and devotion of Indians to serve their motherland and secondly, the great glorious past of India – the land of dharma, the land of sages and saints, the land of spiritualism, the land of Vedas and Puranas. The vitality of India is hidden in its religious and spiritual ideals that make India unique among the whole world.

“Let the Persia or the Greek, the Roman, the Arab, or the English man march his battalions to conquer the world and link the different nations together but the philosophy and spiritualism of India are ever ready to. flow along the new made channel into the veins of the nations of the world”. (48)

Sarojini Naidu declares India to be the leader of all countries because of its spiritual power.

“The nations that in fettered darkness sleep
crave thee to lead them where great morning breaks” (‘To India’) (49)

The spirituality dwells in the heart of Indians based on love, beauty and truth, that is the reason Indian’s love for motherland is never selfish, never mean rather the feelings of service and sacrifice make their patriotism more splendid.

Nissim Ezekiel, the modern Indo English poet also stresses upon the great glorious past of ancient India, an India of Ram Rajya, an India of truth and peace. In ‘Very Indian poem in Indian English’, Ezekiel depicts how an Indian believes in the glory of ancient India and regrets how new generation is forgetting the ancient Indian values and running behind fashion and foreign things, violence and disturbance.

“I am standing for peace and non-violence
why world is fighting fighting
why all people of this world
are not following Mahatma Gandhi
I do simply not understand
Ancient Indian wisdom is 100% correct.

“One day Ram Rajya is surely coming” (‘Patriot’) (50)

Ezekiel’s love for India finds beautiful expression –

“I can not leave the island
I was born here and belong” (‘In India’) (51)

India becomes the part of his consciousness and he wants to live here and serve through his poetic songs –

“The Indian Landscapes sears my eyes
I have become a part of it
To be observed by foreigners” (Background casually) (52)

“I want a human balance humanly
acquired, fruitful in the common hour” (‘A Poem of Dedication’) (53)

The lines beautifully depict Nissim Ezekiel’s sense of love, service and devotion to motherland India.

A K Ramanujam’s naturalization in America could not sever him from his Indian roots and sensibility. In his poem ‘Death and the Good Citizen’, Ramanujam’s reveals his deep love and inborn affinity with India –

“Hearts,
with your king of temper
may even take, make connection

51- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Exact Name’ collected poems page 131
52- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ collected poems page 181
53- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Sixty Poems’ collected poems page 40
with alien veins and continue 
your struggle to be naturalized/

    Beat and learn to miss a beat

In a foreign body

    but

You know my tribe, in carnate 
unbelievers in bodies
they will speak proverbs, contest
my will, against such degradation
hide – bound, even worms can not
have me, they’ll cremate
me in Sanskrit and Sandalwood
have me sterilized
to a scatter or ash” (‘Death and the Good Citizen’) (54)

It expresses that Indianness is a part of his consciousness. His famous poem ‘Chicago Zen’ assimilates his present in Chicago and his past in India.

“You fall into a vision of forest fires
Enter a frothing Himalayan river, rapid, silent
On the 14th floor” …… (Chicago Zen) (55)

Kamla Das speaks her pride in being Indian –
“I am an Indian, very brown, born in Malabar” …. (‘An Introduction’) (56)

She prays and wishes the goodness of her city as well as the goodness of the whole country, the glorious India –

“Oh God,
Blessed be your fair name, blessed be the religion
purified in the unbelievers blood, blessed be
our sacred city, blessed is its incarnadined glory …..” (‘The Independence’) (57)

A sense of deep love and belonging to the places of his land of birth, his own India and to the landscapes of his state urges Jayant Mahapatra to relate it to his poetry as shown in following lines –

“A man does not mean anything
but the place,
sitting on the river bank throwing pebbles
Into the muddy current
A man becomes the place” (‘Somewhere, My Man’) (58)

Through the symbolical representation of Hawk, K N Daruwalla expresses his love for the betterment of his country. The hawk is the symbol of rebellion against the present condition of institutionalized corruption and exploitation. Restlessly he moves higher and higher in search of an ideal order –

“He ferocious floats on splayed wings
then plumets like a flare
smoking and a gust of feathers
proclaims that he was struck” (‘Hawk’) (59)

The hawk made his life of action clear. He would violently pounce upon the oppressors when they would start trading in the sorrows and suffering of the exploited masses. Like a true citizen and patriot the hawk is optimistic. The message of rebellion would spread far and wide. More and more hawks would follow him. The region of tyranny, corruption and exploitation would end and India will usher into a just and peaceful egalitarian order for all-

“During the big drought which is surely going to come
The doves will look up for clouds and it will rain hawks” (‘Hawk’) (59)

3- On the Shoulder of a Soldier the Country Depends —

Soldier is the backbone of a country. The soldier of India is the most sacrificing figure,. the most living example of devotion may be of military, of navy, or of air force, he is always swallowed with enthusiasm, and inspiration, the adventurous love of decision and ability. Indian soldier means a daring personality always ready to fight and face, to accept the challenges and reply, and save the motherland by any cost, by any sacrifice. The history of India shines with the names of those brave heroes and heroines who lived for the country and died for the country. Can we ever forget the daring heroism of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji and Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji the real soldiers, who sacrificed their all to protect and save Hindustan from the tyranny of Mughals? Can we ever forget the heroic bravery of Subhas Chandra Bose and Rani Laxmi Bai, the true soldiers, who sacrificed their life to liberate India from the dictatorship of foreign yoke? The patriotic and heroic spirit was very well seen at the time of national struggle for Independence, then again in 1962, 1965 during the attacks of Pakistan and China and partition of Bangla Desh.

Some patriotic zeal was also seen recently in 1999 at Kargil to face the sudden attack of Pakistan. Heads off to those hundred of Indian soldiers who were sacrificing every drop of their blood to save one – one inch of their beloved motherland India at snow covered areas of Kargil. They reminded us the heroic sacrifice of Shiva Ji, Ranapratap, Sri Guru Teg Bahadur, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, Banda Vir Bahadur, Hakikat Rai, Ashfaq Ulla, Chandra Shekhar Ajad, Subhash Chandra Bose and many more who devoted their lives for the sake of country. This is true sacrifice, true love for motherland, true patriotism. And this is how the honour and glory of motherland is saved. Though Toru Dutt did not witness the peak time of national struggle for Independence but her poetic lines from the poem ‘Prahlaad’ work as a heroic inspiration for Indian soldiers for all the time when some crisis comes –

“Tyrants of every age and clime
remember this…. That awful shape
shall startle you when comes the time,
And send its voice from cape to cape
as human peoples suffer pain,
but oh, the lion’s strength is theirs
woe to the king when galls the chain!
woe, woe, their fury when he dares!” (‘Prahlaad’) (60)

These expressions of rebellions spirit, of bravery and courage serve as a motto for Indian army (though written as a motto for a Persian mob during the French Revolution) fighting for their beloved motherland India. In ‘Geetanjali’, Tagore’s vision of India as an independent country is of spiritual soldiers. He wishes that every Indian should act like a soldier to make India free from all evil practices, blind beliefs, dogmas and superstitions, a free India where fearlessness would be the characteristic of the people and equality, fraternity and spiritual freedom with universal peace will reign supreme.

Sri Aurobindo’s entire poetical gamut is suffused with ardent patriotism and nationalism.

There is a powerful undercurrent of nationalism in all his literary creation both in prose and poetry. In his famous poem “Baji Prohbhou”, Sri Aurobindo glorifies the brave and patriotic effort of the great Maratha warrior Baji Prohbhou who, to cover Shiva Ji’s retreat held a mountain pass for two hours with a small company of men against twelve thousands enemy soldiers. He makes Baji Prohbhou say that the brave soldiers would sacrifice their lives gladly for the sake of their country’s freedom –

“Then Baji first broke silence, “lo, the surge!
that was but spray of death we first repelled
chosen of Shiva Ji, Bhavani’s swords,
for you the gods prepare we die indeed
of heaven to our country’s claim enforced
to freedom” (‘Baji Prohbhou’) (61)

Death can not deter the brave patriots, from their noble pursuit of attaining freedom. Baji Prohbhou exhorts his countrymen –

“make iron of your souls
Yet if Bhavani wills, strength and the sword
Can stay our nation’s future from o’ erthrous
till victory with Shiva ji return” (‘Baji Prohbhou’) (61)

During the time of national upsurge, this poem was a call to Indians to emulate the noble example of Baji Prohbhou so that they could withstand the suppression of a tyrannical power and hold in their hands to liberate the motherland from its clutches.

Dedicated to soldiership, Sri Aurobindo’s poem. “Vidula” first published under the title ‘The Mother to Her Son’ is based on a story from the ‘Mahabharata’. Prince Sunjoy, dethroned by an enemy king, feels so much discouraged that he is ready to forget his dharma (duty) which was to fight on till the recovery of the kingdom or till his death. But his mother inspires him to do his duty and to liberate his lost kingdom. The following lines are the call of mother India to her Sunjoy like children –

“Out to battle, do thy man’s work, falter not in hight attempt
so a man is quit before his God and saved from self contempt
Sunjoy, Sunjoy, waste not thou thy flame in smoke!

Impetuous, dire
Leap upon thy foes for havoc as a famished lion leaps,
storming through the vanquished victors till thou

fall on slaughtered heaps…….
Shrink not from a noble action, stoop not to unworthy deed
Vile are they who stoop, they gain not Heaven’s doors,
nor here succeed
when thou winnest difficult victory from the clutch of fearful strife
I shall know thou art my offspring and shall love my son indeed” (‘Vidula’)(62)

Sarojini Naidu also speaks of almost same call of Mother India to her children (Indian soldiers) in her poem ‘The Gift of India’. Living in the age of national struggle for Independence in 1947 Sarojini Naidu’s poetry reechoes with the courage and bravery of the soldiers on the battlefield. She pays a glowing tribute to all those soldiers who laid their lives for their beloved country India.

“When the terror and tumult of hate shall cease
And life be refashioned on anvils of peace
And your love shall offer memorial thanks
To the comrades who fought in your dauntless ranks
And you honour the deeds of the deathless ones
Remember the blood of my martyred sons” (‘The Gift of India’)(63)

India is here presented by Sarojini, in the traditional metaphor as a mother who has sent her sons to serve as fodder for cannon. Mother India hopes that when the terror and tumult of hate shall end and peace shall be reintroduced in the life of people of various countries of the world and they shall pay homage to the comrades who fought for their sake. They will honour the deeds of the brave sons of Mother India who have sacrificed their precious lives. Though the subject of the poem deals with the time of First World War 1915 when the youth of India already lay bleeding in the bloody battles on the soil of Flanders and France, Iran and Egypt. India was drawn into war by the British and she (India) had no way out to place her men, money and material at of the disposal of her imperial masters but the lines of the poem very well go with the heroic sacrifice of Indian soldiers at the time of every war which India faced. The Indian Army is one of the best army in the world. In India the soldier is known as Jawan and Jawan is the symbol of youth, of patriotism, of strength. The Indian soldiers have proved their worth with Europeans, with the Africans, with the Pakistanis and Chinese. The bravery, the loyalty and the worthiness of Indian Jawans and Indian officers is already a legend. During the British period Indian soldiers were honoured as the ‘Best fighting material’. Sarojini Naidu reminds us of the participation of India’s soldiers in First World War and of the unjust human sacrifice brought to the altar of England. Nothing which the British needed was withheld rich gifts of clothes, grain and gold. There is a tinge of maternal grief when Mother India addresses to the world (you) –

Is there aught you need that my hands hold, with
rich gifts of raiment or grain or gold,
Lo! I have flung to the east and west
priceless treasures torn from my breast
And yielded the sons of my striken womb
To the drum beats of duty, the sabers of doom” (‘The Gift of India’)(64)

62- Sri Aurbindo, ‘Vidula’ (The Mother to Her Son), collected poems and plays Sri Aurbindo Ashram 1976
Sarojani seems to be deeply moved to express the reciprocity of love. If on one hand Indian soldiers can sacrifice their whole life for the protection of their beloved motherland, on the other side, the mother India is also having same deep lore and heart felt emotions, her devoted maternal affection at the loss of lives of her beloved sons, the soldiers, British could not measure the grief of tears Mother India shed, they could not estimate the pride that thrilled through the despair of her heart, they could not understand the hope that comforted her. Yet Mother India sees into the far off future, sad but glorious vision of the torn red banners of victory –

“Can ye measure the grief of the tears I weep?  
Or compass the woes of the watch I keep  
Or the pride that thrills thro my heart’s despair  
And the hope that comforts the anguish of prayer  
And the far sad glorious vision I see  
Of the torn red banners of victory”  (‘The Gift of India’)(65)

The ‘glorious vision I see’ reveals the vision of true freedom, the vision of beauty. Mother India is sad over the great loss of her martyred soldiers. None can understand her pride in having made and continuing to make sacrifice for the world. Mother India with all her sincerity makes one request to British and that is, when the terror and tumult of hate ceases –

“And you honour the deeds of the deathless one  
Remember the blood of my martyred sons”  (‘The Gift of India’)(65)

Sarojini’s expressions are full of utmost dedication of Mother India towards her ‘martyred sons’. Can any country in the whole world have such sentiments for its citizens? No, never! It is India only, the great India, which represents it self as eternal Mother India, who loves her sons and daughters as a real living mother does. The title ‘deathless ones’ very well expresses the bravery, heroism, courage and sacrificing nature of Indian soldiers, the martyred ones. Though they are no more but their sacrifice is immortal. They will be remembered and honored till the world lives. India is the land of true soldiers like Guru Gobind Singh Ji who lived for the country, and died for the country, “The Great Guru Gobind Singh, driven out from this country, fighting against its oppressors after having shed his own blood for the defence of the Hindu religion, after having seen his children killed on the battlefield – ay this example of the great Guru, left even by those whose sake he was shedding his blood, and the blood of his own nearest and dearest, he, the wounded lion, retired from the field calmly to die in the south but not a word of curse escaped his lips against those who had ungratefully forsaken him. Mark me, every one of you will have to be a Gobind Singh if you want to do well to your country”.(66)  

May be such type of inspiring words always reside in the hearts of Indians or the devotion lies in their blood. India is a land of dharma, a land of dharmayudha, a land of Lord Krishna and His preaching’s to Arjuna, “O Arjuna your duty enjoin you (ask you) to fight for Dharma. The evil regime of your cousin Duryodhana must not be allowed to prosper. So long your muscles bear strength, kill them in battle who are opposed to your just cause o oppose you in the cause of Dharma”, O Arjuna do not cower like a coward, be brave and behave like Kshatriya. Fear only God, and keep the power dry”.  (‘II32’)(67). So the Indian soldiers are the sons of bravery, the sons of truth, and the sons of right eousness.

Sarojini’s addressing them ‘deathless ones’ is a fitting tribute to their immortal patriotic spirit. In fact soldiers are the back bone of country. India’s foundation is unshakable because of its two strong pillars ‘Jawan’ and ‘Kissan’. If on one hand the farmer (kissan) grows food for the country without caring heat and cold, rain and storms, on the other hand soldier is (jawan) always standing alert like watchman, having gun in his hand on the boundry of his beloved motherland to save her, to protect her from any bitter eye. And the courage of these brave soldiers is worth seen if some crisis comes. They forget everything except their duty, their love, and their devotion towards India.

66-Vivekananda, ‘Hindu Religion’ vol I page 68
Nissim Ezekiel, the truly Indian by heart is constantly conscious of the contemporary problems that India faces. In his famous poem ‘The Patriot’, Ezekiel mentions that he is sad because our neighboring countries do not behave properly –

“Pakistan behaving like this
China behaving like that
It is making me very sad, I am telling you” ('The Patriot')(68)

The lines directly point out that India is peace loving and wishes the same from others also. It does not want that any other country from outside try to plan to attack on its peace loving policy. Like a true patriot, a true soldier, Nissim Ezekiel, the father and law giver of post independence Indian poetry in English, asserts his Indian identity –

“Confiscate my passport, lord,
I do not want to go abroad
Let me find my song
where I belong” ('In India')(69)

In the very same manner Kamla Das expresses her proud in being Indian,

“I am an Indian, very brown, born in Malabar”.  ('An Introduction')(70)

Jayant Mahapatra feels depressed to note contrast between the heroic past and helpless present. In a bid to get an Indian identity that is lovable and enduring, the poet compares the downfall of present with the pride of our heroic ancestors had in past. The glory and pride of our ancestors exhibited in the great Kalinga war in 261 B. C. which turned Ashoka, the great into a deeply religious man is now long lost trait. The river Daya is a witness to our ancestor’s heroic efforts which has just become a myth for us. Once heroic and militant race, is no than memory because its successors proved to be unworthy of keeping the glory of their ancestors Mahapatra’s poetry explores a sharp contrast in the descending order between the past and the present marking an overwhelming decline in values of life in our time.

“It is hard to tell now
what opened the anxious skies?
how the age old proud stones
lost their strength and fell
and how the waters of Daya
stank with the bodies of my ancestors
my eyes close now
because of the fear that moves my skin” ('Relationship')(71)

A sense of despair overwhelms Mahapatra to think that how our great ancestors sacrificed their lives to liberate the country from the foreign yoke and how at present, there is corruption, violence and destruction which have given the country a sense of helplessness and empty sadness. The image of India as a heroic land is crumbling with the fear of terrorism.

“This country urges us to seek the stars at night
too full as we are of mythic battles, angry Gods
and the heroism of Hanuman, upon those

67-The Bhagvat Gita II/31 page 112
69-Nissim Ezekiel, 'In India' 'The Exact Name' collected poems page 131
71-Jayant Mahapatra, 'Relationship' Cuttak: Chandrabhaga society: 1999 III section page 14
distant pin points of light, we might reconstruct
some other world, denying memory, journeying
no more. None, Ah love, we had read so much
about you, about freedom, was everything you did
Gandhi Ji, only an act you put on for post city?
with India, our India, bravely worth roping” (‘Dispossessed Nests) (72)

……….. “We do not care where
true feeling lies or far a country’s
national anthem floating around in counterfeit freedom” (Dispossessed Nests) (72)

But in this mood of despair, Mahapatra hopes for the best in his beloved country. In the
concluding stanza of his famous poem ‘Relationship’, there is affirmation of the life force and the
harmonious energies of continuing creation
We are delivered by the myth
which exhorts our sleep and our loses
That wake us like toys springing out of a box” (‘Relationship’) (73)

The unquestioning acceptance of myth leads man to see “from the vast night around him the
beauty soar into the sky” Mahapatra concludes that our existence can be meaningful by participating
in the totality of creation because the eternal happiness lies in love of “self” as well as of society.

K N Daruwalla through his striking poem ‘Hawk’ presents the picture of exploitation,
repression, anarchy, subversion of democratic and constitutional norms in India in today’s times.
The hawk is the symbol of an Indian soldier or rebellious Indian youth who finds it difficult to restrain
his growing anger against present day exploitation and corruption. The passionate and rebellious
hawk is detached, objective, balanced and does not compromise with the unjust. He knows that
the realization of purpose of his mission is very difficult with single minded devotion yet he is
determined to do his best to remove injustice. His anger burst forth against the institutionalized
corruption, exploitation, ill health, and starvation. It is his firm resolution to set things right and in
ideal order. He makes his life of action clear like a true soldier. He would violently pounce upon the
oppressors when they would start trading in the sorrows and suffering of the exploited masses.
“i will hover like a black prophecy,
weaving its moth soft cocoon of death
I shall driven down
with the compulsive thrust of gravity
trained for havoc
my eyes focused on them
light the sights of a gun” (‘Hawk’) (74)

The hawk is optimistic, more and more hawks will follow him, The reign of tyranny,
corruption, anarchy and exploitation would and India will again flourish into a just and peaceful
order as it was in past, “During the big ‘drought which is surely going to come’ The doves will look
up for clouds and it will rain hawks (Hawk) (75)
Unity in Diversity – The most striking features which make India great among the countries of the world is firstly the continuity of Indian culture through centuries despite all revolutions and upheavals and secondly the spirit of unity underlying the amazing diversity of Indian life, culture and religion “It is fascinating to find how the Bengalis, the Maratha, the Gujratis, the Tamils, the Andhras, the Oriyas, the Assames, the Kannarese, the Malayais, the Sindhis, the Punjabis, the Pathans, the Kashmiris, Rajpura, and the great central block comprising the Hindustani speaking people, have retained their peculiar characteristics for hundred of years, have still more or less the same virtues and failings of which old traditions or record tell us, yet have been through out these ages distinctively Indians, with the same national heritage which showed itself in way of living and a philosophical attitude of life and its problems.(76). such a harmonious blend of religions, castes and creeds into one body rarely to be found anywhere in the long course of world history. This wonderful texture of unity in diversity is because Indian philosophy rests on the principle of Tat tvam asi or ‘Thou art thou” means there is no difference between me and you.

We all are the children of one Almighty God, God Himself is present in every one in the form of soul, so we all are one in Him. This principle of universal brotherhood is soaked in the blood of Indians that is why they are loving, tolerant and sympathetic to every one who ever comes, what ever comes. Toru Dutt beatifully expresses that there is no difference between me and you – ...... What is rank or caste?
In us is honor or disgrace
Not out of us …..” (‘Buttoo ‘)(77)
During the days of national struggle for Independence how Ravinder Nath Tagore wished a united Independent free. This he reflects through his poetry-
“Where the mind is without fear and
The head is held high
where knowledge is free
where world has not been broken into by narrow
domestic walls” (‘Geetanjali) Let My Country Awake’(78)

Here Tagore envisions an ideal future for his motherland India not only politically free but a land of fearless people who would walk proudly with feelings of self respect and dignity an account of virtuous living. Petty consideration on the basis of caste, colour, creed, language and religion will not divide the nation and its unity. There will be unity in diversity. His dream came true. The culture of India is like a bunch of flowers with flowers of different castes, religions, colours and faiths, but the fragrance is one that is of Indianners. The attitude of human fellow ship in which every human being that’s another as a follow person like himself, is the principle that forms the firm foundation of unity in diversity. The unity in diversity of India is based on the philosophy of co-existence, recognition, respect and tolerance of individual difference, on mutual good will and co-operation, on universal justice rather than on the acceptance of any common ideology, creed or code.

We find the beautiful portrait of unity in diversity in the National Anthem of India-

77- Toru Dutt, ‘Butto’ Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan of Amarnath Jha page 114
78- Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 35 page 162 ed. S K Paul
“Jana Gana Mana Adinayaka Jaya hai 
Bharat Bhagya Vidhata 
Punjab-sindh Gujrat Maratha 
Dravid- utkal Bange 
Vindhya Himachal Yamuna Ganga 
Uchhal Jaladhi taranga 
Tva shubh Namei jage 
Tava shubh asise mangei 
Gave tava jaya Gatha ……..”

People of different races, languages and cultures have met on the soil of India and have settled down as the members of one common civilization whose primary characteristics is the faith in an Unseen Reality. In spite of so many diversities, there is underlying current of unity that is of being Indian. Whether a person is a Hindu, or a Muslim or a Sikh, or a Christian, he is an Indian first, an Indian last. The democracy of Indian is based on service and sacrifice and it uses moral pressure, The constitution of India is equal for every person in case of justice, liberty or thought expression, belief of faith and worship. Verses from the Quran, Christian hymns, Shahab Kirtan from Guru Granth Sahib, or Salokas from Upanishads, all are sung with equal importance. Ravinder Nath Tagore presents this very true sense of united India –

“On the shore of Bharat 
Where men of all races have come together 
Awake! O my mind! 
Standing here without stretched arms 
I send my salutation to the god of humanity 
And in the solemn chant sing his praises 
At whose all on one knows 
come floating stream of men 
And merged into the sea of Bharat” (song 103/ ‘Geetanjali Let my country Awake’(79)

The poetic thoughts of Ravinder Nath Tagore are very similar to Jawahar Lal Nehru’s views expressed on unity in diversity of India, “The unity of India was no longer merely an intellectual conception for me, it was an emotional experience which over powered me. That essential unity had been so powerful that no political division, no disaster or catastrophe had been able to overcome it”.

Sri Aurbindo, the master of yoga, with all his roots in India’s glorious past of spirituality, speaks about the universal love, and divinized humanity as in those words he puts into the mouth of Savitri. “A lonely freedom can not satisfy 
A heart that has grown one with every heart 
I am a deputy of the aspiring world 
my spirit’s liberty I ask for all” (80) ‘Savitri’

Sri Aurbindo wishes a democracy of the divine liberation, breaking the fetters not only of political or social tyranny but also of mortal ignorance. He does not differentiate between religion to religion, or caste to caste rather he wants that goodness should be prevailed through out the world because we all are the children of one God, united by the thread of love and humanity. Sri Aurbindo envisions that –

79-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 103 page 405 
80-Sri Aurbindo, ‘Savitri’ book (x) canto (IV) page 668
“A mightier race shall inhabit the mortal’s world
On nature’s luminous tops, on the spirit’s ground
The superman shall reign as a king of life
make earth almost the mate and peer of heaven”. (Savitri) (81)

Sri Aurbindo wished unity in diversity for India at the time of India’s struggle for freedom, “In spite of all, India has single soul and while we have to wait till we can speak of an India, one and indivisible, our cry must be let the soul of India live for ever. The light which led to freedom though not yet to unity still burns and will burn on till it conquers. I believe firmly that a great and united future is the destiny of this nation and its people”. (82)

The deep awareness of unity in diversity was at its height at the time of national struggle for Independence. Sarojini’s poem ‘An Anthem of love’ is a master piece in this concern in which the people belonging to different religions, castes and communities swear to remain one and united to protect their beloved motherland.

“one heart is we to love thee, o our mother,
one undivided, divisible in soul
bound by one hope, one purpose, one devotion
towards a great, divinely destined goal” (‘An Anthem of Love’) (83)

Sarojini has beautifully revealed the unity in diversity of India through the ardent pledge of Indians to remain one and protect national unity of India. And it was because of the united efforts India attained the goal of freedom from the bondage of foreign domination. In fact, India presents a unique example of unity in diversity and it is the strongest feature of India’s greatness and the very base of her spiritual philosophy of universal brotherhood – “Vasudev Kutumbkam”. “The only infinite that exists in you and in me and in all, in the self”. The infinite oneness of the soul is the eternal sanction of all ethics and all spirituality”. (84)

Sarojini Naidu with a remarkable novelty shows a deep awareness of the fundamental unity of Indian people in her poem ‘Awake’. She visualizes India as the divine mother who bestows her blessings on all her children, be they Hindus or Muslims, Buddhists or Jains, Sikhs or Christians or any other creed. And they inturn adore her with equal love though in different ways. The concluding portion of the poem ‘Awake’ is in form of a chorus in which Hindus, Parsees, Muslims and Christians offer their homage to Mother India separately and then finally all creeds hail her unison –

“Hindus: Mother! The flowers of our worship have crowned thee
Musslman Parsees the flame of our hope shall surround thee, mother! The sword of our love shall defend thee,
Christians: Mother! The song of our faith shall attend thee,
All creeds: shall not our dauntless devotion avail thee?
Hearken! O queen and o goddess, we hail thee!” ‘Awake’ (85)

Sarojini remains gracious to express the love, goodness and sacrificing nature of all Indians whether they belong to any religion, caste or creed, but for Mother India, they all are one and united.

81-Sri Aurbindo, ‘Savitri’ book (III) canto (IV) page 347
82-Quoted from Sri Aurbindo’s Biography ed. Dr. Varshney, Sri Aurbindo’s Savitri and other poems page 07
84-Vivekananda, ‘Vedanism’ Vol. III page 189
what banner you march. Do not care what be your colors green, blue or red, but mix up all the
colours and produce that intense glow of white, the color of love ….. I do not see into future nor do
I care to see. But one vision I see clear as life before me, that the ancient mother has awakened
once more sitting on her throne, rejuvenated, more glorious than ever, Proclaim her to all the world
with the voice of peace and benediction”.(86). Indeed, India has conserved all, made no body her
enemy, and befriended every one with whom she came into contact. If anybody refused to be
woven into the wonderful texture of India’s unity, he had to go away from here. But it is unthinkable
that a man should live in India and not become a part of it. Indians are first Indians then anything
else – Hindu, Sikh or Christian. In today’s time, when there are some foreign militant groups or
some corrupt political parties in India itself, are trying to create an atmosphere of disintegration,
disunity and mutual differences but their efforts are useless because the great unity of India is
having the strong foundation of spirituality. No power can shake it.
India’s spirit is insurmountable.

Nissim Ezekiel’s The Patriot’ is fine poem to express his longing for unity in diversity, universal
brotherhood and universal peace for India which has been lost in today’s times –
“I am standing for peace and non violence
why world is fighting and fighting
why all people of world
are not following Mahatma Gandhi
I am simply not understanding” (‘The Patriot’) (87)

Ezekiel’s stress on non violence of Mahatma Gandhi is to draw our attention that India has
always been peace loving – and Indian philosophy of “Ahimsa parmo dharma” makes the solid
foundation of unity in diversity. It speaks love for all, malice for none. Ezekiel wipes the distinction
between me and you in invoking the Lord for protection and sustenance for all –
“salvation belongs unto the
Lord. It is not through
one or other church
the blessing is upon
all the people of the earth” (‘Latter Day Psalms’) (88)

It clarifies that God never differentiate between person to person. In God’s eyes, all are
equal then why people are divided on the name of religion, caste and creeds? Ezekiel feels sad
to see why our neighboring countries Pakistan and China do not behave properly. Their attitude is
violent and aggressive. He is all the more unhappy when even Indians do not behave as brothers.
They have provincial, linguistic and communal loyalties.

Mutual tolerance is conspicuous by its absence. But the patriot is not pessimistic. He believes
that Ram Rajya will surely come based on truth, love, peace leading to universal brotherhood –
“All men are brothers, no
In India also
Gujratis, Maharastrians, Hindiwallahs

85-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Broken Wing’ ed. Edmund Gosse page 180
86-Vivekananda, ‘The Ideal of Universal’ vol. II page 38
88-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Latter Day Psalms’ collected poems, page 254
All brothers –
Though some are having funny habits
still, you tolerate me,
I tolerate you
One day Ram Rajya is surely coming” (‘The Patriot’)(89)
The line ‘Gujratis’, Maharastrians, Hindiwallah’s all brothers”. sound like the cultural unity of India emphasized in national anthem, ‘Punjab, Sindu, Gujarat, Maratha, Dravid utkal Bang”.
Kamla Das explains the element of unity in diversity with the help of the matter of speech. All human beings are equal, they speak, Every one is free to speak what ever he or she wants They should not be differt on the basis of language or mode of expressions differentiation. Language is the power of expression of mind and heart, no restriction should be put on the expression of language –
“Why not let me speak in
any language I like? The language I speak
becomes mine, its distinction its queerness’s
All mine, mine alone, it is half English half
Indian, funny perhaps, but it is honest.
It is as human as I am human” (‘An Introduction’)(90)

Jayant Mahaputra longs for experiencing the unity in diversity of Indian people, the sweetness of peace and prosperity of India. He wants to be the safe guard of poor sufferer and down trodden of his motherland. He wishes that there should be no hatred, no violence rather love should be prevailed in each and every particle of India –
“I want the flames to warm the empty heart
Of love, nor burn a city with pitiable hatred
I don’t want to sit bent over a page
to reflect in it my grief’s,
more for myself than for others
I want my government to hover
like a butterfly over a garden
not be, as it is, like a wasp or snake” (‘Random Descent) –(Another Ruined Country – 2002’)(91)
Like an ideal citizen of India, Jayant Mahaputra exposes his intention –
“I only want to renew myself
like this old river’s quiet
That has emerged victorious
over a hundred layers of religion
In the airlessness of the dead” (“Random Descent – Another Ruined Country – 2002’) (91)

In K.N Daruwalla., poem “Landscapes”, the divine presence is evoked with intensity of prayer to express that we all are the children of one God. There is no difference between me and you. All have come from and, and all have to return back to God only. This is the great logic of Indian philosophy of unity in diversity –

89- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ collected poems 1952-1988, page 238
91- Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Another Ruined country’ ‘Random Descent‘ Bhubneswar: Third Eye communication, 2005
“Goddess I am seeking shelter
From the approaching storm
I seek the cavern aspect
of your embracing form
which smothers in lap darkness
Yet lights the spiral reed
From your womb all proceed
Into you, all recede” (‘crossing choroti’ ‘Landscapes’) (92)

The last lines from ‘your womb proceed, into you all recede’ clearly explains that we all are the children of one Almighty God, the base of unity in diversity.

**Reciprocity** – It is one of the great principles of Indian culture leading to patriotism. Reciprocity means the concept of give and take. “Indian civilization is of complex origin, deriving its sources from various linguistic groups which inhabited on this land or came subsequently. These linguistic groups who came to India believed that they were going to a vast and barren land but when they reached India, they were taken by surprise and were soon so much swayed by the greatness of India that they lost their identify and ultimately got absorbed in the Aryan way of life. India assimilated all cultures with open arms. It welcomed Pathans, Afgans, Huns, French, Dutch, Mughal, Portuguese, and finally British. All of them (except the last one) were absorbed in her all embracing bosom and were made one with them. Many religions including Islam and Christianity found bed rock foundation for their growth in India and blended together with Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. The synergistic effect of this combination led to the creation of new religious canvas across the nation. Toru Dutt delivers the message of reciprocity, democracy and universal brotherhood through the following lines of her famous poem ‘Buttoo’ –

“............... what is rank or caste?
In us is honor or disgrace
not out of us” (‘Buttoo’) (93)

The composite culture of India has three main features –

1- Assimilation – capacity to absorb the elements of other cultures that come in contact.
2- Tolerance – Indian culture is never rigid and narrow in its out look. It tolerates other cultures and varities in itself.
3- Give and take – as soon as Indian culture comes in contact with a new culture, it starts the process of give and take with it. As in the words of Ravinder Nath Tagore –

“Come O Aryan and not Aryans
Hindu and Muslim
Come O English and you Christian
Come O Brahmin,
Purify your mind and clasp the hands of all
Come, O down trodden
And let vanish all burdens of your humiliation

Tarry not, but come you all
To anoint the mother
On the shore of Bharat” (‘Let the Country Awake – Geetanjali’) (94)
Sri Aurbindo teaches and preaches that only love, reciprocity, and spirituality can redeem the modern
man and bring heaven upon earth—
“And only when thou have climbed above mind
And livest in the Calm vastness of the one
Can Lone be eternal in the eternal bliss. And love divine replace the human tie” (‘Savitri’) (95)

Reciprocity is one of the basic elements of Indian philosophy and Indian culture. The
thousands different cultures have given color, beauty and variety to India. Chitrnanjan Das, one of
the greatest patriots of India stressed upon ‘reciprocity’ in his speech at Gaya, “Through out the
pages of Indian history, I find a great purpose unfolding itself. Movements after movements have
swept over this vast country, apparently creating hostile forces but in the reality stimulating the
vitality and moulding the life of the whole into one great nationality. If the Aryans and the non Aryans
met, it was for the purpose of making one people out of them Brahminism was its great indeed a
mighty unifying force. Buddhism with its protest against Brahminism served the same great historical
purpose and from Mugadha to Taxila was one great Buddhistic empire which succeeded not only
in breading the basis of Indian unity but in creating what is perhaps not less important the greater
India beyond the Himalayas and beyond the seas so much so that the sacred where we have met
may be regarded as a place of pilgrimage of millions and millions of people of Asiatic races. Then
came the Mohamedans of diverse races but with one culture which was their common heritage.
For a time it looked as if here was a disintegrating force, and enemy to the growth of Indian
nationalism but the Mohamedans made their home in India and they did as little as possible to
disturb the growth of life in villages where India really lives. This new outlook was necessary for
India and of the two streams met, it was only to fulfill them and face the destiny of Indian history.
Then come the English with their alien culture, their foreign methods, delivering a rule shock to this
growing nationality but the shock has only completed the unifying process so that the purpose of
history is practically fulfilled. The great nationality is in sight.” (96).

Gandhi Ji also asserted that reciprocity is the leading power of India’s greatness, “we can
never forget the ideas that have moved our race – the dreams of Indian people through the ages,
the wisdom of the ancients, the buoyant energy and love of life and nature of our forefathers, their
spirit of curiosity and mental adventure, the daring of their thought, their splendid achievement in
literature art and culture, their love of truth and beauty and freedom, the basic values that they have
set up, their understanding of life, mysterious ways, their capacity to absorb other people and their
cultural accomplishment, to synthesize them and develop a varied and mixed culture, nor can we
forget the myriad experience which have built up our race and lie embedded in one sub conscious
minds we will never forget them or cease to take pride in that noble heritage of ours”. (97). The
reciprocity dwells in the hearts of Indians based on love, beauty and truth. Their love is never selfish
rather the feelings of sacrifice are always there. Sarojini Naidu who herself was a great patriot of
India, wishes to serve her country and country people through her songs.

Tis mine is to carry the banner of song

Geetanjali’ ed. S K Paul, Delhi: Sarup and Sons, 2006
page 131
96-Maxmiller, ‘Cultural Continuation’ quoted from ‘The Discovery of India’ page 88
97-Quoted from ‘The Discovery of India’ page 123
The solace of faith to the lips that falter
The succour of hope to the hands that fail
The tidings of joy when peace shall triumph
when truth shall conquer and love prevails” (‘The Fairy Isle of Jangira’) (98)

In fact, the attitude of catholicity and liberal adjustment to other’s creeds and opinions is as essential characteristic of Indian culture. Indian culture makes man realize the presence of the Divine soul rolling through all thinking things and all objects of all thoughts. It teaches therefore, ‘charity for all, malice towards none’, as God himself is present everywhere and in everyone. That is why Indians are always loving, sympathetic and tolerant and they have a sense of humility when approaching to different conceptions and representations – Nissim Ezekiel present this liberal attitude of love, reciprocity and humility of Indians through following lines –

“If you are coming again this side by chance
visit please my humble residence also”…. (The Professor)(99)

“You are going?
But you will visit again
any time anybody” (The Patriot) (100)

“All are welcome, whatever caste” (Irani Restaurant Instructions)(101)

Whatever the political, linguistic, racial and religious difference between the various parts of the country may be, one never fails to find a common culture flourishing in India from east to west, from north to south, and that is the culture of being Indian, the culture of catholicity, the culture of synthesis. It is the thread of love that binds all Indians together as well as who ever comes to this heavenly abode. Indians welcome all with open arms to share peace, happiness and security. Indian’s generosity and goodness finds expression in Kamla Das’s ‘The Descendants’ –

“We are too sentimental
for our own
good” (The Descendants) (102)

Indians wish goodness not only for themselves but also for others. Indian culture has never been indifferent to foreign elements rather it has best in the culture with which it came in contact. There was much give and take between the Aryans and Dravidians and than the Greeks and the Indians, India welcomed Christianity and absorbed its best elements into its own culture, in medieval times, made its own all that was best in Islamic culture although Islam came to India as a very hostile creed. And now in modern times the process of reciprocity is still going on, slowly and gradually, Indian culture is absorbing all that is best in scientific civilization of the west without losing any of its vital elements of spirituality.

Some great patriots - India has produced great prophets, patriots and warriors time to time to create and preserve the most, ancient, the most glorious culture of India. Indian history is filled with the heroic deeds of great heroes and heroines who not only gave a new awakening to India but also showed a new life and light to the whole world through their thoughts, words and deeds. Toru Dutt remains the first great Indo English poet to reveal the soul of India through the medium of

100- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ collected poems 1952-1988, page 238
102 - Kamla Das : The Descendant, Calcutta writer workshop 1967 page 04
English. Her poetry ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ beautifully presents her deep faith in Indian Value and Indian philosophy. Like a true patriot of India, Toru Dutt’s aim of life is not just to waste life in trifles which she speaks through the mouth of Savitri—

“In Maya’s network frail and fair
Is not my aim” (Savitri)(103)

Rather she presents the aim of every Indian through the firm declaration of Dhruva—

“I shall try
The highest good, the loftiest place to win
which the whole world deems priceless and desire less” (Dhruva)(104)

Patriot is one who thinks good for his country and countrymen Toru Dutt served her beloved country India through her poetic genius showing her deep concern in Hindu conception of Duty considered in its broadest sense and to seek creative roots in the glorious past of India not only for herself but for others of her generation. Ravinder Nath Tagore was the cultural ambassador of India who visited the countries of the east and west and raised India’s image where ever he went. Patriotism was soaked into his blood. He was as great scholar as great patriot.

Tagore took active part in ‘Swadeshi Movement’. He lectured, and organized processions and toured extensively. He asked people to reform villages, to eradicate social evils, and to arouse mass consciousness. His poetry mainly deals with the glory and greatness of ancient Indian culture and philosophy. He prays to God—

“Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service” (105) (Geetanjali\36)

Because his vision of Independent free country is free from all evil practices, dogmas and superstitious. A free India where fearlessness would be the characteristic of the people and spiritual freedom with peace, and unity and where equality will reign supreme—

“Where the mind is without fear and the head is hold high,
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls,
Where words come out from the depth of truth,
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection,
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreamy desert sand of dead habits,
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening thought and action,
Into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake” (Let My Country Awake – Geetanjali\35)(106)

The yogi poet Sri Aurbindo remains one of the greatest patriot and the truest hero of India whose poetry is an inspiration and instruction having the way towards ‘satyam shivam sundaram’. He was drawn to the centre of revolutionary politics in Bengal in 1905 and during the partition of Bengal, he directly engaged himself in the struggle for national freedom. Sri Aurbindo was the first politician to stand openly for complete and absolute independence ‘Pooran Swaraj’ as the aim of political action in India. He also wrote several articles strongly advocating the use of swadeshi

104-Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 116
105-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem\36 ‘This is my Prayer to Thee’ page 166
106-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 35 ‘Where the Mind is Without Fear’ page 162
goods, boycott of foreign articles, non cooperation, national education and many others. He was a revolutionary of the extreme kind. Sri Aurbindo and his companions thought to have direct fight and arms confrontation with the British. When he was a student, he used to deliver fiery and revolutionary speeches at the meetings known as ‘Indian Majlis’. He joined congress in 1907 and was arrested in 1908 in connection with Alipore Bomb case, and then freed. He also worked as the editor of ‘Bande Matram’. During the struggle, many times he was tried and imprisoned. It was during his stay in jail, he felt the strong pull of spiritual life. Later on, he turned into spiritual and set up a big ashram at Pondichery. Freedom came on the birthday of Sri Aurbindo. As a revolutionary, he is honoured in India not only for his nationalist fervour, but also as a sage and seer, mystic and philosopher, The world admires him for his divine vision. The famous poem ‘Baji Probhou’ was written soon after Sri Aurbindo is coming to Calcutta in which he glorifies the brave and patriotic efforts of the great Maratha warrior, Baji Probhou, who to cover Shivaji’s retreat held a mountain pass for two hours with a small company of men against twelve thousands enemy soldiers. He made Baji Probhou say that the brave soldiers would sacrifice their lives gladly for the sake of their country’s freedom.

“Then Baji first broke silence, ‘Lo, the surge!
that was but spray of death, we first repelled
chosen of Shivaji, Bhavani’s swords,
for you the gods prepare We die indeed,
But let us die with the high-voiced assent
of heaven to our country’s claim enforced
to freedom” (Baji Probhou) (107)

Death can deter the brave patriot from their noble pursuit of attaining freedom. In the twilight Baji Probhou exhorted his countrymen –

“Make iron of your souls
Yet if Bhavani wills, strength and the sword
can stay our nation’s future from o’erthrow
till victory with Shivaji return” (‘Baji Probhou’)(107)

The lines show the deep patriotism not only of Baji Probhou but also of Sri Aurbindo. Written during the struggle for Independence, this poem was really a call to Indians to emulate the noble example of Baji Probhou so that they could withstand the suppression of a tyrannical power and hold arms in their hands to liberate the motherland from its clutches.

Sarojini Naidu lived and created in those stirring times when India was passing through the throes of her struggle for freedom. It was the age of patriots and freedom fighters. Patriotism was in the air and Sarojini could not remain unaffected by the spirit of time She took active part in every important political activity – the ‘Montague Chelmsford Reform’, ‘Khilafat Movement’ the public agitation against the Row I left Bill, the ‘Civil Disobedience Movement’, ‘Sabarmati Pact’, ‘Non co-operative Movement’, ‘Quit India Movement’ etc. She toured widely in the country stirring up the youths, women, and workers to join the struggle for freedom. Her patriotic speeches and poetry during the struggle and her great efforts for education of women, equality of men and women’s franchise, widow remarriage, Hindu Muslim unity were unparalleled. Her poetic collection ‘The Golden Threshold’, ‘The Bird of Time’, ‘The Broken Wing’, and ‘The Feather of Dawn’ are like jewels of patriotic zeal –

“O young through all thy immemorial years!
Rise mother rise, regenerate from thy gloom,
And like a bride high mated with the spheres
Beget new glories from thine ageless womb
The nations that in fettered darkness weep,
Crave thee to lead them where great morning break
Mother, o mother wherefore dost thou sleep?
Arise and answer for thy children sake!” ‘To India’ (108)

“Are we not thine, o Beloved, to inherit
The manifold pride and power of thy spirit?
Lo! we would thrill the high stars with thy story
And set thee again in the far front of glory” (‘Awake’) (109)

It is a kind of patriotism of which any nation can be proud of. It is no only the voice of Sarojini, but of all Indians. It is an really a pure, abiding, deep love of Indians, which ultimately leads to the beauty of truth. During the struggle for Independence, Sarojini Naidu came in close contact with great political leaders who sacrificed their lives to make India free. In her poem ‘Memorial Verses’ Sarojini pays a humble tribute to Gokhale, the great saint and soldier of India. India will remain always indebted to him for his selfless devotion, unfinished service and sacrifice in the cause of India’s unity –

“Heroic heart! Lost hope of all our days
Need’st thou the homage of our love or praise
Lo, let the mournful millions round thy pyre
Kindle their souls with consecrated fire
caught from the brave torch fallen from thy hand,
To succour and serve our suffering land” (‘Memorial verses Gokhle’) (110)

Gokhale was a true moderate who wanted the freedom of India not as an extremist, not in a stormy manner but through calm and thoughtful way believing that “best sources can only lead to best aim. He was the real symbol of unity, the soldier of our national righteousness. Countless of Indians mourned his death and derived inspiration from his dedicated life. It is Sarojini’s message to all Indians that to follow his ideals and carry on his mission. Sarojini addresses to the departed soul of Gokhale –

“Your ashes lie in old Prayag, but we
find in your vision love’s perpetual flame, heirs of your spirit Immortality
of adoration lit in freedom’s name
rekindling all our dream of liberty” (‘In Gokhale Garden’) (111)

Along with Gokhale, another prominent political figure and colleague of Sarojini Naidu, was Lok Manya Tilak who opposed the moderate policy of reform through peaceful agitation and declared that the English had conquered India with force so they have to be expelled by the use of force and strong political pressure. He inspired by his clarion call ‘freedom in my birth right, and I will attain it’. He started the celebration of ‘Shivaji festival’, and ‘Ganapati festival’ to instill a new spirit of bravery and patriotism into the Indian masses. He also started two well known papers the ‘Kesari’ and the ‘Maratha’ to teach people to be courageous, self reliant and selfless fighters for freedom of their

country. Many times he was sent to jail. After freed from jail, he started ‘Home Rule Agitation’. His thoughts and pen was always against the oppressive actions of British government. Because of his selfless patriotism and devoted service, he was given the title ‘Lokmanya’. Sarojini pays a glowing tribute to the departed soul of this great freedom fighter, Tilak, the maker of Modern India —

“Your proud immortal deeds irradiate
The darkness of our land ………
Your ashes are our children’s heritage
And all the epic rhythms of sea
chant your triumphant and undying name” (‘Lokmanya Tilak’)(112)

—

Sarojini’s appreciation goes at its height when she pays her heart felt tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, the father of nation, who used truth and non violence as weapons to make India free, Gandhiji’s life history shows that he was really a saint among the politicians, a great intellectual yet very mystical. He gave his all for India’s freedom and for consoling and comforting the suffering humanity Sarojini Naidu dedicates the most humble words to the humble soul of Mahatma Gandhi —

“O mystic lotus, sacred and sublime
In myriad – petalled grace inviolate
supreme o’er transient storms of tragic fate
deep rooted in the waters of all time” (‘The Lotus’)(113)

The symbolical reference of lotus eulogizes the noble personality and sublime character of Gandhi. Infact Gandhi ji was mysterious, a man of God who showed India and the whole world, the power of truth and non violence. It is a miracle of miracles that great country like India got freedom through Gandhism and without firing a single shot, without any war or blood. He wanted to be free India like this, “I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose making they have an effective voice, an India in which there shall be no high class people, an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony. There can be no room in such India for the curse of untouchability or the course of intoxicating drinks and drugs. Women will enjoy the same rights as men. This is the India of my dream”. (114)

Gandhi ji dreamed of Ram Rajya. He wanted to bring the kingdom of heaven on earth. His book ‘My Experiment with Truth’ gives full details of his works. During his stay at South Africa, he started ‘Satyagrah’ for securing the rights of India in South Africa. After returning back to India, he joined Indian National Congress. He threw himself with heart and soul into India’s struggle for freedom. “Non – co-operation movement” in 1920, “Civil Disobedience Movement” in 1930, and then at last “Quit India Movement” in 1942 show Gandhian era in the history of India. Gandhism brought a new faith in Sarojini’s life and she was totally involved in the national struggle for Independence. Sarojini’s symbolical representation of Gandhi as a ‘Mystic Lotus’ arouses a feeling of deep regard and reverence for Gandhi ji. As Lotus is pure, deep rooted in the waters of all time remaining supreme over transient storm of tragic fate in the same manner Gandhi and Gandhi’s life was pure in midst of worldly affairs. A vast of difficulties came in Gandhi’s life, from British

113-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Broken Wing’ ed. Edmund Gosse page 167
government, and their administration machinery, many times he was insulted, arrested and imprisoned British government strained every nerve to harass him 'to spoil his radiant loveliness' and to suck the sap of inner joy dwelling in his glorious heart. According to Sarojini –

“What legions loosed from many a far off time
of wild bee hordes with lips insatiate,
And hungry winds with winds of hope or hate,
have thronged and pressed round thy miraculous prime
The midmost rapture of thy glorious heart” ('The Lotus')(115)

But no obstacle, no abuse, no persecution could stop Gandhi to achieve his aim. The work of the father of the nation was done. He had got freedom for India. On 15th August 1947, When India became free, Gandhi was still working for Hindu Muslim unity. for the establishment of peace in Bihar, Bengal, Delhi and Calcutta, He toured on foot from village to village and carried the message of love and peace to the whole country even he went on a fast unto death to establish peace and harmony all around. Gandhi was no ordinary man. The great scientist once said, “People in future will refuse to believe that a real Gandhi ever lived in flesh and blood”. (116)

Infact, Gandhi was an apostle of peace and non violence, a leader of the masses, leader of the congress, friends of untouchables rather friend of all the enemy of none. That is the reason; Sarojini Naidu idealizes the immortal soul of Gandhi –

“But who could win thy secret, who attain
Thine ageless beauty born of Brahma’s breath
Or pluck thine immortality, who art
Co-eval with the lords of life and Death”. (117) ('The Lotus')

So long as India lives and Indian freedom lasts, the name of Gandhi will be enshrined in the heart of every Indian. The secret of Gandhi ji’s greatness is out of reach through words and concepts but Sarojini’s attempt of parallelism between the ‘lotus’ and the Mahatma Gandhi is packed with admiration. Any one who does good for the country is a patriot may be a freedom fighter, politician, leader, soldier, scientist, artist, astronaut, writer, poet, player, film maker, sportsman, singer, doctor, engineer, farmer, businessman, industrialist or any common person. The story of India’s patriot does not end with India’s struggle for independence but it continues for ever and ever. But it is sad to notice that on one hand the great scientist, astronauts, industrialists, soldiers and sports men have taken India at the height of appreciation and achievement, on other hand under the sway of money and materialism, fashions and modernization, some Indians have lost faith in the splendid glory of India and Indianess. Post independent poets get surprised why corruption is spreading day by day in India? Why the Indian values are at loss? Why Indians have forgotten their glorious past? And the sacrifice of their freedom fighters? Why Indians are not following Mahatma Gandhi and his great philosophy of peace and non violence. Nissim Ezekiel comments –

“I am standing for peace and non violence
Why world is fighting fighting
Why all people of world

115-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Broken Wing’ ed. Edmund Gosse page 167
Are not following Mahatma Gandhi
I am simply not understanding

Ancient Indian wisdom is 100% correct
I should say even 200% correct
But modern generation is neglecting
Too much going for fashion and foreign thing” ‘The Patriot’(118)

The line ‘why all people of world, are not following Mahatma Gandhi’ is dedicated to Gandhian philosophy of non violence. The credit of India’s freedom goes to Mahatma Gandhi who conquered the world through love and proved that atomic (spiritual) power is greater than the atomic power. Nissim Ezekiel wants to convey the message that not only Indians, but all the peoples of the world should follow the principles of peace and non violence preached by Gandhi then only life will be worth living. The political son of Mahatma Gandhi, the great patriot Jawahar Lal Nehru was India’s most accomplished man. Nehru was much influenced by Gandhian thoughts and ways. He participated in the struggle for independence with full devotion and declared complete independence as the ultimate goal of the congress. When India won freedom in 1947, Pandit Nehru became the first prime minister of India and served the post till his death in 1964. India made all round progress under his able leadership and guidance. Five years plans, the River valley project, the chain of steel factories, the Research Laborites all sprang up under his prime ministership. Kamla Das mentions the name of Jawahar Nehru as something very great –
“I don’t know politics but if I know the names
Of those in power, and can repeat them like
Days of week or names of months, beginning with Nehru” (119) (‘An Introduction’)

Jayant Mahapatra acknowledges Gandhi’s service and sacrifice in attaining independence of India but a sense of despair overwhelms him and he asks why Indians have forgotten Gandhi’s struggle –
“Ah love, we had read so much
About love, we had read so much
About you, about freedom was every thing you did
Gandhi ji, only an act you put on for posterity?
With India, our land, barely worth roping” (120) (‘Dispossessed Nests 44’)

Jayant Mahapatra’s recent poem, ‘Excerpts for Requiem’ (A poem on Gandhi) begins with a statement –
“You became the red earth
that a perfect, constant gravity
achieved through the aeons” (121) (‘Excerpts for Requiem’)
And closes with the glorification of Ahimsa, Gandhi’s principled approach to protest against the unjust persons and injustice in the colonial era, under the British Imperialism –

“It is a world in itself
This ahimsa –
with is mysterious shadows
lurking under ancient places
that assumes the clear, self – sustaining light of suns,
a redefinition of beauty” (‘Excerpts for Requiem’)(121)

Here, Mahapatra tries to create a contemporary myth out of Gandhi ji and wants to convince that Gandhi has become a living myth suggesting non-violence, truth and righteousness. Mahapatra further says that Gandhi has become a living legend for every Indian, a synonym for justice and honesty. Even when people disagree with him or his principles, they are conscious of his presence. Mahapatra presents the unseen presence of Gandhi in every Indian mind –

“In me
Your body opens slowly
as if you have been bound tight all your life,
as if flesh could see
what the mind believes is true (‘Excerpts for Requiem’)(121)

The second part of Jayant Mahapatra’s Bare Face is a long poem of twenty sections “Requiem with a Prologue”. The poem reflects on the contemporary India takes us back to its history, also to Gandhi’s assination – Mahapatra discovers in Gandhi ji last words “He Ram” the best of all poems –

“He Ram
In these two words
was the briefest of silences?
A touch of silence of immensity” (‘Requiem – Bare Faces’) (122)

Gandhi’s Last words ‘He Ram’ convinces that meditation upon Ram Nam leads to Liberation, all peace and pleasure lies in meditation upon shabad, the mantra Ram Ram, Gandhi’s ‘He Ram’ also glorifies Gandhi’s full faith and devotion in meditating upon ‘Ram Ram’ the greatest of great mantra showing the supremacy of Almighty God. Sarojini Naidu’s words for Gandhiji’s assination “The most poignant and memorable is the last picture of him walking to his prayers at the sunset hour on 30th Jan 1948, translated in a tragic instant of martyrdom from mortality to immorality. The Ganga and Yamuna have been through out the ages, the classic rivers that have taken into their bosom the ashes of many millions of men and women who sough final absolution in the united waters. But never in the history of India have the Ganga and the Yamuna received the ashes so glorious a human being whose life and death are an imperishable example”. (123)

So long as India lives and India’s freedom lasts, the name of Gandhi will be enshrined in the heart of every Indian. Gandhi is dead, long live Gandhi’s ideology. Jayant Mahapatra feels sad and comes down heavily on those who wrongly criticize Gandhi and pay only lip service on him. He says,

“Today the voice that points a finger at you,
floats over the breath of discarded ideals,
The breath of dead flowers day after day at Rajghat” (‘Requiem – Bare Faces’) (124)

Indeed, Gandhi ji was a rare human being. He was great, his thoughts were great and his works were great. The pre independence poets glorify his rare virtues where as post independence poets feel dejected that why Indians have forgotten the service and sacrifice of Gandhi and other freedom fighters.

122-Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Bare Faces’ Kerala: D C Books 2000 page 64
123-Quoted from the speeches and writings of Sarojini Naidu page 230
124-Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Bare Faces’ Kerala: D C Books 2000 page 64
FIFTH CHAPTER

INDIAN VALUES
India is a land upholding the great values of truth, love, peace. Truth is the soul of India, love is language and non violence (peace) is its message, the message of peaceful coexistence – to live and let other live and it is this message which guarantees the security, health and happiness of humanity. Out of the glorious values of love, truth and non violence, India creates a new outlook on life, a new ideology and new background which it starts a ceaseless struggle against the modern materialistic age. It shows to the world that by the methods of love, truth and peace, the worst evils of the world can be remedied, the greatest difficulties can be overcome and a nation chained and crushed by a strong imperialist power can be emancipated. India lives through its values. The constant emphasis on its values is the essential characteristic which distinguishes Indian culture from the other modern scientific cultures of the west. The values of India are not simple values but they are the eternal human values found in eternal Vedas. The Vedas are the unique repository of Indian values and Indian knowledge. Indian values of the Vedic age, of the age of Upanishad, of the philosophical system, of the Mahabharata, of the Ramayana, of the smirities, of the Puranas, of the Geeta, of Guru Granth Sahib, of medieval saints, of the modern reformers are the same in spirit yet very different in form. Their super structure may change from time to time but their inner contents remain constant and enduring from time immemorial. Indians have called their values by the name of human values “manav mulyas” – to suit the needs of every human being irrespective of age, sex, colour or race. As such they have a universal appeal. Without any attempt at conversion, people are converted to them. History has not been able to trace their beginning, hence, they are taken in India as beginning less (anadi), they have always existed in time and show no sign of decay or death hence they are said to be as eternal values – “Santana Mulayas”. It is for this reason that Indian values have retained their true spirit through shocks of centuries, hundred of foreign invasion and thousands of social and political upheavals. These values aim at producing moral character of a human being as well as intellectual sweetness of temper leading to spiritual introspection –

**Truth** – The most elevated and contemplated value of India is truth. Truth simply means ‘the power of spiritual light, the vast region of the invisible where the light of physical sense is too weak to reach. When there is truth, there is no fault at all rather there is purity, sincerity and righteousness. Truth is actually Godliness. The one, who always speaks truths, performs his duties truthfully and meditates upon the Name of God with truthful devotion, reaches to the goal of Godliness, which is the ultimate aim of every human life, which is the true knowledge to achieve. Toru Dutt, through the words of ‘Prahlad’ explains this true and ultimate knowledge –

“That is true knowledge, which can make us mortal saint like, holy, pure” (‘Prahlad’) (1)

The path of truth is path of tapasaya because a truthful person aspires for goodness through the ideal of sacrifice and self renunciation. Like Raja Haireshchandra, King Yudhisthra, Ashoka, Dadhichi who sacrificed their all to stick on the path of truthful living. No one can tread upon the path of truth with the help of material possession but through the excellences of moral ideals. Truth implies sincerely of heart, sacrifice, devotion to high ideals, and work for the benefit of humanity. A truthful man is the noblest creature of God, because God is always with him to love, to protect, to guide. People search for God in temples. They sit in meditation with closed eyes and wait for divine inspiration but they do not know that God lives

in the temple of man’s pure and truthful heart To cultivate virtues and realize the truth in soul is the real aim of human life otherwise the life is useless. Toru Dutt speaks of it –
“For life is a shadow vain
until the utmost goal we reach,
To which the soul points” (‘Buttoo’) (2)

“Virtue should be the aim and end
of every life, all else is vain
Duty should be its dearest friend
If higher life it would attain” (‘Savitri’) (3)

“bolo sach pachhno andar” means ‘speak the truth and realize God within’. ‘1\1026’ (4)

The philosophy of Guru Granth Sahib lies in “sach orei sabh ko, upar sach achar” means ‘All efforts to gain truth, the true conduct is highest”. Truth is the real root of all virtues rather all virtues originate from truthful living. Truth purifies the soul from ills and evils and leads to the light of true religion.

A truthful person is a ‘mahamanav’ in the sense that where there is truth, the evils of lies, stealing, dishonesty and corruption can not stay back. Treading upon the path of truth is not an easy task because selfish interest of greed and attachment pull the person down but the lover of truth go through all the thick and thin, toils and failures. Truth wins at the end, ‘Satyamev jayate’. It the virtue of truth that makes one to realize Godliness, the highest goal of human life – In Toru Dutt’s poem, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’, Dhruva declares this goal with unchangable resolve –

“I shall try, The highest good, the loftiest place to win
which the whole world deems priceless and desires” ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ (5)

Savitri’s encounter with death is really the struggle between the forces of good and the evil as depicted in the Ramayana. Savitri shows the victory of Truth (true love) and prophesies the reign of truth on earth –
“And truth shall be a sun on nature’s head
And truth shall be the guide on nature’s steps
And truth shall gaze out of her nether deeps” (‘Savitri)(6)

2- Toru Dutt, ‘Buttoo’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 116
3- Toru Dutt, ‘Savitri’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 57
4- Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 1026
5- Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ page116
6- Sri Aurobindo, (‘Savitri’) Book XI canto I page 7097- Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 01
Every thing exist because of Truth may be the shine of sun, the breath of beings, flame of fire or blow of wind, because Truth is God and God is Truth. Nothing is greater than Truth. Guru Granth Sahib says, ‘adi sach jugad sach, hai bhi sach, nanak hosé bhi sach’, ‘Truth (God) was in the beginning, the Truth (God) was in the primal age, the Truth is now also, the Truth will also be in the future”. (7)

The Bhagavad-Gita also places ‘Truth’ at the highest when describing the virtues of God like person. “Non violence, truth, freedom from anger, renunciation, tranquility, aversion to fault finding, compassion to living beings, freedom from covetousness, gentleness, modesty and steadiness (absence of fickleness). (2/XVI) (8)

The one who always speaks truth, performs his duties truthfully, and follows the principles of truth in every phase, he shines like sun, and he is the saint in true sense. His thoughts are pure, his words are pure, and his deeds are pure. No evil can touch him Above all false people have no guts to stand in front of him and face his purity and truth. Sri Aurobindo says –

“It trembles at its naked power of truth” (‘Savitri’) (9)

Though means permanent purity, permanent peace and pleasure. When there is truth, there is no question of insufficiency and inadequacy. The virtue which was permanent in past, permanent in present and will be permanent in future is truth and truth only. Sarojini Naidu, with the help of her poem ‘Song of Dream”, conveys all the three basic values of India – truth, love and peace – ‘Satyam Sivam Sundaram’ as beauty of nature is the consummate beauty of God –

“All spirits of Truth were the birds that sang,
All spirits of Love were the stars that glowed
All spirits of peace were the streams that flowed” ‘Song of Dream’ (10)

Through modern Indian English poets don’t discuss too much about the Indian values but they emphasize the degradation of Indian values. They feel sad why Indians have forgotten the glory of their ancient values of truth, love and peace? Why there is falsehood, corruption and violence in every phase of life? Jayant Mahapatra feels disturbed by senseless violence and corruption that has become part of our daily routine –

“Men here build cities
cities work their way
Into a maze of stories
From where man’s mind
Fails to see ahead..” (‘March’) ‘Shadow Space 81’ (11)

7- Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 01
8-The Bhagavad-Gita XVI/2 page 334
9-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book X canto 4 page 665
The degenerating and decaying condition, devoid of human values is described—
“It is painful still to bear witness to what we are” (‘Bazar Scene’) ‘Shadow Space’ (12)

Mahapatra’s observes that the significance of the past and the sacrifice of our ancestors are lost from us. We have become valueless. The state of affairs makes Mahapatra gloomy and leads to self questioning—
“And I ask myself will life ever be the same again” (‘Red Roses for Gandhi’) ‘A whiteness of Bone (13)

This only line is quite enough to reflect Mahapatra’s sense of patriotism and awareness of contemporary situations. Mahapatra wishes that India is great and great are Indian values. So again there must be truth, love, peace, in the society. He is conscious of keeping the glorious image of the country alive and wants that India should maintain. its values of truth and love, impartiality and objectivity—
“This country lives on its image” ‘The Whiteness of Bones’ (‘Another Love Poem’) (14)

Love – If the truth is the soul of India, love is its heart. The language of India is love, the culture of India is love, and even the philosophy of India is love. Love is the fundamental value of India on which the whole edifice of Indianness is built. Love and India are synonyms. We can not imagine India without love. Infact Love is the most holy passion, the most beautiful thing prevailing in the universe. Love is that supreme power which God has blessed to all his creatures for the welfare for whole humanity. All religion lies in love as religion simply means love to God and to all his creatures. Nothing is impossible for them who have loving heart and loving soul. Toru Dutt describes the supreme power of love—
“Not in seclusion, not apart from all
Not in a place elected for its peace
But in the heart and bustle of his world
Mid sorrow, sickness, suffering and sin
Must he still labour with a loving soul
Who strives to enter through the narrow gate” (‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’) (15)

The liners clearly express that the passion of love is the only support to help a human being to tread upon the path of religion and spiritualism. God can be seen through the eyes of love only. Nothing remains to be learned if one has learned to love. No knowledge, no sensation, no language, no experience is superior to love. Such a superior love is love to God. God is our creator, God is our sustainer. He has blessed us with such a precious human life. He has given us every thing that we have. He loves us and cares for us so it is our first and for most duty to love Him, to be devoted to Him. We have to purify our soul by remembering Him, by

12-Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Bazar Scene’ ‘Shadow Scene’ page 21
14-Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Another Love Poem’ ‘A Whiteness of Bone’ page 76
15-Toru Dutt, ‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legend of Hindustan’ page 107
meditating upon His Name. Indians live under the concept of loving God. Toru Dutt presents this concept –

“We, who happier, live
under the holiest dispensation, know
That God is love” (‘The Ascetic and the Hind’) (16)

Wondrous is the strength of love. Love fills the personality with all happiness, and charm. When the flower of love blooms, the happiness spreads all around making the atmosphere full of joy. Toru Dutt presents the magical effects of love in Savitri’s life –

“She went away
Leaving her virgin heart behind
And richer for the loss. A ray,
Shot down from heaven, appeared to tinge
All objects with supernal light,
The thatches had a rainbow fringe,
The cornfields looked more green and bright” (‘Savitri’) (17)

Here, Toru Dutt, full of emotions, takes love’s ethereal reals as her own. She has described how the fountain of love springs out a new within a blighted heart. She knows the rapidity of love – as swift as a lighting flash. She sings that when the ‘heart rose’ opens, it can never shut. So when there is love, there is heavenly pleasure, as love is eternal spring, sunshine and cheerfulness. Indeed, love is the spark of divine Here, in India, every relation is bounded with the thread of love may be human to human, human to animal, human to birds, and even human to nature. Toru Dutt descries the true loving relationship of a human to animal through her beautiful poem ‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’. It is a story of king Bharat who embraces the life of an ascetic and retires from politics and goes out to the forest for fasts and vigils. But the change comes gradually over his soul because of the love of little fawn he has rescued from the death, weaves him with so much devotion that he can think of nothing else and even years after when his death is approaching. Bharat’s mind is filled with anguish at leaving his little favourite fawn and with nothing else –

“To it devoted was his last, last thought
Reckless of present and of future both!” (18)

Toru Dutt explains that God is not pleased with our artificial rituals and penance but it is the love that is counted in His court, the love to all God’s creatures, the loving service to all humanity to all living creatures –

“Know that God is love, and not to be adored
Be a devotion born of stoic pride
Or with ascetic rites or penance hard
But with a love, in character akin” (‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’) (19)

16- Toru Dutt, ‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legend of Hindustan’ page 109
17-Toru Dutt, ‘Savitri’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 46
18-Toru Dutt, ‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 108
19-Toru Dutt, ‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’ ‘Ancient Ballads and the Legend of Hindustan’ page 110
Sikhism firmly preaches ‘Jin prem kiyo, tin hi Prabh piyo’. “Those who love God, realize Him”. But where is God? God is present in every creature in form of soul. So loving to His creatures is loving to God.

Ravinder Nath Tagore believes that love is ever deathless and changeless as it gives us immortality and youth. In his words, 'where do we find the touch of immorality in things mortal? Where there is love. It is love that casts the shadow of the infinite and keeps the old perpetually young and does not acknowledge death”. Tagore expresses that when there is love, there is always joy, goodness charm and ecstasy. He explains the peculiar nature of love’s gift –

“For love’s gift is shy, it never tells
Its name, it flits across the shade, spreading a shiver of joy along the dust”. (‘Lover’s Gift and Crossing’) (20)

Tagore’s Geetanjali is offering of songs to God with love and devotion. It gives the universal message that God can be realized in this very life if we love to God and His creatures with pure heart--

“I am only waiting for love to give myself up at last into His hands” (‘17\Geetanjali’) (21)

“In one salutation to thee, my God, let all my senss spread out and touch this world at thy feet” (‘103\Geetanjali’) (22)

It is the love to God that makes the soul pure from all ills and evils and causes to feel God within the state of Sat Chit ananda, the state of Anhadnaad, the state of liberation. Tagore expresses this mystical experience of love that complete dedication to God has made him one with and inseparable from Him. It has rendered his musical and effusive-

“When all the strings of my life will be tuned My Master, then at every touch of thine will come out the magic of love” (‘Stray Birds’) 81’ (23)

Love is the keyword of Sri Aurobindo’s Savitri. He presents the concept that it is only through love, the symbol of divine, that the entire life of mankind can be transformed. He sings that love is the embodiment of eternal in time which carries with it the stamp of immorality –

“Eternity drew close disguised as love
And laid its hands upon the body of time” (‘Savitri Book II canto 9’) (24)

21-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem no 17 ‘I am Only Waiting for Love to Give’
22- Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 13 ‘One Salutation to Thee’ page 405
“We must not cease to live upon earth
For love is the bright link, twist earth and heaven
Love is the full transcendent angel here,
Love is man’s lien on the Absolute” (‘Savitri Book X canto 3’) (25)

No other poet has given such great thoughts on the universal virtue of love as Sri Aurobindo does. His epic ‘Savitri’ is all about love. There is no doubt that love is the unifying force. Love is a link between man to God, man to man, man to nature, and man to animals and birds and so on. It is love that creates all bonding, all relations, all creations. In man woman relationship, love works as a magic. The legendary heroine of Sri Aurobindo’s epic Savitri is the symbol of immortal love.

Savitri is the victory of love over death. After the death of Satyavan, Savitri does not weep, The Story of does not tremble rather follow the God of death who takes away the life of her husband Satyavan. When God of death asks Savitri to forget Satyavan since he is dead and warns Savitri against the transience of life, love and earthly beings by saying that dead can not come back, and love is just a desire of flesh, Savitri vehemently argues -
“My love is not a hunger of the heart
My love is not craving of the flesh,
It came to one from God to God it returns” (‘Savitri Book X canto 3’) (26)

Savitri firmly asserts that her love for Satyavan is stronger than the bonds of fate –
“Love is the far transcendent’s angel here,
Love is man’s lien on the Absolute” ‘Savitri Book X canto 3’ (27)

And it is because of her true, sincere and unchanging love, she wins back Satyavan’s life at last. Infact, love is a mystery in an Indian woman’s life for her; love is not love which alters with alterations. For an Indian woman, love is in the deepest sense. It is a spiritual need, the love which brings peace, richness and fulfillment, the love which leads to completeness. Sarojini Naidu beautifully presents the sensitiveness of an Indian woman who can devote anything to enjoy the bliss of such complete love because for her, the consummation of love is complete self surrender –
“Were beauty mine, beloved, I would bring it
Like a rare blossom to love’s glowing shrine
Were dear youth mine, beloved I would fling it
Like a rich pearl into love’s lustrous wine
Were greatness mine, beloved, I would offer
Such radiant gifts of glory and of fame,
Like camphor and like curds to pour and prefer
Before love’s bright and sacrificial flame” (‘The Offering’) (28)

25-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book X canto 3 page 633
26-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book X canto 3 page 642
27-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book X canto 3 page 633
It clarifies that love does not thrive on beauty or youth, glory or fame, in love, humility is pride, lowliness is the highest exaltation and selfless service has its own reward. According to Sarojini, an Indian woman’s soul always atones for her lover’s passions and fears, in order to save him, this is perhaps the highest degree of perfection of human love –

“Why need you sad penance or pardon or prayer
For life’s passion and folly and fear?
My soul be your living atonement, o love
In the flame of immutable years” ‘The Lute Song’ (29)

Love is the most inspiring source in an Indian woman’s life. She can devote anything for this dynamic force of love. Sarojini Naidu expresses the changeless and undying love of an Indian woman who is prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of love –

“Wherever the way you tread,
A carpet of ageless beauty
Is my heart, for your feet outspread” (‘Immutable’) (30)

True love is a highest kind of devotion. Sarojini indicates that how the sincere love of an Indian woman may spiritualize the soul which communes with divinity directly in consequences –

“…..Since unto my heart you bring
The very vision of God’s dwelling place” ‘The Illusion of Love’ (31)

The modern poet Nissim Ezekiel presents the idea that it is love and humanity which are the responsible forces to decide our fate. In the beginning of the poem ‘Counsel’ of ‘Latter Day Psalms’, the poet observes –

“Love is more concerned about your fate
than your love ever been” (‘Counsel’) (32)

Ezekiel frankly exposes the discards and quarrels of married life but hopes that all this can be redeemed ‘by a mode of love expanding to a way of life, he wishes to attain peace, love and harmony in married life and prays for achieving fidelity -

“Teach us, love, above all things fidelity to music
Sharpen our responses to the colours of creation
Lead us unreceptively to what comes after passion
And let us die, love, as though, we chose to for a reason” ‘To a Certain Lady’ (33)

33-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘To a Certain Lady’ ‘A Time to Change’ collected poems page 3
Ezekiel adds a new dimension to his poetry that love is permanent and not a passing sexual fit –

“Love breaks the incendiary laws
Blazing in a high wind
But staying good. The more you love
The less you burn away” (‘For Her’) (34)

Kamla Das’s whole poetry is love seeking soul.
“I want to be simple
I want to be loved” (‘The Suicide’) (35)

Jayant Mahapatra expresses his deep anguish at the degradation of human values in today’s time especially to the loss of love and humanity. He feels dryness all round In “Relationship”, the truth finally dawns upon him and he discovers that the ruined landscapes that spread around him is an interior landscape that signifies the self’s destiny –

“It is my own life
That has cornered me beneath the stone
of this temple in ruins in a blaze of sun” (‘Relationship’) (36)

Love is all necessity of life. If we do not have love in our heart, we are like dead bodies moving here and there, on contrary, if we love God, love all His creatures, love all His nature, then this earth becomes heaven, and every thing looks beautiful to our eyes, what is needed – the love, K N Daruwalla feels the divine presence while describing fifty Indian peaks –

“Snow and the spray hangover
of icefalls and the blue of distance
As if some God had with a palette knife
honered the landscapes with ethereal colours” ‘Crossing Charhoti’ ‘Landscapes’ (37)

Non Violence – is the key ideal of all greatness of India, spiritual and moral. Non violence simply means an over flowing love for all humanity. It can be defined as ‘Harmlessness to all living creatures’. Non violence is the basic Indian value and belief. If the language of India is love, non violence is its message to the whole world. When Bhagavad-Gita describes the attributes those of divine nature, non violence is at the top – “Non violence, truth, freedom from anger, renunciation, tranquility, aversion to fault finding, compassion to living beings, freedom from covetousness, gentleness, modesty, and steadiness (absence of fickleness)”. In Toru Dutt’s poem ‘The Legend of Dhruva’, Suneeetee, the mother of Dhruva teaches her son the bright prospect of the high human values of love and compassion to all because all creatures are the children of one Almighty God so why to hurt any body physically or mentally –

34-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘For Her’ ‘The Third’ collected poems page 67
36-Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Relationship’ Cuttak: The Chandrabhaga Society 1999 page 14
“Be meek, devout, and friendly, full of love
Intent to do good to the human race
And to all creatures sentient made of God” (‘The Legend of Dhruva’) (38)

Toru Dutt’s poem ‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’ is one of the best example of non violence, compassion and love. It is story of great hermit king Bharat who gives up all the luxuries and goes out to woods to practice penance and prayers to win his soul. One day when he is sitting down on the bank of river for prayer, a graceful, pregnant hind comes to quench her thirst. In the meantime, a lion roars and frightens her. She leaps up to death and her off spring comes tumbling from her womb into the rushing stream and struggles hard for its life. The hermit king gets deeply moved by the scene. He at once gets up, draws up the new born creature from the wave and brings it home –
“He drew the new born creature from the wave
Twas panting fast, but life was in it still
Now, as he saw its luckless mother dead
He would not leave it in the woods alone
But with the tenderness’ pity brought it home”. (‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’) (39)

He cares for the little fawn with much love and devotion. After the lapse of many years when he is to die, Bharat’s mind is still filled with sorrow at leaving his little fawn and not with the problem of death and eternity –
“To it devoted was his last, last thought
Reckless of present and of future both” ‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’ (40)
All religion lies in compassion, love and non violence.

Sikhism firmly preaches ‘dhol dharm daya ka put” means religion originates from compassion or religion is the son of compassion. If we don’t have compassion for other creatures of God, then there is no use of lecturing and talking about religion. The poem ‘Royal Ascetic and the Hind’ ends with a spiritual defence of the hermit king’s compassionate conduct and a condemnation of the ideal of asceticism. Compassion is the other name of non violence. Non violence is the best remedy of all evils because when non violence, love and truth prevail, there can never be lust, greed and violence. Non violence does not only mean the avoidance of physical force, or avoidance of inflicting pain, torture or death on others rather it is the creed of moral courage, the courage to bear all dealings with kindness and calmness to resist the evils without doing any physical violence. It requires a rigorous training both of mind and body. Mostly it is the ego hurt that causes violence The cuture of violence delights in crushing and beating. God’s grace is never possible if we hurt others through our words, thoughts and deeds. Tagore again and again emphasizes that God is not found in temples and places of worship. He is present everywhere, in every human soul. He lives with the poorest, the lowliest and the humblest. Loving to God means serving to humanity.

38-Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 114
39-Toru Dutt, (‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’) ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 108
40-Toru Dutt, ‘The Royal Ascetic and the Hind’ ‘Ancient Ballads and the Legends of Hindustan’ page 111
“Pride can never approach to where
thou walkest in the clothes of the humble
among the poorest, the lowliest and lost” (‘Gitanjali/10’) (41)

No words of prayers and worship can reach God if we do not have love and compassion for the suffering humanity. Love for the poorest, and lowliest and lost is the greatest worship of God. The false pride of richness, beauty, youth, power and position results in violence. It is the confusion of weakness, born from a wounded spirit, a spirit burned by the fire of arrogance, a spirit splintered by the frustration of powerlessness and inferiority. The rage that results from injured self respect, from humiliation erupts as violence. On contrary non violence or compassion in actual sense is purity of thoughts, words and deeds. It is a highest form of humanity as well as the highest form of humility. Sri Aurobindo when describes the virtues of Savitri, the symbol of spiritual figure, compassion is at first –
“A deep of compassion, a hushed sanctuary
Her inward help unbarred a gate in heaven
Love in her was wider than the universe
The whole world could take refuge in her single heart” ‘Savitri Book I canto II lines\70’ (42)

Indeed, non violence or compassion is the fundamental teaching of all religions, of all sages and seers. Humanity must be guided by the overriding principle that violence and killing is never acceptable or justified under any circumstances. Unless we realize this, unless we widely promote and deeply implant the understanding that violence can never be used to advocate one’s beliefs, we will have learnt nothing from the bitter lessons of past. The flames of hatred can only be extinguished by the great flood of love and peace. And peace can only be established by developing the virtue of non violence or compassion Sarojini Naidu longs for peace for all humanity through her prayer to God in her poem 'Temple Bells' –
“That cleaves the dark with wings of prayers
craves pity for our mortal ways
seeks solace for our life’s despair
And peace for suffering heart that die” ‘Bells- Temple Bells’ (43)

Non violence is no more idealism. Many times India has proved the efficacy of non violence ‘Ahimsa Parmo Dharma’. Gandhi ji won independence for India in non violence ways and not through the blood shed atmosphere. He declared that violence is not the solution of any problem. Non violence is life, violence is death. During the struggle for independence, his words were, ‘We must meet ungodliness with godliness, we must meet untruth, by truth we must meet cunning and craft by openness and simplicity, we must meet terrorism and frightfulness by bravery (in non violent way)”. (44)

41-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem No-10 ‘Here is Thy Footstool’ page 55
42-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I canto II ‘The Issue’ page 22
43-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Broken Wing’ ed. Edmund Gosse page 170
At present when people are so much dazzled by money and materialism, we miss the music of peace. There is hatred and jealous everywhere, there is tension every where, Nissim Ezekiel yearns for peace and non violence—

“I am standing for peace and non violence
Why world is fighting fighting
Why all people of world
Are not following Mahatma Gandhi
I am simply not understanding.

Ancient Indian wisdom is 100% correct
I should say even 200% correct
But modern generation is neglecting
Too much going for fashion and foreign things: (‘The Patriot’) ‘Very Indian Poems in Indian English’ (45)

Infact, violence is a confession of weakness. It is never the solution of any problem. That is why violence can not be universalized; it can never be morally approved. Non violence on other hand is morally approved, universally recognized. It is the basic philosophy of India. India has always been peace loving. But it does not mean that India is weak. If some country dares to attack or shows bitter eye, India replies with strong passions. K N Daruwalla beautifully presents both these aspects of Indian philosophy—

“Ahimsa is a positive creed,
We will not submit to aggression” (‘Food and Words, Words and Food’) ‘Apparition in April (46)

**Dutifulness** — It is one of the fundamental value of India because life and work are co related, two sides of one coin. When there is work, there is life, without work, life is useless. It is the work that makes life worth living, useful and fruitful. Bhagavad-Gita Gita says, ‘Do thou thy all work, for action is better than inaction, the maintenance of thy physical life can not effected without action” (III\8). Action generates energy in us but activity without purpose is unproductive. So we must set an ideal in life. The higher the ideal, the greater the energy generated. Actions dedicated to higher ideals are always satisfying where as actions undertaken with selfish motives become monotonous and cause fatigue, one who is always sincere in his duty and does good for others, is surely on the way to salvation in this very life because it is the deeds that are counted in the court of God, not the creed. That is why Toru Dutt insists upon to do good and virtuous deeds—

“Virtue should be the aim and end
of every life, all else is vain
Duty should be its dearest friend
If higher life it would attain” (‘Savitri’) (47)

47-Toru Dutt, ‘Savitri’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 57
“The Right must be our guiding star
Duty our watch word, come what may” (‘Savitri’) (48)

Duty and truth are interwoven. Without a truthful heart a man can not be dutiful and in the same way, without a sense of duty, truth can not be achieved. Truthfulness in duty creates a spiritual satisfaction. Only a right action done in right way can give us happiness. God is all knowing, all seeing so to whom to cheat, to whom to hurt. Toru Dutt teaches to perform good and right through the mouth of Suneetee, the mother of Dhruva –

"Intent to do good to the human race
And to all creatures sentient made of God" (49)

It is our own deeds that make our karmas or fate. Our fate is in our hand. We ourselves are responsible for our happiness and sorrows. If we do good to other and shower love and happiness to others, happiness will automatically come on our part but if we think bad for others, do bad for others, cheat and hurt others, suffering is waiting for us. Guru Granth Sahib again and again stresses, ‘aapee beej aape hi khao’ “As one sows, one reaps”. (50)

Toru Dutt beautifully convinces through the mouth of Savitri this theory of Karmas and fate –

“He for his deeds shall get his due
As I for mine, thus here each soul
Is its own friend, if it pursues
The right, and run straight for the goal” ‘Savitri’ (51)

Suneetee, the mother of Dhruva, explains the doctrine of karma –

“The deeds that thou hast done
The evil, happily, in some former life,
Long, long ago, who may alas! annual
or who the good works not done, supplement!
The sins of previous lives must bear their fruit” (‘The Legend of Dhruva’) (52)

The ‘sins of previous lives’ not only explain the theory of rebirth but also stress upon the theory of karma. Infact, it is our deeds that make our fate and future, the cycle of births and rebirths. Success never comes to those who just sit idle and curse their fate, but to those who do efforts without caring for hardships and failures. The real worship of God is dutifulness. He is the true devotee of God who performs all his duties honestly. Ravinder Nath Tagore presents the great principle of Indian philosophy that work is true worship –

“Leave this chanting and singing and telling the beads
whom dost thou worship in this lonely
dark corner of a temple with doors all shut?

48-Toru Dutt, ‘Savitri’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 58
49-Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 115
50-Sri Guru Granth Sahib, page 04
51-Toru Dutt, ‘Savitri’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 47
52-Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 115
open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee?
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 shower
and his garments is covered with dust” ‘Geetanjali\11’ (53)

It clarifies that God is not present in the closed doors of temples rather every human heart is the temple of God. It also explains that God is not pleased just by chanting, singing and counting beads but by doing work, by performing all duties honestly and sincerely and by serving the humanity. Liberation can never be achieved by mere meditation and observance of rituals but God realization is only possible by the service of humanity. Service of God means the service of humanity as God Himself is present in every human being in the form of soul—
“come out of thy meditation and leave aside the flowers and incense? What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained? Meet Him and stand by Him in toil and in sweat of thy brow” ‘Geetanjali\11’ (54)

Infact, all reward, all regard lies in the labour which we do. Life moves through work. If we don’t work, and don’t use our body, the machinery of our body will fail one or another day. The Bhagavad-Gita again and again teaches and preaches that we all should be dutiful and active in our work. Work must be our concern, not the result. Action burdened by the craving of fruit loses its effectiveness. The true karma yogi means ‘the servant of God, the servant of humanity. Whatever God has assigned for us to do we must do it with full enthusiasm and activeness, then only we are karma yogi. Most of the troubles in present day world rise from the fact that instead of doing their duty honestly, people blame others for their failure and misdeeds. Then a vicious cycle is created. How can we imagine peace and happiness, if this process of blaming others continuous? So without thinking what others are doing, everyone should try to perform his duties honestly. No man of honest life can come to grief. No dutiful man can come to an evil end. Sarojini Naidu like a true karmayogi, teaches that all success lies in doing efforts and not in laziness.

So in the severe test of life, we must be the struggler, we must do our best efforts and above all we must be silent, selfless suffer to bear the burden of defeated hopes patiently—
“Till ye have battled with great grief and fears
And borne the conflict of dream shattering years,
wounded with fierce desires and worn with strife
Children, ye have not lived, for this is life” (‘Life’) (55)

The above lines of Sarojini convey the message to every one that life must be accepted and lived despite all its sorrows and sufferings, pains and failures. Because it is sorrow that is transient, and not the life and Its joys—

53-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 11 ‘Leave the Chanting and Singing’ page 57
54-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ Poem 11, ‘Leave the Chanting and Singing’ page 57
“Nay do not weep new hopes, new dream, and new faces
The unspent joy of all the unborn years,
will prove your heart a traitor to its sorrow
And make your eyes unfaithful to their tears” (‘Transience’) (56)

The fundamental teaching of Bhagavad-Gita and Sri Guru Granth Sahib is ‘nishkam karma’ which means that man has to do his duty in selfless and detached way without caring for reward or appreciation, ‘He who works having given up attachment, resigning his action to God is not touched by sin even as a lotus leaf (is untouched) by water. ‘V/10’ (57)

It clarifies our life must be enriched by the accomplishment of right action than the outward success or failure. Nissim Ezekiel presents the real picture of a hardworking simple man whose meditation is his work. There is no desire to escape, no negation of life but affirmation and commitment-
“He does not meditate day and night
on anything, his delight is in action” ‘Latter Day Psalms’ (58)

Indeed, work is the real worship of God. God is not pleased by our artificial rituals and meditation but by our dutifulness. But we people are some time perplexed to see that we are true in all our duties, but do not get appreciation or, good salary or reward according to our labour. where as there are some people who get money, power and position through clever tricks. But we should understand it properly that the gain achieved through wrong means is always temporary. The permanent happiness and peace lies in performing duties sincerely. Nissim Ezekiel presents the real emotions of a poor railway clerk. Who is dutiful but does not get appriciation or reward accordingly. He is the only support of his family and finds it difficult to make both ends meet because he gets no extra money. No body appreciates his work –
“I am never neglecting any responsibility
I am discharging it properly
I am doing my duty
But who is appreciating
No body, I am telling you” ‘The Railway Clerk’ (59)

The practice of ‘Nishkam Karma’ can only give spiritual satisfaction, however, it is not easy to follow the path of dutifullness and truth for all, because man is essentially swayed by the desire of appreciation and reward, whatever be its form, but the only way to enjoy happiness and satisfaction is to do one’s duty honestly and leave the rest to Almighty. Right action and right efforts never go waste. That man succeeds who is devoted not only in the nobility of his morals and manner but also his capacity of suffering for the cause of his

57-The Bhagavad-Gita V/10 page 178
58-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Latter Day Psalms’ Collected poems page 252
59-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ collected poems page 184
dutifulness and cherished deals. Suffering is essential for progress. Success does not come to weaklings. But sometimes it is sad to notice that some labour class people, some poor and middle class people go on working hard and hard for their livelihood and spend their whole life in suffering without getting any appreciation (in the form of money, material, power or position) according to their worth.

Kamla Das expresses her sympathetic sentiments for the hard job and suffering of –

“The field hands
Returning home with baskets on their heads
-their thin legs crushing
the heads, the shrubs, their ankles
bruised by thorns” (‘Evening at the old Nalapat House’) (60)

In ‘A Hot Noon in Malabar’, Kamla Das presents the hard work of the “kuravan and kurathis” (scheduled castes in Kerala who earn their livelihood by reading palms of people) and bangle sellers moving from house to house –

“……..all covered with the dust of roads
For all of them whose feet devouring rough
miles cracks on heels so that when they
clambered up our porch, the noise was grating” (‘A Hot Noon in Malabar’) (61)

Work is the law of nature. Even one gets reward of his work or not, one has to work to live on. No one will put food into one’s mouth. One has to make efforts for it. If every person may be a doctor, engineer, soldier, scientist, teacher, lawyer, business man, industrialist, becomes honest to his profession and performs his duties truthfully, this earth will become heaven. Heaven is not far away, heaven is there where all people do their duty well for the good of themselves as well as for the good of others without complaining, grudging or criticizing. Human life is very previous Each and every moment should be used to do something good. If we waste time, time will waste us. Wastage of time is a crime. God has blessed us with precious human body, with precious hands. If we do not use our hands, if we do not move our body, then our life is a real curse. Success comes to those only who do efforts. Sooner or later, they will win the race of life. Above all, hard work is key of every achievement. Jayant Mahapatra presents this theory of hard work and success when he recalls his father’s advice to work hard and liken his fate to a summer koel. Mahapatra wants to become active and take risks to do human good –

“But does anything I say or do matter
If I risk nothing of my life?
This easy myth we live in
my fate which like summer koel, answers


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my limitation of its calls through the warm rights,  
Once my father said: if you work hard,  
There will be time enough to play later” ‘Performance’ ‘Poetry Review’ (62)

**Firm Faith in God** – It is in India only not any where else in the whole world that people have so much faith in Almighty God and His Powers. God is worshipped in different Forms and with different Names. A faith in God is the most powerful value of India, to which almost all other values are interrelated. It is the faith in God which compels us to become dutiful and self disciplined. It is the faith in God which generates the fountain of love, compassion, humility in our hearts, and it is the faith in God that helps us to face the struggles of life bravely. God is the Supreme Power – the creator, the preserver, the destroyer. God Himself declares in Geeta, “I am the origin of all, from Me all the (whole creation) proceeds. Knowing this the wise worship Me, endowed with conviction”. ‘X\8’(63)

It clarifies that God is the soul of universe. Every thing and every activity is under His command, of One Almighty God. There are not two three Gods, God is one and one only. All the Names and Forms are His own creative powers. Toru Dutt supports the fact of one God through the mouth of Prahlad -

“There is one God – one only mark!  
To Him is all our service due” (‘Prahlad’) (64)

This only line of Toru Dutt is quite enough to convince the Supreme Power of Almighty God. Sikhism stresses upon the concept of one God by giving the Name IK ONKAR means God is only one. In Hinduism the syllable Aum (OM) stands for the Inexpressible Absolute, the symbol of Hindu Trinity – Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma, Brahma as the Creator of the universe, Vishnu as the Preserver and Shiva as the Destroyer. Guru Granth Sahib says, ‘karan karan prabh ek hai dusar nahi koe, nanak tis balihaaren jal thal mahial soi’, “God alone is the Doer of all acts and there is none else. (Guru) Nanak (says) I am sacrifice to Him, who pervades water, lands, nether regions and skies”. ‘5\276’ (65)

Indeed, the whole universe is God’s manifestation. He not only creates the universe but also controls the creation and working of universe. In twinkling of eye, He can create miracles, He can give life to dead, He can make poor to rich, everything and every being is under His power and control. Toru Dutt explains the Supreme Power of Supreme Being –

“God can evert the heavy blow!  
He answers worship” (‘Savitri’) (66)

63-The Bhagavad-Gita X/8 page 258  
64-Toru Dutt, ‘Prahlad’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 157  
65-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 276  
66-Toru Dutt, ‘Savitri’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 58
Toru Dutt’s expression ‘He answers worship’ is very similar to Bhagavad-Gita teachings where Lord Krishna declares, ‘To those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I grant the concentration of understandings by which they come unto Me’ ‘X:10’ (67)

It is the firm faith of Indian philosophy that God is Universal and Infinite spirit. He pervades the cosmos. He is present in all creation. According to Taittiriya Upanishad, the Supreme Lord is, “from which these beings are born, by which they live and into which, when departing, they enter” (68)

It explains that God Himself is present in every one. God is the universe and universe is God. Ravinder Nath Tagore presents this eternal nature and relation of God and human being through the prayerful words of a human heart to Almighty God –

“Thou hast made me endless such is thy pleasure
This frail vessel thou emptiest again and again
And fillest it ever with fresh life”. (‘Geetanjali’01’) (69)

In reality, human life is just a small separation from God. We have come from God; we have to return back to God, through “self (God) realization”. He is present in us in form of ‘soul’; He is present inside and out side in the form of ‘Shabad’. Ravinder Nath Tagore convinces the presence of Almighty God, “He it is, the inner most one, who awakens my being with his deep hidden touches. He it is who puts his enchantment upon these eyes and joyfully plays on the chords of my heart in varied cadence of pleasure and pain”. ‘Geetanjali’72’ (70)

Soul is the synonymous of God and Shabad. God not only creates but also supports and protects the universe God is the only Giver. He gives and gives and asks nothing in returns. He has blessed us with precious human life and all the comforts to live on – Tagore expresses his firm faith –

“Thy infinite gifts come to me only on these very small hands of mine
Ages pass and still thou pourest and still there is room to fill” (‘Geetanjali’1’) (71)

Human birth is the only birth in which man can realize God and Shabad (God’s Name, God’s teachings) is the only support to help in this process of God realization. Sri Aurobindo says that God has incarnated His creations in His own image. Every human being has hidden spark of divinity in him but because of the fetters of ego, greed, lust, anger and attachment, he does not realize God’s presence in himself. Sri Aurobindo teaches and preaches that it is man’s duty to try to attain divinity for the betterment of mankind –

67-The Bhagavad-Gita X:10 page 259
70-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 72 ‘The Inner Most One’ page 293
71-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 1 ‘Thou Hast Made Me Endless’ page 31
“We are sons of God and must be even as he
His human portion, we must grow divine
our life is a paradox with God for key” (‘Savitri’) ‘Book I canto 4’ (72)

Each and every expression of Sri Aurobindo’s Savitri convinces his firm faith in God and soul’s strong desire to merge with the Maker. Throughout the whole of this holy epic “Savitri” one feels the pulsating presence of God –
The one, the perfect, the divine –
“He is the maker and the world he made
He is the vision and he is the seer
He is himself the actor and the act
He is himself the knower and the known” (‘Savitri’) Book I canto 4 (73)

As a matter of fact, no one can fully describe the glories of God. He Himself knows His ways and excellences. Guru Granth Sahib says He is without and within all beings. He is unmoving and also moving. He is too subtle to be known. He is far away and yet is the near” (‘5:283’) (74)

“He is the light of lights, said to be beyond darkness, knowledge, the object of knowledge and the goal of knowledge – He is seated in the hearts of all”. ‘5:283’ (74)

‘hari bin duja nahi koi, sarab nirantar eko soi’ ‘There is nothing without God. He is present in every particle of this universe” ‘5:287’ (75)

It clarifies that God is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. Sarojini Naidu shows the unshakable faith of Indians in God through her prayer poem “Harvest Hymn’ in which the villagers pray and invoke to Almighty God to shower His grace –
“Lord of the universe, Lord of our being
Father eternal, ineffable OM” ‘Harvest Hymns’ (76)

All the above four attributes expressed in the glory of God, clearly stress that God is all in all, and, the world is the body of God. ‘Lord of our being’ specifies the fact that every human being is a part and parcel of Divine being. God Himself dwells in every one in the form of soul. Sarojini Naidu skillfully convinces this theory of atma and Parmatma –
“O thou who mad’st me of thy breath” (‘The Soul’s Prayer’) (77)

72-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I canto 4 page 67
73-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I canto 4 page 61
74-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 283 (4) page 287
74- Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 283
75-Sri Guru Granth Sahib, page 287
76-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Golden Threshold’ page 14
Sarojini beautifully explains that God is the Supreme Being who not only creates and supports the existence but is also the active power of the world

“In whose glorious shadow
All life is unfolded or furled” ‘Solitude’ (78)

Sarojini Naidu sets forth the conviction that if a man has full faith in God and considers Him as the Ultimate Reality, the Goal of his life, he becomes an embodiment of power, and all his weakness are turned into invincible strength –

“We praise thee o compassionate
Master of life, time and fate,
Thou art the goal, for which we long,
Thou art our silence and our song
Life of the sunbeam and the seed
Thou dost transmute from hour to hour
Our mortal weakness into power,
Our bondage into liberty” (‘The Prayer of Islam’) (79)

All lines successfully show the firm faith of people in God and His powers. In western countries people attach much importance to money and material but here in India, the concerns of people are fixed in the supreme faith in God, “God will help us”, “God will protect us”, “God will save us” “God will guide us” are some common expressions of Indian people showing firm faith in Almighty God and His grace. Nissim Ezekiel presents the typical Indian situation through his poem ‘Night of the Scorpions’ when the mother gets stung by the scorpion and all the simple peasant collect and sit around the mother, pray and sing

“The peasants came like swarm of flies
And buzzed the name of God a thousand time
To paralyze the evil one” (‘The Night of Scorpions’) (80)

The lines express firstly the firm faith of Indians in God, secondly the true Indian spirit of sharing and caring that how Indian people share their sorrows and happiness with each others and become one if some suffering comes. Though All Nissim Ezekiel’s approach to life is not so much religious, rather he is that of philosophical humanism, but the words ‘God’ and ‘prayer’ often occur in his poetry – his natural way of praying –

“God grant me privacy
God grant me certainty
In kinship with the sky
Air, earth, fire, sea
And the fresh inward eye” (‘Morning Prayer’) (81)

79-Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Broken Wing’ ed. Edmund Gosse page 168
80-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Exact Name’ collected poems page 130
81-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Unfinished Man’ Collected Poems page 122
The ‘sky (space), air, earth, fire, sea (water) are the five basic elements of which our human body is made up of, and the ‘fresh inward eye’ reflects the goal of Liberation or Perfection. Nissim Ezekiel shows his faith in God and His creation—

“God is a presence here and His people are real” (‘Latter Day Psalms’) (82)

A K Ramanujan, brings into light his belief in the concept of God’s presence in every object in the cosmos—

“Actually see the one in the many” (‘Entries a Catalogue Fears’) (83)

This only line is quite enough to present the omnipresence of God. Indeed, God is the Ultimate Reality of the whole universe. ‘God is a principle, not person. He is the Infinite, Impersonal being, ever existence, unchanging, fearless and I and you are all His manifestations. This is the God of Vedanta and His heaven is everywhere’. (84)

Kamla Das’s poem ‘The Inheritance’ shows her faith in God and God’s Name—

“Oh God
Blessed be your fair name, blessed be the religion” (‘Inheritance’) (85)

Jayant Mahapatra succeeds in presenting his firm faith in God through Gandhi’s last words ‘He Ram’. Here ‘Ram’ is not any personal God but Universal God, the Almighty One. Mahapatra discovers that all peace, all happiness, all satisfaction lies in meditating upon ‘Ram’—

“He Ram
In these two words
was the briefest of silences
A touch of silence of immensity” (‘Requiem’) ‘Bare Face’ (86)

Infact, all the peace and pleasure lies in remembering the Name of God. All names whether God, Ram, Rahim, Karim, Allah, Gobind, Waheguru are equally good. What matters is sincere devotion and love for God and His creatures. Rigveda speaks, ‘He is a Universal God, who Himself is universe which He includes within His own being. He is the light the light within us ‘hryantar jyotih’. He is the Supreme whose shadow is life and death’. (87)

The Blessed Lord says in Bhagavad-Gita, “I am the father of this world, the mother, the supporter and the grandsire. I am the object of knowledge, the purifier. ‘IX\17’ (88)

82-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Latter Day Psalms’ collected poems page 254
84-Vivekananda, ‘Hindu Religion’ vol. III page 31
86-Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Bare Faces’ Kattayam: D C Books 2000 page 64
87-Quoted from ‘The Bhagavad-Gita’ ed. S Radhakrishnan page 23
88-The Bhagavad-Gita IX:17 page 245
“I am the origin of all; from Me all (the whole creation) proceeds”. ‘X\8’ (89)

K N Daruwalla’s poem ‘Landscapes’ reflects the intensity of prayer in the glory of God –
“From your womb all proceed
Into you all recede” (‘Landscapes’) ‘Crossing Charhoti’ (90)

Though the lines are written in the glory and grace of mother goddess Dolma, but here mother goddess represents the supreme power of Almighty God.

**Self Discipline** – means ‘self control’ It is one of noble Indian value forming the very base of a cultured person as it leads to purify, to transform, to sublimate, to mould and to be perfect. A self disciplined man is one who has brought his natural instincts under control and has shaped in accordance with ideal placed before him by his moral consciousness. Our great sages and saints stressed upon self control and declared it to be one the highest value to achieve the goal of spirituality. Manu, the greatest social Law giver said, that by nature we all are barbarous, uncultured, and uncivilized, it is the self discipline that makes us human being, man can by his conduct rise higher to the level of God or can fall down to the level of animals. Toru Dutt when describes the virtues of Sindhu (Shravan Kumar) actually presents the picture of self discipled person –

“Attentive, duteous, loving, kind
thoughtful, sedate and calm” (‘Sindhu’) (91)

The Bhagavad-Gita repeats again and again that self disciple is must for spiritual knowledge. “He whose understanding is unattached every where, who has subdued his ‘Self’, from whom desires has fled he comes through renunciation to the supreme state transcending all work”. ‘IV\19’ (92)

“He whose mind is untroubled in the midst of sorrows and is free from eager desire amid pleasures, he from whom passion, fear and rage have passed away, he is called a sage of settled intelligence”. ‘II\56’ (93)

Self discipline advocates the conquest of worldly desires and passions. Love for worldly desires bears no real fruit as worldly desires and pleasures are temporary like the shadow of tree. Self discipline leads to self mastery. In Toru Dutt’s poem Eklavya’s life history is the best example of self help and self discipline through self mastery, and firm determination, Eklavaya, the low caste hunter’s son, learns the art of archery to its perfection. The statue of Dronacharya, the matchless master of Archery is his Guru. At the instigation of Arjuna, who

89-The Bhagavad-Gita X\8 page 258
90-K N Daruwalla, ‘Crossing Charhoti’ ‘Landscapes’ Delhi: Oxford University press page 31
91-Toru Dutt, ‘Sindhu’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 127
92-The Bhagavad-Gita IV\19 page 163
93-The Bhagavad-Gita II\56 page 123
becomes jealous of Eklavya’s perfection of archery, Dronacharya demands Eklavaya’s ‘right hand’s thumb’ and latter at once severs with a sharp knife without feeling any sorry. Dronacharya profoundly gets moved to see Eklavaya’s devotion and dedication and blesses him—

“Fame
shall sound thy praise from sea to sea
And men shall ever link thy name
with self help, truth and modesty” ‘Buttoo’ (94)

Buttoo’s (Eklavaya’s) “self help” and “self discipline do not go waste, rather result in immortality Eklavaya does not care for any worldly name and fame, his Guru’s Bhakti is all his wealth, and through self discipline and self help he reaches the goal of Perfection, and also becomes successful in attaining the blessings of Guru Dronacharya. Indeed worldly desires, worldly attachments are the fetters on the way to spiritual progress. They are worthless like dust. Ravinder Nath Tagore describes that worldly desires are our enemies, as they make man devil. Worldly desires and material attachment make man unholy and unclean because these are born of ignorance and extinguish the lamp of reason, wisdom and understanding. Man becomes the slave of desires and it is very difficult for him to break the shackles of worldly temptations—

“Obstinate are the trammels, but my heart aches
when I try to break them
Freedom is all I want but do hope
for it I feel ashamed” (‘Geetanjali’28’) (95)

“I came out alone on my way to my tryst
But who is this that follows me in the
silent dark? I move aside to avoid his
presence but I escape him not
he makes the dust rise from the earth with his
swagger, he adds his loud voice to every
word that I utter
he is my own little self, my lord, he knows
no shame, but I am ashamed to come
to thy door in his company” ‘Geetanjali’30’ (96)

‘my own little self’ is ‘the ego, the ‘I’ and when this little self (I) rules, the higher self (you) or God can never be revealed. As soon as ego melts through Bhakti yoga, Gyan Yoga, Karma yoga, God gets revealed. ‘I’ (‘mai or Ego’) and ‘you’ (God) can not live together. When there is ego or I, there is no question of you or God. According to Tagore, ego is the greatest

94-Toru Dutt, ‘Buttoo’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 117
95-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 28 ‘Obstinate are the Trammels’ page 139
barrier to tread upon the path of self discipline. Ego causes vanity, pride and arrogance, destroying all the virtues of love, compassion and honesty. By remembering God and meditating upon God’s Name, the soul gets purified from all ills and evils of egocentric desires. As soon as God’s Name enters in body through hearing and singing, the filth of ego, lust, greed, anger and attachment start shunning off. Though it is very hard to break the ties of worldly temptations but senses have to be controlled through practice and determination. We do not have to think ill of others because God Himself is present in every one in the form of soul. Purity of thoughts leads to purity of words and deeds, what we think, we express. Our words should be true, soft and comforting. Words can create friends, words can create enemies. So we do not have to hurt others through our thoughts and words. We do not have to be pure not only in thoughts and words but also in deeds. Human life the only opportunity in which a man can do some thing great, some thing benificial for himself as well as for nation and society, Selfish action filled with greed, anger, ego and lust can never make life noble rather the virtuous deeds done for the country, society, poor and needy makes life worth living. Honesty, courage, determination, activeness, love and understanding must be the pillars of our deeds. Animal life is ‘bhog pradhan’ consisted only in eating, drinking, sleeping but it is human life, the best of bests, ‘karam pradhan’ (to do jap, tap, sanjam, dharma) something precious. Animals can not achieve the goal of Perfection but we human beings can, as we have a mind to think, a body to work, a heart to feel, a soul to realize God within God has blessed us with precious eges we should have purity in our eyes. Impure eyes lead to impure actions. so Eyes have great responsibility to make life pure.. God has blessed us with precious ears, our ears should hear the good of other instead of back biting and criticism. God has blessed us with precious tongue, our tongue should sing the glories of God, our tongue should speak truth as well as sweet comforting words. Fault finding nature is very dangerous rather we must see our faults and observe what is good in others. But we people do opposite, we think we are always right, always superior and others are wrong. God’s Name and God’s teachings can help us in controlling our senses. Daily we should meditate upon the Name of God early in the morning and daily before sleeping at night, we should think and ask, from our selves, have I done some thing good or not? Have I not hurted any one through my thoughts words and deeds? This daily self analysis takes towards self control, self discipline. Guru Granth Sahib guides, ‘kar isnaan simar prabh apna, mann tann bhaye aaroga’. (97)

Taking bath early in the morning and meditating upon the Name of God creates purity in mind and body. Purity of body and purity of food are as necessary as purity of thoughts words and deeds. There should be purity in what ever we see, what ever we think, what ever we hear, what ever we say, what ever we eat, what ever we do and where ever we go. What is the use of washing body again and again if the ‘self’ has not been washed from evils? Yoga works as a medicine to cure body and mind from ills and evils. Indian philosophy of praying, fasting, charity trains us to learn self retraint. When body, heart and soul are purified through the efforts of bhakti yoga, karma yoga, jnana yoga, God is revealed in purified self, God is revealed here and there, in you and me. That is the state of Perfection, the state of Spirituality. A spiritual person shines like sun. His godly virtuous speak his glory. Sri Aurobindo describes the spiritual self discipline of (Savitri) –

97-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 611
At once she was the stillness and the word,
A continent of self – diffusing peace
An ocean of untreambling virgin fire
The strength, the silence of the Gods was hers” ‘Savitri’ Book I canto II (98)

“Self diffusing peace” is “self mastery”, when one has conquered the lower self of passions and desires, he has conquered the world. He is a spiritual figure indeed. “mann jite jag jeet” (99)

As soon as the lower self (of sensual passions and desires) dies, the higher self (Godly conciousness) unfolds, its true nature, that is self realization, “the God realization” then there is no life and death, no sorrow, no suffering. Only ecstasy, only peace, In Sri Aurobindo’s epic Savitri, when twelve months of happy married life of Satyavan and Savitri paas, away shortly before the appointed day, a voice summons and reminds Savitri to her mission in life –

“Find out thy soul, recover thy hid self
In silence seek God’s meaning in thy depths
Then mortal nature change to the divine” ‘Savitri’ Book VII 540-01 (100)

Many human beings try to achieve the goal of self realization but very rare one reach to ultimate aim. because self mastery is a hard job. The human life is a turbid, noisy house of struggles, pains, sufferings and defeats with unlimited objects to be fulfilled, with unlimited desires to be achieved. Desire multiplies by desire. Sarojini Naidu presents that the thirst for pleasure, power, and being is the cause of all suffering –

“For us the travail and the heat
The broken secret of our pride
The strenuous lesson of defeat
The flower deferred, the fruit denied”
“Dream yield to dream, strife follows strife”
“with futile hands we seek to gain
our inaccessible desire” (‘Ta a Budha Seated on Lotus’) (101)

Worldly suffering can be ended by controlling the senses and by developing the emotional detachment towards desires, actions and surroundings. All money and materials, all things, all people, all relations in this world are impermanent and changing so why to attach with them and suffer. In this temporary sense of world if something that is true and permanent that is God and God’s Name, and our virtuous deeds. We have to attach our mind, heart and soul to God, the Giver, not to His gifts and givings. We have to perform all our duties honestly with a mind attached to God. This attitude of detachment to things and attachment to God will

98-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I canto II page 183
99-Sri Guru Granth Sahib
100-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book VII page 540
automatically cultivate sense control. Sense control leads to self discipline, self discipline creates self mastery, and self mastery is spiritual illumination in itself.

Nissim Ezekiel appreciates the virtues of ‘self control’ and ‘self sacrificing’ for those great ancestors who are the role models for us to follow –

“The great provide a pattern for our lives
self sacrificing, self controlled, unique” (‘The Great’) (102)

The process of spiritual growth through self discipline is slow. Spirit has to be fostered with great painstaking efforts of control of senses. Nissim Ezekiel expresses his opinion that spiritual growth through self discipline is a long, silent, invisible process like the growth of grass in the lawn –

“Expectancy
Is satisfied
And when the grass becomes too long
You only cut it
Short to let it grow again it,
You keep an eye on it
In rapport with its secret laws
maintain its rituals
of mortality” ‘Lawn’ (103)

“Cut the grass”, ‘keep an eye on it’ suggests controlling and training the senses in proper direction. The use of lawn as symbol for spiritual growth is highly evocative and suggestive.

Humility – Humility means absence of pride (I). Humility is a divine virtue, direct way to God. Faith in God and faith in ‘self’ automatically create humility. As a tree loaded with fruits bends downward to the earth, in the same manner, a person loaded with virtues of truth, dutifulness, love, compassion, contentment, becomes very humble, modest, down to the earth. Bhagavad-Gita when describes the virtues of true knowledge, humility comes at the top, “Humility (absence of pride) integrity (absence of deceit) non violence, patience, uprightness, service of the teacher, purity (of body and mind) ,steadfastness and self control”. ‘7\XIII’ (104)

Toru Dutt’s poem ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ is a story of the prince Dhruva, an ambitious child who tries to win his father’s love but Suruchee, his step mother does not like this because she wants all favours for her son Uttama. Hurted by Suruchee’s misbehaviour Dhruva runs to his own mother Suneetee, the less favoured queen, and tells all the matter. Suneetee is deeply moved and consoles Dhruva not to be sad, She explains him the theory of karma

103-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Ezekiel’s Latter poetry 1965-1974’ collected poems page 160
104-The Bhagavad-Gita XIII\7 page 304
that whatever we do, we get the same in return. She Says It may be because of my bad karmas that you are the son of helpless and less favoured queen. Now if you want to make your future bright and successful, you should be good in present. Suneetee stresses to be humble and modest in behaviour and actions —

“Be meek, devout and friendly, full of love
Intent to do good to the human race
And to all creatures sentient made of God
And oh, be humble, for on modest worth
descends prosperity, even as water flows
down to low grounds”. (‘The Legend of Dhruva’) (105)

The expression ‘down to low ground’ beautifully reflects the virtue of humility that success touches the feet of humble people. Humility takes the person to the upward direction where as proud causes all downfall.

Water symbolizes humility. As water flows down to low grounds in the same manner humble people are never proudly, they are down to the earth.

Humility is to be humble and modest. Suneetee teaches that great we may be, when we look at ourselves as just a part of God’s creation, humility grows naturally. We should recognize our talents and good qualities and work hard to build on them, at the same time we should be grateful to God for these qualities and not proud of the fact that we happen to possess them.

Humility means the quality by which we can win the heart of anyone. And when we pray to God with humility, with meekness, remembering our nothingness in His presence, then He surely bestows us with His unlimited blessings because God loves meekness. As in Geetanjali, Tagore expresses that meeting with God needs urgency with humility and no ceremony of pride, ego, show off, artificiality. The poet is ashamed of himself for appearing before Him with the jewelled chain on his neck, he would rather like to appear with a garland. ‘VII’ (106)

To come to God and meet Him, needs no schooling, but the guidance of conscience —
“I was not schooled enough to be afraid of you in the dark, therefore I came upon your doorstep unaware” (‘Geetanjali XVI’) (107)

Like a true devotee, the poet declares with humility —
“I shall stake all I have and when I lose my last penny, I shall stake myself and then I think I shall have won through my utter defeat” (‘Geetanjali XXIX’)

God loves humility, God loves meekness. Even the poor, the defeated and the down trodden are lovable to Him.

“My master has bid me while I stand at the road side, to sing the song of defeat, for that is the bride whom he woos in secret” ‘Geetanjali LXXXV’ (108)

105-Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 114
107-Ravinder Nath Tagore ‘Geetanjali’ poem XVI page 80
108-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem LXXXV page 344
“Pride can never approach to where thou walkest in the clothes of the humble among the poorest, and the lowliest and lost” (‘Geetanjali\10’) (109)

“But I am thankful that my lot lies with the humble who suffer and bear the burden of power and hide their faces and stifle their sobs in the dark” (‘Geetanjali LXXXVI’) (110)

All above expressions are completely steeped in humility. To seek the grace of God, humility has very high place in religion. Every religion teaches the dangers of egotism and pride, and stresses to foster humility and reverence for all the people around us. The religious philosophy of India recognizes the fact that it is partial knowledge that fosters arrogance where as one with complete knowledge about himself and life can not but be humble. He will naturally see divinity in all beings and would hence never try to lord over or dominate others. Humility is a way to God. Tagore concludes humility as an endless quality, an allied to greatness —

“we come nearest to the great when we are great in humility” (‘Stray Birds’) (111)

In a very similar way, Sri Guru Granth Sahib guides – “dhan bhumi ka jo karai guman, so murakh andha agyan, kar kirpa jis kai hirdai garibi basavai, nanak iha mukat agai sukh pavai” ‘5\278’

“He, who is proud of his riches and lands, is an idiot (mentally) blind and ignorant. He, in whose heart God causes humility to reside, shall get divine peace in the God’s court (says) (Guru) Nanak”. (112)

“apas ko jo jane neecha, sohu ganiye sab tie unchha”, “the humble person will only succeed. He will get the grace of God”. (113)

Humility and humanity are co-related, it is the quality of humility that makes a person true human being, and it is humanity that creates humility in the personality. Crushing hurting and beating others into submission is the life of beasts. The fire of arrogance, hatred and rage can only be quenched with the power of humility. It is the virtue of humility only that can get was off ‘ego’ and awaken the higher self – the divine nature of soul. When Sri Aurobindo describes the divine virtues of Savitri, the awakening of Savitri the universal mother, to save the mankind from the evils of ignorance or darkness, the virtue of humanity is at the top —

“Even her humanity was half divine
Her spirit opened to the spirit in all
Her nature felt all nature as its our,
apart, living within, all lives the bore,
aloof, she carried in herself the world,
the universal mother’s love was hers” (‘Savitri’ Book I canto ) (114)

109-Ravinder Nath Tagore ‘Geetanjali’ poem X page 55
110-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem LXXXVI page 346
112-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 278
113- Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 278
114-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I canto I page 3
Humility adds rare beauty to one’s personality. To become humble and human is a divine quality. Humble person accepts all as it is and hence easily approachable. But humility should not be mistaken with being weak or passive nor should it be taken as low self low esteem, an inferiority complex, lack of self confidence. Rather humility is a strong sense of self esteem and at the same time not let ‘self’ worth deteriorate into negative qualities like conceit and snobbery. There is no place of pride, vain ostentation or arrogance in front of God. Rather we can win the love of God through humility only. When we surrender our self (ego or I) to God through heart felt prayers, God becomes our closet friend to protect and guide, to love and bless. “Bhakti in the Bhagavad-Gita is an utter self giving to the transcendent. It is to believe in God, to love Him, to be devoted to Him, to enter into Him. When the devotee truly surrenders himself to the Divine God becomes the ruling passion of His mind and whatever the devotee does, he does for the glory of God”. (115)

Sarojini Naidu portrays before us the picture of humble self surrender of true devotee –

“Whenever you tread
A carpet of ageless beauty
Is my heart for your feet out spread” (‘Immutable’) (116)

The sacred thoughts which Sarojini wants to convey is that complete self surrender with humility is essential for the realization of divinity. It is through struggles and sufferings that one can attain the goal of Perfection What is necessary a spirit of total self surrender, humility and self sacrifice-

“Let me gather, love, instead
The entranced and flowering dust
You have honoured with your tread
For mine eyelids and mind head (‘The Feast’) (117)

Many similar references of selfless devotion, humility and love we find in Sri Guru Nanak Sahib as ‘sajan tere charan ke hoi raha sad dhur, or ‘Kesha ke mai chavar ghulava, charan dhur much laiyee’. Only humility can help us to get rid of our ‘Ego’. We have to annihilate our ‘ego’ and awaken the discipline within ourselves. Then every experience of the universe will become our guru, but no amount of experience can help us realize our mistakes until we cultivate and adopt humility required to be able to surrender ourselves. To cultivate humility we have to surrender our ego and understandings to God, and adopt God’s teachings in our life. By praying, by singing God’ glories, by meditating upon God and God’s Name, humility automatically develops. Prayer is in itself humility. Nissim Ezekiel presents a humble prayer to God –

“God grant me privacy
God grant me certainty
In kinship with the sky
Air, earth, fire, sea
And the fresh inward eye” (‘Morning Prayer’) (118)

118-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Unfinished Man’ collected poems 1952-1988 page 122
‘Privacy’ is to develop the virtue of silence to analyze our faults and qualities, ‘Certainty’ is fearlessness for right action, kinship with sky, air, earth, fire sea is the reasonable concern with five basic elements out of which this body is made up of, then lastly ‘Inward eye’ symbolizes the spirituality. In above few lines, Nissim Ezekiel has expressed the whole Indian philosophy of religious and spiritual thoughts; Humility has a very important place in Indian culture. In a culture where everything from the stars and planets to oceans, rivers, mountains, animals and birds are worshipped, humility runs in its veins. Indians have believed from the earliest beginning of their civilization that man is an inherent part of the universe. Everything in the universe animate or inanimate, all aspects of nature and even celestial objects are connected in some way or other to the Supreme Power of Almighty God. That is why Indians are humble by birth, humble by behaviour. Nissim Ezekiel presents this concept of humble greetings with each other in his poem ‘The Professor’ –

“I am retired though my health is good
If you are coming again this side by chance
Visit please my humble residence also
I am living just the opposite houses backside” (‘The Professor’) (119)

**Athithi Devo Bhav** – Indian philosophy teaches that the real purpose of human life is not just work for livelihood, to provide for our family and contribute to society. It is more than that. To live for the good of others is the only way to real human life. To serve humanity is to serve God. This attitude of serving others is the base of Indian principle of Athithi Devo Bhav. It is in India only where guests are served with devotion and love – Toru Dutt beautifully expresses this concept of Athithi Devo Bhav in her famous poem ‘Jogadhya Uma’ when priest greets the pedlar who is giving call to maidens and matrons to come and buy shell bracelets from him –

“Ho sunkha pedlar! Pass not by,
But step thou in and share the food
Just offered on our altar high,
If thou art in a hungry mood,
welcome are all to this repast!
The rich and poor, the high and low!
Come, wash thy feet, and break thy fast
Then on thy journey strengthened go” (‘Jogadhya Uma’) (120)

The expression ‘But step thou in and share the food’ is completely soaked into the concept of ‘Athithi Devo Bhav’. It is in India only where guests are welcomed with loving eye and devoted heart. Indians feel happy and mentally satisfied to offer food clothes variety of entertainment and other things to guests. It is believed that God Himself comes in the form of guest so to serve guests is to serve God. In ancient India, Indians used to worship their guests specially the sages and saints. They were devoted to serve their guests whole heartedly without caring their own food and rest. Even today guests are a mark of great respect in Indian family. Nissim Ezekiel presents this aspect of respecting and serving guests –

120-Toru Dutt, ‘Jogadhya Uma’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 102
“If you are coming again this side by chance, 
Visit please my humble residence also” (‘The Professor’) (121)

“You are going? 
But you will visit again 
Any times any day” ‘The Patriot’ (122)

Infact, guests approach to us with the wish of God, If is our first and foremost duty to welcome them warmly and smilingly. We must offer them what ever we can, to eat and drink, but it should be served in a loving manner. It is the love that counts not the number and variety of dishes All joy and peace lies in giving happiness and comfort to others. It trains us to be humble and to do things against our selfishness, Serving the guests with sullen face or with grumbling is never good Indian culture teaches that our tongue, our eyes, our ears, our hands, our heart must be ever ready to greet and serve guests with loving devotion then there is no need to seek any reason to do unselfish work.

Contentment – ‘Santosh parmo dhrama’, it is one of the greatest value of India having the base of simplicity and sacrifice. Contentment means ‘satisfaction’ in what ever we have, Indian philosophy teaches that we should be satisfied in every circumstance by cultivating the feeling that everything is going on according to the will of God. Nothing came with us when we were born, nothing will go with us, when we die. Then why to stick with the worldly relations, worldly desires and worldly pleasures? Why to cry over loss and misfortunes Our own present and past deeds are responsible for our success and failure so whom to blame, to whom to grudge. We must live a life of contentment rather than every time complaining and blaming. Toru Dutt, through the mouth of Dhrura’s mother Suneeetee, teaches the lesson of contentment not only to Dhrura but to every body –

“That man is truly wise 
who is content with what he has and seeks 
nothing beyond, but in whatever sphere 
lowly for great, God placed him, works in faith” (‘Legend of Dhrura’) (123)

It clarifies that a contented person is always happy. The Blessed Lord says in Gita, “He who is satisfied with whatever comes by chance, who has passed beyond the dualities (of pleasure and pain), who is free from jealous, who remains the same in success and failure, even when he acts, he is not bound” ‘IV\22’ (124)

To cultivate the feelings of contentment, we must live life with optimistic attitude. The way to be happy is just to be happy. Desire is multiplied by desires. Wealth and worldly attainments are temporary it is the life of simplicity, purity and humility that helps to all win the

121-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ collected poems page 239
122-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ collected poems page 238
123-Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhrura’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 113
124-The Bhagavad-Gita IV\22 page 165
grace of God not the proud of wealth and material possessions. Tagore describes that how the pride of wealth (dress, decoration and ornaments) works as an obstruction in the way to God—

“The child who is decked with prince’s robes
And who has jeweled chains round his neck loses all pleasures in his play, his dress hampers him at every step” (‘Geetanjali’) (125)

So he prays to God—

“my song has put off her ornaments. She has no pride of dress and decoration, ornaments would mar our union, and they would come between thee and me”

“O master poet, I have down at thy feet. Only let me make my life simple and straight life the flute of reed for thee to fill with music”. (126)

It is the simplicity that leads to contentment Simplicity can be practiced by surrendering the egoistic enjoyment, by controlling the sensual pleasures, by sacrificing material possessions and restricting the food habits. Sacrifice is the law of simplicity and all sacrifices are the best means to spirituality. Living life for selfish motives is not a life but the actual life is in suffering troubles so that others may be happy. Hence, contentment consists in being satisfied with whatever we have or what ever comes by chance, loving and serving the humanity, remembering God and His Name, making life happy with the principle “Live and let others live”, and working at the best not for one’s own selfish good but for the good of others heading.

**Universal brotherhood**- On the unique principle of presence of God in every one, Indian philosophy of universal brotherhood ‘Vasudev Kutumbkam’ is based on. It marks the special feature of Indian culture. No other country of the world preaches the philosophy of one family. It is in India only where the philosophy of synthesis prevails, the philosophy of tolerance prevails, the philosophy of love prevails, the philosophy of reciprocity prevails leading to the great philosophy of universal brotherhood. Whatever the political, linguistic, racial, and religious difference between the various parts of country may be, one never fails to find a common culture flourishing in India from east to west, from north to south. Indian philosophy of love teaches every body that the real society of man is humanity as a whole. God is present in every being and in Him we all are one. The limits of countries, religions, castes, races, colours are artificial which tend to disappear when man lives a true human life. Humanity flourishes better on love, sympathy, and co-operation than on the acts of violence. The entire ‘ism’ like imperialism, racialism, colonialism are the diseases of humanity. There must be an end on all these exploitation because the cruel and selfish community or country who trample over and crush the natural right of others are like the poisonous germs in the body. All humanity is like a family and all human beings are like the brothers and sisters. Ravinder Nath Tagore wishes to God to lead his country into the heaven of universal brotherhood—

“Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,
Where knowledge is free,
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments

125- Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’08, Page 50
126-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 07 ‘My song has Put off Her Adorments’ page 48
by narrow domestic walls,
Where words come out from the depth of truth
Where tireless striving stretches its arm towards perfection
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
Into the dreamy desert sand of dead habit
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening
thought and action,
Into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake” (‘Geetanjali’ 35) (127)

This is a true vision of universal brotherhood, a vision of free India, free from all evil practices, blind beliefs and narrow mindedness, Unity and reason will reign supreme. Sri Aurobindo spreads the message of universal brotherhood through the mouth of Savitri –
“A lonely freedom can not satisfy
A heart that has grown one with ever heart
I am a deputy of the aspiring world
My spirit’s liberty I ask for all” (‘Savitri’) (128)

Sri Aurobindo, here, wishes the democracy of divine liberation not only for one or two people but for the whole human race. Because every human being is a part and parcel of Divine being and to realize this divinity is the ultimate aim of every human life. In reality all human beings are the children of one Almighty God. Guru Granth Sahib teaches and preaches, ‘ek pita ekas ke hum balak’ (129)

Then why to differentiate between person and person, community and community, religion and religion, country and country. This is the Indian philosophy of universal brotherhood. It is the philosophy of universal brotherhood that creates unity in diversity in India. India is recognized throughout the world for two most striking features first the continuity of Indian culture through centuries despite all revolutions and upheavals and secondly the unity of spirit underlying the amazing diversity of Indian life, culture, and religions leading to the philosophy of universal brotherhood (vasudev kutumbkam, vishva ka kalian ho) and universal peace (vishva shanti, om shanti shanti shanti) Indian philosophy teaches that there is no difference between me and you, Hindu or Muslim, Sikh or christian. we all are one as God Himself resides in every human being.

In this concern, Sarojini Naidu’s poem ‘An Anthem of Love’ is really admirable in which people of different religions, castes and communities. swear to remain one and united and pledge their loyalty to Mother India –
“One heart are we to love thee, o our Mother
one undivided, indivisible soul
bound to one hope, one purpose, one devotion

127-Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem 35 ‘Where the mind is without fear’ page 162
128-Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book II canto I page 692
129-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 611
Towards a great divinely destined goal” (‘An Anthem of Love’) (130)
The expression ‘one undivided, undivible soul beautifully shows God’s presence in every
soul. Guru Granth Sahib says, ‘sagai samigri apne sutr dhani’ ‘5\264’ (131)

“All the creations are strung on your string”.
So we all are one and same. The concluding portion of Sarojini Naidu’s poem ‘Awake’ is in
the form of a chorus in which Hindus, Parsees, Muslims and Christians offer their homage to
Mother India separately and then finally all creed hail her unison –
Hindus: Mother! The flowers of our worship have crowned thee,
Parsees: Mother! The flame of our hope shall surround thee,
Muslims: The sword of our love shall defend thee,
Christians: Mother! The song of our faith shall attend thee,
All Creed: Shall not our dauntless devotion avail thee,
Hearken queen and o goddess, we hail thee” (‘Awake’) (132)

Sarojini is, here, powerful exponent to explore the spirit of unity, the spirit of universal
brotherhood in India.
Nissim Ezekiel creates the authentic atmosphere of universal brotherhood and universal peace
by the peculiar flavour of words and language –
“Come again
All are welcome whatever caste
If not satisfied tell us,
Otherwise tell others
God is great” (‘Irani Restaurant Instructions’) (133)

Nissim Ezekiel feels sad to notice that why people have forgotten the philosophy of love and
universal brotherhood –
“I am standing for the peace and non violence
Why world is fighting, fighting
Why all people of world
Are not following Mahatma Gandhi” (‘The Patriot’) (134)

Mutual tolerance is conspicuous by its absence but the patriot is not pessimistic. He believes
that Ram Rajya of universal brotherhood and universal peace will surely come –
“All men are brothers, no,
In India also,
Gujratis, Maharashtrians, Hinduwallas

131-Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 264
133-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Irani Restaurant Instructions’ Latter Day Psalms, collected poems page 252
All brothers
One day Ram Rajya is surely coming” (‘The Patriot’) (135)

Very similar thoughts we find in Jayant Mahapatra’s poetry for whom, the ‘promised land’ of India is a land of peace, prosperity and social equality which was Gandhi ji’s vision of Ram Rajya the Ram Rajya of love and universal brotherhood. So Mahapatra and wishes, and longs
“I want the flames to warm the empty heart
of love, not burn a city with pitiable hatred
I don’t want to sit bent over a page
To reflect in it my grief
More for my self than for others
I want my government to hover
Like a butterfly over a garden
Not be, as it is, like a wasp or snake” (‘The Land that is not’) ‘Another Ruined Country’ ‘Random Descent’ (136)

Conflicts and clashes arise when love and truth are given up for the attainment of selfish ends and undue privileges. The divine teachings of Bhagavad-Gita and Sri Guru Granth Sahib guide everybody that humanity can be saved through harmony, love, compassion, forgiveness and not through bitterness, hate, anger and strife. In this age of science, when scientific inventions have greatly increased the power of man to do both good and evil, there is great need to organize humanity on equitable principles and develop a keen social and humanitarian consciousness in every human child so that the inhuman activities may not reoccur again. Science and spirituality must join their hands and work together for the common good of all. It is a happy sign that some great Indian saints and sages, preachers and leaders are working in this field of cultural growth Even few thinkers and scholars of the west are realizing the need of grafting, the spiritual values of India on the tree of western civilization. The day is not for when India on the wings of truth and love will come as ‘Jagad Guru’ to comfort the world torn with hatred and spread the message of universal brotherhood and universal peace based on co existence, mutual respect and tolerance.

135-Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Patriot’ ‘Hymns in Darkness’ collected poems page 238
136-Jayant Mahapatra, ‘The Land that is not’ ‘Random Descent’ page 70
SIX CHAPTER

Indian People
India does not enter into us through our mind but through our senses. It is not the rivers and mountains, forests and fields that make India unique among the world rather the grandeur of India lives through its people, their way of living – their simple faiths customs and traditions. India is proud of its people because it is the people that make India great and glorious. They may be belonging to any caste, or creed, religion or faith but they are Indian first and Indian last. They grow up in Indian soil; work for it and automatically their body, soul and mind get into the colour of Indian philosophy of love, truth and peace. They are the real wealth, power and strength of India.

**Variegated life of Indian people** – Indo English poetry presents before us the vistas of variegated life of Indians in very charming way through folk songs. These songs project the feelings and aspirations of the wide range of Indian people coming from the lower and middle strata of life. Under the spirit of these simple folk songs, there are hidden the basic values of Indianess- “satyam shivam sundaram”. They are not all sung or supposed to be sung by the folk, many of them are about the folk themselves. They breathe the spirit of India and it is through these songs that the heart of India is laid bare. Toru Dutt creates Indian atmosphere through the folk lore ‘Jagadhya Uma’ which opens with a description of a peddler, the bangle seller tramping along the road to Khirogram in the early morning when the dew still lay heavy on meadows and tree, crying and selling –

“Shell bracelets ho! Shell bracelets ho!
Fair maids and matrons come and buy” Jogadhya Uma (1)

Of the many ornaments worn by the women in India, bangles are perhaps the most common but most precious. These bangles are used by one and all, both young and old. “Shell bracelets” are a type of bangles in the form of bracelets made of shells. They are quite decorative to give the charm to the wrist of maidens and ladies. The bangle seller cries again when crossing the ghat –

“Shell bracelets ho! See, maiden see!
The rich enamel sunbeams kist!
Happy oh happy, shall thou be
Let them but clasp that slander wrist,
These bracelets are a mighty charm,
They keep a lover ever true” (‘Jagadhya Uma’) (2)

The lines beautifully depict how valuable bangles and bracelets are! They are the sign of happiness and charm. They not only have decorative value but their wearing provide a joyful touch to the wrists of maidens and ladies. In India, bangles are sign of “suhag” for married women, where as unmarried girls also wear it just for a charm. There are variety of bangles and bracelets in the markets. In small towns and villages, bangle sellers visit here and there to sell their products. We can feel and breath the humid air, see and bear the crowds in the streets, remember the bright colours of saris and bangles, the murmur of the voices, music and sculptures and so many other things creating the typical Indian atmosphere. Sarojini Naidu with excellent skill presents before us the picture of ‘Bangle Sellers’ roaming about in the street of a town of India and delighting the heart of every woman –

2- Toru Dutt, ‘Jagadhya Uma’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 100
“Bangle sellers are we bear
our shining loads to the temple fair,
who will buy these delicate, bright
Rainbow tinted circles of light?
Lustrous token of radiant lives,
For happy daughters and happy wives” (‘Bangle sellers’) (3)

Sarojini’s simple words “for happy daughters and happy wives” are quite enough to convey the real aim of Indian woman’s life. An Indian woman is always a symbol of devotion, goodness and truth and glorifies these through her chaste and pure life centred on love, sacrifice and service. She is great as a daughter, as a wife and as a mother. Sarojini’s bangle sellers again emphasize –

“Some are meet for a maiden’s wrist
silver and blue as the mountain mist,

some are like fields of sunlit corn
meet for a bride on her bridal morn
some like the flames of her marriage fire
or rich with the hue of her heart’s desire
Twinkling luminous, tender and clear
Like her bridal laughter and bridal tear” ‘Bangle Sellers’ (4)

The colours of the bangles silver and blue, used for Indian maiden’s wrist are quite apt to suggest the blooming beauty of her growing age. The ‘flame like’ colour of bangles is appropriate to harmonize with the flame of sacred marriage fire. “The ideal that marriage aims at is that of spiritual union through the physical. The human love that it incarnates is intended to serve as a stepping stone to divine or universal love”. Infact an Indian wife is said to a “saha dharmacharni” who performs her all duties (dharma) enjoyed in company with her husband. The emphasis given on ‘radiance’ is suggestive of joyfulness. Bright bangles made of glass, lac, silver, gold and brass with a variety of other material and colours add richness. Hindu married women love to wear new bright coloured bangles on every happy occasion, especially on marriage, “karva chauth” and “teej” festivals. Sarojini Naidu throws light on the feelings related to these bangles and says that the bangles which are purple and gold flecked gray meant –

“For her who has journeyed through life midway
Whose hands have cherished whose love has blest
And cradled fair sons on her faithful breast
Who serves her household in fruitful pride,
And worships the gods at her husband’s side” (‘Bangle Sellers’) (5)

Out of common subject of bangles, Sarojini has woven a rich pattern of philosophy of Indian woman’s life cycle. The holy book Bhagavad Gita when presents the ideals of a perfect human being, “Humility, unostentatiousness, nonviolence, forgiveness, uprightness, service to the preceptor, purity of mind and body, stead fastness and self control” effectively suit the devoted life and nature

of Indian woman. (XIII\7). Sarojini’s lines – “Whose hands have cherished, whose love has blest” is excellent to explore the ideals of Indian womanhood.

In her song ‘Palanquin Bearers’, Sarojini depicts the typical and very common sight of Indian people and vividly recreates the scene of the nineteen century and the early decades of present century when the cars were not in common use as they are at present and at that time the ladies of the noble families used to visit their relative’s house in palanquins. The bride too used to be carried in the palanquin. One might even today go to remote Indian village a removed from the scientific means of conveyance and observe the palanquin bearers (kahar) usually two or four carrying in the palki a young noble lady. The palanquin bearers in Sarojini’s poem are singing song in rhythmic harmony with their foot steps –

“Lightly, o lightly we bear her along
She sways like a flower in the wind of our song
She skims like a bird on the foam of a stream
She floats like a laugh from the lips of a dream
We bear her along like a pearl of a string”. (‘Palanquin Bearers’) (6)

What a marvelous sight of India it is! when a beautiful bride or maiden is carried by the palanquin bearers in such a sophisticated manner the similes ‘she sways like a flower,’ ‘skims like a bird and floats like a laugh’ clearly are used not to explain anything, for nothing needs explanation but to fill the mind’s eyes with the picture of an elusive delicacy and beauty of newly married Indian girl. The bearers bear her along like a pearl on a string, their hearts burst out in rapture again and again over the delicate and graceful beauty to whom they are carrying. They are not just carrying a lady but in reality they are carrying the honour, dignity and respect of India because the glory of India lies in the respect of Indian womanhood –

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“Softly, o softly we bear her along,
She hangs like a star in the dew or our song,
she springs like a beam on the brow of the tide,
she fells like a tear from the eyes of a bride,
lightly, o lightly we glide and we sing,
we bear her along like a pearl on a string” (‘Palanquin Bearers’) (7)

The lyric has totally Indian touch. The palanquin, the bearers the inmate inside, the song, the springly movements, all fuse into one another. The very rhythm of the swaying movements of the palanquin, the images used for the graceful beauty of Indian bride or maiden sitting inside, the happiness of the bearers while carrying the dignified beauty of India bride or maiden sitting inside, and their awareness of the happiness that is to come to the bride, make the poem charming. The poem presents the toil, sweat, and oppression of the palanquin bearers and also articulating their admiration for the beautiful Indian bride or maiden sitting inside the palanquin, so freely and enthusiastically through their subconscious reverence. The palanquin, bearers are known to sing as they work, their verses are meant to lighten the burden that they carry. Such verses are often repetitive and rhythmic. Sarojini Naidu has successfully tried to bring a similar formula of repetitiveness and rhythm to the poem.

Another, a very typical sight of Indian people is presented by Sarojini, through the nostalgic longing of the Indian minstrels for the chivalry of past times in her poem ‘Wandering Singers’. They are called the ‘bhats’ in India. They roam about from place to place playing music and singing songs and delighting the hearts of numerous hearers and making an honest penny for themselves.

“Where the voice of the wind calls our wandering feet through the echoing forest and echoing street with lutes in our hands ever singing we roam All men are our kindred, the world is our home”. (‘Wandering Singers’) (8)

The last line of the above stanza is completely based on the philosophy of universal brotherhood – “Vasudev Kutumbkam”, the basic characteristic of Indianness. Through the song of wandering singers, Sarojini has depicted the generosity and reciprocity of Indian people that they are always loving and warm, and they are bound to one another with the thread of love, not by any rules or laws. The basic fact behind this value of universal brotherhood of Indians belongs to the essence that, ‘In every being He lives, through all minds He thinks” Sarojini’s line “All men are our kindred, the world is our home” is noble to express the oneness of every human being. The charm of wandering singers lies in their songs and music. These wandering minstrels singing and playing on roads and streets in villages and towns at banquet halls, weddings and festive occasion private as well as public has always presented common sight of India. The soothing effect of the songs of Wandering Singers, and the music mingled with their emotions and thoughts counteract the force of love and goodwill directed towards the people. In Sarojini’s poem, the wandering singers breathe an air of buoyancy, care freeness, abandon and release. The wandering singers are gay but their song is pensive. They are not concerned with the present or the future; they cherish no hopes, no dreams. Nothing in the world binds them. They none freely like wind. But at the same time they sing of simple and sorrowful things – which are decidedly the timeless themes.

“Our lays are of cities whose luster is shed The laughter’s and beauty of women long dead, The sword of old battles, the crown of old kings, And happy and simple and sorrowful things” (‘Wandering Singers’) (9)

May be they are singing of the cities which have lost the glory which they once enjoyed like that of chittar or Goconda, may be they are singing of the beauty and joys of women who have been dead for a long time such as Jhansi Ki Rani or Zeb-Un-Nisha, may be they are singing of the battles which were fought in the past, and the kings and warriors who fought these battles. Thus these wandering singers are the repositories of history, customs and traditions. It is they who keep alive many a local and national legends and make the people conscious of their cultural heritage of glory and greatness of their past. Cosmopolitan by temperament these singers roam about singing and playing on –

“What hopes shall we gather, what dream shall we sow? where the wind calls our wandering steps we go No love bids us tarry, no joy bids us wait, The voice of the wind is the voice of our fate” (‘Wandering Singers’) (10)

The Wandering Singers have no dream of the future and they have nothing to hope for. They are entirely in present without any regret for the past or hope for the future. In this admirable song, Sarojini Naidu has not only captured scintillating tunes of the ancient “bauls” or “bards” of India, she has also expressed their exuberance of joy which they take in singing. Even today, inside India, there are those who have no property, no education no lucrative profession and they drift in non-descriptive vocation of wandering singers. But according to Sarojini the songs of these wandering singers are not without aim rather they create typical Indian atmosphere by reflecting the cultural heritage of India, its traditions, stories and legends.

Sarojini Naidu with her observant eye and understanding heart, has explored the Indian philosophy of life and death, darkness and light, happiness and misery in her song ‘Indian Weavers’. Weaving was very important folk vocation of India at the time of Sarojini Naidu. Mahatma Gandhi respected this profession with head and heart. He used to weave his clothes by his own. He always said stress that all Indians should wear garments which are hand-woven. Kabir Das, greatest sage and saint of India, was a weaver by profession. Even today, weaving is one of the most important folk vocation in some of the remote villages of India and the weavers are the important folk characters. Sarojini’s poem ‘Indian Weavers’ introduces a typical Indian scene, that of particularly of the rural side, weaving clothes on handlooms in different coloured pattern. Questioner, any man, approaches the weavers and puts them questions, and the weavers answer. The first two lines of each stanza form the question and the last two lines are the answer. It is at three different hours, the questions are put, one at the break of day when nature wakes up and new life emerges, the other at night fall for which the newly married couple eagerly await and the last at chill moon light time and its association with cold stillness approaching death –

“Weavers, weaving at the break of day
Why do you weave a garment so gay?...
Blue as the wing of halcyon wild
We weave the robes of a new born child
Weavers weaving at fall of night,
Why do you weave a garment so bright?.....
Like the plumes of a peacock, purple and green
We weave, the marriage veil of queen
Weavers, weaving solemn and still
What do you weave in the moon lit chill?..
While as feather and white as a cloud
We weave as a dead man’s funeral shroud” (‘Indian Weavers’) (11)

Here, Sarojini has assembled so many things to weave, the complete texture of the poem—the birds, the colours, the different hours of the day, different moods, similes and images, and sound pattern, each merging into another, and creating a harmonious effect of Indian philosophy of human life, for example the bird halcyon with its blue wings and the break of the day as though something were suddenly opening out, goes well with the phenomenon of a child taking birth. The halcyon bird is the symbol of the spirit of the beginning of creation, and the sea is the chaos which the halcyon charms into the cosmos for the purpose of breeding. These two symbols suggesting

birth and creation are quite apt. The gay robes, embodying the gaiety of nature’s heart at a newly born life, the peacocks with its green and purple plumes (feathers) and the nightfall (suggesting the hour of expectancy) all go well with the Indian girl’s marriage dress and marriage time. In last stanza, Sarojini suggests white feather (it is neither a wing nor a plume which go with living birds, it is a feather torn of a dead bird) and the chill moon light and the weavers weaving in solemnity, produces only a funeral shroud and create a dark atmosphere of death.

Hence, the poem ‘Indian weavers’ of Sarojini is symbolic rather than allegorical since it is only a thought rather than experience. The whole comedy of human life based on Indian philosophy is brought out here. The fates (here the weavers) are weaving the mingled web (textures) of human life. Fates in Indian mythology are embodied in the concept of Brahma, the God of creation, sitting on lotus, coming out of blue sea is presented by Sarojini Naidu by recalling the blue of the halcyon wings in first stanza, Vishnu the God of prosperity, marriage, wealth splendour corresponding with the splendour of peacock plumes in the second stanza, and at last Rudra, the God of destruction—death besmeared in ash, going well with the while of feather and chilled moonlight in the third stanza so man’s birth, life and death is the subject matter of ‘Indian Weavers’ and the poem is a symbolical representation of the Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh based on Indian philosophy. The weavers, weaving should have led the poetess to solemn thinking about life. Though Sarojini has not made any comment yet transistories of human life does not fail to move our hearts. Also, she has skillfully retained the simplicity and listening music of the folk song of India.

In the colourful pageant of diverse people which India proudly presents, the figure of gipsy girl has unique attraction. In tattered robes yet hoard of a glittering grace of by gone colours, Sarojini beholds this daughter of wandering people. Tamless and unabashed, she is healthier in body and spirit than her sisters of sophisticated society—

“In tattered robes that hoard a glittering grace
of by one colours, broidered to the knees
Behold her, daughter of a wandering race
Tamless, with bold falcon’s agile grace
And the lithe tiger’s sinuous majesty” (‘Indian Gipsy’) (12)

The picturesque and vivid delineation of the Indian gipsy maiden, who has been treated as majestic like that of a tiger, is the main characteristic of the poem. The word tamless throws light on her well balanced, energetic and free personality. The gipsy girl actively and space fully walk like a falcon. She leads an idealized pastoral life and tends her simple wants with frugal skill when avarice, jealousy and mutual bickering are the rule, among the dwellers of the most modern of the town—

“With frugal skill her simple wants she tends
she folds her tawny heifers and her sheep
on lonely meadows when the day light ends
Ere the quick night upon her flock descends
like a black panther from the caves of sheep” (‘Indian Gipsy’) (13)

Days, weeks, months, years, centuries, come and go, but the life of gipsies is immutable and eternal. The character of the gipsies is moulded by the particular place they live in. Through the

adjustment nature of gipsies, Sarojini wants to emphasize the adjustable nature of Indian people, the basic value of assimilation and tolerance. Indian gipsies, who are born and bred in the purity of nature, is a away from the artificiality and contamination of society. They have plain emotion and universal passions. Their demands are instinctive and natural rather than the outcome of a higher developed logic. Sarojini Naidu depicts this Indian gipsy girl as a symbol of eternity.

“Time river winds in foaming centuries
It’s changing swift, irrevocable course
To far off and in calculable sea
she is twin born with primal mysteries
And drinks of life’s at times forgotten source” (‘The Indian Gipsy’) (14)

The gipsy girl to Sarojini is, “twin born with primal mysteries” who “drinks of life at time’s forgotten source” With the eternal nature of gipsy girl, may be Sarojini wants to refer, here, the eternity of our motherland India whose mysterious is hidden in the “realization of one ultimate truth”. “It is the land which stands firmer than any rock in the world, with its undying vigour indestructible life. Its life is of the same nature as the soul, without beginning and without end, immortal and we are the children of such a country”. (15)

As countries may come and go, but India will ever shine through its philosophy of spiritualism, in the same manner, men may come and go, but this Indian gipsy girl goes on forever. Sarojini wants to emphasize like the eternity of India and Indianness, the gipsy girl is eternal, endless and twin born as she shows all about the mysteries of past age and also an inking into the time to come. Sarojini wants to suggest that gipsies may be humble and modest but they are not trivial. They reflect through their veins the process of nature as they move through nature and their life is regulated by nature. There is hardly any difference between Sarojini’s gipsy girl and all gipsies scattered all over the world, between the present day gipsy and the gipsies of centuries ago. We, therefore, see in them very roots of humanity. Their holistic feelings are consequently fiercer and contrasted with the superficial life of materialistic world.

The grandeur of India lives through the creation of diverse forms of rituals, worships and sadhnas for personal satisfaction, on enchanting variety of ceremonies and festivals for community interactions, myriads of soul stirring forms of dance, music and art illuminating holistic practical science like Ayurveda, Vasutusilpa, Astrology, Astronomy, Yoga, Meditation and so on and transcending all of them in an immeasurable and incalculable treasury of spirituality and other literature which are a source of wonder and inspiration for entire mankind. Indian traditional dance forms are the most articulated forms of physical expressions achieving an unusual integration of body, mind and soul, a harmonious blending of science, art and spiritual yearning. Sarojini Naidu is thrilled to describe the rapture, rhythm and felicity of Indian dancers who are introduced against the background of the silent sky –

“O wild and entrancing the strain of keen music,
That cleaveth the stars like a wail of desire
And beautiful dancers with houri like faces
be witch the voluptuous watches of night” (‘Indian Dancers’) (16)

The strain of keen music is described as ‘wild and entrancing and seems to cut the longing of passionate heart. The imagery is keeping with the theme is highly sensuous and impassioned –

“The scents of red roses and sandal wood flutter and
Die in the maze of their gem tangled hair
And smiles are entwine like magical serpents, the
Poppies of lip that are purple are burning
Like tremulous dawns in the quivering air,
And exquistic, subtle and slow are the tinkle and
Tread of their rhythmical, slumber soft feet” (‘Indian Dancers’)(17)

It appears as Sarojini herself has identified with the dancers in order to feel the vital rhythm of life. Indian dancers with ‘tread of their rhythmical, ‘slumber-soft-feet, ‘The scent of red roses and sandal wood’ the gem tangled hair, ‘magical smiles,’ ‘glittering purple garments’ is presumably the sight of Kathak, the best classical dance from of India. Kathak, from North India is an urban sophisticated style full of virtuosity and intricate craftsmanship commonly identified with the court tradition of the late Nawabs of Northern India. It is really an amalgam of several folk tradition, the traditional dance drama form prevalent in the temple of Mathura and Brindavan known as Krishna and Radaha lilas and the sophistication of court tradition.…… Straight walks gliding movements, fast pirocuttes, changing tempos and metrical pattern constitute the beauty and dexterity of the style”. (18)

Sarojini Naidu has vividly portrayed the rhythm and felicity of accomplished ‘Kathak Dancers’ may be of some courtly place like that of Hyderabad. Every sense is pushed to a point beyond satiety through an over abundance of lust and over ripe imagery. There is magical use of words and phrases in conveying the impression of, not mere movements but the movement that is rhythmic, graceful, artistic, sometimes slow, sometimes swift –

“Now silent, now springing and swaying and swinging,
Like blossoms that bend to the breezes of showers,
Now wantonly winding, they flash, now they falter,
And lingering, languish in radiant choir,
Their jewel girt arms and warm, wavering lily –
Long fingers enchant through melodious hours,
Eyes ravished with rapture, celestially panting
What passionate bosom a flaming with fire!” (‘Indian Dancers’) (19)

The whole stanza is at its best to express the vibrating rhythm of ‘Indian Dancers’. Their sense impression, their love for beauty, their passion for music. The magical touch of words like ‘springing’ ‘swaying’ ‘swinging’ are excellent to produce a thrill. The movement of their delicate feet is exquistic, subtle slow and rhythmical. The expression ‘Jewel girt arms’, ‘wavering lily long fingers”
‘eyes ravished with rapture’ ‘celestially panting’ “passionate bosom flaming with fire” are really captivating specially ‘eyes ravished with rapture and ‘celestially panting’ seem to be based on inner ecstasy, Indian philosophy of spiritualism- sat chit ananda.

The first thing about the people of India that strikes the outside world is their Indianness which penetrates through what they say, what they feel, what they aspire, what they hope for. It is something sensed and readily recognized but is hard to define. Sarojini Naidu presents the realistic picture of the inner feelings and sentiments of the robust spirit of the fishermen of India. We hear the throb of the ‘tom tom’ playing from the village nesting in the midst of mango or coconut groves or the more sophisticated beat of the maridagam and tabla. The fisher folk are awakened in their villages and asked to go to sea. Perhaps the ‘tom tom’ throbs with their working –

‘Rise, brothers, rise the wakening skies prays to the morning light,
The wind lies asleep in the arms of the dawn like a child that has cried all night
Come, let us gather our nets from the shore and set our catamarans free
To capture the leaping wealth of the tide, for we are the sons of sea” (‘Coromandel Fishers’) (20)

Sarojini has recreated the scene of the atmosphere of sea and its surroundings and the intense feelings which the fishers folk have for the sea. In this song, the fishermen declare themselves to be the ‘sons of sea’ explaining their daring, enthusiastic and adventurous nature. They lead a rough life and are not afraid of any stormy weather, because it is their business to “hasten away in the track of the sea gull’s call and go deep in the sea” to capture the leaping wealth of the time. For this, they face the pearls of their profession with manly courage and are undaunted by death –

“What though we toss at the fall of the sun where the hands of the sea god drives?
He who holds the storm by the hair, will hide In his breast, our lives” (‘Coromandel Fishers’) (21)

Sarojini brings before us the religious faith of fishermen in Sea God who is always there to guard and save their lives. For them, attraction lies in the hazards they undertake each day. Though they are leading an adventurous life but their simplicity and loving thoughts have created an atmosphere of tolerance all around on the Coromandel Coast. That is the unique feature of Indianness because, ‘The gift of India’s greatness is because toleration and sympathy have become practical’. Life in their coconut glade, among their own people, has all the homely joys. It conveys their loving and generous feelings for each other, the basic characteristic of Indian people –

“Sweet is the shade of the coconut glade, and the scent of the mango grove,
And sweet are the sands at the full o’ the moon with the sound of voices we love,

But sweeter, o brothers, the kiss of her spray and
the dance of the wild foam’s glee …..
Row, brothers, row to the blue of the verge
where the low sky mates with the sea” (‘Coromandel Fishers’) (22)

Their home surroundings with mango groves brimming with cherry voices of their loved
oner are no doubt picturesque, Through the loving addresses ‘O brothers’, “Row brothers row”,
Sarojini has presented the Indian philosophy of brotherhood. The lines are very precious to convey
the feel of mutual love. And such lines and expressions of mutual love and understanding are very
important in today’s time of restlessness. In today’s time, love, mutual help, brotherhood, sharing,
have become the thing of past. People are burning in the fire of hatred and jealous because of
materialism. Indian philosophy teaches, ‘Ek pita ekas ke hum balak’. God is our common Father,
we call all are His children”. (23)

Stressing upon brotherhood, In Sarojini’s poem, fishermen’s address to each other as
‘brother’ and their working together is very loving to convey the message of mutual help and
brotherhood. It is note worthy that while dealing with the life and vocation of these simple fishermen,
Sarojini does not forget to mention the moral values of India. As lover of adventure, the fishermen
find great pleasure in courting risk, and dangers on the wild foam of their beloved sea, the praises
of which they sing with mirth, their simple faith in sea God, all create a typical sight of India.

Another, a very realistic picture of Indian people is – Indian snake charmer presented by Sarojini
Naidu in her poem ‘Snake Charmer’. India has always been a curious place of snake charmers,
jugglers and magicians to the west. Even today whether in the countryside or in the town, we can
see the snake charmers lad in dirty ochre, moving with a pair of baskets containing snakes. Here
in the poem ‘Snake Charmer’, we see him singing a song to woo the snake into basket who has
slipped out of and is hiding somewhere-

“where dost thou hide from the magic of my flute call,
In the moon light tangled meshes of perfume,
where the clustering keoras guard the squirrel’s slumber
where the deep woods glimmer with the Jasmine’s bloom? (‘The Snake Charmer’) (24)

India is the only country where snakes are not seen as a thing of horror, but on the contrary
they are worshiped and respected as a symbol of god. Hindus worship the snake as the sacred
pet of Lord Shiva. From the vedic period, serpents happened to symbolize wisdom and one
commonly considered sacred and hence greatly venerated. Even a festival is held every year in the
respect of these snakes – ‘Nag Panchami’, a feast in the honour of snakes and also to survive the
ancient snake worship in the country. In Sarojini’s poem, the snake charmer allures the snake by
affectionate offers as the snake has not appeared before his sight –

“I'll feed thee, o beloved, on milk and wild red honey,
I'll bear thee in a basket of rushes, green and while,
to a palace bower where golden vested maidens
Thread with mellow laughter the petals of delight” (‘The Snake Charmer’) (25)

23- Sri Guru Granth Sahib page 611
24- Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Golden Threshold’ page 08
The snake charmer knows his art, so through his flute, he again asks the serpent where it is loitering, by what murmuring hollows, he woos his would be captive as a bride groom woos his bride —

"come, thou subtle bride of my mellifluous wooing
come, thou silver breasted moon beam of my desire" ('The Snake Charmer') (25)

This is the uniqueness of India where each and every relation is bounded by the thread of love may be human to human, human to animal or bird because according to Indian philosophy "love is always the highest ideal, its manifestation is from the lowest atom to the highest being omnipotent, all pervading is this love". (2)

The concluding lines of Sarojini’s poem show the Indian snake charmer’s deep love for his pet – the serpent, a symbol of high esteem. The snake is depicted as a delicate and soft bride whom the snake charmer woos by the sweet tunes of his flute. The snake has a silvery breast like the ‘ray of moon’. It produces by its beautiful sight, a desire in the onlookers to possess it as it does in the heart of snake charmer. What distinguishes the poem is its flower scented bowers of keora and jasmine flowers creating the atmosphere of sweet and delicate perfume and the loving and affectionate way by which the snake is wooed by the snake charmer.

Fellow feeling and the feeling of humanity are the characteristics that deserve cultivation in every human heart and it is the motive that prompts the origin of various charitable institutions in India and that is why there are more beggars in India than in other parts of the world because Indians generally pay more attention to the development of finer instincts than the people of other countries. India teaches, ‘The poor and the miserable are for our salvation, so that we may serve the Lord coming in the shape of diseased, the lunatic, the leper, and the sinner” (27) Sarojini Naidu has conveyed the simple philosophy of ‘fakirs’ and ‘darvesh’ of India in her poem ‘Wandering Beggars’ who with begging bowls in their hands wander from place to place, singing songs –

“From the threshold of the dawn
on we wander, always on
 till the friendly light be gone,
 Time is like a wind that blows
 the future is a folded rose,
 who shall pluck it, no one knows” ('Wandering Beggars') (28)

Through the simple lines of wandering beggars, Sarojini has presented the mystical approach that time and future are hidden from the ordinary eye, they are revealed to spiritually enlightened person. Sarojini has reproduced mental images of reality called ‘Time’ and the reality called ‘Future’. Human life in reality is a mystery whose future and fate are in hands of God. Nissim Ezekiel shows great concern for human relations in his poetry. The miserable flight of the weaker section of society specially the beggars and poor stirs his heart and he feels sympathy for them. His poem “Episode” is full of compassion for poor beggars –

26- Vivekananda, ‘Practical Wisdom’ Vol. II page 48
27- Vivekananda, ‘Vedanta and Indian life’ Vol. III page 247
“A beggar’s whine approached, his eyes
shone in the darkness, fixed on us,
to make him go me gave him half an anna
But then another came,
And a third from a little distance,
watched us give the second half an anna
He lurched towards us, dragged one foot,
And howled like a sick dog towards the moon” (‘Episode’) (‘The Third’) (29)

Ezekiel has graphically painted in vivid picturesque words and phrases, a vast gallery of
portraits representing various Indian professions and ways of life. How pitiable is Dhanya, a typical
Indian beggar –
“His old skin
Is like a ground
on which he sleeps
so also his rages” (‘The Truth about Dhanya’) (30)

A very realistic picture of the poor railway clerk who is the only support of his family and finds
it difficult to make both ends meet because he gets no extra income or reward. No body appreciates
his work –
“I am never neglecting my responsibility
I am discharging it properly
I am doing my duty
But who is appreciating
No body, I am telling you” (‘The Railway Clerk’) (31)

Nissim Ezekiel has depicted the picture of money charmer in his poem ‘Entertainment’
when a girl with two monkeys is shows to entertain the public through the play tricks of monkeys.
The crowd thickens as the show climaxes but melts when the time for payments comes –
“Only the monkeys are sad,
And suddenly
The body begins to cry
Anticipating time for payment,
The crowd dissolves
some in shame, part
with the smallest coin they have
The show moves on” (‘Entertainment’) (32)

Dancing eunuchs are a familiar sight in India but in Kamla Das’s poem they are used
symbolically. The poetess sympathizes with the dancing eunuchs who belong to neither sex and
thus suffer a peculiar irony of fate. On happy occasions like marriages, the birth of a baby in a
family, they dance ecstatically to entertain people and to earn money. They seem to be completely merged with their dance which actually reveals their inner rottenness and void. How graphically and sensuously the poetess pictures the dancing eunuches in summer heat –

“It was hot, so hot, before the eunuches came
To dance, wide skirts going round and round, cymbals,
Richly clashing and anklets jingling, jingling
Jingling….. Beneath the fiery gulmohar, with
Long braids flying, dark eyes flashing they danced” (‘The Dance of Eunuchs’) (‘Summer in Calcutta’) (33)

In “Evening At the Old Nalapat House”, Kamla Das expresses her sympathy and deep compassion with the hired Tabourers –

“… The field hands
returning home with baskets on their heads
Their thin legs crushing
the heads, the shrubs, their ankles
bruised by
thorns, their inside bruised by memories” (‘Evening at the old Nalapat House’) (34)

Kamla Das portrays the hardworking of poor bangle sellers moving from house to house –
…. All covered with the dust of roads
for all them whose feet devouring rough
miles cracks on heels so that when they,
clambered up our porch, the noise was granting” (‘A Hot Noon in Malabar’) (35)

Child labour is a curse for the society. Though many laws, many rules, many efforts are at in hand to put a bann at child labour but even then, poverty pushes the children towards hard labour. Jayant Mahapatra speaks of child labour and the plight of a boy who worked in the black smith’s shop. Thus he writes –

“As a child, on my way to school
I watched the fire crackle in the black smith’s shop
A boy sat smiling, fanning the flames,
I did not notice his eyes then, misty with pain
or his hands as he worked with the bellows
A finger broken, sores on his thin wrists” (‘Defeat – Shadow Space’) (36)

The line show that Mahapatra is deeply moved at the future and fate of child labour, again he describes everyone of India in the poem ‘Some Where My Man’ and writes –
“Here sits my man
With the doorway of a changed street
Beside his ailing mother
Her pinched aged mother
proudly bearing the irrelevance
of movements” (‘Somewhere My Man’) (‘A Rain of Rites’) (37)

K N Daruwalla has created veritable picture gallery of common ‘real’ men and women with authenticity but there is anger, pity, sarcasm and genuine love while depicting these characters of India. The poet brings in the analogy of palanquin bearers but these are of a different sort for –

“On the string beds they carry
no henna smeared brides
Prone upon themselves are frail bodies
Frozen bodies delirious bodies
some drained of fever and sap
some moving others supine
Transfixed under the sun” (‘Pestilence’) (‘Under Orion’s’) 16’ (38)

In Daruwalla’s poetry there is disease, violence and weakness while depicting Indian people with different occupation. He presents the beggars through a parallel between the river and the land –

“Beggars hoist their deformities
As boats men hoist their sails” (‘Vignette I’) (‘Crossing of Rivers’) (39)

Lepers are common among the beggars. K N Daruwalla chooses images of diseases to suggest the present of leper – through his poem ‘The Leper at the Taj’

“He reduced the marble to his own terms
a resurrection of ghosts as a half moon
vomited upon a domed leprosy” (‘The Leper at the Taj’) (40)

The Taj becomes the unlikely metaphor for the Leper. Like the Taj, leper too is old, like it his eyes too are opaque and blank –

“His look was old as the moguls
his stance was older rooted in time
when time and human misery were young” ‘The Leper at the Taj – Apparition in April’ (40)

Magicians are very common to show their magic art and earn their livelihood. They perform their magic on the stage, and sometimes just on road corner. In K N Daruwalla’s poem ‘The Magician’s Son’ there is no any fantasy, nor any magic, rather the use of the boy as a tool in the magic show fills

the poet with disgust. The Magician’s Son is described almost as a victim who has to participate in the performance. He is just like a puppet in the hands of father, the magician. He has no free will. He is hypnotised and made to lie on the point of an unturned sword –
“A jackdaw may smile but the magician’s son
will not utter a word. The dandruff of expression
has been blown from his eyes,
He never smiles and he never cries” (‘The Magician’s Son’) (41)

The boy’s becomes expressionless under the influence of hypnotism. K N Daruwalla brings the scene to life –
“On an up thrust sword point they make him lie spine
why does not the sword blade enter the spine,
of this senseless huddle, rigid from knee to throat?
The sword removed, he levitates, he floats
for some hypnotic, moments and dares,
gravity, asleep on a hammock which is not there” (‘The Magician’s Son’) ‘Landscapes’ (42)

When the boy is brought back to consciousness, he feels like a child fish thrown on to the beach. K N Daruwalla wants to focus how hard job a magician’s son does, to earn for livelihood. It is his daily routine.

**Simple faiths, joys and concerns of rural people of India -**

It would be a pleasant experience for every, one specially for any westerner to visit any Indian village because here he will see no more the individual aloofness of modern western civilization but here he will get the warmth of a real and loving welcome as soon as he may knock at any door and, here, he may see a simple life beautifully lived with Indian customs and tradition. Each and every act of village life has a sacred site smilingly undertaken in the serene spirit of faith in God and executed with patient love.

For Indian peasants, the harvest fills their granaries with corn and their pockets with money. Fields and harvest is the fruition of their labour enabling them to purchase a pair of fresh bullocks, articles of clothing, and comfort, agricultural implements and to build and repair their houses, pay off the debts, and arrange for marriage of their sons and daughters. So their whole life depends on their harvest in fields – Toru Dutt presents the sketches of Indian life in village and the farmers stirring early in the day to feel happy to see their crops in the fields –
“A rugged herd boy, here and there,
wtih his long stick and naked feet,
A plough man wending in his care,
the field from which he hopes the wheat” (‘Jogadhya Uma) –(43)

41- K N Daruwalla, ‘The Magician’s Son’ ‘Landscapes’ Delhi: Oxford University press 1987 page 26
42- K N Daruwalla, ‘The Magician’s Son’ ‘Landscapes’ page 27
43- Totu Dutt, ‘Jogadhya Uma’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 101
Toru Dutt again creates the farmer’s joy to see their “Log huts full of grain”
“Huge straw sticks, log huts full of grain
sleek cattle, flowers, a tinkling bell
spoke in a language sweet and plain
here smiling peace and plenty dwell” (‘Jogadhya Uma’) (43)

‘Peace and Plenty’ describe the peaceful life of villagers and richness of their crops. In villages, air is pure, water is pure, food is pure, and so there is purity and peace in their life and living. There is no such artificiality, materialistic race and corruption as in the modern life of cities and towns. True India lives in villages, if any guest comes to the house, the villagers serve him with full love and devotion, respect and dignity. They offer the guest with best food, milk, curds, sweets and so many other comforts with affectionate feelings. The value of ‘Athithi Devo Bhava’ can be very well seen when some visits to the house of villager. Toru Dutt describes the same loving emotions when a village priest welcomes the peddler, the bangle seller, and offers him food –

“Ho sunkha peddler, pass not by,
but step thou in, and share the food
Just offered on our altar high,
If thou art in a hungry mood,
welcome are all to this repast!
the rich and poor, the high and low!
Come, wash thy feet, and break thy fast
then on thy journey strengthened go” (‘Jogadhya Uma’)(44)

The lines beautifully depict the simple living and high thinking of Indian villagers and how they respect their guest with head and heart.

Sarojini Naidu is very practical in describing the simple faiths and joys of Indian rural people in her poem ‘Harvest Hymn’. She presents a group of men and women singing a hymn of adoration and thanks giving to the four great deities responsible for their rich harvest – Surya, the sun god, Varuna, the god of rain. Prithvi, the goddess of earth and Brahma, the creator of all life in the universe. Men, at first praise Surya as the giver of mellowing radiance that nurtures their grain, lord of lotus, bright and magnificent lord of morning –

“The gold of our fields, the gold of our fruit
O, giver of mellowing radiance, we hail thee,
We praise thee, o surya, with cymbal and flute”( ‘Harvest Hymn’) (45)

Hence, the first devotion goes to Surya, one of the chief deities of Vedas, because the warm rays of the sun ripen the corns and crops of farmers. Continuing their thanks giving prayers in the form of ritual, lord Varuna is hailed as the sender of rain and dew, the lord of rainbow, great and beneficent, lord of water that fosters their crops –

44- Toru Dutt, ‘Jogadhya Uma’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 101
“Lord of rainbow, lord of harvest,
Great and beneficent lord of the main,
Thine is the mercy that cherished our furrows
Thine is the mercy that fostered our grains,
O sender of rain, and the dewfall, we hail thee
We praise thee Varuna, with cymbal and pipe”(‘Harvest Hymn’) (45)

The farmers long for the ‘mercy’ of Varuna, the precious gift of rain which nourishes the crops into the soil furrowed by the plough. In Rigveda, Varuna stands out as guardian of world order. He is also conceived as the ruler of water who makes river flow and causes the clouds to moisten the earth. The Rigveda says Varuna waters the soil, the earth, the sky. “This earth is his, to him belong, those vast and boundless skies both seas within him rest and yet in that small pool he lies” (46) (2.28)

After the thanks giving prayer to Varuna, some women are shown praising goddess Prithvi, the Earth, from where their corn spring up –
“Thine is the plentiful bosom that feeds us,
Thine us the womb where our riches have birth” (‘Harvest Hymns’) (47)

In praising goddess Prithvi, Sarojini has presented a group of women instead of men as ‘Woman’ and ‘Prithvi’ are similar in the sense because both are the true symbol of sacrifice and patience, in both the words the whole phenomenon of world is absorbed’. Sarojini has vividly created the joyous atmosphere of Indian countryside when rural women invoke goddess Prithvi who is the source of their manifold gladness –
“We bring thee our love and our garland for tribute,
with gifts of thy opulent giving we come” (‘Harvest Hymn’) (47)

Then all voices of men and women hail and praise Brahma as life of all lives and all blessings, Lord of Universe, eternal father, ineffable OM –
“Lord of universe, lord of our being,
Father eternal, ineffable OM
Thou art the seed, and the scythe of our harvest,
Thou art our hands, and our heart and our home,
We bring thee our labour for tribute,
Grant us thy succour, thy council and thy case” (‘Harvest and Hymn’) (47)

Sarojini has successfully captured the spirit of immense faith of Indian village people in God as ‘God is the goal, the sustainer, the witness, the abode, the refuge, the resting place and the imperishable seed’ (IX\18) (48)

48- The Bhagavad Gita IX\18 page 245
The whole poem ‘Harvest Hymn’ is a beautiful picture of Indian farmer’s faith, joy and concerns on one side, and constant hard work and simplicity on other. Sarojini’s line ‘Thou art our hands our hands, our heart and our home’ reflects their devoted hard work, their tough routine which their carry may be it is hot sunlight or freezing cold, or heavy rainfall. It is they who grow food for all without caring their own comforts.

Sarojini’s poem ‘Harvest to Indra, Lord of Rain’ is a prayer of Indian farmers to God of Rain to favour them by his bounty, for their very existence depends on his mercy –

“Thou, who with bountiful torrent and river,
Dost nourish the heart of the forest and plain
Thou who art mighty to succor and cherish
Who savest from sorrow and shieldest from pain
Withhold not thy merciful love or we perish
Hearken, O Lord of Rain” (‘Hymn to Indra, Lord of Rain’) (49)

India is chiefly a country of villages, where more than seventy percent of people of the total population live and a major part of these rural people are engaged in the occupation of agriculture. In short, farmers are the backbone of our country. In the words of Gandhi ji ‘Real India Lives in Villages’. Because Indian farmer is the true personification of simplicity, hard work and devotion. Through the simple devotional prayer of Indian peasants to Lord of Rain, Sarojini Naidu has depicted the hard job of their daily routine, and the religious spirit lying behind every thought.

Simplicity and grace of Indian village girls is realistically presented in Sarojini’s poem ‘In Praise of Henna’. She visualizes a group of young Indian maidens going with their pitchers to fetch water from the river early in the morning. Seeing these innocent village maidens –

“A kokila called from a henna spray
Lira! Liree! Lira! Liree”
Sarojini Naidu translates this message of kokila to the girls like this –

“Hasten, maiden, hasten away,
To gather the leaves of the henna tree,
send your pitchers afloat on the tide,
gather the leaves ere the dawn be old
grind them in mortars of amber and gold” ‘In Praise of Henna’ (50)

What a lovely sight! The maidens running to collect the henna leaves! Such a simplicity, lovely talks and concerns are only possible in India and India only. Feminine grace is the special feature of Indian woman hood. Sarojini has created Indian atmosphere in a beautiful manner by interpreting Indian way of life. Henna is a plant whose dry leaves are powdered and turned into paste which Indian women and maidens apply to colour their palms and feet on all happy occasions specially on ‘Karva Chauth’, Marriage ceremony, ‘Engagement Ceremony’, Teej festival and many more. Henna is the symbol of happiness. On account of its decorative value, it is applied in a way as to make beautiful designs on palms. Once applied, the colour lasts about a week despite washing. Though the paste of henna is brownish yellow, but the colour after washing is red and red is the

symbol of love. Sarojini’s lyric ‘In Praise of Henna’ is transcription of the self sung song which intends to bring out the tenderness and innocent joy of the girls by harmoniously assembling the kokila’s lirallireel!, the particular season of ‘Shrawan’, the henna spray, the group of young maides – a call goes to the girls to come out and collect the leaves of henna and sing songs, makes the background to welcome Teej festival very popular in north India, when Indian women and maidens colour their palm and feet with henna and go to enjoy swinging on decorative swings –

“The tilka’s red for the brow of a bride,
And betel nuts red for lips that are sweet,
But, for lily like fingers and feet,
The red, the red of henna tree” (‘In Praise of Henna’) (51)

Applying henna (mehandi) is a special ceremony at the time of marriage in all Indian families. Sarojini’s poem ‘In Praise of Henna’ not only express the innocent joy of Indian maidens but also the value of henna a symbol of beauty, love and happiness.

Sarojini Naidu presents another realistic picture of an Indian maiden’s fear on a long and lonely way through the poem ‘Village Song’. In villages, it is usually the women folk who go to fetch water for their household. Where there are no wells, they go to some near by river. In Sarojini’s poem, a village maiden goes with her pitcher to the sacred river Jamuna to bring water. After having filled up her pitchers, she turns homeward hastily in order to avoid nightfall, but is detained by the boats man’s song. Lured by the song, she is tempted to stay, so gets late. The shadows of night are falling swiftly –

“Full are my pitchers and far to carry,
Lone is the way and long,
Why, o why was I tempted to tarry
Lured by the boats men’s song?
surety the shadows of night are falling?” (‘Village Song’) (52)

And the maiden is worried about the feelings of her nears and dears at home, waiting for her return –

“My brother will murmur, ‘Why doth she linger?’
Saying ‘o safe may the great gods bring her,
The Jamuna’s water’s are deep……
The Jamuna’s waters rush by so quickly
The shadows of evening gather so thickly\Like black birds in the sky”…. ‘Village Song’ (52)

The innocent fearful feelings and the inner feminine sensibility of village maiden, her loving attachment with her mother, brother and home, the anxiety of parent’s heart for their children, the

repeated cries “why, o why”, in a subdued tone bears the lyric of Indian feel. A fear embodied in maiden’s feelings grips her that the storm might break and the lightening might strike her so she prays to God –

“Unless thou succour my footsteps and guide me,
Ram re Ram! I shall die!” ‘Village Song’ (53)

The repetition of ‘Ram re Ram’ intensifies the Indian flavour. It expresses God fearing spirit of Indian people and convinces that Indian people always have immense faith in presence of God who is All Pervading.

Simplicity, love and joyous feelings dominate the atmosphere of Indian villages. Sarojini Naidu recreates the scene of Indian village maidens with heart full of love and happiness and are so much excited to welcome the newborn year of spring –

“Ho! Let us dance, let us sing
And wear saffron garments to welcome the spring,
And pluck the new buds that are blowing” (‘Song of Radha, the Milk Maid’) (54)

In her poem ‘Village Song’, Sarojini has captured the very spirit of Indianness through the simple dialogues of mother and her child.

“The bridal songs and cradle songs have cadeness of sorrow
The laughter of the sun today, the wind of death tomorrow
For sweeter sound forest notes where streams are falling
O mother mine, I can not stay, the fairy folk are calling” (‘The Village Song’) (55)

The child’s answers are thoughtful to express Indians’ love for solitude, meditation, peace and spiritual strivings.

Nissim Ezekiel creates typical Indian atmosphere of an Indian village through his poem ‘Night of Scorpion’ and shows that all villages have much concern with each other and become one if any problem comes in any family. One rainy night some mother is stung by a scorpion. As mother occupies a prominent place in Indian home so all love her and respect her. All family members, neighbours and all other village people come to their place and are very worried to bring her relief –

“The peasants came like swarm of flies,
And buzzed the name of God a thousand times
To paralyze the evil one
with candles and with lanterns
throwing giant scorpion shadows
on the sun baked walls
They scorched for him: he was not found” (‘Night of Scorpion’) (56)

54- Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Bird of Time’ ed. Edmund Gosse page 113
56- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Exact Name’ collected poems 1952-1988 page 130
The whole experience is essentially Indian. The villagers’ affection and concern with one another, their faith in God, their efforts to remove scorpion, ‘with candles and with lanterns’ all creates a superb picture of ordinary human event of day to day Indian life.

Kamala Das presents the hard work and suffering of Indian farmers and labourers in the farms in her poem ‘Evening at the Old Nalapat House’, a personal sympathy for the workers in the fields seen around her house in the village –

“The field hands
returning home with baskets on their heads,
their thin legs crushing
the heads, the shrubs, their ankles
bruised by
thorns, their inside bruised by memories” (‘Evening at the Old Nalapat House’) (57)

Jayant Mahapatra shows his deep concern and sympathy for the suffering of the fate of land along with suffering of village women through his poem ‘In the Fields of Desolate Rice’ He says –

“In the fields of desolate rice (…….)
An old woman’s voice trembles (…) crows in the trees, knots around the eyes
dead furrows mark the captive earth
lines of the people that seem doomed for ever” (‘In the Fields of Desolate Rice)’ (58)

In the poem ‘The People’, K N Daruwalla blames the politicians as well as people because people accept easily the lies told by the politicians. The people of India, specially the village people are so innocent. So emotional so sensitive, so simple that they either make a demigod of a person or reject him altogether –

“Between their raillery and applaudes
I found no difference, either way
Their eyes lit up with scorn or worship
And fore fingers marked the hero out
Or the person whom to spit on” (‘The People’) (59)

The next section of the poem describes how people do hero worship of a leader. after listening to leader –

“They swarmed out like a nervous disorder
with his words in their mouth
misquoting, mispronouncing, misinterpreting,
confounding dialectic with myth” (‘The People’) (59)
K N Daruwalla’s poem ‘Migration’ describes how village people had to move out in search of livelihood because the villages failed to provide it. Where as the cities were growing richer, India’s development policies after independence were partly responsible for this migration and withering away of the villages. First it were few but –

“Later there were thousand
footsore hordes scouring the land for forage
numerous enough to start a tiger beat
In every nullah. And herds,
first camels and then goats
which hugged the stems with forepauses?
and nibbled away, till the trees
were lift only with a green head of hair” (‘Migrations’) (60)

The lines are just a satire to show that in the eyes of city people, the villagers are no better than animals who like their goats will hug “the stumps with forepaws” and nibble away the leaves till the trees are left “only with a green head of hair”. This is worse effect of materialism. The People of city feel that the villagers have invaded their safe lives –

“Do you see trains streaming out
ten thousands frying on the lurching roof?
It is our carts rolling today
Our villages walking out with their head loads
an ant line following
the scent of a moist root” (‘Migrations’) (60)

**Colourful Life of Towns and Cities in India** -  Indo English poetry does not only show the simple faiths, concerns of rural people but also depicts the glimpses of colourful city life of Indian people. Sarojini Naidu successfully brings out the common life of Indians with their daily tasks particularly of her native town Hyderabad to which she was deeply attached. The bazaar scene is beautifully painted in her poem ‘Street Cries’ in which we come to notice the occupations of city people in the morning, at noon, in the evening. The day dawn comes with new hopes arousing the world to labour, to toil in diverse ways for livelihood. Sarojini Naidu describes how the hawkers cry to sell their ‘breads’, the want of breakfast, in the morning –

“When dawn’s first cymbals beat upon the sky
Rousing the world to labour’s various cry
Buy bread, buy bread, rings down the eager streets” (‘Street Cries’) (61)

At noon, when the whole atmosphere is hot, the earth falters, the water swoon, the koel hush their songs in dim shelters, “thirsty throats crave”, “liquid succour from the cruel heat”, then the hawkers cry to sell their fruits –

“When the earth falters and the water swoon

with the implacable radiance of noon
Buy fruit, buy fruit, steals down the panting street” ('Street Cries') (62)

The different vendor’s cries are appropriately linked with different human needs and moods. They reflect the changing phases of life in relation with their activities and vocations. Sarojini wants to focus attention at the hard work of Indians which they do to earn their livelihood. It is their labour and hard work that is valued everywhere even in the western countries Sarojini’s vendors are not merely picturesque or decorative characters, they are endowed with life and vitality and suitable representatives of the greatness of the land of which they arise because according to Indian philosophy, performing one’s duties sincerely is true worship of God.

It is a common sight in India that if the farmers are busy with thir fields and corns, the shopkeepers are busy in selling their articles for their livelihood. Sarojini’s poem ‘In Bazaar of Hyderabad’ is a good example in presenting the lively and pictorial scenes of merchants, vendors, peddlers, goldsmiths, fruit men and fruit girls selling their articles, musicians playing on their instruments and magicians diverting crowds by their magic and tricks –

“What do you sell o ye merchant?
Richly your wares are displayed
turbans of crimson and silver
tunics of purple brocade
mirrors with panels of amber
daggers with handles of Jade” ('In Bazaar of Hyderabad') (63)

The lines depict a rich colour of feast with rich material specially suitable for the royal families as the “brocade’ refers to richly decorated woven material with design in raised gold or silver thread very popular in south India, the daggers with handles of jade, may be belonging to Rajputana families. Then Sarojini presents the common things of daily use –

“What do you weigh o ye vendors,
saffron and lentil and rice”
And then –
“What do you make, o ye, gold & miths?
wristslets and anklets and rings”('In Bazaar of Hyderabad') (64)

Bangles, anklet bells, rings and necklaces are the common ornaments used by an Indian woman and maiden. These ornaments add a different beauty, a traditional look and grace in the personality of Indian women. The feminine grace of Indian women reflects through their way of dressing up, wearing, costumes, and ornaments. In the end of the poem ‘In Bazaar of Hyderabad’, Sarojini Naidu presents the flower girls weaving –

“What do you weave, o ye, flower girls?
with tassels of azure and red,

crown for the brow of a bride groom
capelts to garland his bed.
sheets of white blossoms new gathered
To perfume the sleep of the dead" ('In the Bazaar of Hyderabad') (65)

The lines convince the co-relation between joy and sorrow, happiness and misery, light and
darkness. On one hand the flower girls are weaving the crown and chapelts or red and azure
colours for the bridgroom and marriage bed but on the other side they are busy in making sheet
of white flowers to cover the dead body. Sarojini wants to make us realize that the web of our life is
of a mingled yarn grave and gay together. “Wherever there is life, death must follow as its shadow
and every one who smiles will have to weep and vice versa. Thus the Vedanta philosophy is neither
optimistic nor pessimistic. It voices both these views and take things as they are”. (66)

Modern Indo English poetry does not depict the colourful panorama of city life, rather a
pessimism is prevailed through out the poetry when describing the urban themes. Unlike the Pre
Independence poets who sing the glories of ancient land, Post Independence poets tell the tale of
degradation of Indian values and ruin of Indian culture after Independence.
The urban theme is dealt with irony and wit in Nissim Ezekiel’s poetry. His poem ‘Island’ describes
the ugliness of city life but the poet who was born and brought up here can not leave it –

“Unsuitable for song as well as sense
the is land flowers into slums
And sky scrapers reflecting
precisely the growth of my mind
I am here to find my way in it” (‘Island’) (67)

Ezekiel’s poetry is so much about Bombay the city in which he lived. He describes the
mechanical life of city, lost between journeys in buses and trains and waiting in queues. In the poem
‘Occasion’ he writes –
“Do you know where he lives?
Ghat Kopar, twenty miles away,
Half an hour in queue
Fiftee minutes in a bus
Forty minutes in a train
A long walk from station to slum” (Occasion) (68)

Bombay, the symbol of any modern city is the theme in a large number of Ezekiel’s poems. The
dehumanising influence of, city on human individuality is described in poem Urban –
“The city like a passion burns

66- Vivekananda, ‘Maya and Illusion’ vol. II page 97
67- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ Collected Poems page 193
68- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ collected poems page 277
He dreams of morning walks, alone
and floating on a wave of sand
But still his mind its traffic turns
away from beach and tree and stone
To kindred clamour close at hand” (‘Urban’) (69)

A ‘Morning Walk’ describes the sordidness of Bombay and dwellers –
“Barbaric city sick with slums
deprived of seasons, blessed with rains” (‘A Morning Walk’) (‘Unfinished Man’) (70)

In ‘Urban’ Ezekiel bewails how he his lost contact with nature in Bombay –
“At dawn he never sees skies
which, silently, are born again
Nor feels the shadows of the night
receive their fingers at his eyes
He welcomes neither sun nor rains
His landscapes have no depth or height” (‘Urban’) (71)

Again he writes that people come to the city with dream but get disappointment –
“The fog is thick and men are lost who wanted only quite lives
And failed to count the growing cost of cushy jobs or unloved wives” (‘Healers’) (72)

But in spite of all that is wrong with city life, Ezekiel wants to remain where he belongs –
“Confiscate my passport ord,
I do not want to go abroad,
Let me find my song
where I belong” (‘In India’) (73)

For Ezekiel, India is not merely the crowd of the noisy city but the innocent, peace loving masses,
in ‘City Song’, he finds positive identification with the city. Having climbed down to a friend terrace
he looks down at the view –
“As i sway in the breeze
The city sways below
Suddenly I learn
what I always knew
I don’t wish to go any higher
I want to return
As soon as I can

69- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Unfinished Man’ collected poems page 117
70- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Unfinished Man’ Collected Poems page 120
71- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Unfinished Man’ collected poems page 117
72- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns In Darkness’ collected poems page 232
73- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Exact Name’ Collected Poems page 131
To be of this city
To feel its hot breath
I have to belong” (‘City Song’) (74)

This feeling of belonging, of ‘setting in’ after a long wandering, reveals the poet's sense of complete identification with the place of his birth. The city of Bombay becomes a part of his consciousness and he identifies himself with it –
“’I can not leave the island
I was born here and belong’” (‘The Patriot’) (75)

Nissim Ezekiel presents two realistic pictures of urban life through his very famous poem ‘Good Bye Party For Miss Pushpa’ and the “Railway clerk”. In Good Bye Party For Miss, Pushpa” a party has been thrown in to bid farewell to miss Pushpa and a number of friends have gathered to wish her good luck –
“’Friends
our dear sister
Is departing for foreign
In two three days
And we are meeting today
To wish her bon voyage” (‘Good Bye Party for Miss Pushpa’) (76)

In ‘Railway Clerk’, the poor clerk himself is the speaker and expresses his discontentment that despite his honesty in work, he is facing so many difficulties –
“’I am never neglecting my responsibilities
I am discharging it properly
I am doing my duty
But who is appreciating
No body, I am telling you” (‘The Railway Clerk’) (77)

A K Ramanujam depicts the common life of Indian people through his poetic volume ‘Relationship’ In poem ‘Obituary’, he remembers his father who did not leave huge bank balance and other material possessions for his heirs. The poet very pointedly says –
“’Father when he passed on
left dust
on a table full of papers
left debts and daughters” (‘Obituary’) (‘Relationship’) (78)

74- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Unfinished Man’ Collected poems Page 118
75- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ collected poems page 238
76- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ collected poems page 189
77- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ Collected Poems page 184
Daughters do not follow debts, because in the Hindu social code daughters are considered liabilities. The lines reflects the real condition of common Indian families where the father who leave no legacy because of poverty. Ramanujam’s poetry rests in the shade of the family tree. In his poem “Small Scale Reflection On a Great House”, the Hose becomes a symbol of vast joint family where things come in every day but –

“Never leave the house they enter
like the servants, the photographs
the epilepsies in the blood” (‘Small Scale Reflection on a Great House’) (‘Relations’) (79)

Living in distant U S A, the poet yearns and longs for the past describing various aspects of the great house. He recalls all things and creatures that came into the great house, got lost there and never went out. The lines reflect Indian’s love for their belonging, relations and home. The city and city life is an integral part of Kamala Das’s existence and she can not shake off its memories. Kamala’s being a typical poet of city is quite clear from her frequent use of the metaphor of the city for life as in the poem -

“I have come with only a picnic bag
to this new city
to seek a blind date, to shed as snakes do
in coils and coils, my weariness” (‘A New City’) (‘Summer in Calcutta’) (80)

The one city which shows great impression upon her mind is Bombay and yet she bids a farewell to it in her poem –

“I take leave of you, fair city, while tears
hide some where in my adult eyes
And sadness is silent as a stone
In the river’s unmoving core……..
It’s good bye, good bye, good bye
To slender shapes behind windowpanes
shut against indiscriminate desire
And rain…” (‘Farewell to Bombay’) ‘Summer in Calcutta’ (81)
A separation from Bombay is painful and makes her say a tearful good bye to it.

Jayant Mahapatra is said to be the poet of Orissa because Orissa’s life is life and landscapes has dominant place in his poetry. May be the descriptions of land are pessimistic and depressing but show Mahapatra’s deep love for Orissa. His poetry is not an escape from life but an escape into life. The following lines reveal the sweep of Mahapatra’s geographical imagination for positioning things in their locale –

80- Kamla Das, ‘A New City’ ‘Summer in Calcutta’ page 38
81- Kamla Das, ‘Farewell to Bombay’ ‘Summer in Calcutta’ page 39
“Wherever I try to live
In pious penitence at Puri
Or in the fiery violence of a revolutionary
my reason becomes a prejudiced sorrow like socialism
And not understanding myself,
And not understanding you
Like the still strange shapes of hills,
In the distance
I, too, listen to the faraway waiting of hyenas
aware of the dying country side around them
tortured by hunger and the reek of decay in the air” (‘Life Signs’) (82)

Mahapatra cries over the morbid and depressing reality of present state of country nearly
half a century after Independence. In the midst of poverty, corruption, exploitation and violence, he
searches for ‘the lost inhabitant’ of his country and for a history ‘in which dignity neither comes nor
goes’ (The Quest Shadow Space 32). His poem ‘Heroism’ is just a lament for the shattered hopes
of freedom –

“As in a film, this talk of freedom
freedom from want, social injustice and greed,
poised above the bleeding heartland
fields, streeing orange, white and green
For afterwards,
there will be no sacred relic of democracy
all our thousands of hands,
That reached out to the sky
sulk in small strips of black cloth
of futile protests on our chests…..
the sky is not my freedom of speech”(‘Heroism’) (‘Shadow Space’) (83)

The lines reflect the degradation and ruin of land and its people. As a true humanistic poet,
Mahapatra feels deeply disturbed by the poverty, violence and corruption that have become a part
of daily routine of city life –

“Men here build cities
cities work their way
Into a maze of stories
From where man’s mind
fails to see ahead…. (‘March’) (‘Shadow Space’) (84)

82- Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Life Signs’ Delhi: O U P 1983 page 12
84- Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Shadow Space’ Kerala: D C Books 1997 page 81
In spite of this despair and misfortune, there is a hope in poet’s heart that change will surely come. It is this hope that makes his to say –

“I must move ahead In my eagerness to catch hope against hope toward the hiding place under the roots of fallen country” (‘The Time of What is) Shadow Space’ (85)

An important part of K N Daruwalla’s poetry is his description of cities and towns. These are landscapes poems as well as of life experience strain in them. Daruwalla paints the picture of a small, industrial town –

“The evening smelt of crushed molasses as effluents from sugar mills went simmering in open drains ersatz ecstasies fermenting” (‘Love in Meerut’) (‘Apparition in April’) (86)

The sound of day to day activities we find in ‘Love in Meerut’ –

“While outside, life shuffled on rickshaw wheels and second hand cars and sandals of slashed motor tyres Beneath an overhand of dust They looked for stars” (‘Love in Meerut’) (‘Apparition in April’) (87)

The city is not merely the sound of ‘the second hand cars’ and of ‘sandal of slashed motor tyres’ but also the ‘shuffling of life’ Daruwalla’s poem ‘Skopje – The Earthquake City’ is a totally different picture of city life. The poet describes an afternoon here.

Circling through the hills one blistering afternoon in a closed bus, throats parched, our tongues afire billeted with strangers, I did not take to this, salt and pepper city of minarets and spire” (‘Skopje:) ( The Earthquake City’) ‘Landscapes 50’ (88)

‘Death Vignette’ in ‘Crossing of Rivers’ is a poem about a city where people go to die. The city is depicted as a place where shadow fall:-

“Shadows fall here
Like old lime wash
From sand papered walls
The city broods on nothingness
forms bulge and snap” (‘Death Vignette’) (89)

The word ‘Shadows’ express the image of an old city grown hard because it has seen so much with death.

89- K N Daruwalla, ‘Crossing of Rivers’ Delhi: O U P 1976 page 22
Human relations – the first thing about the people of India that strikes to the outside world is their Indianness. It penetrates what they say, what they feel, what they wish for, what they aspire for. It penetrates through the sacred relations the relation of father to his son, son to his father, husband to wife, brother to brother, father to his son, wife to husband, mother to her children, children to their parents, sister to sister, friend to friend, Guru (teacher) to shishya (student), and many more. It is something to be felt but hard to define. In India, each and every relation is bounded by the thread of love, affection and devotion. It is in India only where Lord Ram was born and proved his idealism as a son, it is in India only where Bharat and Lakshman were born and proved their idealism as brothers and it is in India only where Sita and Savitri lived and proved their idealism as wives. Sita, the wife of Ram, the heroine of Valmiki’s Ramayana and Tulsidas’s Ram Charitra Manas is the ideal of Indian womanhood in front of the whole world. Toru Dutt’s poem ‘Sita’ presents the picture how pure and innocent Sita is yet, is exiled by her husband. She bears all the tortures hurled to her by an envious world. She simply weeps at the undeserved treatment given to her but does not open her mouth against any one including husband –

“She weeps – for lo! At every tear she sheds
  tears from three pairs of young eyes fall amain
It is an old story and the lay
which has evoked sad Sita from the past
Is by a mother sung…….. Tis husband at the last
And melts the picture from their sight away
Yet shall they dream of it until the day!
when shall those children by their mother’s side
gather, ah me! as erst at eventide” (‘Sita’) (90)

The lines speak the glory of Sita, her patience and sacrifice the perfect epitome of temperance and innocence. Toru Dutt’s poem ‘Savitri’ is a piece of idealism to point out that Savitri’s absolute and whole hearted devotion to her husband Satyavan and its triumph over the merciless angel of death. When following her dead husband, ‘to cross the doleful lake’, she is asked to retrace her steps and go back home but Savitri says with indomitable courage and resoluteness –

“No weariness, O death, I feel,
And how should I by the side
of Satyavan? In woe and weal
To be a helpmate swears the bride
This is my place” (‘Savitri’) (91)

This is the speech of an ideal Indian wife. Hindu ideals of duty devotion and sincesity are soaked with considerable power in Savitri. If Savitri embodies the ideal wife, Lakshman is excellent example of an ideal brother. Lakshman loves Ram from the core of his heart. He is dutiful and devoted to the elder brother, seeking glory in faithful service. He is forced by his brother’s wife Sita, the heroine of Ramayana, to leave her in the forest and go to help of Rama, who, she fears, is in the grip of dangerous demons. Lakshman first tries to convince her of Rama’s immense power and asks –

90- Toru Dutt, ‘Sita’, ‘Ancient Ballads and Legend of Hindustan’ page
91- Toru Dutt, ‘Savitri’, ‘Ancient Ballads and Legend of Hindustan’ page 57
“what being of demonian birth
could ever brave his mighty arm?
is there a creature on the earth?
that dares to work our hero harm? (‘Lakshman’) (92)

But Sita grows angry and uses harsh words for him, doubling his motive and character –
Lakshman can not tolerate such words and decides to go to the forest. But before he goes out, he
tells Sita –
“In going hence I disregard
the plainest orders of my chief
a deed for me – a soldier – heard
and deeply painful” ‘Lakshman’ (93)

Then Toru Dutt puts before us the “guru shishya” relation through character of ideal disciple
Buttoo (Eklavaya). On account of his low birth, he is rejected by Dronacharya, the great master of
archery. But he acquires marvelous skill in archery by the worship of his guru Drona’s image. When
Arjuna brings this great attainment to the notice of Drona, he gets shocked. Along with Arjuna (his
favorite disciple) Drona approaches to Buttoo and asks him to give him his due (guru dakshina) as
his right thumb. Buttoo does not hesitate for a single minute and like a true disciple offers his due
to satisfy the demand of his guru –

“Glanced the sharp knife one moment high
the severed thumb was on the sad
there was no tear in Buttoo’s eye
He left the matter with his God” (‘Buttoo’) (94)

Drona is deeply touched and exclaims in admiration of Buttoo’s heroic devotion, humility,
sacrifice and truth –
“Fame
Shall sound thy praise from sea to sea
And men shall ever link thy name
with self help, truth and modesty” (‘Buttoo’) (95)

Buttoo’s devotion to Guru is a guiding example for all the modern disciples.

Toru Dutt’s poem ‘Sindhu’ (Shravan Kumar) is an example in itself as an ideal son, who
lived for his parents died for his parents. Services to parents was his only religion. Toru Dutt
describes the ‘Matra Pitra Bhakti’ of Shravan Kumar through her poem ‘Sindhu’ While Sindhu, the
young boy is filling his pitches in the evening on the bank of a river in order to quench the thirst of his
beloved parents, who are helpless and blind, leading the life of ascetics in the neighbouring woods,
he is shot by mistake by the great king Dasaratha. The whizzing arrow brings Sindhu down to the
earth with a cry, and in the last agony of death, he, the dutiful son, expresses his noblest sentiments
–

92 Toru Dutt, ‘Lakshman’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 89
93- Toru Dutt, ‘Lakshman’, ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 89
94- Toru Dutt, ‘Buttoo’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 116
95- Toru Dutt, ‘Buttoo’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 117
“And so I die – a bloody death –  
But not for this I mourn  
The feel the world pass with my breath  
I gladly could have borne,  
But for my parents, who are blind  
And have no other stay –  
This, this weighs sore upon my mind,  
And fills me with dismay” (‘Sindhu’) (96)

And the beautiful spirit passes away, teaching the lesson of duty, devotion and love to parents. Toru Dutt’s lines are very touching and pathetic to narrate the exalted theme of Sindhu’s devotion. Toru Dutt presents the picture of an Ideal Indian mother through the great character of Suruchee, who teaches the lessons of contentment, love, modesty and duty to his devoted son Dhruva –

“That man is truly wise  
Who is content with what he has and seeks nothing beyond”  
“Be meek, devout and friendly, full of love  
Intent to do good to the human race,  
And to all creatures sentient made of God” (‘The Legend of Dhruva’) (97)

Such lessons of moral values make India great and glorious. And such lessons of love duty, humility and universal brotherhood get soaked into the blood of Indians, that is why they are loving and affectionate not only to their family members but to every one who comes to them. Toru Dutt Depicts the picture how Indians are eager to respect, serve and help their guests – Athiti devo bhava –

“Pass not by,  
But step thou in and share the food,  
Just offered on our altar high,  
If thou art in a hungry mood,  
welcome are all to this repast!  
the rich and poor, the high and low!  
Come, wash thy feet, and break thy fast,  
Then on thy journey strengthened go” (‘Jogadhya Uma’) (98)

The line ‘step thou in and share the food’ beautifully reflects the Indian principle of serving the guests. It is in India only where guests are served with so much love and devotion. It is believed that God Himself comes in the form of guests, so to serve guests is to serve God. Tagore is the poet of human relations and humanity par excellence, in a song (XXXV) in Geetanjali, “where the mind is without fear and the head is hold high”. (99)

96- Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 114  
97- Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 114  
98- Toru Dutt, ‘Jogadhya Maya’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ page 101  
99- Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ song XXXV page 162
Tagore expresses his vision of universal brotherhood and the essential oneness of humanity. Tagore again and again stresses that man is image of God. So to love human beings is to love God. We should love every creature the naked, and the hungry, the sick and the stranger.

“Here is thy footstool and there rest thy feet where live the poorest, and lowliest and lost. When I try to bow to thee, my obeisance can not reach down to the depth where thy feet rest among the poorest and lowliest and lost” (‘Geetanjali’ X) (100)

Tagore identifies himself with the suffering humanity in order to feel the presence of God. He remarks – “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 shower and his garment is covered with dust. Put off thy holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil” (‘Geetanjali’ II) (101)

Sri Aurobindo’s epic is a glorification of Indian woman’s love for her beloved husband that conquers death. Savitri is an ideal Indian wife who, with power of her love, can defy death and break the doors of captivity. Savitri says –

“Death grip can break our bodies, not our souls
If death takes him, I too know how to die” ‘Savitri’ (102)

The lines very well describe the glory of true and sincere love of Savitri for her husband Satyavan. Similar thoughts of sincerity and love of an Indian wife for her beloved husband we find in Sarojini Naidu’s poem –
‘Life of my life, death’s bitter sword
Hath severed us like a broken word
Rent us in twain who are but one’ (103)

“Shall the flesh survive when the soul is gone?” The lines reflect that here in India, union of husband wife is considered very pure and chaste relation, the marriage of two minds, striven through tapasaya, and if the husband dies, how can a wife love? Sarojini Naidu continually impresses upon our mind by proving the devotion of Indian wives. She presents before us the strong and sincere love of Damayanti which works as an armour of hope to defend Nala against anguish and affliction in the hour of exile –

“O king, thy kingdom who from thee can wrest
What fate shall dare uncrown thee from the breast,
O god born lover, whom my love doth grid
And armour with impregnable delight,
Of hope’s triumphant keen flame carven sword” (‘Damayanti to Nala in the Hour of Exile’) (104)

100- Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ song X ‘Here is Thy Footstool’ page 55
101- Ravinder Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ poem XI ‘Leave the Chanting and Singing’ page 57
102- Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book X canto. 3 page 643
Nissim Ezekiel describes the blissful aspects of the sacred relationship of husband and wife and their domestic affairs in the concluding section of ‘To a Certain’ with a psychological speech –

“Always we must be lovers
Man and wife at work upon the hard
Mass of material which is the world
Related all the time to one another and to life
Not merely keeping house and paying bills,
And being worried when the kids are ill” (‘To a Certain Lady’) (105)

Ezekiel’s poem ‘Birth’ celebrates the moment of attaining parenthood. The father (speaker) is very happy that his wife, ‘bore me a child bearing the stamp of my name and the shells of her eyes”. The focus of the poem is on the speaker as well as on his new born son –

“Through the winding wind of time
I see him swarm with tides and sun
Hooded and aided by fancies I gave him
Remaking my feelings by which he was formed’ ‘Birth’ (106)

A K Ramanujam’s poem ‘of Mothers, Among Other Things’ is a succession of beautiful and suggestive images which evoke pictures of his mother at various stages of her life.
The poet is nostalgic and he remembers how his mother ran to the cradle if the baby cried –

“And I see my mother run back
From rain to the crying cradle” (‘of Mother, Among the Other Things’) (107)

Kamla Das expresses the motherly touch and feminine sensibility by the time of birth of her son –

“And then wailing into light
He came so fair, a streak of light thrust
Into the faded light” (‘Jaisurya’) (108)

Jayant Mahapatra recollects the memories of childhood and family through his poem ‘House’.
He wants to take a backward journey to enjoy the blessedness of his childhood but the time has changed, his sons too have grown even then he expresses the possibility –

“Could I
Hide again as a child, some place here,
The woman in the silent frame before me
Does not stir old murmur
Wear me out again
And I suppose I must have loved
As I look out, I realize sadly

105- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘A Time to Change’ collected poems page 28
106- Nissim Ezekiel, ‘A Time to Change’ collected poems page 27
Our sons are with us too” (‘House’) (109)

Mahapatra’s poem ‘Life Signs’ beautifully describes that “as your father, so you are”. The son usually takes on the father. The son inherits most of the characteristics of his father. He inherits his father’s voice; he takes his likeness down from his walks. He inherits his father’s beliefs and can not escape it –

“Thinking to escape his beliefs
I go to meet the specter of belief
A looming shadow the colour of mud
watery and immense as Ganga” (‘Life Signs’) (110)

K N Daruwalla’s poem ‘The Epileptic’ is more about the common people of India and their sympathetic reaction towards the lady in the fit. The woman’s husband tries to help her in the best possible way he can, the woman’s children are scared, the rickshaw puller is confused because “it was too much for him” people gather round the struggling woman –

“A crowd senses
mishap before it sees one” (‘The Epileptic’) (111)

The crowd represents the common Indian people who generally are involved in to be helpful and sympathetic to some one’s problems. The crowd of people help the woman who is suffering the fit of epileptic. They fan her, rub her feet and look “around for other ways to summon back her senses”. A pedestrian tries to display his knowledge about epilepsy –

“A pedestrian whispered
Her seizures are cyclic
They visit her in her menses” (‘The Epileptic’) (112)

She is taken to the hospital, at last her fit is cured, “She recovered, bleached by the sun of her agony”. Daruwall’s poem ‘The Epileptic’ is somewhat similar to Ezekiel poem ‘Night of Scorpions’ in which a woman suffers because she has be stung by a scorpion. The villagers gather round her and try to help her in what they can. Both the poems describe the sympathetic, co-operative, helpful and loving nature for human concerns and relations.

So both Pre and Post Independence Indo English Poetry is par excellence in revealing the emotional and mental make up of Indian men and women, their fancies, their changing moods, their faiths and concerns, their age long customs and traditions, along with the deep Indian philosophy hidden in pageantry of Indian life. All poems are class in themselves because they have meaning in them based on Indian values. For example, Sarojini Naidu’s poem bangle sellers throw light on the ideal of Indian womanhood when one Bangle Seller sells the bangles ‘purple and gold flecked gray’ for ‘Whose hands have cherished, whose love has blest’. In the same manner, A K Ramanujan’s poem ‘Of Mother Among the Other Things’ throws light on the devotional love of motherhood –

“And I see my mother run back
From rain to the crying cradle”

Indeed, Indians are always loving, sympathetic, and tolerant and above all they have a sense of humility. They are loving and affectionate not only to their family members and close relations but to every one. Love flows in their blood. It is the people and their loving behavior pattern that makes India great and glorious.

The attitude of catholicity and liberal adjustment with others is the fundamental characteristic of Indianness. It makes man realize the presence of the Divine Soul rolling through all thinking things. It teaches ‘charity for all, malice for none’ as God himself is present everywhere and in everyone. That is why, what ever difference between the various parts of the country may be, one never fails to find a common culture flourishing in India, the culture of love, the culture of tolerance and the culture of synthesis. The glory of India, Indian people and Indian culture is not a thing of past but these has always been an additional growth and development by the great people of India in the field of trade, literature and science, history and philosophy, geographical and mathematics, agriculture and technology, astronomy and logic, games and sports, art and architecture, more and more scientific inventions and achievements are there to march India on the way of progress.

In this age of science, when scientific inventions and material advancement have get grea increas with the power of man to do both, good and evil, there is great need to organize the humanity and to develop humanitarian consciousness in every child so that inhuman activities may not reoccur again. Education must be compulsory for every child. Science and spirituality must join their hands to work together for the common good of all. It is with these efforts only, satyug will again prevail and the world will become heavenly, and the humanity divine.
SEVEN CHAPTER

Indian Womanhood
India is recognised throughout the world for the great ideal of Indian womanhood and the ideal of Indian womanhood is Sita and Savitri. Indian is that holy land where Sita and Savitri lived and proved their ideals of purity, sincerity, service and sacrifice. Indian Motherhood has blessed India with incarnations, prophets, saints and sages, patriots and warriors who in turn blessed India with glorious culture of spirituality. Indian woman means a statue of love, devotion, service and sacrifice. She is always devoted to her family may be as a daughter, as a wife or as a mother. Because of her loving and devoted nature, service and sacrifice, she stands as a role model infront of the whole world. Above all, the most dignified aspect of Indian woman is that she spends her life within the limits of Indian Indian value She is the back bone of Indian society, an inspiration of man. Sacrifice is her nature, giving is her religion, patience is her fasting and love is her life. She tells man what loving and sharing is all about.

**INDIAN WOMAN SYMBOLISES SACRIFICE AND SINCERITY** - It is in India only where woman is so much devoted to her husband and her family, She serves her family with head and heart and can make any sacrifice for her husband and her family. Her devotion towards her husband, her affection towards her children, her character towards society and her compassion towards the world is all the strength in itself to tread upon the path of ‘dharma’. Through her life of simplicity, sincerity and sacrifice, she projects the best of Indian culture, the universality and the essential divinity of human life. Toru Dutt presents the sincerity of Indian woman through her poem ‘Savitri’, the great heroine of Hindu mythology. The poem ‘Savitri’ is a story of legendary character of Mahabharata- Savitri, her absolute and whole hearted devotion to her husband Satyavan and her triumph over death. Savitri is stick to follow her husband and does not care for the temptations held out to her by Yama, the God of Death. With indomitable courage and resoluteness, she follows Yama to bring back her husband’s life-

“No weariness, O Death, I feel
And how should I by the side
of Satyavan? In woe and weal
To be a help mate swears the bride” (Savitri) (1)

This is the speech of ideal Indian woman, a sincere and faithful wife. Savitri is an ideal wife. When Yama asks her to go back and perform the funeral rites and sacrifices of a widow as ordained by ‘Shastras’, Savitri does not care for the words and firmly expresses her desire to be always besides her dear Satyavan in woe and weal. She tells Yama that she had taken vow to that effect at the time of marriage in the presence of God of fire. Hindu ideals of duty are delineated with considerable power in Savitri. She says-

“Where ever my husband is led
Or journeys of his own free will,

I too must go, though darkness spread,
   Across my path, portending ill
‘Tis thus my duty I have read!
   If I am wrong, oh! with me bear” (Savitri) (2)

As a sincere wife, Savitri knows how to perform her duty with utter humility. All above expressions beautify the sincerity, love and devotion of Indian woman. To Ravindra Nath Tagore, woman is not only the source of inspiration for man but also the real source of all creations, an epitome of perfect life-

   “Woman, the sin has stripped you naked, the
   Curse has washed you pure, you have risen
into a perfect life—
   You are young as the new born flowers and old
   as the hills” (Poems) (3)

Sri Aurobindo’s epic ‘Savitri’ is a story of sincere and pure love of Savitri, legend of Mahabharata. It carries us to the supreme height of victory- the victory of love over death. Savitri’s love is spiritual from the beginning. Savitri returns home to report her joy of meeting Satyavan to her parents. The divine sage Narad Muni comes to know about Savitri’s choice. He praises Satyavan’s manifold qualities of head and heart but also discloses the fatal truth that Satyavan is fated to die in a year. But Savitri is firm and sincere in her love and marriage to Satyavan. She says-

   “Once my heart chose and chooses not again
   Death’s grit can break out our bodies, not our souls,
   If death takes him, I too know how to die,
   Let fate do with me what she will or can,
   I am stronger than death, and greater than my fate,
   My love shall outlast the world, doom fall from me
   helpless against my immortality” (Savitri) (4)

She accompanies Satyavan with all her strength to the forest on the fatal day. When the pre-ordained hour arrives, Satyavan cries out her name and falls down dead. And from here starts her journey to win over death. She follows her husband’s soul closely. Death exhorts her not to follow but she fearlessly continues her journey. Even Yama, the god of death doubts her pure and sincere love and calls it ‘a sensual want refined’, to this, Savitri replies-

(4) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book VI Canto 1, page- 432.
“My love is not a hunger of the heart
My love is not a craving of the flesh
It came to me from God, to God returns” (Savitri) (5)

It is in India only, where Savitri was born and proved her sincerity, love and sacrifice, an example to follow. It is her purity, chastity, service, sacrifice and surrender on which ‘dharma’ and honour of her family, community and nation rests. In very few and touching words, Sarojini Naidu unfolds the sacrificing lives of Sita, Savitri, Draupadi, Damayanti and Shakuntala, the immortal heroines of Indian womanhood. The colour of the blooming nasturtiums recalls to Sarojini’s memory the names of these great women of India who proved their idealism through the virtues of sincerity, sacrifice and devotion.

“———Savitri’s sorrow and Sita’s desire
Draupadi’s longing, Damayanti’s fears,
And sweetest Shakuntala’s magical tears” (Nasturtiums) (6)

The glowing names of Sita, Savitri, Draupadi, Damayanti and Shakuntala will ever shine through the pages of India’s age longed history because though they suffered a lot but never thought to break the ideals and values of Indianess. They are the real symbols of glorification of Truth, Love and Beauty. “O India forget not that the ideal of thy womanhood is Sita, Savitri, and Damayanti.” (7) Sita, the daughter of King Janak of Mithila, and the wife of Lord Ram, is the heroine of two great epics- Valmiki’s ‘Ramayana’, and Tulsi Das’s ‘Ram Charit Manas,’ is the example of devoted and chaste wife in front of all Indian women. How she spent the time of thirteen years of exile with her husband Ram, being a queen, it was very difficult for her to pass her days in the hard life of thorns in jungles but for her, the company of her husband was heaven. Then how she suffered a lot during the last fourteenth year of exile under the cruel rule of King Ravana but no one could dare to touch the respect and honour of Sita. After coming back to Ayodhya, she was again exiled because of the criticism about her purity and chastity. But these sufferings could not effect upon pure and chaste Sita. She remained an ideal throughout her life- as a daughter, as a wife, and as a mother. “Sita is unique, that character once and for all. There may have been several Ramas, perhaps but never more than one Sita. She is very type of true Indian woman, for all the Indian ideals of a perfect woman have grown out of that one life of Sita and here she stands these thousands of years, commanding the worship of every man, woman and child, throughout the length and breadth of the land of Aryavarta. There she always be, this glorious Sita, pure than purity itself, all patience and all suffering. She who suffered that life of suffering without a murmur; she the ever chaste and ever pure wife; she, the ideal of people and the ideal of God, is the great Sita, our National God. All mythology may vanish, even our Vedas may depart and our Sanskrit language may vanish forever but so long as there will be five Hindus living here, even if only speaking the most vulgar patois, there will be the story of Sita present, Mark my words, she has gone into the very vitals of race. She

is there in the blood of every Hindu, man and woman. We are all children of Sita. Any attempt to modernise our women, if it tries to take our women away from that ideal of Sita, is immediately a failure, as we see every day. The woman of India must grow and develop in the foot prints of Sita, and that is the only way.” (8)

And it was the ideal of Savitri, the only child of Madra’s wise and mighty King Aswapathy, whose constancy in love and purity in thought could triumph over death of her beloved husband Satyavan. Every Indian is familiar with the story of Savitri and Satyavan. Savitri was the wife of Satyavan who died after one year of their marriage. The devoted wife Savitri follows Yama, the God of Death, to hade and requests him to give back her husband’s soul. Yama is influenced by her deep love and restores Satyavan to life. Sarojini Naidu portrays the picture of a devotional Indian wife, who like Savitri, also wants to conquer death-

“O Love, I dreamed my soul had ransomed thee
In thy love, dread, in calculable hour
From those pale hands at which we mortal cower
And conquered Death by love, like Savitri” (Love and Death) (9)

Where we can find such noble characters like Sita and Savitri? It is in India only where they lived and proved themselves as a rare ideal, to be followed, to be worshipped. The ideal of Damayanti is no less than Sita and Savitri. Sarojini Naidu, in her poem ‘Damayanti to Nala in the Hour of Exile’ presents the sincerity and sacrifice of Damayanti. When King Nala, the husband of Damayanti is forced into exile by his brother Pushkara, clad in a single garment, it is his faithful and sincere wife Damayanti only who follows him and decides to stick to her husband in the time of misfortune. Deserted by all except Damayanti, Nala wanders through the dense forests, drinking water and eating wild fruits. The miserable monarch Kali, many times implores Damayanti to abandon Nala to his fate and return to her father’s kingdom but she never hears his words and determines to stay with her husband through thick and thin. Sarojini Naidu depicts the picture in which Damayanti is consoling her husband by saying that these kingdoms and temporal glories fade away with time but the rich dominion of nature remains powerfully supreme. So Nala should seek solace in thoughts that winds are his ‘heralds’, ‘silver belted planets’ and ‘sun’ his vessels-

“Earth’s glories flee of human eyes unseen
Earth’s kingdoms fade to a remembered dream
But thine hence forth shall be power supreme
Dazzling command and rich dominion
The winds thy heralds and thy vessels all

The silver belted planets and the sun” (Damayanti to Nala in Hour of Exile) (10)

Damayanti offers her husband Nala all comfortable and loving feelings which a woman alone can give and which is more precious to a depressed heart of a fallen man than a crown of gold.

“My hair shall braid thy temples like a crown of sapphires and my kiss upon thy brows like cithara music lull thee to repose
Till the sun yield thee homage of his light” (Damayanti to Nala in Hour of Exile) (10)

Then Sarojini Naidu remembers and refers Draupadi, the heroine of the immortal epic ‘Mahabharata’. She was the daughter of King Draupada of Panchal and the wife of five Pandu Princes- Yudhishtra, Bheema, Arjuna, Nakul and Sehdev. Sarojini’s reference to ‘Draupadi’s longing’ shows that how she was made to go through the humiliating experience of ‘cheer haran’ and then how she longed to Lord Krishna to help her, to save her honour and respect. And she was helped by Lord because her ideal was no less than Sita and Savitri.

Then at last, Sarojini is reference ‘Shakuntala’s tears’ in her poem ‘Nasturtiums’ expresses the life story of Shakuntala and Dushyanta. Shakuntala, the legendary heroine of Kalidas’s ‘Abhigyanam Shakuntalam’ was the wife of King Dushyanta. After sometime of their union, Dushyanta forgot Shakuntala due to the curse pronounced by Rishi Durvasa. After long separation, they were united again. Though Shakuntala suffered a lot during this separation period but she did not move from the path of devotion and deep love towards her husband Dushyanta. These are the rare ideals of Sita, Savitri, Damayanti, Draupadi, and Shakuntala. Though Sarojini’s poetic words mainly stress upon their sufferings but out of the sufferings, their virtues glow, making India proud of them.

Nissim Ezekiel explores the glory of sincere and sacrificial love of Indian woman that keeps marital bonds intact-

“Between the acts of wedded love
A quieter passion flows
which keeps the nuptial patterns firm
as passion comes and goes
and in the soil of wedded love
rears a white rose.” (Marriage Poems) (11)

Ezekiel highlights the importance of sublime and self-sacrificing love which is the anchor of happiness in married life.

“Earthly love, O earthly love
Be active when you will
But let the quieter passion come
To every love till
The nuptial pattern is secure
And I am still” (Marriage Poems) (12)

The ‘quieter passion’ and ‘security’ comes through the sincerity and sacrificing love of Indian women giving place to tolerance and acceptance. In the poem ‘Couple’, Ezekiel talks to female love positively-

“His love is small
A flickering lamp
While hers lit up
The while universe” (Couple) (13)

The last line reflects limitless expansiveness of an Indian woman’s love and sincerity.

Jayant Mahapatra shows a great concern to the patient, sacrificing and sincere attitude of Indian women. With the images of oppressed victims, Mahapatra says that an Indian woman is-

“piled up to her silences,
waiting for what the world will
____________—only let her do” (Dawn) (14)

Mahapatra again talks about ‘These Women’ and says-

“Where are things called homes
Sticky with toil, need after need
tempts the fates to touch them
trap the homely, embarrassed hurt,
year after year
like onions and herbs hung out to dry,
their hearts heavy
the quiet too long
what do they live for———
they seed, though
they close their eyes everywhere
to that end

The lines express how devout and patient the Indian women are. Their lives seem to be bound in an endless round of suffering. Mahapatra experiences and notices same condition in village-

“A freezing sense of inutility sits
On the dark brown throat of a woman
A suffering, subtle spirit” (Village) (16)

‘Subtle spirit’ refers to the inner strength of an Indian woman. Though she suffers a lot but no one can shake her patience, sincerity and sacrificing nature.

**INDIAN WOMAN- A LIGHT HOUSE OF WISDOM, A DYNAMO OF SHAKTI, A HARBOUR OF SOLACE AND PEACE**- An Indian woman is not only a symbol of surrender and sacrifice but her main grace comes from the hidden qualities of her courageous and consoling nature. These qualities make her honourable and dignified. She is a courageous woman who can face any crisis with all her strength and wisdom, with patience and comfort. Toru expresses this courage, power and wisdom of an Indian woman through her legendary poem ‘Savitri’, the great heroine of Hindu mythology. When following her husband’s soul, Savitri is asked to return back home and perform the duties of widow, she remains firm in her love and attachment and does not deviate from the path of duty of a woman even in the midst of many temptations held out for her. She says with indomitable courage and resoluteness-

“No; weariness, o death, I feel
and how should I by the side
of Satyavan? In woe and weal
to be- a help mate swears the bride,
This is my place” (Savitri) (17)

And with her wisdom, power and courage, Savitri asks for three boons one by one and ultimately gets triumph over the merciless Angel of Death to bring back her husband’s life. That is the reason, even to this day; Savitri lives in the hearts of the people of India-

“As for Savitri, to this day
Her name is named, when couples wed,
And to the bride the parents say,
Be thou like her, in heart and head” (Savitri) (18)

In Sri Aurobindo’s epic ‘Savitri’, we see many brilliant expressions of Savitri’s courage, power and wisdom. When Narad muni, the divine seer comes to know her choice of Satyavan as her husband, he praises Satyavan’s manifold qualities of head and heart but discloses the truth that Satyavan is fated to die within a year. Savitri is the decisive action. She is firm in her love. She cannot change. She rejects and defies fate itself—

“Let fate do with me what she will or can,
I am stronger than death and greater than my fate,
My love shall out last the world, dooms falls from me
Helpless against my immortality,
Fate’s law may change, but not my spirit’s will” (Savitri) (19)

When the pre-ordained day arrives, Satyavan cries out her name and falls down dead. Now begins Savitri’s ordeal- strength of a woman and a wife with a power like Yama. She follows her husband’s soul closely. Death exhorts her not to follow him but fearlessly continues her journey. Death speaks to her, argues with her sometimes in anger, sometimes in terms of worldly wisdom but she firmly holds on to love. Death adopts many tricks to get rid of her, but Savitri will not be easily deceived—

“O Death, who reasonest, I reason not
Reason that scans and breaks, but cannot build,
Or builds in vain because she doubts her work
I am, I love, I see, I act, I will” (Savitri) (20)

When Death challenges her, she shows her ‘mighty transformation’ and then command Death ‘Release the soul of the world called Satyavan’. Death finds him helpless. His associates Night Hell and the Inconscient, desert him—

“At last he knew defeat inevitable
Afar he fled” (Savitri) (21)

This is the victory of love over death, love accompanied by courage, power and wisdom. Savitri carries us to the Supreme Height of Victory. Death accepts defeat and leaves. Love comes out triumphant. Savitri and Satyavan enter the everlasting day after leaving the death behind. Can we find another woman in the world history who could struggle to bring back her husband’s soul from the grip of Death? No. It is India only, where a woman like Savitri lived and proved herself as dynamo of shakti (power), courage and wisdom.

Sarojini Naidu presents before us the dynamic personality of Damayanti, her courageous and consoling nature at the time of crisis when her husband Nala was facing the worst circumstances. Damayanti, the heroine of Indian legend (referred in greatest epic Mahabharata, composed in Sanskrit by Ved Vyasa) was not only famous for her lovely beauty but also she proved the example of sincerity, faith, courage, wisdom and strength. When Nala lost his kingdom in gambling from his younger brother Pushkara (prompted by Kali, the demon of evil who himself wanted to marry Damayanti) who banished him from his kingdom along with his devoted wife Damayanti. Sarojini depicts the picture how Damayanti consoles her husband by stating these courageous words-

"Shall thou be conquered of a human fate
My liege, my lover, whose imperial head,
Heath never bent in sorrow of defeat
Shalt thou be vanquished whose imperial feet have shattered armies and stamped empires dead?"

(Damayanti to Nala in Hour of Exile) (22)

Sarojini has idealized the unbending strength and courage of an Indian woman at the time of misfortune of her husband. Some other woman might have left her husband in similar circumstances but it is in India only where we come across such rare ideals of Sita, Savitri, Damayanti and many more.

**INDIAN WOMAN LEADS THE LIFE OF DHARMA- DUTIFUL AS A DAUGHTER, SINCERE AS A WIFE AND DEVOTED AS A MOTHER**

An Indian woman is a true symbol of love, sacrifice and service. From the childhood to adulthood, she is always devoted to her family, may be as a daughter, as a wife or as a mother. As a daughter, an Indian girl is much devoted to her parents especially to her father. She cares for them with affectionate feelings and concerns. Toru Dutt expresses the devoted feelings of an Indian girl Savitri while asking boon for her beloved father in her poem ‘Savitri’-

"my sire the king
Beside myself hath children none
Oh, grant that from his stock may spring
A hundred boughts" (Savitri) (23)

These lines beautifully express how the daughter is worried and concerned for her father and his future. Then Toru Dutt presents the sincerity of an Indian wife through the character of Savitri-

"No weariness, O Death I feel,
And how should I, when by the side,
of Satyavan? In woe and weal

to be a helpmate swears the bride
this is my place, my solemn oath
wherever thou conductest him
I too must go, to keep my truth” (Savitri) (24)

Each and every word is steeped into love, faith and sincerity of a wife for her husband. Then we see, how intellectually Savitri asks for third boon from the Lord of Death, Yama. Her hidden sentiments of motherhood reflect through the lines-
“Let my Satyavan live again
And children unto us be born
Wise, brave and valiant” (Savitri) (25)

With great wisdom Savitri asks the boon of being ‘Mother’, and then automatically the life of Satyavan will be saved. Wish for ‘wise, brave and valiant’ children shows the greatness of Indian motherhood. Toru Dutt presents the greatness of Indian Mother through the character of Sunetee, the mother of Dhruva, who teaches and advises her son to become an ideal human being by cultivating high human values-

“Be meek, devout and friendly, full of love
Intent to do good to the human race
And to all creatures sentiment made of God
And all, be humble, for on modest worth,
Descends prosperity even as water flows
Down to low grounds” (The Legend of Dhruva) (26)

In Tagore’s poem ‘The Beginning’, when the baby asks his mother, ‘Where have I come from, where did you pick me up’ and the mother gives a very natural answer to the questioning of the baby-
“You were hidden in my heart as its desire, my darling
You were in the dolls of my childhood’s games, and when
With clay I made the image of my god every morning
I made and unmade you then-------------
“In all my hopes and my loves, in my life,
In the life of my mother you have lived,
When the girlhood my heart was opening in its petals
You hovered as a fragrance about it------
As I gaze on your face, mystery overwhelms me,

(26) Toru Dutt, ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’
You who belong to all have become mine
For fear of losing you I hold you tight on my breast” (The Beginning) (27)

Sri Aurobindo’s epic ‘Savitri’ is an epic of sincerity, the sincerity in love and devotion of wife for her husband. The twelve months of wedded life of Savitri and Satyavan pass lovingly but shortly before the death’s inevitable hour, a voice summons Savitri to her mission in life ‘Arise, O Soul and vanquish Time and Death’. Then Savitri again questions to herself-
“Why should I strive with earth’s unyielding laws
Or stave off death’s inevitable hour?
This surely is best to practice with my fate
And follow close behind my lover’s steps” (Savitri) (28)

This last line beautifully reflects the deep sincere love of an Indian wife for her husband. Then we see the noble example of Indian motherhood through Sri Aurobindo’s poem ‘Vidura’, first published under the title ‘The Mother to Her Son’ based on a story adopted from ‘Mahabharata’ of Prince Sunjoy, who gets dethroned by an enemy King. But his mother inspires him to do his duty and liberate his lost kingdom-
“Out to battle, do thy man’s work
Falter not in high attempt
So a man is quit before his God and saved from self contempt
Sunjoy, Sunjoy, waste not thou thy flame smoke
Impetuous, dire
Leap upon thy foes for havoc as a famished lion leap
Storming through the vanquished victors till thou
Fall on slaughtered heaps-
Shrink not from a noble action, stoop not to unworthy deed!
Vile are they who stoop, they gain not Heaven’s doors
When thou winnest difficult victory from the clutch of fearful strife
I shall know thou art my offspring and shall love my son indeed” (Vidura) (29)

These lines are indeed an inspiring lesson from an ideal Indian mother to her children that how to live and struggle for noble life and living. The history of India tells us that Indian Mother has always played an important role in building the character of her children. Chhatrapati Shivaji, the son of Jija Bai is quoted often as a classic example.
Indian woman is always devoted and sincere to her family may be as a daughter, wife or a mother. As a daughter she cares for her parents' feelings, respect and dignity. Sarojini Naidu expresses the devoted sentiments of an Indian maiden for her father in her poem ‘An Indian Love Song’ when the lover of this girl is so much enamoured of his beloved’s beauty that he requests her to lift up the veil which hides “her luminous face” then the beloved says that she cannot fulfil his desire because he belongs to different religion that has no reverence to her father’s religion. He is also an enemy of her ancestors. His near and dear ones have “broken their sacred altars” and “slaughtered their sacred cows”. The conflict of two ancient religions and the blood of her kinsmen shed in the battle field have severed their families so no love can germinate in her heart-

“How shall I yield to the voice of thy pleading,
how shall I grant thy prayers,
or give thee a rose that red silken tassel,
a scented leaf from my hair?
Or fling in the flame of thy heart’s desire the veils
that cover my face,
profance the laws of my father’s creed for a foe of
my father’s race?
The kinsmen have broken our sacred altars
And slaughtered our sacred kine,
The feud of old faiths and the blood of old battles,
Sever thy people and mine” (Indian Love Song) (30)

Through this song, Sarojini wants to emphasize that Indian daughters care for their parents' feelings, bother for their parents’ respect. They are not freedom loving. As a daughter, an Indian girl always has a soft corner for her parents especially for her father.

As a wife, Indian woman is an ideal for her family. Just as the divine sun imparts happiness by releasing its rays, touching the earth, removes the darkness by producing immense light, life giving elixir to the vegetation world and lustre to the dawn, similarly the life of an Indian wife implants the lustre of love, wisdom, service and faith to her husband, children and other family members. She is the central ‘bindu’ of her family and on her lays the happiness of whole family. When a girl becomes wife and starts loving her husband, then her children, she is already a transformed person from what she was as a young girl, because most of her girlish selfishness and egoism have already been flushed out and replaced by unselfish love and a true spirit of service. Sarojini Naidu presents before us the greatness of an Indian wife devoted to her husband and family-

“who serves her household in fruitful pride
And worships the gods at her husband’s side” (Bangle Sellers) (31)

The first line stresses on the qualities of service and sacrifice and second line expresses the religious faith of an Indian wife. An Indian wife serves her household with dignity, pride and religious faith. Sarojini Naidu now depicts the picture of devotional Indian wife by the side of her sinking husband. Her eyelids are heavy with keeping awake night by night. Her soul burdened with the grief of the coming inevitable hour, her body tired with ‘tending the invalid’, the devoted wife falls asleep. Though she knows in reality that death is certain but in her sub conscious mind this faithful wife dreams that her husband would recover. Her thoughts and desires which could not be fulfilled in waking reality had its fulfilment in her dream -

“O Love, I dreamed my soul had ransomed thee,
In thy love, dread incalculable hour
From those pale hands at which we mortal cower,
And conquered death by love like Savitri” (Love and Death) (32)

Sarojini Naidu has beautified the immense faith and devotion of an Indian wife for her husband in above lines. Savitri is the symbol of India’s true wife’s devotion and power and Satyavan is the symbol of Truth. Unfailing devotion and power can overcome even the greatest of evils of Death. So, beauty, love and power allied truth can be dare anything and achieve anything. Sarojini has shown that by strengthening the three main currents of her life- the capacity to love, sacrifice and serve, an Indian devoted wife transcends the barriers of her physical devotion into spiritual one. In one of her another poem ‘Damayanti to Nala in the Hour of Exile’, Sarojini throws light on the devotion of a true Indian wife through the example of Damayanti, the legendary heroine of Indian epic. The hour of her husband’s exile is the hour of her trial and test. Her resolution to stick to her husband through thick and thin displays the unbending strength of commendable character. She, as a faithful wife consoles her husband Nala in exile by stating that his proud and unbowed head has never bent in sorrow or defeat-

“Who shall unking thee, husband of a queen
wear thou thy majesty inviolate
Earth’s glories flee of human eyes unseen
Earth’s kingdom fade to a remembered dream” (Damayanti to Nala in the Hour of Exile) (33)
The devoted love of Damayanti will be “impregnable armour” of hope to defend Nala against anguish and affliction-

“O King thy Kingdom who from thee can wrest?
What fate shall dare uncrown thee from the breast
O God-born lover, whom my love doth gird
And armour with impregnable delight
Of hope’s triumphant keen flame carven sword” (Damayanti to Nala in the Hour of Exile) (34)

Sarojini presents the character of Damayanti in such a way to convey the message that an Indian wife always remains true and sincere to her husband even among the worst circumstances if he is to be scorned by men or victimised by time, because here in India, the union of husband and wife is considered as a very pure and chaste relation, the marriage of two minds. This sacred relationship of husband-wife is not to be got simply or purchased but to be striven for through ‘tapasaya’ giving at all levels of experience. They are two bodies with one soul and if husband dies, how can a wife live?

“Life of my life, Death’s bitter sword
Hath severed us like a broken word
Rent us in twain who are but one
Shall the flesh survive when the soul is gone” (Suttee) (35)

The words are really touching. There is no suggestion of force or compulsion. The widow is not under any social pressure. She just expresses her faithfulness and deep devotion in pathetic words by saying that all her joys have parted with the death of her husband. It is India only where we can find such deep love and devoted sentiments.

It is the greatness of Indian motherhood that India has been a pious land of sages and saints. India is the land of Jija Bai and Kunti, who brought up their children with the moral teachings of truth, goodness, self discipline, meditation, non-violence and brotherhood. An Indian mother is the true symbol of the all pervading principle ‘spirit of offering and asking for no return.’ Through her life of simplicity, devotion and service, she (Indian mother) projects the best of our culture, our dharma, the universality and essential divinity of human life. Sarojini Naidu skilfully presents the greatness of an Indian mother in the following lines-

“For her, who has journeyed through life midway
Whose hands have cherished, whose love has blest
And cradled fair sons on her faithful breast” (Bangle Sellers) (36)

“The position of the mother is the highest in the world as it is the one place in which to learn the greatest unselfishness. The love of God is the only love that is higher than a mother’s love.” (37) These words of Vivekananda very well go with the devotion and unselfishness of Indian Motherhood. Sarojini’s use of the words ‘hands’, ‘cradle’, ‘faithful breast’ etc remind us of the well known saying, “The hands that rock the cradle, rule the world.” The words also express the sincerity, deep love, sacrifice and service of Indian mothers for their children. In fact, mother represents the very womb of creation, the source from which we arrive our existence, our being. She is the embodiment of true love, who gives and gives, asking for no return. It is through mother that a new life is shaped

and released. It is the warmth of mother’s love that first put its imprint on the offspring. Her prayers are always centred on the welfare of children. Sarojini admires-

“In the dawn that thrills to a mother’s prayers” (The Bird of Time) (38)

This only line is quite enough to show the religious spirit of Indians as well as the highly devotional nature of mothers to pray to God for the goodness of their children.

From the time of conception, hour after hour, day after day, the thoughts of a mother are centred on her child and there is no sacrifice that she would not do for her child. Night after night may be spent without sleep. She keeps her own comfort aside. It is very common with Indian mothers that they sing lullaby to send their babies to sleep. Sarojini’s poem ‘Cradle Song’ and ‘Slumber Song for Sunalini’ are fanciful lullabies to express the affectionate feelings of a mother towards her child. In ‘Cradle Song’, the mother tells the baby through lullaby that she has brought a beautiful dream, bright as dew. She has brought it from the groves of fragrant spice trees across fields of rice and streams in which lotus flowers grow-

“From groves of spice
O’er fields of rice
Athwart the lotus stream
I bring for you
Aglint with dew
A little lovely dream” (Cradle Song) (39)

The rhythm of swinging and beat of the lullaby can almost be felt because the words are so light, airy and soft in above stanza. In the Indian folk tradition, the dreams of lullaby are supposed to be haunted by fairies as in the opening stanza of ‘Slumber Song for Sunalini’-

“Where the golden, glowing
Champak buds are blowing
By the swiftly flowing stream
Now, when day is dying
There are fairies flying
Scattering a cloud of dream” (Slumber Song for Sunalini) (40)

There is no relationship in the world so spontaneous, so sacred and at the same time as natural as that of a mother towards her child. Sarojini Naidu presents before us the tenderly feelings of a mother for her child-

“Sleep o my little ones sleep
Safe till the day light be breaking” (In the Night) (41)
‘At Dawn’ she instils inspiration-
“Children my children, the day light is breaking
The symbols of moon sound the hour of your waking” (At Dawn) (42)

A mother is indeed the first window through which a child looks at the world. Her touch, her kisses, her embrace, her addresses and her guidance to her child are filled with rare affection and blessings. Sarojini presents tenderness and care of her own soul and prays to Goddess and nature to protect her child-

“Lotus maiden, you who claim
All the sweetness of your name
Lakshmi fortune’s queen, defend you
Lotus born like you and send you
Balmy moons of love to bless you
Gentle joy winds to caress you
Lotus born- may you be
Fragrant of all ecstasy” (To My Children) (43)

Mother does not only show her love and affection but also teaches the lessons how to live in the world, how to face the struggles of life-

“Till you have battled with great grief and fears,
And borne the conflict of dream shattering years,
Wounded with fierce desire and worn with strife,
Children, ye have not lived, for this life.” (Life) (44)

These lines are indeed an inspiring lesson from an ideal Indian mother to her children that life is a short silk pattern of tears and laughter, agony and ecstasy, aspiration and despair. The history of India tells that Indian mother has always played an important role in building the character of her children. Sarojini Naidu, through her own maternal feelings, teach the lesson to her children to become a foremost fighter of freedom and right conqueror of all that is wrong and evil-

“Learn to conquer, learn to fight
In the foremost flanks of night
Like Valmiki’s heroes bold
Rubies girt in epic gold” (To My Children) (45)

The references of Valmiki’s heroes remind us Lord Ram’s Sons ‘Love and Kush’ and their courageous life. Such valuable examples and teachings of Indian mothers make India unique in itself.

Nissim Ezekiel, the father of modern Indo-English poetry throws light on the love, sincerity and sacrifice of Indian Mother in his poem ‘The Night of the Scorpion’. He presents an embodiment of motherhood who is ready to sacrifice her life in order that her children may live. She is thankful to God that the scorpion bit her and not her children. Ezekiel writes-

“my mother only said
Thank God the scorpion picked on me
And spared my children” (The Night of the Scorpion) (46)

A.K.Ramanujan through his poem ‘of Mothers, Among other Things’ communicates the love, devotion and affection of his mother. In distant U.S.A, he lovingly remembers his mother and yearns for her company. He remembers how delicate she was in the prime of her life. She used to wear three diamonds in her earrings and rays of bright light like needs splashed out of them. Being an affectionate mother, she ran back in rain to the cradle in which the baby cried-

“I smell upon this twisted
Black bone tree the silk and white
Petal of my mother’s youth
From her ear rings three diamonds
splash a handful of needles,
And I see my mother run back
From rain to the crying cradles” (of Mothers, Among Others Things) (47)

‘Jaisurya’, one of Kamala Das’s finest lyrics deals with motherly love and expresses feminine sensibility very nicely. The woman in her adores the child and in its love forgets her pains of bearing it. It is a very happy experience of the poetess at the time of birth of her son. Kamala Das express this joy of feminine sensibility-

“And then wailing into light
He come so fair, a streak of light thrust
Into the faded light” (Jaisurya) (48)

Indeed, no one can take the place of Mother. She is equal to God. Her love, service and sacrifice for her children is beyond appreciation. She can suffer but she will never let her children suffer. This is the greatness of mother and motherhood. But when she grows old sometime an attitude of self

pity develops in her. Jayant Mahapatra presents this reality that when a mother hands over her responsibility and power of domestic works or kitchen work to her daughter-in-law, she feels her role in the family has depreciated. Later when for the same power she enhances herself for occasion of self-pity, the mother is compelled to feel her desolation from that alienated attitude of the others in the family-

“As a mother’s hand floats like a raft
endlessly down the river still to find an end” (Bazaar Scene) (49)

**INDIAN WOMAN- AN ETERNAL SPRING OF LOVE-** Love is a mystery in Indian woman’s life. It touches to the inner core of her heart. For her, love is not which alters with the alteration rather love for her is in the deepest sense. It is a psychological and spiritual need, the love in which there should be peace, richness and fulfilment, the love which leads to completeness. Toru Dutt through her poem ‘Savitri’ presents before us both the concepts- the start and sincerity of love. Savitri, the only child of Madra’s wise King, when grows up, her father anxiously ponders over the question of her marriage, but can think of no suitable match. Many months later, as Savitri goes through the corn fields on her way to the hermitage, she sees some youth at their games-

“And one among them tall and blithe,
________________— that the eye
was loth to quite that sun browned face” (Savitri)
Savitri’s choice is at once made as the love began at first sight-

“Their eyes just met- Savitri’s past
Into the friendly muni’s but
Her heart rose opened had at last
opened no flower can ever shut” (Savitri) (50)

And the youth’s name Satyavan, the son of Dyoumatsen, the former King of Salva who had been deposed by his enemies and now old and blind lived with his queen and only son as a hermit. Savitri gets attracted towards Satyavan at first meeting and love blooms. Toru Dutt, full of emotions describes the magical effects of love in Savitri’s heart-

“She went away
Leaving her virgin heart behind
and richer for the loss. A ray
shot down from heaven, appeared to tinge

All objects with supernal Light
The thatches had a rainbow fringe
The corn field looked more green and bright" (Savitri) (51)

But her love is not just physical attraction or temporary love rather a fountain of eternal love burst in her heart for Satyavan which no one can change. After returning home, Savitri tells of her love to her mother who rushes to King’s chamber to tell the entire story. At the same time, Narad muni comes to the palace to see his old friend. Savitri’s father put all the matter before him. Narad muni is not willing to permit the marriage because he knows that Satyavan’s life is very short. He tries to persuade Savitri to choose another husband. But Savitri does not move from her decision. Her heart is filled with love for Satyavan. She declares with dignity-
“Once and once only have I given
My heart and faith- it is past recall” (Savitri) (52)

This is the assertion of any Indian woman’s heart. Savitri chooses Satyavan as her life partner in the face of opposition of Narad muni and her parents. After one year of their happy married life, the fatal day arrives and Satyavan is no more. But the death of Satyavan makes her love stronger, deeper and more challenging. She follows God of Death to bring back her husband’s departed soul-
“No weariness, O Death I feel
And how should I, when by the side
of Satyavan? In woe and weal
To be a helpmate swears the bride
This is my place, by solemn oath
Wherever thou conductest him
I too must go, to keep my truth” (Savitri) (53)

And with the power of her deep, pure and sincere love she could do the struggle and bring back her husband’s life from the clutches of Death. Her third boon from Lord Yama explores the depth of her love for Satyavan-
“Let my Satyavan live again
And children unto us be born
wise, brave and valiant” (Savitri) (54)

The lines beautifully show that an Indian woman is never weak or feeble rather she can face and fight with any situation to save the life of her beloved husband and children.

For Tagore, Love is a universal attribute which binds one to another. In Geetanjali, Tagore expresses and treats love in a devotional manner, a super device to communicate with Almighty God. Here, Love has been treated and communicated through different different relations- master and Servant, lover and beloved, boatman and traveller, musician and listener, the seer and the seen, father and son. Indeed, we all human souls are females, God is the only male. To love and become one with the Divine is the ultimate aim of human life. In Tagore’s Geetanjali, Love is a keen longing and an all-devouring passion. The Lover (human soul) expresses his desire for meeting with the Beloved (Divine Soul).

“I am only waiting for love to give myself up at last into his hands” (Geetanjali/17) (55)

“From dawn till dusk, I sit here upon my door and I know that of a sudden the happy moment will arrive when I shall see” (Geetanjali/44) (56)

The beloved (human soul) is anxiously waiting for the safe arrival of her Divine lover. Delay in his arrival causes more disturbances in the mind of beloved-

“I have no sleep tonight. Ever and again I open my door and look out on the darkness, my friend! I can see nothing before me. I wonder where lies thy path” (Geetanjali/23) (57)

The lines illustrate the deep love, longing and spiritual urge of the soul for its union with God. Tagore wants to convince that God acts like a sincere lover. His mercy is Infinite, He must come to comfort his beloved if she is in trouble.

Sri Aurobindo’s epic ‘Savitri’ is a glorification of love, love that conquers death. Sri Aurobindo beautifies the ecstasy of love of Savitri and Satyavan-

“She brought, flower symbol of her offered life
Thus were they in each other lost a while
Then drawing back from their long ecstasy’s trance
came into a new self and new world” (Savitri) (58)

Knowing the truth of Satyavan’s short life, Savitri is firm in her love-

“Once my heart chose and chooses not again

(55) Ravindra Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ Poem 17, ‘I am only waiting for love to give’, page- 86.
(56) Ravindra Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ Poem 44, ‘This is my delight’, page- 194.
(58) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book V Canto 4, page- 413.
Death’s grit can break our bodies, not our souls,
If death take him, I too know how to die” (Savitri) (59)

Each and every word is steeped into the intensity, purity and sincerity of Indian woman’s love. Very similar expressions we find when Toru Dutt speaks of Savitri’s love for Satyavan-
“Once and once only have I given
my heart and faith” (Savitri) (60)

Sri Aurobindo is excellent in expressing the sincerity and purity of Savitri’s love during her struggle with Yama.
“My love is not a hunger of the heart
It came to me from God, to God returns” (Savitri) (61)

It is in India only where a woman can connect the depth of her love to God. And it is the strength of love only that makes Savitri to follow God of Death fearlessly and at last bring back the life of her beloved husband Satyavan from the clutches of Death.

According to Sarojini Naidu, an Indian woman’s soul atones for her lover’s passions and fears in order to save him; this is perhaps the highest degree of perfection of human love-

“Why need you sad penance or pardon or prayer
for life’s passion and folly and fear?
my soul be your living atonement O Love,
In the flame of immutable years” (The Lute Song) (62)

Braving all obstacles and dangers, she will heed to her lover’s call, having deep love and eagerness in her heart-
“If you call me, I will come
Swifter than desire
Swifter than the lightening’s feet
shod with plumes of fire.
Life’s dark tides may roll between,
O death’s deep charm divide,
If you call me I will come
Fearless what betide” (If You Call Me) (63)

Sarojini’s mentioning ‘fearless’ for the deep love of an Indian woman for her lover very well go with Indian philosophy, “Love knows no fears. Love is always the highest ideal.” Sarojini Naidu presents the love of Indian woman’s heart in a devotional manner. She shows that an Indian woman is all sacrificing in love. She illustrates the sentiments of deep devotion and sacrifice—

“Let me gather, love instead
The entranced and flowering dust
You have honoured with your tread
For mine eyelids and mine head” (The Feast) (64)

She wants from her lover and lord no materialistic gifts but only the permission to gather the foot dust of her lover. Many similar references of selfless love and devotion we find in Shri Guru Granth Sahib, “sajan tere charan ki hoi raha sad dhur” or “Kesha ka mai chavar jhulava charan dhur much laiee.” Sarojini has treated the highest kind of love of an Indian woman’s heart for her beloved. The woman wants—

“Bring me no pearls from ravished seas
gems from rifled hemisphere
Grant me, Love in priceless boon
All the sorrows of your years
All the secret of your tears” (The Feast) (65)

The woman wants all the sorrows that may be fall upon her beloved all through his life to become hers so that his life may be one of unbroken happiness. She wants all the tears that may be in beloved’s lot to be transferred to her, so that his life may be one of unmitigated smiles. So boundless is her love, so pure, so sincere and so sacrificing—

“O Love! I know not why, when you are glad
Gaily my glad heart leaps,
O Love! I know not why, when you are sad
Wildly my sad heart weeps” (A Persian Love Song) (66)

It shows that for an Indian woman, love is the whole existence. It is a secret mystery of her life. What needs to her strong and devoted love is sincerity and self sacrifice- a loving eye, a loving voice, a loving heart and an atoning soul. She can devote anything to enjoy the bliss of such complete love—

“Were beauty mine, beloved, I would bring it,
Like a rare blossom to love’s glowing shrine

Were dear youth mine, beloved I would fling it,
Like a rich pearl into love’s lustrous wine,
Were greatness mine beloved, I would offer,
Such radiant gifts of glory and of fame,
Like camphor and like curds to pour and profer
Before love’s bright and sacrificial flame” (The offering) (67)

Sarojini Naidu has beautified the sensitiveness of an Indian woman. For her, the consummation of love is complete self surrender to her lover. Love does not thrive on beauty or youth, glory or fame, rather, in love, humility is pride, lowliness is the highest exaltation and selfless service has its own reward. Through her poem ‘Immutable’, Sarojini presents the pure and sacrificing love of an Indian woman who is prepared to sacrifice herself if her lover so wills. She says-
“Wherever the way you tread
A carpet of ageless beauty
Is my heart, for your feet outspread” (Immutable) (68)

Sarojini again indicates that how the sincere love of an Indian woman may spiritualize the soul which communes with Truth directly in consequence-
“Beloved you may be as all men say
only a transient spark,
of flickering flame set in a lamp of clay
I care not——— Since you kindle all my dark
with the immortal lustres of the day
And the you are like men of mortal race,
That Death may mar and destiny efface
only a hapless thing
I care not-------------- Since unto my heart you bring
the very vision of God’s dwelling place.” (The Illusion of Love) (69)
The heart of a true lover desires the immortality of love. For her, no sacrifice would be greater than instilling immortal breath into the mortal flesh of her lover and fashioning him into God. The woman feels it necessary that her lover should be first strong, and then free, the immortal and then he can verily be fashioned into a God-
“Instil into your mortal flesh
Immortal breath

Triumphantly to conquer life
   And trample death
What starry height of sacrifice
   Were left untrod,
So could my true love fashion you,
   Into a God" (The Desire of Love) (70)

The sincere love of woman nourishes a desire to change her beloved an inspired one too. She has immense faith that her love will raise her struggling spirit clean from dust. Through sorrow her love will find deliverance from the mortal pride. Thus her soul will be redeemed and reborn and will attain its deserved place beside the beloved-

“So shall my yearning love at last
   Grow sanctified
Throw sorrow find deliverance
   From mortal pride,
So shall my soul, redeemed, reborn
   Attain thy side.” (Invocation) (71)

What a great wish of an Indian woman! It is in India only where such noble passions of ‘sincerity’, ‘devotion’, ‘sacrifice’ and ‘immortality’ dwell in the hearts of people and make India and Indian womanhood unique.

Nissim Ezekiel, though frankly exposes the discards and quarrels of married life but he hopes that all can be redeemed ‘by a mode of love expanding to a way of life.’ He wishes to attain peace and harmony through love in married life-

“Always we must be lovers,
   Man and wife at work upon the hard,
Mass of material which is the world” (To a Certain Lady) (72)

He wishes and prays for achieving fidelity-

“Teach us Love, above all things, fidelity to music
   Sharpen our responses to the colours of creation

Lead us undeceptively to what comes after passion
And let us die, Love as though we chose to for a reason” (To a Certain Lady) (72)

It clarifies that Love is the unifying force of married life. Here in India, marriage is considered a very sacred relation binding two person in one. It is marriage of not two bodies but also two minds, two

(72) Nissim Ezekiel, ‘A Time to Change’, page- 29.-30
souls and two families. Marriage ceremony is held with all religious rites and rituals, with all pomp and show and with all blessings of relatives, friends and elders. Love forms the very base of married life. Nissim Ezekiel throws light on this most sacred and pious relation of marriage-

“Lovers when they marry face
Eternity with touching grace
Complacent at being fated
Never to be separated” (Marriage) (73)

It is the sincere love of Indian woman that makes the relation stronger, truer. What a woman actually needs from her husband and family is sincerity of love, sincerity of feelings, because without true love, life is blank. Kamala Das in almost all poems, pleads and longs for this authentic love and sense of security (as Kamala Das’s life tells shows that she was married at an early age and did not find her married life happy and satisfied)-

“O sea, I am fed up
I want to be simple
I want to be loved
And
If love is not to be had
I want to be dead” (Suicide) (74)

There are occasional flashes of love and romance in the poetry of K.N.Daruwalla. In ‘Landscapes’ when he describes about spring season there is reference of various flowers and trees in concern of love. It is a when ‘the Ashoka blossoms’ but it does so, ‘at the touch of the beloved feet.” There is great depth of love when the poet expresses that he does not need even the physical presence of the beloved-

“I quicken into flower
At the memory of your touch” (The Round of the Seasons) (75)

Another poem ‘Suddenly the Tree’ in ‘Winter Poem’ ends with feeling laden expression of love-

“behind your rhinestone eyes  flickered compassion.” (Suddenly the Tree) (76)

Such expressions of direct romanticism have an innocent charm. There is beauty of deep love in the poem ‘Elegy I’-

“Your words
and my memories of them
turn meaningless, unreal now
your absence is so irrefutable
There were more gestures to your hand
than I have words” (Elegy I) (77)

(73) Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Unfinished Man’, page- 123.
INDIAN WOMAN- A PARAGON OF SHEER BEAUTY, GLAMOUR AND GRACE- Beauty along with the feminine grace is the precious God gift to Indian womanhood. From time immemorial, poets and writers have been writing and singing the charming beauty of Indian woman. Indian woman is not only recognised for her physical beauty but also for her virtuous beauty. Here in India, the real ornament of Indian woman is her grace, her character and her purity. With great sensitiveness, Toru Dutt presents the graceful beauty of Savitri-

“In the meek grace of virgin hood,
Unblanched her cheek, undimmed her eye,
Savitri like a statue, stood,
Somewhat austere was her reply” (Savitri) (78)

Here is Toru’s sparkling poetry to describe the sparkling beauty of Savitri. Like the master hand of a genuine poetic artist, Toru has portrayed the charm of feminine beauty of Savitri’s personality. With the fullness and the force, she depicts the superb grace of goddess Uma as follows-

“Not meek she seemed, nor delicate
Strong was each limb of flexible grace,
And full the bust: the mien elate,
Like hers, the goddess of the chase
On Latmos hill- and oh, the face
Framed in its cloud of floating hair,
No painter’s hand might hope to trace!
The beauty and glory there! (Jogadhya Uma) (79)

And the highest praise that Toru can bestow on Savitri’s charm-

“Fair as a Lotus when the moon,
Kisses its opening petals red,
And sweet showers in sultry June” (Savitri) (80)

“What was her own peculiar charm
The soft black eyes, the raven hair
The curling neck, the rounded arm,
All these are common everywhere
Her charm was this- upon her face
Child-like and innocent and fair” (Savitri) (80)

It all shows that grace and simplicity dominate the beauty of Indian

woman and beauty is the vital principle to develop the feelings of love and life. With full of emotions, Toru Dutt describes the magic of graceful beauty of Savitri-

“The sweet simplicity and grace
   abashed the boldest, but the good,
God’s purity there loved to trace
   mirrored in dawning womanhood” (Savitri) (80)

The beauty of Savitri in Sri Aurobindo’s epic is much more radiant and majestic. Even as a girl. She emits an uncommon radiance-

“As from the soil, sprang glory of branch and flower
   As from the animal’s life rose thinking man,
A new epiphany appeared in her,
   A mind of light, a life of rhythmic force” (Savitri) (81)

Having been brought up in beautiful nature surroundings, she grows up into a maiden, radiant, beautiful, dignified, calm and self disciplined having dignity and majesty of nature herself-

“A body like a parable of dawn
   That seemed a niche for veiled divinity
Or golden temple door to things beyond
   Immortal rhythms swayed in her time born steps
Her look, her smile, awoke celestial sense
   Even in earth-stuff and their intense delight
Poured a supernal beauty on man’s lives” (Savitri) (81)

Narad Muni too is struck by her radiant beauty and speaks of her in the following manner-

“Who is this that comes, the bride,
   The flame-born and round her illumined head,
Pouring their lights, hymeneal pomps
   move flashing about her?
From what green glimmer of glades
   Retreating into dewy silences
Or half seen verge of waters moon-betrayed
   Brings thou this glory of enchanted eyes——” (Savitri) (82)

The lines beautifully reflect the captivating and virtuous beauty of Savitri. Sarojini Naidu takes us to the world of beauty and shows how Mughal King Humayun gets attracted towards the charming beauty of Zobeida. When he moves about in the garden full of roses and other beautiful nature objects, he happens to see Zobeida’s beauty in rose, her glory in dawn, her sweetness in the nightingale song and her whiteness in the swan-
“Your glory in the dawn
Your sweetness in the nightingale
Your whiteness in the swan” (Humayun to Zobeida) (83)

This intense adoration of beauty means love. Love involves the perception of beauty and the longing for the beautiful and life is incomplete without love.

“You haunt me waking like a dream
My slumber like a moon
Pervade me like a musky scent
Possess me like a tune (Humayun to Zobeida) (83)

In another poem of Sarojini Naidu, the beauty of the young Mughal princess Zebun Nisha is so piercing that all beautiful objects of nature are envious of Zeb-un-Nisha’s beauty.

“When from my cheek I lift my veil
The roses turn with envy pale,
And from their pierced hearts, rich with pain
Send forth their fragrance like a wail” (The Song of Princess Zeb-un-Nisha in Praise of Her Beauty) (84)

Sarojini’s lines are rich in sensuousness and melody to depict the majestic beauty of Zeb-un-Nissa. Zeb-un-Nissa, the eldest daughter of Aurangzeb was not only famous for her extraordinary beauty but also for her talents as a poet and calligraphist.

In fact, the creed of beauty facilitates the growth of love everywhere in the world or we can say that love is generated or kindled by beauty. Sarojini Naidu conveys this thought in her poem ‘An Indian Love Song’ in which the lover is so much enamoured of his beloved’s beauty that he requests her to lift up the veil which hides her luminous face.

“Lift up the veils that darken the delicate moon,
of the glory and grace
Withhold not, O Love, from the night of my longing
the joy of thy luminous face
Give me a spear of the scented keora guarding
the pinioned curls” (An Indian Love Song) (85)

All the lines are brilliant to express the lovely beauty of woman which kindles the fire of love in man’s heart. Sarojini’s poem ‘Palanquin Bearers’ is one of the superb illustration unfolding the full bloom of beauty of a young Indian bride or a maiden harmonised with the rhythm of the palanquin in which she is sitting.

“She sways like a flower in the wind of our song,

She skims like a bird on the foam of a stream
She floats like a laugh from the lips of a dream” (Palanquin Bearers) (86)
The Palanquin Bearers tell nothing about the woman they are carrying but the images explore that she is very beautiful, delicate and fragile. The palanquin bearers burst into happiness while carrying their precious passenger-

“She hangs like a star in the dew of our song,
She springs like a beam on the brow of the tide,
She falls like a tear from the eyes of a bride
Lightly o lightly, we glide and we sing
We bear her along like a pearl on a string” (Palanquin Bearers) (86)

The charm of the poem lies in the use of quick succession of similes which describe the captivating beauty of Indian woman sitting inside the palanquin in her full bloom. The veiled palki, the palki bearers, gaily attired and singing a song in adoration of the young beauty they carry along is romantic breathing an air of the days gone by.

Jewellery and cosmetics add more beauty and romantic charm to Indian maidens, brides and ladies and help to arouse warm sentiments in lover’s heart. With stimulating languages, Sarojini Naidu expresses the hidden desires and sentiments when the lover longs to smell the keora scent of his beloved’s pinioned curls, or a silken thread from the fringes of her dress, or the magical perfume of her tresses or the music of twinkling bells of her anklets-

“Give me a spear of the scented keora guarding
thy pinioned curls,
or a silken thread from the fringes that trouble
the dream of thy glimmering pearls
faint grows my soul with thy tresses perfume
and the song of thy anklet’s caprice” (An Indian Love Song) (87)
The anklet bells are a common bearing of Indian ladies. The music produced by anklet bells is always sweet and soothing and gives the impress as if some newlywed is coming. In dress sense, saree is the most common wearing for Indian women. It is an Indian dress that adds grace to the personality of Indian maidens and Indian ladies. A.K.Ramanujan, with felicity of expression, describes the commonly worn saree and vividly recreates his mother’s emaciated form in fewest possible words which are remarkable for their simplicity and commonness.

“Her sarees
Do not cling; they hang loose
Feather of a one time wing” (of Mothers, Among other things) (88)
A.K.Ramanujan's poem 'of Mothers, Among Other Things' is a succession of beautiful and suggestive images which evoke varied pictures of his mother at various stages of her life. The opening lines describe the blooming beauty and delicacy of the mother-

“I smell upon this twisted
black bone tree the silk and white
petals of my mother’s youth” (of Mothers Among Other Things) (89)

INDIAN WOMAN- HER EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA- It is sad to notice that on one hand, Indian woman is respected and worshipped like Lakshmi, Saraswati, Sita, Savitri and Radha but on the other side she suffers a lot in this man dominated society. From childhood to adulthood she is depending on man may be her father or husband or son. She does not have her independent existence. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, “Woman is the companion of man, gifted with equal capacities. She has the right to participate in the minutest details of the activities of man and she has the same right of freedom and liberty as he. She is entitled to a supreme place in her own field of activities as man is. But by sheer force of various customs even the most ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying superiority over women which they do not deserve and ought not to have.” (90) Gandhi Ji opinions about the pathetic condition of Indian womanhood need no explanation. In fact, the other name of Indian woman is statue of sacrifice. All secrets of dreams, joys and sorrows are up to her only. The widowhood is associated with the highest of misfortune in Indian society. It is not her fault that she is a widow but who cares for her feelings? A Hindu widow is not allowed to participate in any festive ceremony. With remarkable faculty of observation, Toru Dutt presents the sketches of Indian social life and reflection on social problem of widow hood in India. She highlights the sorrows of a Hindu widow-

“And think upon the dreadful curse
of widowhood, the vigils, fasts,
And penances; no life is worse
Than hopeless life- the while it lasts” (Savitri) (91)

It expresses that the life of a widow is blank, sad and pathetic. She is all alone to share her sorrows and sufferings-

“Day follows day in one long round,
monotonous and blank and drear” (Savitri) (91)

In the very same manner Sarojini Naidu presents the painful condition of widowhood. Sometimes Indian widow has to go through many critical situations and sufferings that their condition becomes like that of fluttering leaves of autumn. Mark the note of poignant pathos in the following lines-

“My heart is weary and sad and alone
For its dreams like the fluttering leaves have gone
And why should I stay behind” (Autumn Song) (92)

The widows themselves avoid participating in various ceremonies and celebrations in order to avoid humiliation. Sarojini Naidu deals with the widowhood of a young bride and condemns the unjust and inhuman treatment towards widows in our country by divesting them of all articles of establishment and making it compulsory for them to wear the customary dress of the widow-

“What longer need hath she of loneliness
whom death has passed from her lord’s caress?
of glimmering robes like rainbow-tangled mist
of gleaming glass or jewels on her wrist” (Dirge) (93)

The custom bound society wants that her shining bracelets should be shattered and she must wear plain dress-

“Shatter her shining bracelets, break the string
Thread the mystic marriage beads that cling,
Unbind the golden anklets on her feet
Divest her of her azure veils and cloud
Her living beauty in a living shroud” (Dirge) (93)

No one bothers about the grief that sears the widow’s heart. She is all alone to share her sorrow-

“The yearning pain of unfulfilled delight,
The moonless vigils of her lonely night,
For the abysmal anguish of her tears,
And flowering springs that mock her empty tears? (Dirge) (94)

Under all these tears, are hidden the secrets of her unexpressed hopes and dreams which she cannot openly share to anyone. To give happiness to others’ she sacrifices her own feelings, aspirations and hopes-

“Who cares if a woman’s heart be broken” (Destiny) (95) or
“And all my days are a consuming pyre

of accomplished longing and desire” (The Silence of Love) (96)

It is not so that only widows suffer rather many women are sufferer in Indian society. They live for others and die for others. Though time has changed, the women have come out of the four walls and are touching the height of success in every field even then it is the bitter truth that a woman suffers a lot in this male dominated society. Tears are said to be the true companions of her untold sorrows and unexpressed sentiments. Sarojini presents a vivid portrait of an old woman with a begging bowl, sitting under a banyan tree. Her sole companions are poverty, hunger and pain and she keenly waits for death which is the end of life. Her happy past is in contrast with her unhappy present-

“In her youth she has comforted lover and son
In her weary old age, o dear God, is there none
To bless her tired eyelids to rest” (The Old Woman) (97)

The lines throw light on two bitter realities- one is of poverty and the other is that of the Indian woman, who looks after her family and children with so much devotion, is sometimes not respected in her old age.

How the Indian women suffers in the hand of men is not the matter of today, but from ancient times it has been repeated again and again. Sita, the ideal of Indian womanhood had to go through fire (Agni Pareeksha) to prove her purity. “If we remember the pliant of Sita, when banished for the second time, her wandering alone in the vast forest, despair and horror filling her soul, is so pathetic that tears come to our eyes automatically.” Draupadi was made to go through the most humiliating experience of ‘Cheer Haran’ and above that an Indian woman was forced to burn herself at the pyre of her dead husband to become Sati. Sarojini’s poem ‘Nasturtiums’ is compact of brilliance and vitality to reflect the radiant names of the immortal women of India as well as to explore their poignant sorrows and sufferings of their lives-

“——— Savitri’s sorrow and Sita’s desire
Draupadi’s longing, Damayanti’s fears
And sweetest Shakuntala’s magical tears” (Nasturtiums) (98)

In some what similar way, Toru Dutt presents the pathos of Sita-

“she weeps-for lo I at ever tear she sheds
Tears from three pairs of young eyes fall a main,
And bowed in sorrow are the three young heads
It is an old, old story, and the lay
which have evoked sad Sita from the past” (Sita) (99)

Nissim Ezekiel with authentic voice exposes the pitiable condition of Indian wives who are subjected to stern discipline where as their husbands are free to do anything-

“The wives of Indians sit apart
They do not drink
They do not talk
of they do not kiss
The men are quite at home
among the foreign styles” (India) (100)
The lines clearly show that Indian women are never freedom loving. They live their lives within the limits of ‘dharma’. For that, they can even sacrifice their dreams and desires. In one another poem, Ezekiel exposes the pathetic condition of a virgin and suggests how a virgin adjusts to unending loneliness of life-

“You were not made to live like this, although
Your face suggests that you are reconciled
Its gentle sadness as it slowly grew,
And crushed your liveliness, oppressed me too
The universe is much too small to hold
Your longing for a lover and a child” (Virginal) (101)
The lines have psychological insight into the life of a virgin. By idealizing and universalising the common place, Ezekiel has skilfully treated the lonely, sad and blank living of virgin.

Almost all the poetry of Kamala Das is a bold exposition of women’s sufferings, hurt and humiliation in male dominated society. Though her poetry is confessional and autobiographical, but she has universalised what is personal. Her autobiography reveals that Kamala Das was married to K.Madhva Das at the age of fifteen and could not find emotional fulfilment. Despite disillusionment and frustration in married life, Kamala Das resigned to her fate and lived with her husband and had three children. Her poems again and again repeat her emotional defeat and frustration with a sense of nothingness-

“To be frank
I have failed
I feel my age and my
uselessness” (Composition) (102)
She conveys the meaninglessness of her life-

“When I die

Do not throw the meat and bones away
But pile them up
And
Let then tell
By their smell
what life was worth
on this earth
In the end” (A Request) (103)
The lines speak of defeat and emptiness of woman’s life. Every woman wants love- the loving eyes, the loving words, the loving soul- a complete and true love which can satisfy the mind and soul along with the body. And when a woman does not get this true love from her life partner, she remains blank from inside. Kamala Das suggestively protest against the male ego-
“You called
me wife
I was taught to break saccarine into your tea and
To offer at the right moment the vitamins, cowering
Beneath your monstrous ego I ate the magic loaf and
became a dwarf. I lost my will and reason, to all your questions, I mumbled incoherent replies” (The Old Play House) (104)
The lines clarify that wife is treated no better than a hireling. She therefore loses identity and personality and suppresses her will and reason. Kamala Das becomes universal from personal emotions and stresses that all women are sufferer in this male dominated society-
“We are all alike
We women” (Composition)
The words are excellent to convey the pathetic phenomenon of woman’s world.
There is always longing for true love, sincerity, care and respect in Kamala Das’s poetry. With great feminine sensibility her heart cries-
“O sea, I am fed up
I want to be simple
I want to be loved
And
If love is not to be had
I want to be dead” (The Suicide) (106)
Many times we see that a woman is just like a puppet in the hands of man. She suffers a lot but does not have the right to argue or protest. Sometimes situations make her helpless and weak.

Jayant Mahapatra shows great sympathy and concern for women especially the women who are abused, oppressed victims at the hands of poverty and sexuality. Mahapatra says that an Indian woman is “piled up to her silences, waiting for the world will only let her do” (Dawn) (107)

Mahapatra writes that the suffering of the women is endless and the situation has remained unchanged for the centuries. Mahapatra describes the suffering of village woman-
“a freezing sense of in utility sits
On the dark brown throat of a woman
a suffering, subtle spirit” (Village) (108)
Devout and patient as these women are, their lives seem to be bound in an limitless round of sufferings. Mahapatra talks about “These Women” and says-
“Where are things called homes
sticky with toil, need after need,
tempts the fates to touch them,
trap the homely, embarrassed hurt
year after year
like onions and herbs hung out to dry
their hearts heavy
the quiet too long.
What do they live for
They seed, though
They close their eyes every where
to that end
airing the poise of a flower” (These Women) (109)
The melding of the fate of the land and its women is repeated in the poem “In the Fields of Desolate Rice”-
“In the fields of desolate rice
An old woman’s voice trembles
Crows in the trees, knots around the eyes
Dead furrows mark the captive earth
Lives of the people that seem doomed forever” (In the Fields of Desolate Rice) (110)

Indeed, an Indian woman is all sacrificing figure- she serves, she suffers, she sacrifices- this is her fate. Though the efforts of social reformers have changed her position, education has given her a definite recognition, even then there are many parts of India where woman is abused

and oppressed for dowry, for female child, for the girl boy difference, for work and labour and also for sex exploitation. The problems of dowry and female infanticide work as a curse on the life of a woman. Jayant Mahapatra is deeply moved at the sufferings of woman in the past-

“In the writing on ancient rock, young women
bound and gagged, etch the grey walls
with their dead brown bellies, their joyless eyes
on the pages of palm leaves they dance, lonelier than ever
stone bodied courtesans swaying to the dark water” (In a Time of Winter Rain) (111)

Even in the present time, the shadow of dowry darken the life of woman-

“The silent sob from the dying girl
set on fire simply for the colour television
She did not bring as part of her dowry” (The Uncertainty of Colours) (112)

So we come across almost all stages and aspects of Indian woman’s life in Pre and Post Indo-English poetry- from girlhood to womanhood, from innocence to courageous nature, from simple love to spiritual ecstasy and from joyous spirit to pathetic condition. Can we ever forget the pure and sincere love of Savitri in Toru Dutt’s poem-

“Once my heart chose and chooses not again
Death grit can break our bodies not our soul” (Savitri)

In the same tone, we see many brilliant expressions of Savitri’s courage, power, wisdom and sincerity in Sri Aurobindo’s epic Savitri-

“Let fate do with me what she will or can,
I am stronger than death and greater than my fate” (Savitri)

Sarojini’s presentation of Indian woman’s love is also spiritual one based on sacrifice, surrender and devotion-

“———Since unto my heart you bring
The very vision of God’s dwelling place”
And the heroic character of Damayanti when she consoles her husband Nala with courage and strength-

“Shall thou be vanquished, whose imperial feet
Have shattered armies and stampled empires dead?”
The Indian woman is courageous on one hand but she is a great sufferer too. The custom bound society compels her that a widow should live like a dead body-

“Divest her of her azure veils and clouds

Her living beauty in a living shroud” (Dirge)

The women are abused and tortured for dowry, girl boy difference and sex exploitation. Jayant Mahapatra comments on the bitter reality of woman’s pathetic condition-

“The silent sob from the dying girl
set on fire simply for the colour television
she did not bring as part of her dowry”

This all should be avoided. Man should understand that his own existence is because of a woman only. Tagore emphasizes that woman is not only the source of inspiration for man, but also the real source of all creation- an epitome of perfect life-

“Woman, the sin has stripped you naked,
the curse has washed you pure, you have men into perfect life——
you are young as the new born flowers and old as the hills” (The Child, Last Volume) (Section-1, Poems)

Hence woman should be given more and more respect. India is a land of Sita and Savitri, Damayanti and Kunti. Combined efforts should be done to provide a secure and definite status to female child, girl and woman when women will be respected, it will be heaven upon earth. Indian philosophy teaches-

“Yatr nariste pujante, ramante tatr devta”- “where woman is respected and worshipped God Himself resides there”

Shri Guru Granth Sahib preaches-

“ so kyon manda aakhiye jis jamme rajaan”- “why to abuse a woman who gives birth to kings and warriors”

So woman is all power- the power of man, the power of society, the power of the world. She should be given same position, same respect as man has. Here we can mention Toru Dutt comments on the happy conditions of Indian womanhood in the glorious past-

“In those far-off primeval days
Fair India’s daughters were not pent
In closed zenanas” (Savitri)

Such lines are very precious to change the outlook that we witness in some parts of the country.
8 Chapter
Myth can be defined as a traditional tale containing beliefs about ancient times and Legend means a famous story handed down from past. Indian myths and legends play an important role to supply a firm foundation of India’s religious philosophy because “Hinduism is a Search after Truth. Idols and Symbols are an expression of the Real and help the human spirit in its efforts after the Divine.” The existence of Indian myths began with the beginning of Vedic literature and Puranic stories. The first and foremost are the four Vedas- The Rig Veda, The Sama Veda, The Yajur Veda and The Atharva Veda, secondly the Puranas and other sacred epics particularly Ramayana and thirdly the miscellaneous minor deities, all created the historical background of Indian myths and legends. The Vedic gods and goddesses, the heroes and heroines of Smritis and Puranas, Ramayana and Mahabharata are the legendary figures of Indian mythology. Myth is not exactly the truth but the things, events and stories (said to be) relating to the truth by various authorities in various times. Myths are sacred in sense. They are about history, about gods and goddesses, gods and demons, their wars, about society, the cosmos, the conflicts and politics etc. So mythology is not a chronological record of the doing of divinities rather it is a record of the stories and events related to the divinities, the history of their creation and deeds.

Toru Dutt, the legendary queen of Indo-English poetry has presented a unique and splendid composition of India’s past myths and legends through her volume of ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’. The active influence of Toru’s parents towards Indian culture, her own deep study of Sanskrit language, study of Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Vishnu Purana, the Bhagwad Purana etc all bore their impress and here is an immortal work ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’. Toru Dutt makes us familiar with the legendary hero Dhruva who left the worldly wealth to attain the spiritual greatness. Her poem ‘The Legend of Dhruva’ relates to the story of Prince Dhruva taken from Vishnu Purana (Book I, Chapter VI). Dhruva, the Son of Uttamapada and the grandson of Manu, is shown to win the love of his father but greatly insulted by his step-mother Suruchee who wants that King’s love be solely reserved for her own Son Uttama. Suruchee rebukes Dhruva and asks him to forget about the king and kingship-

“Why hast thou, child, formed such a vain design
Why harboured such an aspiration proud.
Born from another’s womb and not from mine?
Oh thoughtless! To desire the loftiest place
the throne of thrones, a royal father’s lap!” (The Legend of Dhruva) (1)

Hurted by the poisonous words of Suruchee, the indigent and ambitious child Dhruva runs to his mother. Trembling with anger and insult, he tells the entire story to Sunneetee, the less favoured Queen of King Uttanapada.

“With a trembling heart
Repeated to his mother every word
That proud Suruchee spoke from first to last

Even to the very presence of King” (The Legend of Dhruva) (2)

After hearing all this, Suneetee gets much upset and sad but consoles Dhruva by explaining the Law of Karma-

“The deeds thou hast done
The evil, haply in some former life
Long long ago, who may alas! annual
Or who the good works not done supplement
The sins of previous lives must bear their fruit” (The Legend of Dhruva) (3)

Suneetee advises Dhruva to do good deeds in life and to practice all virtues. Suneetee also holds out to him a bright prospect in the future if he lives his present life well. According to mother, the fate and life future of depends on the deeds that he does in his life-

“Be meek, devout and friendly, full of love,
Intent to do good to the human race
And to all creatures sentient made of God
And oh, be humble, for on modest worth
descends prosperity, even as water flows
down to low grounds” (The Legend of Dhruva) (4)

Dhruva hears the advice carefully but declares his unchangeable resolution-

“I shall try
The highest good, the loftier place to win
which the whole world deems priceless and desires” (4)

Then he leaves his father’s palace and all the comforts of royal life and goes to the woods to live among the hermits. There he practises hard penance, meditation and prayers. God gets pleased with his devotion and blesses him the “highest heaven”- the eternal star of heaven and there he shines eternally-

“By prayer and penance Dhruva
The highest heaven and there shines a star!
Nightly men see him in the firmament” (The Legend of Dhruva) (5)

Even today, he shines as an eternal star. It is very common with Indian Mothers to tell the stories of Dhruva, Prahlad, and Shravan Kumar to their children. The mother’s point out towards the sky and say to the children, “See, there eternal ‘Dhruva Tara’ shining in the sky. His light never fades. He is eternal and ever shines because he meditated continuously on the eternal Name of God and attained the highest position in heaven.” In the holy book of Sikhism, Shri Guru Granth Sahib, there are many repeated reference of the names of Dhruva and Prahlad and their meditation upon the Name of God-

"Ram jape ji aise aise
Dhruv Prahlad japayo Hari jaise" (6)
"Meditate upon the Name of God in such a manner as Dhruv and Prahlad meditated"
Toru Dutt, with beautiful narrative skill has clearly demonstrated the whole life and attainment of legendary hero Dhruva.

Toru Dutt’s poem ‘Savitri’ is all about the great legendary heroine of India, Savitri, the only child of Madra’s wise and mighty King Aswapathy and her triumph over death. The story of Savitri has been taken from Mahabharata. The whole ballad has been divided into five parts. The first part starts with the glowing beauty of Savitri-

“Fair as lotus when the moon
Kisses its opening petals red,
After sweet showers in sultry June” (7)
“Her charm was this- upon her face
    childlike and innocent and fair”
“God’s purity- there loved to trace
    mirrored in dawning womanhood” (Savitri) (8)
Then Savitri’s meeting with Satyavan and love at first sight-

“Her heart rose opened had at last
    opened no flower can ever shut”
“Of royal race he was in truth
Satyavan was he hight- his sire
Dyomatsen had been Salva’s King
But old and blind, opponents dire
    Hath gathered round him in a ring
And snatch the sceptre from his hand,
    Now- with his queen and only son
He lived a hermit in the land
    And gentler hermit was there none” (Savitri) (9)
The lines fully describe Satyavan and his family background. Savitri, on her return to home, tells everything, her love, Satyavan as her would be life partner, to her parents. Her parents are very happy to know her choice, but when Narad muni comes to know about Satyavan and Savitri, he predicts the bitter reality of the short life of Satyavan-

“The fatal truth- I tell you I

(6) Shri Guru Granth Sahib
Upon this day as rounds the year
   The young Prince Satyavan shall die"
Despite of the opposition of Narad muni and her own parents, Savitri is firm in her choice of love
and life partner-
“Once and once only, have I given
   My heart and faith” (Savitri) (10)
Part II describes that marriage ceremony is held in Madra with great joy and Savitri goes to her
husband’s place. But the fatal day comes exactly after the one year of their happy married life and
Satyavan dies. The God of Death appears and takes away Satyavan’s soul. Strong in love, Savitri
pursues Yama, the God of Death to bring back her husband’s life. Yama asks her to go back and
perform her husband’s funeral rites but Savitri is stick to the path and says-
“where’er my husband dear is led
   or journeys of his own free will
I too must go” (Savitri) (11)
“No weariness, O Death I feel,
   And how should I, when by the side
of Satyavan? In woe and weal
   to be a helpmate swears the bride” (Savitri) (11)
III and IV parts of the poem narrate the continuous intellectual dialogues and debate between Yama,
the Lord of Death and Savitri-
“I know that in this transient world
   All is delusion- nothing true
I know its shows are mists unfurled
   to please and vanish. To renew
its bubbles joys, be magic bound,
   In Maya’s network frail and fair,
   is not my aim!” (Savitri) (12)
To hear such highly intelleitual and philosophical words of Savitri, Yama gets pleased to grant her
boons which Savitri asks, one by one- (1) the restoration of the lost sight and domain to Satyavan’s
father, (2) the gift of hundred sons to her own father and (3) the granting of Satyavan’s life back to
him-
“Let my Satyavan live again
   And children unto us be born
wise, brave and valiant” (Savitri) (13)

How intellectually she asks for the third boon and the boon is granted. That is victory of Savitri’s pure and sincere love for Satyavan. Even death could not stand in front of the strong power of love. In the Fifth and last part of the poem, Toru Dutt describes ‘the happy life again’ of Savitri and Satyavan. Savitri’s name is remembered even today at the time of a marriage. She has become, immortal in the human world because of her noble nature, handsome conduct, and marvellous wisdom, constancy in love and purity in thoughts.

“To this day, her name is named when couples wed
And to the bride the parents say
Be thou like her in heart and head” (Savitri) (14)

Toru Dutt’s poem ‘Lakshman’ is cast in the form of a conversation between Sita, the wife of Lord Ram and Lakshman, the brother of Lord Rama. The holy scripture ‘Ramayana’ depicts Lakshman as the Legend, the hero, the warrior and the true devotee of Lord Ram. Lakshman remains ideal throughout his life because his brother Ram is God for him. To serve Lord Ram is his life’s ultimate aim. When Lord Ram and Sita are ready to go exile for 14 years, Lakshman too gets ready to accompany them, to serve them and to protect them from every bitter eye. This poem, the living episode is related to the conspiracy hatched by Ravana to elope with Sita. Ravana asks Marichi to disguise himself in the shape of golden deer and Marichi does the same, when Rama follows the deer, shoots at it, which fells the deer. It is not the deer rather Marichi is dying and crying in the imitation of Ram’s voice. Sita hears the painful cry of her husband Ram and she asks Lakshman to go at once for the help of Ram. At this point, the poem ‘Lakshman’ begins. Lakshman is a bit unwilling to go because he thinks that Sita may be harmed or eloped by some demon from the hermitage all around demons but Sita insists Lakshman to take up his bright sword and unerring bow and go to the woods for the help of his brother Ram. At his continual silence and inaction, she cries-

“Swift in decision, prompt in deed
Is it my brother that I see!” (Lakshman) (15)

Sita accuses and even rebukes Lakshman for this delay and remarks-

“He perishes- well, Let him die!
His wife hence forth shall be mine own!
Can that thought deep embedded lie
with thy heart’s most secret zone!” (Lakshman) (16)

Lakshman answers to the doubts of Sita and convinces her his complete faith in the power of Ram and his heroism-

“Hast thou his prowess never seen?
  Wipe off for shame that dastard tear!
What being of demonian birth
  Could ever brave his mighty arm
Is there a creature on the earth
  That dares to work out hero harm”
“The lion and the grisly bear
  Cower when they see his royal look
Sun staring eagles of the air
  His glance of anger can not brook.” (Lakshman) (17)

At the same time he seems to be determined to go to the direction of Ram but before leaving the hut, he draws a magical circle on the ground with his arrow for Sita’s protection. He asks her not to go beyond it and blesses her before departing-
“Here with an arrow, lo, I trace
  A magic circle ere I leave
No evil thing within this space
  May come to harm thee or to grieve”
“Farewell, O Sita! Blessings crown
  And peace forever rest with thee” (Lakshman) (18)

Through musical and harmonious poetry, Toru Dutt has truly presented the strong character of Lakshman as an ideal brother, ideal brother-in-law, ideal human being and ideal devotee by showing his qualities of greatly obedient and dutiful, highly tolerant, swift in decision and prompt in deed. Even today, Lakshman’s name shines as an ideal brother throughout the history of world because of his service, sacrifice, sincerity, soldier ship and devotion to his brother, Lord Ram.

Toru Dutt’s ‘Jogadhya Uma’ essentially is a ballad which narrates a folk tale of India based on the legend of goddess Uma. Goddess Uma represents Mother Goddess having chief powers of Supreme Being manifested according to the need of time- The folk story of Jogadhya Uma begins with a description of a pedlar selling his shell bracelets-
“Shell bracelets ho! Shell bracelets ho!
  Fair maidens and matrons come and buy!” (19)
The pedlar reaches a tank where he finds an extremely beautiful lady sitting on the door of the ghat-
“— the face
Framed in its cloud of floating hair,
No painter’s hand might hope to trace
    The beauty and the glory there
well might the pedlar look with awe” (20)

After buying and wearing the bracelets, the lady disappears after asking the pedlar to go to his
priest father to pay him the price of bracelets. When the pedlar goes to the temple of priest, the
priest says that he has no daughter-
“No daughter in the world have I” (Jogadhya Uma) (21)

Then the pedlar tells the priest that the gentle lady refused to give the price and said that there is a
red box which contains the cost of bracelets. The priest at once goes to the corner of the temple
and brings the box and opens it, and to a great surprise, the box has the exact price neither less nor
more. The priest and the pedlar both get shocked. The priest thinks that the pedlar is a blessed
soul who has seen the glimpse of Goddess Uma-
“How strange! How strange! Oh blest art thou
    To have beheld her, touched her hand
Before whom Vishnu’s self must bow
    And Brahma and his heavenly band!
Here have I worshipped her for years,
    And never seen the vision bright;
Vigils and fast and secret tears
    Have almost quenched my outward sight;
And yet that dazzling form and face
    I have not seen and thou, dear friend
To thee, unsought for, comes the grace
    What may its purpose be and end?” (Jogadhya Uma) (22)

Much surprised, both of them, the priest and the pedlar, run to the tank and pray to the Goddess to
show her to them. There upon, they see the arm of Uma rising above the lotus flower-
“Sudden from out the water sprung
    A rounded arm, on which they saw
As high, the lotus buds among
    It rose, the bracelet which, with awe
Then a wide ripple tost and swung

The blossoms on that liquit plain
And lo! The arm so fair and young
sank in the water down again” (Jogadhya Uma) (23)

They both bow before the mystic and strange appearance of the arm of Uma. When they return home, they bring up a lotus flower as the symbol of the devotion to Goddess. Even today the grandson, the great grandson of the pedlar offers their devotion by offering bracelets to the deity every year. With great narrative skill, romantic charm and mystic element, Toru Dutt has described the folk legend of Jogadhya Uma. Toru Dutt closes the intense story with the request that the story may seem illogical and imaginary but the story must remain intact.

Another legendary folk tale, which Toru Dutt presents through her poetry, is “The Royal Ascetic and the Hind”. It is a story of King Bharat of Saligarm taken from XIII part of the Vishnu Purana. The great hermit King Bharat, at the end of his life gives up all the comforts and luxuries at home and goes out to the forest to practice religious penances, to offer prayer and meditation in order to have a perfect control over his soul and attain goal of spiritual ecstasy. Everything goes well with him until, one day, a great event happens to change his whole life. A graceful hind comes there to quench her thirst. Just then a lion comes roaring. The hind startles and leaps up. From her womb, her offspring comes out and falls in the rushing stream. It struggles for life against the waves due to shock and pain of her mother’s death. The royal ascetic Bharat feels great pity to see struggling fawn and draws her out from the wave-

“It was panting fast life was in it still
Now, as he saw its luckless mother dead,
He would not leave it in the woods alone
But with the tend crest pity brought it home” (The Royal Ascetic and the Hind) (24)

After saving the life of the fawn, the King brings it to the hermitage. To look after it constantly, he forgets all about his prayers and vigils. His love for fawn grows deeper and deeper. Many years pass on, when death comes to the royal ascetic; his attention is totally on the fawn, forgetting all the vital issues regarding God and Eternity-

“——— watched and watched
His favourite through a blinding film of tears,
And could not think of the beyond at hand,
So keen he felt the parting” (The Royal Ascetic and the Hind) (25)

“To it devoted was his last, last thought
Reckless of present and of future both” (The Royal Ascetic and the Hind) (25)

Though the story of the Royal Ascetic is about the failure of King Bharat’s asceticism, but it is his victory in love to God’s creatures because. God loves those who love His creatures, great and low,

rich and poor. This is the moral of this folk tale, the moral of Indian philosophy, which Toru Dutt wants to teach everybody-

“Not in seclusion, not apart from all
Not in a place elected for its peace
But in the heat and bustle of the world
Must he still labour with a loving soul
who strives to enter through the narrow gate” (The Royal Ascetic and the Hind) (26)

Toru Dutt’s famous poem ‘Buttoo’ is about the legendary hero ‘Buttoo’ an ideal disciple, the son of a hunter, and also called Eklavya. The story has been taken from Mahabharata which describes that Buttoo comes to Dronacharya, the great master of archery, to learn the art of archery but is rejected by Dronacharya on account of his low birth. Being humiliated, he makes up his mind to fulfil the aim of his life- the perfection in archery with his rebellious spirit-

“My place I gather is not here
No matter- what is rank or caste
In us is honour or disgrace
Not out of us” (Buttoo) (27)

“And I shall do my best to gain,
The science that man will not teach
For life is as a shadow of vain
Until the utmost goal we reach
To which the soul points” (Buttoo) (27)

In the midst of beautiful natural surroundings he prepares a life like statue of Dronacharya and knows that “the teacher in his flesh there”. Having inspiration from the statue, Buttoo starts practicing archery and conquers all obstacles by steadfastness of heart and will. He at last succeeds to learn all the secrets of archery even the magic shaft. One day he has to fly a magic shaft to silence the continuous barking of a dog. By chance Arjuna happens to be there and gets shocked to see the dog struck by the magic shaft. Arjuna at once comes to Dronacharya and tells the story and charges him of betrayal of faith. Dronacharya reassures Arjuna and comes to Buttoo from where he hears that he himself is the source of inspiration. As a guru, and also in his anxiety to make his favourite disciple Arjuna unequalled in the field of archery, Dronacharya demands the right thumb of Buttoo as his due. Like a true disciple (shishya) Buttoo replies-

“Yea, I swear

So long as I have breath and life
To give thee all thou wilt" (Buttoo) (28)
Without delay, Buttoo very gladly offers his right thumb to the Master Dronacharya, though it means the end of his long years of hard practice and great achievement of archery-
“Glanced the sharp knife one moment high
The severed thumb was on the sod
There was no tear in Buttoo’s eye
He left the matter with God” (Buttoo) (29)
Dronacharya gets deeply touched to see the act of sacrifice and exclaims in admiration of Buttoo’s heroic conduct and truth loving word abiding to retreat-
“———Fame
Shall sound thy praise from sea to sea
And men shall ever link thy name
with self help, truth and modesty” (Buttoo) (30)
Buttoo’s (Eklavya’s) name as an ideal disciple is immortal in the history of India and his heroic conduct is a guiding example for all the modern disciples.
From the ideal disciple, Toru Dutt passes our attention to ideal son, the legend in him, for the service and devotion to his parents. The story describes that Sindhu, generally known as Shravan Kumar, the only son, lives with his old, blind and helpless parents and spends all his time in serving them-
“Attentive, duteous, loving, kind
Thoughtful, sedate, and calm
He waited on his parents blind,
whose days were like a psalm” (Sindhu) (31)
One day King Dasaratha, along with his trainee, comes to the forest for a hunt, having lost his way, he reaches to the curve of a river. In the darkness of evening, he hears the sound as of a roebuk drinking water and at once shoots his arrow in the direction of sound. But what is this! He is shocked to hear a feeble human wail. He runs towards the sound. It is Shravan Kumar dying with his pitcher at his side. The King filled with remorse tries to save Shravan, fearing badly a Brahmin’s dying curse. But Sindhu forgives him and comforts him by saying that this punishment is his fate because by mistake once he has committed the sin of killing one of the pair of doves-
“Blood calls for red blood still” (Sindhu) (32)
Sindhu is not afraid of his own death, but he is worried about his blind parents who are helpless-
“And so I die- a bloody death

But not for this I mourn
“But for my parents who are blind
And have no other stay” (32)

A noble soul, Sindhu does not forget to do his duty even at the time of death-
“Bear thou the pitcher-friend, ‘tis all
I ask- down that steep lane” (33)

With a heavy heart, carrying Sindhu’s dead body and pitcher, Dasaratha goes to the thirsty parents of Sindhu. The parents are waiting and longing to hear Sindhu’s voice-
“Lo here he is- oh where fore grieves
thy soul, my partner dear?”
“It is not Sindhu- who art thou?
And where is Sindhu gone?
There is blood upon thy hands- O vow!
There is- speak on, speak on” (Sindhu) (34)

Dasaratha tells Sindhu’s parents all about his misdeed- the shooting of their only support. The parents cry-
“Our hearts are broken come dear wife
On earth no more we dwell” (35)

They predict-
“Thou too shall like us die
Die- for a son’s untimely loss
Die- with a broken heart” (35)

Sindhu’s parents die because of shock of the death of their beloved son Sindhu. Dasaratha accepts all the curse and prediction with sad heart. He brings the three dead bodies on the bank of Sarayu and performs the funeral rites according to shastras. The old parents’ prophecy also comes true when Dasaratha dies at the departure of his dear son Ram for the jungle for fourteen years. The Legend Sindhu or Shravan Kumar’s name ever shines with golden words in the history of India. Whenever there is any son serving his parents with love and devotion, people give the compliment, ‘He is Shravan Kumar’.

‘Prahlad’ is one of the best poems in Toru Dutt’s volume ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan. The story of Legend Prahlad has been taken from Mahabharata showing the victory of good over evil, truth over falsehood and godliness over inhuman activities. The story describes that

(34) Toru Dutt, ‘Sindhu’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’, page- 140.
Prahlad though born in a royal family, has great reverence for God from the very beginning. On opposite to this, Prahlad’s father King Heerun Kasyapu is a very cruel and irreligious King. He has become a terror both of gods and men. There is no place for God, Vedas, sacred scriptures, Brahman, sacrifices and rites in the life of Heerun Kasyapu. He wants everyone should worship him and him alone. Even the teachers are ordered to teach the students his ruler ship as God. All the students agree with what the teacher teaches, but Prahlad is very thoughtful. His soul, mind, heart and body, everything is coloured with the Name of God. His reply to the teacher is a blow to the tyranny of King Heerun Kasyapu-

“That is true knowledge which can show
The glory of the living gods-
That is true knowledge which can make
us mortals saint like, holy, pure” (Prahlad) (36)

When the King comes to know Prahlad’s devotion to God, he gets furious and orders Prahlad to bow down and worship him-

“bow down, thou slave
And worship me or thou shall die” (36)

Prahlad, however remains unshaken and boldly proclaims his firm faith in God by saying that his head will only bow down in front of God who is the Maker of all-

“The gods who made us are the life
Of living creatures, small and greats
And shall we these high gods blaspheme? (Prahlad) (37)

Hearing this, the furious tyrant King gives the instructions to torture and punish Prahlad in cruel manner. Prahlad is thrown into dungeon cell and orders are given to cut his throat, but the sword does not work. Then Prahlad is ordered to sit in the lap of Holika in midst of fire, but what a miracle! Holika burns and dies but there is no effect of fire on Prahlad. Many other trials are done to torture Prahlad but all devices fail. Then lastly Prahlad is chained to a hot crystal pillar. Heerun Kasyapu mocks at him and asks him “Is He here in, thy God of light”. Prahlad is firm in his faith and devotion to God-

“Yes father, God is even here,
And if he chooses this very hour
Can strike us dead with ghastly fear
And vindicate His name and power” (Prahlad) (38)

Heerun Kasyapu gets mad with anger-

“Where is this? God now let us see

He spurned the pillar with his foot” (38)
The pillar bursts and from there comes God in the form of “Narsima Avatar” (half lion and half human body) and kills Heerun Kasyapu with His paws and saves His true devotee Prahlad-
“He had a lion head and eyes
A human body, feet and hands,
Colossal- such strange shapes arise
In clouds, when autumn rules the lands
He gave a shout: the boldest quailed
Then struck the tyrant on the helm
And ripped him down: and last, he hailed
Prahlad as king of all the realm!” (Prahlad) (38)
Prahlad is immortal and immortal is his faith in the presence of God. Shri Guru Granth Sahib declares with authority-
“Bhagata di tu sada rakhda Har jio dhur tu rakhda aaya
Prahlad jan tudh rakh laye, Harnaksh maar pachaya” (39)
“Oh God, you are always there with your devotee to protect and save. From the very beginning of this universe, you were / are always present with your devotees. You protected Prahlad from death and killed cruel Heerun Kasyapu with your paws”.

Last of all, Toru Dutt makes us familiar with Sita’s touching life. The legendary heroine of Ramayana, the wife of Lord Ram and the only daughter of King Janaka, Sita suffered a lot during her married life. Ramayana tells how she spent the time of thirteen years of exile in the company of her husband Ram. Being a queen, it was very difficult for her to pass her days in the hard life of thorns of jungle but for her the company of her beloved husband was heaven. Then how she suffered a lot during the last fourteenth year of exile under the cruel rule of King Ravana, but no one could dare to touch the respect and honour of Sita. After coming back to Ayodhaya she was again exiled by her husband Ram because of the criticism among people about her purity and chastity. Toru Dutt’s poem ‘Sita’ is a moving ballad about her second banishment, giving a glimpse of Sita’s life at Valmiki’s Ashram on the bank of the holy river Ganga.
“A dense, dense forest where no sunbeam pries
And in its centre a cleared spot...” (Sita) (40)
The lines describe the hermitage of Valmiki surrounded by a dense forest in which Sita lives with her loving sons, Love and Kush, when Sita is banished second time-

(39) Shri Guru Granth Sahib
(40) Toru Dutt, ‘Sita’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’, page- 158.
“There dwells in peace the poet anchorite
But who is this fair lady? Not in vain
She weeps- for lo! At every tear she sheds
Tears from three pairs of young eyes fall amain
And bowed in sorrow are the three young heads
It is an old, old story and the lay
Which has evoked sad Sita from the past” (Sita) (41)

The pathetic words ‘she weeps’, ‘at every tear she sheds’ and ‘sad Sita’ fully describe the tragic episode in Sita’s life when she was exiled at the time of pregnancy and sent to the forest. The treatment that she receives from her beloved husband Lord Ram can never be justified. She is more sinned against the sinning. Toru Dutt’s lines depict the deep sorrow and suffering of Sita’s heart. She weeps continually and her children also feel it as she has been born and bred in a royal family and wedded to a noble prince and therefore unaccustomed to a hard life and above all she weeps at the undeserved treatment meted out to her. She is innocent and pure and yet is exiled because of a baseless and slanderous rumour about her purity. The greatness of Sita is that she bears all the tortures given to her by this envious world, but she does not open her mouth against anyone including her husband. “If we remember the plaint of Sita, when banished for the second time, her wandering alone in the vast forest, despair and horror filling her soul is so pathetic that tears come to our eyes automatically.” In the words of Toru Dutt herself, “Can there be more touching and lovable heroine than Sita? I do not think so.”

Toru Dutt’s poem ‘Sita’ though it is brief ballad, but has ring of pathos which moves all human hearts. The ballad also throws light on the childhood memories of Toru Dutt when she along with her brother and sister used to gather at their mother’s knee in the twilight and listen to the old, sad story of Sita’s sufferings.

Sri Aurobindo’s epic ‘Savitri’ has been subtitled as a legend and a symbol. It is based on the Mahabharata story of Savitri and Satyavan. Like Sita, Savitri is the great legendary heroine of India’s Womanhood, who with her power of love, brings back her husband Satyavan’s life from the clutches of death. The original story of Savitri and Satyavan appears in Mahabharata as well as in Puranas. It is concerned with the life and penance of King Aswapathy who is child-less, the birth of Savitri, Savitri’s marriage with Satyavan, Satyavan’s death and Savitri’s victory over death. For eighteen years, the King Aswapathy, undergoes austerities, offers oblation to the fire, worships Goddess Gayatri etc. Through continuous meditation, he attains the Perfection and Spiritual Ecstasy-

“Thus came his soul’s release from ignorance
His mind and body’s first spiritual change,
A wide God knowledge poured down from above

(41) Toru Dutt, ‘Sita’ ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’, page- 159.
Aswapathy prays to the Divine Mother-

"Let thy infinity in one body live
All knowledge wrap one mind in seas of light
All love throb single in one human heart" (Savitri) (43)

The Divine Mother accepts his prayer and promises him to send out an emanation of Herself in the form of Savitri who will transform the future of mankind.

"O strong forerunner, I have heard thy cry
One shall descend and break the iron law
Change Nature’s doom by the love spirit power" (Savitri) (44)

“A seed shall be sown in Death’s tremendour hour,
A branch of heaven transplant to human soil
Nature shall over leap her mortal step
Fate shall be changed by an unchanging will” (44)

Savitri is born to King Aswapathy as a result of a boon granted to him by the Goddess Savitri, the World Mother. Savitri is the incarnation of Divine Mother-

“Even her humanity was half divine
Her spirit opened to the spirit in all
Her nature felt all Nature as its own
Apart, living within, all lives she bore
Aloof, she carried in herself the world,
The Universal Mother’s love was there” (Savitri) (45)

Savitri is brought up in beautiful nature- surroundings and therefore she reflects the dignity and majesty of nature herself. She grows up into a radiant, beautiful and intelligent lady. Whoever sees her, is attracted by her dignified beauty. Narad Muni when sees her radiant beauty, comments -

“who is this that comes the bride,
The flame born and round her illumined head” (Savitri) (46)

Following her father’s order, Savitri starts her quest and at last meets Satyavan in the forest and falls deeply in love with him. Though Narad muni praises Satyavan’s manifold virtues but disclose the bitter truth-

“Twelve swift winged months are given to him and her
This day returning Satyavan must die” (Savitri) (47)

(47) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book VI Canto 1, page- 431.
In spite of her parents’ disapproval on account of the short life span of Satyavan, Savitri is determined in her decision to marry Satyavan and Satyavan alone-

“My will is part of the eternal will,
My fate is what my spirit’s strength can make” (Savitri) (48)

Savitri marries Satyavan. She knows about her future but at the same time, she is firm to change her fate through her spiritual power. She is determined to change human destiny and make Satyavan immortal. It is universal love, which inspires her to change nature’s law-

“But not to submit and suffer was she born
To lead, to deliver was her glorious part” (Savitri) (49)

At last the fatal day comes; Satyavan dies exactly after one year of their happy married life. Firm and fearless, Savitri, follows Yama, the God of Death, to bring back the life of Satyavan from the clutches of death. Death adapts many tricks to get rid of, but Savitri rejects all the temptations and arguments. She says-

“I bow not to thee, O huge mask of Death”

“I am immortal in my mortality” (Savitri) (50)

Savitri has firm faith in herself and her pure love when Yama, the god of death argues and calls her pure love ‘lust’ and ‘a sensual want refined’, Savitri gives a befitting reply-

“My love is not a hunger of the heart
My love is not a craving of the flesh”

It came to me from God, to God it returns” (Savitri) (51)

Yama, the God of Death, wants to know her real identity-

“Who then art thou hiding in human guise
Reveal thy power, lay bare thy spirit force,
Then will I give back to thee Satyavan” (Savitri) (52)

Then Savitri reveals her cosmic form-

“A mighty transformation came on her
In a flaming moment of apocalypse over
The incarnation thrust aside its veil———
Eternity looked into the eyes of Death” (Savitri) (53)

This is the climactic moment when Love conquers Death and Light overpowers Night, the moment of the Eternal Dawn-

(48) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book VI Canto 1, page- 432.
(49) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I Canto 2, page- 77.
(50) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book IX Canto 2, page- 582.
“His body was eaten by light, his spirit devoured
At last he knew defeat twilight of that symbol world
In the dream twilight of that symbol world
The dire universal shadow disappeared
vanishing into void from which it came
And Satyavan and Savitri were alone” (Savitri) (54)

Endowed with supernal love and firm will power, Savitri conquers death, darkness, ignorance and all evils. Despite her divinity, Savitri does not aspire paradisal felicity forever. She makes earth, the scene of her striving, and the field of realization because the real aim of her life is-

“To change the earthly life to life divine” (Savitri) (55)

She along with Satyavan returns to the earth and brings there the bliss of heaven. So Savitri’s struggle with Yama, the God of Death, is clearly the struggle of a woman and a wife. Savitri’s struggle symbolises victory of love over death, the symbol of wife’s true devotion and power even to overcome the greatest of evils, death. Aswapathy, Savitri’s father, the Lord of Tapasya, symbolises the concentrated energy of spirituality that help us to rise from the mortal to the immortal planes. Satyavan is the seeker of Truth. Love along with Truth can win anything, even death that is the glory of legendary heroine Savitri.

Many of Sarojini Naidu’s poems show her deep concerns with Indian myths and legends. In one of her best poems, ‘Kali, the Mother’, she successfully captures the very spirit of idol worship, a hymn to Kali, the eternal Mother of Hindu Mythology-

“O terrible and tender and divine
O mystic mother of all sacrifices
We deck the sombre altars of thy shrine
With sacred basil leaves and saffron and rice
All gifts of life and death, we bring to thee
Uma! Haimavati!” (Kali, the Mother) (56)

Goddess Kali, the personification form of Parvati is brought under various names as Durga, Annapurna, Jagadpurna, Jagad Gouri, Uma, Ambika, Ganesh Janani etc. She is worshipped throughout the country under different names, in different forms and by different group of people. Sarojini has presented a choral chant in which various types of people participate. The worshippers have decorated the altars of the shrine with “sacred basil leaves and saffron and rice”, with full faith and devotion. Like the mother of Indian joint family, Kali, whose creation and child the cosmos is, represents the prevalence of law and continuity. She embodies a feminine world of space and time

in which hers is a participating presence amidst the flux of confluent forces. Goddess Kali, the Mother Divine, the Universal Mother, has a power above time and duration. Her love and compassion are one and only as all other love and relationship based on kinship, friendship and social relations flow from reciprocity but hers alone can afford to be unilateral because in her are fused the multiple forms which the soul assumes. She is the mystic mother of all sacrifices. Sarojini Naidu presents the faith of the worshippers laying stress on the cosmic principle as the dreadful Goddess stands for the feminine principle at work in the cosmos. The worshippers offer their attributes and gifts of devotion to make her happy-

“Maidens: We bring thee buds and berries from the wood,
Mothers: And the sweet travail of Motherhood
Widows: And we the bitter vigils of despair
All voices: All gladness and all griefs we bring to thee
Ambika! Paravati!” (Kali, the Mother) (57)

Sarojini’s presentation of the chanting of the hymn brings about a sort of trance and the divine is turned into a living presence for the time being. A catharsis or relief is introduced for the emotion of fear and a consciousness of social solidarity is produced, because God is always present in such type of devotional rituals, worships and faith. The Blessed Lord says in Bhagwad Geeta, “I am the ritual action, I am the sacrifice, I am the ancestral ablation, I am the medicinal herb, I am the (sacred) hymn, I am also the melted butter, I am the fire and I am the offering” (58) In Sarojini’s poem, at first the worshippers recount her various gifts in their communal chant then they chant to her each, offer their devotion and invoke her glory and grace-

“Scholars: We bring the secret of our ancient arts,
Priests: We bring the treasures of our ageless creeds,
Poets: And we the subtle music of our heart,
Patriots: And we the sleepless worship of our deeds,
All voices: All glory and all grace, we bring to thee
Kali! Maheshwari!” (Kali, the Mother) (59)

Sarojini has communicated the Hindu’s faith in worshipping gods and goddesses in temples and holy places through her poem ‘Kali, the Mother’. “People show reverence to temples and holy places because He is worshipped there and His presence is associated with love.” (60) In Hindu Culture, the day begins with worship and prayer. People pray, worship, meditate and bow in front of the idols and symbols of gods and goddesses. A sincere act of Idol Worship and rituals makes them to the natural realization of God’s presence and fills their minds with soothing, moral and religious thoughts. The worship and rituals performed in temples and in domestic rites, puts them

(58) The Bhagwad Geeta, IX/16, page- 245.
in a positive and peaceful frame of mind. The worship of Goddess Kali is the most spectacular and most popular in all worship in eastern India lasting for ten days (Navratri). Ma Shail putri, Ma Brahmcharini, Ma Chandraghanta, Ma Kushmanda, Ma Skandmata, Ma Katya yani, Ma Kalratri, Ma Mahagauri, Ma Sidhidatri etc are the names and forms of Goddess Kali. Navratri festival is one of the most important celebrations in other parts of India also, second perhaps to Diwali. It is known by different names in different parts of the country and coincides with Ramlila festival. On the tenth day, image of Kali is taken out in procession for immersion in the river. After the immersion which marks the climax of the celebration, people greet each other and sweets are distributed. Though the worship of Kali is very popular in whole India, but special expressions of faith and ceremonies are held in Bengal and being born in Bengali family Sarojini has successfully captured the Hindu ideal of fusion in observing a simple and direct relationship between the folk reverence for the Mother and the sacramental ecstasy of the group worship through her poem ‘Kali, the Mother’. It is true that Idol Worship is strictly prohibited in Sikhism and Islam, but Hindu culture is dominated by Idol Worship, an outcome of Indian myths and legends because according to Hindu philosophy, “Man is an anthropomorphic and is inclined to conceive God in vivid and pictorial form. He cannot express his mental attitude except through symbolism and art as they help the human spirit in its efforts after the Divine.” (61)

Sarojini Naidu’s poem ‘Lakshmi, the Lotus Born’ is another good example of Hindu’s faith in Indian myths and legends, rituals and idol worship. The poem was composed exactly on Lakshmi Puja Day in 1915, in which the poetess worships the goddess Lakshmi in a traditional manner -

“Prosper our cradles and kindred and cattle
And cherish our hearth-fires and coffers and corn
O watch o’er our seasons of peace and of battle
Hearken, O Lotus Born” (Lakshmi, the Lotus Born) (62)

Lakshmi is known and worshipped as Goddess of wealth, prosperity and happiness. It is believed according to Hindu Mythology that “Lakshmi, the wife of Vishnu (the supreme God Narayana), the goddess of fortune was born from the Lotus. She rose like a pearl from the ocean and her beauty surpassed the splendour of morning. The Padma Purana and Vishnu Purana describes, ‘when Hari (Vishnu) was born a dwarf, the son of Aditi, Lakshmi appeared from the lotus as Padma, when he was born as Rama, of the race of Bhrigu, she was Dharani, when he was Raghva, she was Sita, when he was Krishna, she was Rukmani. In other descents of Vishnu, she was His associate. If a mortal, she becomes a mortal too transforming her own person agreeably to whatever character it pleases Vishnu to assume.” (63) Sarojini’s hymn ‘Lakshmi, the Lotus Born’ is an invocation of the worshipper to seek the blessings of the goddess of fortune and prosperity.

Another lively example of Indian myths and legends, Indian vedic heritage and faith of Indian people in worshipping gods and goddesses is Sarojini’s poem ‘Hymn to Indra, Lord of Rain’. In Hindu

mythology, Indra is the Lord of Rain and can rouse the voice of thunder. He can bid the storms awake from their sleep. As a protector and enricher, He nourishes forests and plains by a beautiful supply of water. The Rig Veda says, “He who made fast and tottering earth, who made still the quaking mountains, who measured out and extended the expenses of the air who propped up the sky, He my people is, Indra.” (64)

Sarojini’s poem is marked with deep insight into Hindu Religion and ancient lore when both men and women offer their prayers to Indra for a down pour-

“Thou, who with the bountiful torrent and river
Dost nourish the heart of the forest and plain
Withhold Thy gifts, O Omnipotent Giver
Hearken, O Lord of Rain!” (Hymn to Indra, Lord of Rain) (65)

Same expressions we find in the second stanza of Sarojini’s poem, ‘Harvest Hymn’ in which the people invoke to Varuna, “He waters the soil, the earth, the sky O Varuna! Born of strength” (66), the Lord of Rain without whose showers all growth would be checked-

“Lord of rainbow, Lord of Harvest,
Geart and beneficent, Lord of main!
Thine is the mercy that cherished our furrows,
Thine is the mercy that fostered our grains——
O sender of rain and the dewfall, we hail thee
We praise the Varuna, with cymbal and pipe” (Harvest Hymn) (67)

In Rig Veda, ‘Varuna’ stands out as a guardian of the world order. He is also conceived as the ruler of water who makes river flow and causes the clouds to moisten the earth with its showers. The farmers always long for the ‘mercy’ of Varuna, the precious gift of rain which nourishes the crops in the soil furrowed by the plough.

Sarojini’s poem ‘Harvest Hymn’ is in the form of praise giving song offered to different deities- Surya (the Sun), Varuna (the lord of rainbow), Prithvi (the earth) and finally Om (The lord of universe). All sincere devotion and worship is a seeking after the Truth, the Supreme God, may be in the form of these deities, symbols, forms and idols. “We are born idolaters and idolatry is good because it is in the nature of man. What is this universe but name and form? Can you think without words? Words and thoughts are inseparable. There cannot come the idea of form without the idea of name.” (68) Lord declares in Bhagwad Geeta, “Whosoever offers to me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water that offering of love, of the pure heart, I accept.” (69) In Sarojini’s poem ‘Harvest Hymn’, men and women with devotional tone praise and thank and express their gratitude

(64) Quoted from ‘The Rig Veda’ (An Anthology), Ed: Wendy Doniger O’Flaherty, page- 160.
(69) The Bhagwad Geeta IX/26, page- 248.
to Sun which is in the form of God Himself. The Blessed Lord says in Geeta, “That splendour of the sun that illuminates this whole world, that which is in the moon, that which is in the fire, that splendour know as mine.” (70) Sarojini Naidu presents the thanks giving prayer of men and women to Surya—

“The gold of our fields and the gold of our fruit
O giver of mellowing radiance, we hail thee,
We praise thee O Surya with symbol and flute” (Harvest Hymn) (71)

“Surya, is regarded as a son of Aditi. Surya and Savitri are two names by which the Sun is addressed in Vedic hymns. Some hymns describe that Savitri (the Sun) is golden tongued. He rides in a chariot drawn by radiant white footed steeds. He illumines the earth, his golden arms stretched out to bless, infusing energy into all creatures, reach to the utmost end of heaven.” A hymn from Rig Veda in which Surya is addressed as-

“thou, O Sun,
Dost ever travel on, conspicuous to all
Thou dost create the light, and with it dost illumine
The universe entire, thou risest in the sight
Of all the race of men and all the host of heaven”

The Bhavishya Purana says, “Because there is none greater than him nor has been nor will be, therefore he is celebrated as the Supreme Soul in all the Vedas” (72)

After the thanks giving prayers to Surya, the Sun God, Varuna, the Lord of Rain, some women are shown praising Goddess Prithvi, the Omnipotent Mother, the earth, the source of their manifold gladness, from where their corn spring up-

“Thine is the plentiful bosom that feeds us,
Thine is the womb where our riches have birth” (Harvest Hymn) (73)

In praising Goddess Prithvi, Sarojini has presented a group of women instead of men, as ‘woman and ‘Prithvi’ are in the same sense because both are the true symbol of eternal truth- the real symbol of patience, love and sincerity, in both the words, the whole phenomenon if world is absorbed.

Nissim Ezekiel refers the great five elements of universe according to Hindu mythology and Hindu philosophy, from which the human body is made up of, rather from which the whole universe is made up of-

“God grant me privacy
God grant me certainty
In kinship with the sky
Air, earth, fire, sea-
And the fresh inward eye” (Morning Prayer) (74)

(70) The Bhagwad Geeta IX/12, page- 330.
In kinship with Sky (Aakash devta), Air (Vayu devta), Earth (Prithvi Ma), Fire (Agni devta), Sea (Pani devta) expresses all the great gods and goddesses of Hindu Mythology. Out of these the three deities are main Vedic gods and spoken of as immortal. “There are three deities according to the expounders of the Vedas- agni whose place is on the earth, vayu or Indra whose place is in the air and surya whose place is in the sky.” (75) All the five elements- air, water, fire, earth and sky are present outside as well as inside the human body. When the physical body dies, all these five elements get dissolved in their different different spheres. Ezekiel’s references of these five elements show his concern and interest in Indian philosophy of Vedic gods.

A.K.Ramanujan in his poem ‘Extended Family’ takes a plunge into the great whirlpool of time and his memory transports him into the past and visualizes before him the bathing ritual of his father. He further adds that there is no “Vedic Sun” in Chicago and only a naked bulb is available which can be taken to be a cousin of the Mythical Sun-

“the naked Chicago bulb A cousin of a Vedic Sun” (Extended Family) (76)

The worship of sun has been very common in olden times and has continued to the present hours. ‘Savitri’ refers to Sun when invisible, while Surya refers to him when he is visible to the worshippers. Gayatri mantra, the most sacred text of the Vedas is addressed at his rising by every devout Hindu-

“Let us meditate on that excellent glory of the divine vivifier. May he enlighten our understanding” (77)

In reality, Gayatri mantra has the power of Sun God and Sun God has the power of Gayatri. Gayatri mantra is true worship and devotion to Surya. Skanda Purana says, “Nothing in the Vedas is superior to Gayatri. No invocation is equal to the Gayatri, as no city is equal to Kashi. The Gayatri is the mother of the Vedas and of Brahmans. By repeating it a man is saved.” (77) A.K.Ramanujan’s address to Surya as Vedic Sun beautifies the ancient glory of Sun God.

Kamala Das makes use of the four compulsory elements of nature- the fire, the earth, the water and the air, which form the integral part of human life, an integral part of universe. The ‘fire’ image is the most powerful and appealing in the poem ‘The Flag’-

“The orange stands for fire, for fire that eats
Us all in the end” (The Flag) (78)

The poem ‘An Introduction’ employs all the four elements-

“Not the deaf blind speech
Of trees in storm or of monsoon clouds or of rain or the
Funeral pyre” (An Introduction) (79)

(75) Quoted from ‘Hindu Mythology’ (The Vedic Gods), Ed: Trir Iyengar, page- 01.
(76) A.K.Ramanujan, ‘Relations’, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1971
(77) Quoted from ‘Hindu Mythology’ (Surya), Ed: Trir Iyengar, page- 15.
Another beautiful application of the four elements is to be found in the poem ‘Convicts’-

“Darkness we grew as in silence
We sang, each not rising out of
Sea, out of wind, out of earth and
Out of each sad might like an ache” (Convicts) (80)

The basic nature elements as water, earth, sky and air are also common in Jayant Mahapatra’s poetry but rain (water) occupies the main place-

“The sky’s face expressionless
An oriole call echoes away in the sullen grayness
The book of earth throbs with the light of things
A pond heron floats wearily in a rainpool
Its face a mask, it pauses for another look around
Grass everywhere is huge and moves forward to kill” (Rains in Orissa) (81)

Here is the lively effect of rain in Orissa. Rain for Mahapatra is a metaphor of life. He loves it and cannot live without it. According to Mahapatra, rain is associated with purification, a mode of washing one’s sins off-

“The Rain
Has come like an organized movement
Like a ling tongue to lick your palms
Of guilt and atonement” (Waiting) (82)

Rain as a symbol of fertility, regeneration, life, purity, cleanliness and sometimes for separation occurs frequently in the poetry of Jayant Mahapatra. His poetry is fully concentrated in the history, myths and legends of Orissa especially his comprehensive poem ‘Relationship’ which is deeply rooted in the myths of Orissa. It links Mahapatra’s present with past, he begins his past with his awareness of myth-

“Once again one must sit back and bury the face
In this earth of the forbidding myth
The phallus of the enormous stone” (Relationship) (83)

Myths in Orissa held in beautiful sculptures are linked with mystery of life, symbolized by the ‘Phallus’, and with the mystery of death symbolised by the “restless vulture”. Mahapatra also tries to evaluate the historical phase of Ashoka’s invasion on Kalinga, the ruthless massacre of thousands of Oriya at Dhauli, near the river Daya, and Ashoka’s peaceful edicts on the rock face of posterity. But this change of heart on the part of Ashoka could do no good to the dead-

“What can ever wash the air of its gashed voices?
It is hard to tell now,
What opened the open skies,
How the age-old proud stones
Lost their strength and fell
And how the waters of the Daya
Stank with the bodies of my ancestors” (Relationship) (84)

Mahapatra is also aware of the glory as well as decline of Sun temple at Konark- the charm of the chariot of the Sun God with seven horses and elephants, it’s beautiful wheels, its gods and goddesses, its men and women, gandharva and apsara and every motive in the carving contributing to its grand design of the Konark’s Sun Temple. But the burnt granite of the fallen Konark and the natural phenomena makes the poet think in an elegiac mood-

“and yet my existence lies in the stones
Which carry my foot steps from one day into another” (Relationship) (85)

Mahapatra is conscious of the ruins, and the stones encompass within them a myth which Mahapatra explores fully relating it to the contemporary world-

“We are delivered by the myth
Which exhorts our sleep and our loses,
That wakes us like toys springing out of a box,
opening out humiliating episodes
or dutiful monuments that celebrate
the victories of that darkness over us.” (Relationship) (86)

The mystery underlying the myth of Konark has captured the unceasing rhythm of life.
Mahapatra accepts the myth and surrenders before it because deliverance lies in the acceptance of myth.

Mahapatra refers legendary hero Hanuman when he says that the image of India as a heroic land is crumbling with the attacks of terrorism. He becomes nostalgic for a moment and a sense of despair overwhelms him-

“This country urges us to seek the stars at night
too full as we are of mythic battles, angry gods
and the heroism of Hanuman, upon those
distant pin points of light we might reconstruct
some other world denying memory, journeying
no more” (Dispossessed Nests) (87)

The ‘heroism of Hanuman’ reminds us the heroic service of Hanuman, the Legend and hero of Ramayana. Hanuman, the son of Vayu, also known as ‘Anjaneya’ and ‘Maruti’, the true devotee

(86) Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Relationship’, page- 34.
of Lord Ram, is inseparably associated with Ramayana, because of the virtue of his devoted and
heroic service for Lord Ram at the time of search for Sita, to bring Sanjivini for Lakshman and
during the war between Ram and Ravana. Lord Ram's words to Hanuman to express his gratitude,
“Your services are so great that in return for even one of them, I must give you my life and remain
indebted for the rest. With the assurance that they will ever remain, never bring myself to wish that
I had an opportunity similar to the one you had to serve you.” Jayant Mahapatra’s mentioning ‘mythic
battles, angry gods, heroism of Hanuman’ all is concerned with the recognition of ancient glory of
Indian myths and legends and people’s faith in it, but now with the change of time, there is degradation
of Indian values, Indian myths and legends.

Though most of the poetry of K.N.Daruwalla is concerned with common people but he has
written about mythological as well as historical characters. His two notable poems ‘Charvak’ and
‘Karna’ in the volume ‘Apparition in April’ are about mythological characters. Charvak (the one who
speaks beautifully) is a legendary figure from

Mahabharata. The poem describes a day after Mahabharata war has been won and
Pandavas enter Hastinapur in a victorious procession. Everyone praises Yudhishtra as a new King
except Charvak who curses Pandva King for having killed his brothers. He shows his anger by
throwing hot ash on Yudhishtra’s face-

“He stands rooted, a father figure
his arm aloft, holding the tribe men’s curse
before he brings it down
hot ash on the victor’s face
then a stampede of moments
hoarse with blood cries (Charvak) (88)

Charvak’s philosophy is though cynical but not perverse. He is against all rituals. He does
not believe in heaven or hell nor in after life. Brahmins put charge against his ‘false omen’ reading
and heresies and Charvak is finally burnt-

“As flesh and myth are ushered to the flame
You wind up like Kama
The throne is curious
To see the star clay burning in your blood
To smear their foreheads with the totem ash” (Charvak) (89)

The central image in the poem is of Charvak’s body being burnt alive. This act of Brahmins indicates
their desperation as well as defeat. The Brahmins do not have the arguments to counter Charvak’s
philosophy and so can only use violence against his body.

Karna, the eldest son of Kunti, by Sun God is the great mythical character and legendary
hero of Mahabharata.

“you were born to the adolescent Kunti
—— a rape child by the sun!” (Apparition in April) (90)

That is why Karna is an illegal child by birth. In next image Daruwalla presents baby Karna floating down the river abandoned by his mother. Being son of Sun, he has the indestructible power and is famous for the celestial armour and earrings he is born with. The armours are rooted in his flesh, as long as he possesses this armour, no one can hurt him-
“armours one can take off
but this was shell-skin
rooted in flesh
and when you ripped it off-
nerve root and flesh root
still clinging
in bleeding fidelity
and handed to the Brahmin Indra
too late you discovered
that gods too have castes” (Karna) (90)

Even Lord Indra has to disguise himself as Brahmin to vanquish Karna and to ask for the celestial armour as alms. Mahapatra’s lines glorify the martial ability and extreme valuable virtues of Karna, which make him the central hero of Mahabharata during war, but Karna is ill- fated by birth-

“Your horoscope kock marked with curses
—— the chariot wheel in the mire.” (Karna) (91)

The reference of chariot wheel reminds us the death of Karna, when his chariot wheel is struck in the mud and he is killed by Arjuna. The concluding part of the poem describes the death of Karna. The chariot wheel, “come full, circle and stack” is like the ‘dying planet’ that has ‘lost its orbit’. Karna forgets how to defend himself. Such death with dark curse is predestined-
“Radheya you were dead
Before the falcon- arrow found you” (Karna) (92)

Karna is described as ‘lover of battle’, ‘King of Anga’, ‘Slayer of Ghatotkacha’, and ‘Vanquisher of Kamboja’ etc. With vivid imagery, K.N.Daruwalla depicts the violence and death on the battlefield, the battle between Karna and Bhima, the battle between Karna and Arjuna, how Lord Krishna saves Arjuna and how Karna receives his tragic death.

Daruwalla’s poem ‘The King speaks to the Scribe’ in the ‘The Keeper of the Dead’ is a brilliant example of history and myths of India, the poem is a dramatic monologue in which the
speaker is great Mauryan King Ashoka who speaks to his scribe asking him to write the message on ‘Volcanic rock’ after the bloody Kalinga war of 261 B.C. in which thousands of Kalingans were killed by the victorious Maurayan army. Filled with remorse, Ashoka is beyond pride and humility—

“First Kartikeya, there is no pride involved
nor humility, understand this, I speak
of atonement, that is, if blood can ever
be wiped away with word———” (The King speaks to the Scribe) (93)

Ashoka’s sorrow is difficult to express. He is truly overwhelmed with what has happened. He has abjured pride. He will not say anything even if the lowest person abuses him. He wishes everyone to come to him, people from whom “our demons and yakshas have borrowed their faces.” He wants the tribals to turn away from crime and he promises that they “will not suffer”. Ashoka wants that these words of goodness, forgiveness, humanity and humility must be cut deep into the rock—

“deeper than the cuts of my sword” (The Keeper of the Dead) (94)

Ashoka’s message is to be engraved on volcanic rock in which volcanic suggests violence and destruction. These are opening lines. The concluding lines also evoke an image of blood—

“Mind you Kartikeya, between me and them is blood
Your words will have to reach across to them
Like a tide of black oxen crossing a ford” (The King speaks to the Scribe) (95)

The ‘tide of black oxen’ points out the image of Yama, the god of death, riding a black bison, showing Daruwalla’s familiarity with Hindu Mythology. ‘The King speaks to the Scribe’ is an extremely moving poem expressing the lament of King Ashoka at the death and destruction in Kalinga war. All the time he is thinking of the people who will receive his message. He wants not to be misunderstood and seeks forgiveness all the time.

CHAPTER NINTH

INDIAN LANDSCAPES, SEASONS AND FLOWERS
INDIAN LANDSCAPES, SEASONS AND FLOWERS

Nature has blessed India with so much beauty that India seems a heaven upon earth in itself. High rising mountains, deserts, rich green plains, dense jungles, lovely sea beaches, rivers and streams add richness and variety in the beauty of India. And this amazing nature’s beauty of India has always fascinated poets and writers to sing in its glory. The poetry specially of Pre Independence Indo-English poets is glutted with freshness and gaiety, light and colour, passion and emotions, music and melody, above all with Indian thoughts and imagery, when they describe the enchanting beauty of Indian landscapes, seasons and flowers.

1. Day Dawn Scenes—Day dawn is the time of freshness, newness, joy and happiness. Toru Dutt beautifully paints the picture of day dawn scene in her poem ‘Jogadhya Uma’ which is based on a folk lore. The poem opens with a description of a pedlar tramping along the road to Khirogram in the early morning, where the dew still lay heavy on meadow and trees—

“Along the road, in morning’s glow
The pedlar raised his wonted cry—
“Shells bracelets ho! Shells bracelets ho!
The road side trees dripped with dew
and hung their blossoms like a show.” (Jogadhya Uma) (1)

Tagore’s description of nature is highly romantic, sensuous and picturesque. The sight of flowers, trees, clouds, fountains, the songs of birds, the colours, the sounds, the scents fascinate him and intoxicate him with boundless joy.

The following lines from Geetanjali reveal his unique talent as colourist and painter while describing the early morning—

“The morning sea of silence broke into ripples of birds’ songs and the flowers were all merry by the roadside, and the wealth of gold was scattered through the rift of the clouds while we busily were on our way and paid no heed.” (Geetanjali/48) (2)

Sri Aurobindo with his mysticism and modernization, portraits the extremly beautiful picture of early morning, the outbreak of Dawn, the symbol of birth and beginning—

“Then through the pallid rift that seemed at first
Hardly enough for a trickle from the suns
outpoured the revelation and the flame
The brief perpetual sign recurred above”

“A message from the unknown immortal Light
Ablaze upon creation’s quivering edge,
Dawn built her aura of magnificent hues
And buried its seed of grandeur in the hours
An instant’s visitor the godhead shone

On life’s thin border a while the vision stood  
And bent over earth’s pondering forehead curve  
Interpreting a recondite beauty and bliss  
In colour’s hieroglyphs of mystic sense.” (Savitri Book I, Canto 1) (3)

In Sri Aurobindo’s epic ‘Savitri’, Book I, Canto 1 is all about the beginning and the birth. Sri Aurobindo has described the birth of spiritual figure Savitri through the symbol of Dawn. The description conveys the message that as the day dawn breaks, the darkness of night vanishes, in the same manner; the birth of Savitri is going to end all the darkness of ignorance.

Sarojini Naidu’s poetry is the poetry of beauty, charm and glory of nature. How beautifully she presents the impression produced by the morning scene-

“Long ere the sun’s first far off beacons shine  
or his prophetic clarions call afar,  
The gorgeous planets wither and decline  
save in its eastern shrine  
Unquenched, unchallenged, the proud morning star.” (The Garden Vigil) (4)

“The moon behind the western mount is sinking  
The eastern sun is heralded by dawn  
From heaven’s twin lights, their fall and glory linking” (5)

Here Sarojini is no less than Kalidas, in producing fresh accurate and graphic description of day dawn. What makes the lines more valuable is Sarojini’s addresses to Sun as ‘the proud morning star’, ‘unquenched’ and ‘unchallenged’ as Sun is all seeking God and comes with his prophetic clarion call of new hope and light. “Crossing space, you are the maker of light seen by everyone, O Sun, you illumine the whole realm of space.” (6) Blessed Lord says in Bhagwad Geeta, “That splendour of Sun, that illumines the whole world, know as mine.” XV/12 (7) Sarojini’s line ‘Long ere the Sun’s first far off beacons shine’ is somewhat similar to the description of sunrise referred in Rig Veda,

“See how the dawn have set up their banner in the eastern half of the sky, adorning and anointing themselves with sunlight balm.” (8) Sarojini Naidu shows her deep love and fascination for the romantic grace and glow of day dawn and there is hidden in it the magic and message of new life and hopes-

“The great dawn breaks, the mournful night is past,  
Sweet and long slumbering buds of gladness open  
fresh lips to the returning winds of hope.” (The Broken Wing) (9)

Day dawn is always welcomed as a symbol of happiness, goodness, new hopes and dreams. All the tiredness, sadness & disappointments end with the passing of night. The morning light comes filling the hearts with enthusiasm to do something, to achieve something. “Radiant dawn

(3) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I Canto 1, page- 02.
(7) The Bhagwad Geeta XV/12, page- 330.
spread her webs smiling like a lover who wishes to win his way. She shines forth and with her lovely face awakens us to happiness (1.92)” (10) The day breaks with a hope of new achievements, making the world glorious and rich-

“When dawn’s first cymbals beat upon the sky,
Rousing the world to labour’s various cry.
To tend the flock, to bind the mellowing grain,
From ardent toil to forge a little grain” (Street Cries) (11)

The beauty of day break is always captivating because of the radiant rays of sunrise. It is the time of worship, prayers, meditation and yoga. The atmosphere is dominated by calmness and serenity. The breeze of air is cool, fresh and soothing With sweet imagery. Sarojini depicts the calm and serene atmosphere of day break when-

“The wind lies asleep in the arms of the dawn
like a child that has cried all night.” (Coromandel Fishers) (12)

Unseen and unheard, the wind penetrates all the mysteries of nature’s variegated life with the break of the day. This idea is expressed in the opening stanza of ‘Garden Vigil’-

“In the deep silence of the garden- bowers
only the stealthy zephyr glides and goes
rifling the secrets of sirisha flowers,
And to the new born hours
bequeaths the subtle anguish of the rose” (The Garden Vigil) (13)

There is another charming description in sarojini’s poetry when birds are shown chirping with delight and ecstasy to welcome the day break-

“In your quiet garden wakes a magic tumult,
Of winged choristers that keeps the Festival of dawn
Blithely rise the carols in richly cadenced rapture
From lyric throats of amber of ebony and fawn.” (The Bird Sanctuary) (14)

Nissim Ezekiel longs for this festivity, freshness, coolness, joy and charm of day dawn but does not find it in the dry, tensed, busy and restless routine of Bombay life-

“The city like a passion burns
He dreams of morning walks, alone
And floating on a wave of sand.” (Urban) (15)


“Driven from his bed by troubled sleep
In which he dreamt of being lost

(8) Quoted from Rig Veda, Ed: Wendy Doniger O’ Flaherty, page- 179.
Upon a hill too high for him
(A modest hill whose sides grew steep)
He stood where several highways crossed
And saw the city, cold and dim,
where only human hands sell cheap.” (A Morning Walk) (16)

Same subtle irony permeates in Mahapatra’s poetry when he depicts the blankness of early morning
scene commenting on the sick civilization, the tired religious fervour in the temple town of Puri
where religion can give no solace, no comfort-

“In these indistinguishable mornings
Like pale yellow hospital linen
A legless cripple
Clutters up the wide temple street
The quite early light crouched in his palms.” (The Faith) (17)

Dawn and dusk, day and night, sun and moon, sky and earth, rivers and hills all find their
place in Mahapatra’s Landscape poetry. But he does not sing the songs of praises for the beauty
of nature rather as a realist, he analyses it in the terms of life. He describes day dawn-

“The dawn looks strange, skilled in the world’s ways
Old men feel their shrunken years
And return to their dark with an insane longing
for injustice.......” (of a Dawn) (18)

Kamala Das refers the early morning with the description of sea and the beating of the tides
against the walls. The tides of sea in the ‘wild morning’ signify the rising passions within her
heart- “It’s only the wind knocking at the door, the sea
Is wild this morning, there is perhaps a high tide on.” (The High Tide) (19)

The description of day dawn in Daruwalla’s poetry is also somewhat cynical. In the half
light of dawn forms merge-
“coincidence of forms along the water front
coincidence of silhouettes
in the spear- grass street.” (Dawn) (20)

‘Dawn’ landscapes the Ganga, a holy city on its bank. The atmosphere evokes image of
disease and debris noting the ugliness first-
“Dark olive mud, sand heads that bulge
like a herd of bison, rising from their sleep,
objects bristle with outline,
a silhouette lost in prayer

develops feet.” (Dawn) (20)

The second section of the poem ‘Dawn’ describes the images and sounds of a temple city at dawn-

“There is a clang of cymbals,
likewise brass beating against brass.” (Dawn) (20)

Then the imagination turns visual. The rising sun is personified as a “bald headed devotee”-

“And then a bald head
smeared with saffron
inching slowly above the distant reed
dawn on the Ganga
like a bizarre illusions.” (Dawn) (21)

Similar images of disease, violence and weakness are evoked in the poem Vignette I presenting the day dawn with rising sun-

“The sun comes up
like the outer husk
of some fiery despair.” (Vignette I) (22)

2. Noon Scene- Noons are often hot and dry. Toru Dutt presents a lovely noon scene in her poem ‘Jogadhya Uma’ when the pedlar old priest run to the ghat, to search the noble lady ‘goddess Uma’-

“The birds were silent in the wood
The lotus flowers exhaled a smell
Faint, over all the solitude,
A heron as a sentinel
stood by the bank—
The landscape lay in slumber’s chain
E’en echo slept within her cell
broad sunshine, yet a hush profound.” (Jogadhya Uma) (23)

Ravindra Nath Tagore describes the hotness of noon in such a beautiful manner that even the hot noon soothes our heart- “The sun rose to the mid sky and doves cooed in the shade. Withered leaves danced and whirled in the hot air of noon. The shepherded bay drowsed and dreamed in the shadow of the banyan tree, and I laid myself down by the water and stretched my tired limbs on the grass.” (Geetanjali/48) (24)

While describing the changing moods of the day, Sarojini Naidu does not forget to mention the hotness and dullness of noon time. At the time of noon especially in summer, the earth scorches in bright sunshine, water boils in the relentless heat of the sun, and the koels silence, their melodious notes and shelter under shady trees-

(22) K.N.Daruwalla, ‘Crossing of Rivers’, page-17.
"When the earth falters and the waters swoon, 
With the implacable radiance of noon 
And in dim shelters koels hush their notes." (Street Cries) (25)

Nissim Ezekiel compares the hotness of sun at noon time with the “rage of pilgrim”. In his poem ‘Enterprise’ the first stage in the journey symbolises childlike innocence when man is entirely unconscious of his predicament with all its miseries and frustrations. But soon the stage of bliss and innocence passes away and the pilgrims have to confront dangers and difficulties. Their idealism is untested by the bitter experience of daily life. Their rage, their passion for their mission is as hot as the hot sun in noon time-

“It started as a pilgrimage
exalting minds and making all
the burdens light. The second stage
explored but did not test the call
the sun beat down to match our rage.” (Enterprise) (26)

Kamala Das refers the hotness of noon with the hotness of physical love-

“All through that summer’s afternoons we lay

The heat had blotted our thoughts.” (The Invitation) (27)

“Like convicts hacking, breaking clods,
At noon, we were earth under hot sun.” (Ferns) (28)

In the poem ‘Sepia’, Kamala Das presents the hotness of sun at noon time as a source of scorching heat that dries up the very marrow of the bones. It is conceived as a destroyer of the real charm of life-

“It’s time to hold anger
like a living sun
and scorch
scorch to the very marrow
this sad mouthed human
race.” (Sepia) (29)

Jayant Mahapatra vividly describes hot and harsh afternoon of summer season which is unbearable in Orissa-

“May be it is summer again
The sunlight grows harsher
The faces of rice are stony

its fists seem clenched all the time
women move around
carrying children in their arms
with a sad vacant stillness.” (A Mask) (30)

Jayant Mahapatra reveals that he fails to find solace and peace anywhere. He is sick of the ruined landscape enveloping him all over. He discovers that the ruined landscapes that spreads around him ‘in ablaze of sun’, signifies his own self’s destiny-

“It is my own life
That has cornered me beneath the stones
of this temple in ruins, in a blaze of sun.” (Relationship) (31)

K.N.Daruwalla depicts the hotness and dryness of an afternoon in the poem ‘Skopje: The Earthquake City’. The picture is totally different from the description of ‘Love in Meerut’ because there is no sound of ‘cars and motors’, no sound of ‘pop songs’ rather the hotness of noon time in a closed bus-

“Circling through the hills one blistering afternoon
in a closed bus, throats parched, our tongues afire,
billeted with strangers, I didn’t take to this
salt and pepper city of minaret and spire.” (Skopje: The Earthquake City) (32)

3. Evening Sights- Evenings are mostly cool and charming. Toru Dutt seems to be an expert in presenting the lovely beauty of evening scene and sight-

“Upon the glassy surface felt
The last beam of the day
like fiery darts, that lengthening swell
As breezes wake and play,
Osiers and willows on the edge
And purple buds and red,
leant down—— “ (Sindhu) (33)

With high skill and sensuousness, Toru Dutt presents the charm of evening sight, with the beauty of sunset, in her poem ‘Buttoo’-

“How vivid was the breast-high grass
Here waved in patches, forest corn,
Here intervened a deep morass
Here arid spots of verdure shorn
Lay open-rock or barren sand
And here again the trees arose

Thick clustering- a glorious band
Their tops still bright with sunset glows-" (Buttoo) (34)

The lines are the proof of the sensuousness of Toru Dutt. Each expression is full of minute observation and minute description of nature. How beautifully she paints the picture of ‘sunset’s beauty to disclose’-

“The Indian fig’s pavilion tent
In which the whole armies might repose
with here and there a little rent

The sunset’s beauty to disclose” (Buttoo) (35)

The time is about sunset. There is peace, serenity all around.

“The garnish day was well night spent
Birds had already raised its dirge
Oh what a scene! How sweet and calm!
It soothed at once his wounded pride,
And on his spirit shed a balm

that all its yearning purified.” (Buttoo) (35)

Such sight has filled the heart of Buttoo (Eklavya) with soothing effect and at this time he chooses this place of forest to learn the art of archery and gain perfection. Toru Dutt appears to be landscape painter in the words while describing the beauty of nature.

Tagore as a true devotee waits and longs to have a glimpse of God in the charming sight of evening- “I stand under the golden canopy of thine evening sky and I lift my eager eyes to thy face.” (Geetanjali/87) (36)

Sarojini’s poetry is extremely worth noticing in the description of evening scenes and sights. In her poem ‘June Sunset’ she presents before us a peaceful Indian country side under the colours of June evenings. She portrays a lovely scene of inanimate nature objects and finds peace and tranquillity by rivers and streams and under the multihued sky-

“Here shall my heart find its haven of calm
By rush-fringed rivers and rain fed streams,
That glimmer through meadows of lily and palm,

Here shall my soul find its true repose
Under a sunset of dreams
Diaphanous, amber and rose” (June sunset) (37)

Her expressions touch our senses. It appears as the scene is before us. No other poet has unfolded such a marvellous and comprehensive description of an evening sight under sunset, as Sarojini does. It creates a deep communication between nature and human life. The lines seem to

be the outcome of a particular sight seen on a particular day as the word ‘Here’ refers to the place and scene and suggests the events happening at the moment. The inebriating wind, the picture of birds flying westward in the light of the setting sun and gems like stars fill her heart with deep delight-

“The air is aglow with the glint and the whirl
Of swift wild wings in their home-ward flight
Sapphire, emerald, topaz and pearl,
Afloat in the evening light,
And the faint stars gleam in the eastern sky
To herald the rising moon” (June Sunset) (37)

Very same description of beautiful sunset we find in Toru Dutt’s poem ‘Savitri’-

“Oh lovely are the woods at dawn
And lovely in the sultry noon,
But loveliest when the sun withdraws
The twilight and a crescent moon
Change all asperities of shape
And tone all colours softly down
With a blue veil of silvered crapes
Lo, by the hills which palm trees crown
Down the deep glade with perfume rife
From buds that to the dews expand” (Savitri) (38)

Because of such marvellous descriptions and minute observations, Toru Dutt is called ‘Keats of India’. The lines present the beauty and charm of evening sight under sunset. The flowers and buds are also spreading their fragrance. It is at that time Satyavan and Savitri pass through the dense forest. Sarojini’s poem ‘June Sunset’ is a feast of colours- the ‘diaphanous’, ‘amber’ and ‘rose’ in the western sky and ‘emerald’, ‘topaz’ and ‘pearl’ of the birds flying in the air. With keen sensitiveness she captures an elusive phenomenon in describing the calm, serene and colourful evening-

“And thro’ the wet earth the gentian pushes
Her spikes of silvery bloom
Where’er the foot of the bright shower passes
Fragrant and fresh delight unfold,
The wild fawn feed on the scented grasses
Wild bees on the cactus-gold” (June Sunset) (39)

Here is the innocent, genuine poetry. The passage makes us feel the moisturous evening of ending June in India when there have been some showers of rainfall. Each word glimmers with the gleam of sunset. We float in the world of movement, emergence and settlement suggested by the push of gentians, ‘wild fawns feeding on scented grass’ and ‘wild bees on cactus gold’.

Then Sarojini depicts a beautiful picture of evening sight with sunset in which sunset symbolises joy which hides beneath dark clouds representing sorrow-

“Like a joy on the heart of a sorrow
The sunset hangs on a cloud,
A golden storm of glittering sheaves
Of fair and frail fluttering leaves,
The wild wind blows in a cloud” (Autumn Song) (40)
To sit, gossip and take rest under the shade of trees, or to walk in the summer evenings by the river side or cool oneself by bathing in pools is always a pleasant sight of Indian villages. In Sarojini’s poem ‘Summer Woods’, the lady is tired of painted roofs and silken floors, weary of songs and festival and fame, she longs for the crimson canopies provided by gulmohur trees, seeks the shelter of cassia woods. She invites her companion to accompany her to the flowering glades where the koels are calling and where-
“O let us fling all cares away and lie along
and dream
‘Neath tangled boughs of tamarind and molsari
and neem
and bind our brows with Jasmine sprays and
play on carven flutes,
To wake the slumbering serpent kings among
the banyan roots’
And roam at fall of eventide along the river
brink,
And bathe in water-lily pools where golden
panthers drink!” (Summer Woods) (41)
The evening sight prompts and compels Mahapatra to look within and to know his own self-
“This evening I look at that part of myself
which remains with me, but I do not know
what it is, hard to recognize it anymore” (of This Evening) (42)
The sight and scene remind Mahapatra the past glory and the dead who had once inhabited the place. To see ‘the evening landscape by the river’ he expresses-
“This is the kind of sadness which closed the eyes
Here the memory for faces of the dead never appears” (Evening Landscape by the River) (43)
K.N.Daruwalla paints the picture of evening sight in such a way that the scene evokes in us through action and movement-
“The evening was bery blue
And we left the grass bowl of Barahoti

And reached the wind shadow
In a place which has no grass, no trees,
no dust, you cannot see the wind" (Crossing Chorhoti) (44)

4. **Night Scenes**- Indo-English poets have not only captured the freshness of day dawn, the
hotness of noon, the magic of evening sight but also the golden glow of starry nights. How beautifully Toru Dutt describes the charming night in an Indian forest-

"Under the faint beam of stars
How beautiful appeared the flowers
Light scarlet, fleeced with golden bars
Of the palasas, in the bowers
That nature there herself had made
without the aid of man. At times
trees on their path cast densest shade" (Savitri) (45)

There is another beautiful example of night scene in Toru Dutt’s poem ‘Sindhu’ when Sindhu (Shravan Kumar) comes to bring water for his old blind parents in the dark atmosphere of night and is killed by mistake by the arrow of King Dasratha. The landscape of darkness and thickness is very aptly described-

“And softly, hour by hour
Light faded and a veil
Fell over tree, and wave and flower
On came the twilight pale,
Deeper and deeper grow the shade,
stars glimmered in the sky
The nightingale along the glade
Raised here precluding cry” (Sindhu) (46)

Ravindra Nath Tagore refers ‘Night’ to welcome day dawn. He prays to God- “It is thou who
drawest the veils of night upon the tired eyes of the day to renew its sight in a fresher gladness of awakening.” (Geetanjali) (47)

In Sri Aurobindo’s ‘Savitri’, night is vividly described-

“Night, splendid with the moon dreaming in heaven
In silver peace, possessed her luminous reign”

With great power of symbolism and mysticism, Sri Aurobindo unfolds the mission of Savitri and Satyavan to earth. Night symbolises the bosom having the light of spirituality. The spiritual epic closes with the following lines-

“Night splendid with the moon dreaming in heaven
In silver peace possessed her stillness on a thought
She brooded through her stillness on a thought
Deep guarded by her mystic folds of light
And in her bosom nursed a greater dawn” (Savitri) (48)

The lines express that the fateful day is over with its entire storm and the future unfurls a great promise not only to Savitri and Satyavan but to all of us.

Sarojini’s poem ‘Leili’ is a short and lovely lyric depicting the sight of night (as in Persian ‘Leili’ means night)-

“The serpents are sleep among the poppies
The fireflies light the soundless panther’s way
To tangled paths where shy gazellers are straying
And parrot-plumes out shine the dying day
O soft! the lotus buds upon the stream
are stirring like sweet maidens when they dream” (Leili) (49)

We feel the night’s quietude through the suggestion of concrete events and images. The words like ‘poppies’, ‘fireflies’, ‘parrot-plumes and ‘dream’ create the atmosphere of sleep, peace and tranquillity. In the second stanza of the poem night is personified as a goddess enshrined in a forest temple-

“A caste-mark on the azure brows of heaven
The golden moon burns sacred, solemn, bright
The winds are dancing in the forest temple
And swooning at the holy feet of Night
Hush! In the silence mystic voices sing
And make the gods their incense offering” (Leili) (49)

Night personified as goddess, the sacred golden moon as a ‘caste-mark’ on the brows of night (goddess) and the ‘dancing of winds’ as devotees at the holy feet of night (goddess) is a rare specimen of poetry The metaphor ‘A caste-mark——— bright’ is transformed into a thing of infinite beauty by an extremely fertile imagination and it is Sarojini the pot who in the silence of the night ‘Hush!—— offering’ can mystically hear a voice that we do not hear. Such descriptions of Indian thought and images make Sarojini Naidu the immortal soul of India.

Very impressive is Sarojini’s pictorial description of the night scene at the Coromandel Coast depicting the life of Coromandel fishers in their coconut glades with all their homely joys-

“Sweet is the shade of the coconut glade and the
scent of the mango groove
And sweet are the sands at the full’o the moon
with the sound of the voices we love” (Coromandel Fishers) (50)

Sarojini Naidu has poetised the sights and sounds familiar to us, known to us and thereby she strikes a responsive chord in us. Sensuousness and picturesquesness are the two main characteristics of Sarojini’s poetry when she deals with India’s beauty of nature. How beautifully she presents the picture of glimmering glades and darkness of night in following lines-

“To the glen, to the glades, where the
magical darkness is falling,
In rivers of gold from the breast of
radiant cloud” (Solitude) (51)

Blooming of roses in the midst of ‘moon lit grasses’ fascinates Sarojini and fills her heart with an unspeakable rapture-

“How they deck the moonlit grasses
In thick rainbow-tinted masses,
Like a fair queen’s bridal sheet” (The Time of Roses) (52)

Sometimes, Sarojini becomes mystic while describing the beauty of nature, the beauty of the darkness of night-

“Thro the luminous hours ere the lotus of dawn
shall reblossom
In petals of splendour to worship the
Lord of the world” (Solitude) (53)

The lines definitely state the theory of sorrow and happiness, darkness and light, death and birth, coming and going. Through the images of night (luminous hours) and day break (dawn), Sarojini has convinced the mystic philosophy of rebirth. Here, she is no less than Aurobindo Ghosh or Ravindra Nath Tagore who present the similar thoughts of night and day dawn-

“Recalling the tenebrous womb from which it came
Turned from the insoluble mystery of birth” (Savitri) (54)

“In her bosom nursed a greater dawn” (Savitri) (55)

“It is thou who drawest the veil of night upon the tired eyes of the day to renew its sight in a fresher gladness of awakening.” (Geetanjali) (56)

Again there are many references in Sarojini’s poems which beautify the grace of night scenes-

“Come O tender night, with your sweet consoling
Darkness
Come O tranquil night, with your soft consenting
Darkness” (A Rajput Love Song) (57)

“And the night that shelters a heart’s despair” (The Bird of Time) (58)

(54) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book 1 Canto 1, page- 01.
Same expressions we find in Tagore’s Geetanjali- “As the night keeps hidden in its gloom the petition for light” (Geetanjali/38) (59)

Sarojini’s poem ‘Nightfall in the city of Hyderabad’ is an excellent poetic piece depicting the glory and beauty of the city during the nightfall. First we have the sky radiantly shining like “the throat of a pigeon” adorned with the speckles of yellow, green and crimson colours at the time of night fall, the clear and limpid water flowing in the river and brightly shining like “bright tusk coming out from the mouth of city gates”-

“See how the speckled sky burns like a pigeon’s throat
Jewelled with the embers of opal and peridot
“See the white river that flashes and scintillates,
curved like a tusk from the mouth of city gates” (Nightfall in city of Hyderabad) (60)

All these musical lines are replete with sparkling similes and metaphors and show Sarojini’s deep knowledge in developing thought with images. The last lines of the poem are highly picturesque and romantic for the description of night-

“Over the city bridge night comes majestical
horne like a queen to a sumptuous festival” (Nightfall in city of Hyderabad) (60)

Here the night is imbued with human attributes. Night majestically comes over the city bridge, like a queen going to attend a rich and luxurious festival. Such a personification of night in an impassioned perception is rare one.

5. *Pastoral Scenes-* True India lives in its villages. The greenery of fields, the purity of atmosphere, the simplicity of people’s way of living add a unique touch to Indianness. Toru Dutt with her keen sensitiveness, paints the picture of Indian village landscape-

“Huge straw ricks, log huts full of grain
sleek cattle, flowers, a tinkling bell,
spoke in a language sweet and plain,
“Here smiling peace and plenty dwell” (Jogadhya Uma) (61)

Toru Dutt has an eye for the objects of nature. How beautifully she describes the brightness and greenery of cornfields under the ‘rainbow fringe’-

“Shot down from heaven appeared to tinge
All objects with supernal light
The thatches had rainbow fringe
The cornfields looked more green and bright” (Savitri) (62)

Sarojini Naidu presents a very realistic picture of rural life at the ‘godhuli vela’, the hour of cow dust in the following lines-

“An oxcart stumbles upon the rocks

And a wistful music pursues the breeze  
From a shepherd’s pipe as he gathers his flocks  
Upon the peepal tree  
And a young banjara driving his cattle  
Lifts up her voice as she glitters by,  
In an ancient ballad of love and battle  
set to the beat of a mystic tune  
And the faint stars gleam in the eastern sky  
to herald the rising moon.” (June Sunset) (63)

Sarojini’s description constitutes a genuine poetic picture of an Indian village countryside. A scene compelling silence is suggested by the wistful music from the shepherd’s pipe and the singing of banjara, against a background of faint stars, gleaming in the sky. It seems that there is a mystery lurking behind and Sarojini wants to make us aware of it. The great charm of the above passage is that she gives pure Indian picture through English verse which has the ring of originality. The reference of ‘oxcart’, ‘shepherd’s pipe’, ‘peepal tree’ and ‘banjara’ are commonly seen in their set village areas.

In her poem ‘Bells’, Sarojini Naidu has wonderfully created the pastoral atmosphere and the scene of idealised rural life, when the cattle return home. The cattle bells bring the gracious memories of ‘drowsy fields’, ‘dreaming wells’, ‘tired labourers’ and ‘the roof of cottages’ of which have climbed creepers laden with flowers, fruits and vegetables-

“Cattle bells, soft cattle bells,  
What a gracious memories you bring  
Of drowsy fields and dreaming wells  
And weary labour’s folded wing,  
of frugal mirth round festival fires,  
Brief trysts that youth and beauty keep,  
of flowering roofs and fragrant byres  
white heifers gathered in for sleep  
old songs the wandering women sing” (The Bells) (64)

Similar expressions we find in Ravindra Nath Tagore’s ‘The Fugitive’- “When in the evening, the cattle return to their field, raising dust from the meadow path, as the moon rises higher than the smoke ascending from the village huts, I feel sad as for some great separation that happened in the first morning of existence.” (65)

Sarojini’s poem ‘Village Song’ is another beautiful example of pastoral life where the young boy who is introduced here, wants to give up all the worldly pleasures and near and dear ones and go to enjoy nature village life-

“Where upon the,
Champa boughs, the,
Champa buds are blowing
To the koel-haunted river isles
Where lotus lilies glisten” (Village Song) (66)

Sarojini’s poem ‘Cradle Song’ is a lullaby creating a myth which connects the human to cosmic. The natural forces from the fertile drowsy moist landscapes of Indian village are invoked to bless the child with sound sleep and sweet dreams-

“From groves of spice
O’er field of rice
Athwart the lotus stream
I bring for you
Alingt with dew
A little lovely dream———” (Cradle Song) (67)

Very similar reference of pastoral sight in a child’s fancy we find in Ravindra Nath Tagore’s poem ‘The Merchant’-

“Mother do you want heaps and heaps of gold?
There, by the banks of streams, fields are full of golden harvest,
And in the shade of the forest path the golden Champa flowers drop on the ground.
I will gather them all for you in many hundred baskets” (The Merchant) (68)

K.N.Daruwalla refers the village scene through the anger and violent force of Ghagra river-

“And through the village
the Ghagra steers her course
thatch and dunk-cakes turn to river scum
a buffalo floats over to the rooftop
where the men can stranded.” (A Ghagra in Spate) (69)

6. Beautiful Sights of Lakes and Rivers- The natural beauty of Indian lakes and rivers have always inspired Indo-English poets to sing melodious songs. Toru Dutt’s poetry is excellent to express that a thing of beauty is joy forever. How beautifully she describes the sunset on an Indian lake-

“Upon the glassy surface fell
The last beams of the day,

Like fiery darts, that lengthening swell
   As breezes wake and play,
Osiers and willows on the edge
   And purple buds and red,
Leant down—and mid the pale green’s edge
   The lotus raised its head
And softly, softly, hour by hour
   Light faded and a veil
Fell over tree, and wave and flower
   On came the twilight pale” (Sindhu) (70)

Toru Dutt describes the beauty of lake in quite harmony with the quietness of the cottage of
Sita in forest surroundings-
“A dense, dense forest, where no sunbeams priest
And in its centre a cleared spot_ There bloom
Gigantic flowers on creepers that embrace
Tall trees: there in a quiet lucid lake
The white swans glid, there, whirring from
   the brake’
The peacocks springs: there, herds of wild deer
   race” (Sita) (71)

Ravindra Nath Tagore expresses the state of sat chit ananda with the reference of flow of
heaven’s river-
   “Mirth spreads from leaf to leaf, my darling, and gladness without measure. The heaven’s
river has drowned its
banks and the flood of joy is abroad” (Geetanjali/57) (72)

Beauty and love seem to be the fountain sources of Sarojini’s inspiration when she describes the
charm and glory of Indian landscapes. There is a lively piece of poetry on the marvellous beauty of
‘Hussain Saagar Lake’ near Hyderabad. To Sarojini, it seems to have a particular appeal. She
views and enjoys the ‘Hussain Saagar’ at sunrise.
“The young dawn woos thee with his amorous grace” and at sunset-
“The journeying clouds of sunset pause and hover
   Drinking the beauty of thy luminous face” (Hussain Saagar) (73)

‘Drinking the beauty of thy luminous face’ is an original and suggestive expression by Sarojini
Naidu. May be she wants to convey the depth of love through the example of wind and lake. The
wind is the only true lover of this Silver Lake. None but the wind can discover her (Lake) inmost

(70) Toru Dutt, ‘Sindhu’ Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan, page- 129.
(71) Toru Dutt, ‘Sita’ Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan, page- 158.
(72) Ravindra Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali’ Poem 57 ‘Light My Light’, page- 244.
glory. She (the Lake) is responsive only to her lover (wind). Only for him (wind) do the shining waves unfold translucent music. The lake which is so completely devoted to her lover, the wind, that she is indifferent to the advances of other admirers-

“But none thine in most glory may discover
For thine evasive silver doth enclose
What secret purple o what subtle rose?
Responsive only to the wind, thy lover,
Only for him thy shining waves unfold
Translucent music answering his control” (The Hussain Saagar) (73)

Sarojini finds a very close association between her soul and the Hussain Saagar-

“Thou dost, like me, to one allegiance hold
O lake, O living image of my Soul” (Hussain Saagar) (73)

The concluding line ‘O lake, O living image of my soul’ produces a noble and uplifting effect. This does not only express the beauty of Hussain Saagar lake but also convinces the depth of true love which comes through inner soul and leads to perfect happiness. Sarojini Naidu makes us familiar that nobody can discover the inmost glory of her heart. She is responsive only to those who approach her with love. Only for them, do the shining waves of her soul play clear music. The beauty and scenic effects of the lake are highly coloured and show the real joy and appreciation of Sarojini’s love for Indian landscapes and sights.

As far as rivers are concerned, Sarojini Naidu shows her partiality for Jamuna river, may be for the reason as it provides the background for the spiritual love of Radha-Krishna. Her poem ‘Village Song’ is about a rustic maiden whose house may be located in Uttar Pradesh at a distance from the river Jamuna, showing the setting of Panghat, a place for the daily haunt of Indian village women, where they go to get water. The village girl, carrying her pitchers back from the river is overtaken by darkness. She repents having lingered on the way, lured by the boatman’s song. The terrible night is approaching fast. There is no moon light, river Jamuna is flooded. The girl is worried and scared not only for herself but for her family also who must be anxious for her-

“My brother will murmur, ‘Why doth she linger’?
My mother will wait and weep
Saying, ‘O safe may be the great gods bring her
The ‘Jamuna’ waters are deep——————
The Jamuna’s waters rush by so quickly,
The shadows of evening gather so thickly,
Like black birds in the sky——————” (Village Song II) (74)

The reference to the song of boatman puts in mind the image of Krishna, the Eternal Flute Player and the girl then would be Radha, out to meet Krishna and delayed by Him.

Another poem illustrating the reference of river Jamuna is the ‘Song of Radha, the Milk Maid’. The concluding line of every stanza is about the flow of Jamuna-

“These curds that are white as the clouds in the sky,
When the breezes of shrawan are blowing?
But my heart was so full of your beauty, Beloved,
They laughed as I cried without knowing;
Govinda! Govinda!
Govinda! Govinda!
How softly the river was flowing” (Song of Radha, the Milk Maid) (75)

Through glowing words and fluent phrases, Sarojini has recaptured the soft, rhythmic ripples of water of river Jamuna, as well as heart of the singer.

Along with the references of lake and river, Sarojini also recalls the beauty of mountains and streams in her poems. As in ‘On Juhu Sands’, Sarojini Naidu boldly presents the Juhu Beach in Bombay but her mind is busy in recollecting the beauty of mountains and valleys where wild narcissus bloom-

“But my heart gazes with your eyes
On the far mountain snows” (On Juhu Sands) (76)

Sarojini loves to enjoy the warbling and sparkling streams-

“And hearken at noon to the jubilant paean
The mountains streams chant from gay aeon to aeon” (Spring in Kashmir) (77)

Nissim Ezekiel is the poet of city, especially of Bombay. His poetry is closely related with his environment rooted deep in Bombay, deep in India-

“The Indian landscape sears my eyes
I have become a part of it” (Background Casually) (78)

But he misses the greenery of fields, the flow of streams and rivers, the beauty of lakes and mountains. His eyes long for the snowy hills which are far away-

“The hills are always far away
He knows the broken roads and moves
In circles tracked within his head
Before he wakes and has his way” (Urban) (79)

The whole poem ‘Urban’ is a vivid recordation of the tension that Ezekiel feels in the city and his harmonization with his environment. He is aware of the environmental pollution- the polluted river and polluted wind-

“The river which he claims he loves
is dry and all the winds lie dead” (Urban) (80)

A.K.Ramanujan's poem is about the river Vaikai which flows through Madurai, a city that has for long been the seat of Tamil culture. The river Vaikai dries in every summer. Ramanujan vividly describes when the river dries-

"every summer
A river drives to a trickle
In the sand
Baring the sand ribs
Straw and women’s hair
Clogging the water gates
At the rushy bars" (A River) (81)

How ironically he describes the devasting power of the river when it is in flood-

"People every where talked
of the inches rising
of the precise number of cobbled steps
run over by the water, rising
on the bathing places
And the way it carried off three village houses
one pregnant woman
and a couple of cows
named Gopi and Brinda, as usual (A River) (82)

Kamala Das’s poetry is not so much of rural life, or pastoral sight, of lakes and rivers but she constantly employs the metaphor of the city for life in many poems. She gives the reference of river while bidding farewell to the city of her long residence Bombay-

“I take leave of you fair city, while tears,
Hide somewhere in my adult eyes
And sadness is silent as a stone
The river’s unmoving" (Farewell to Bombay) (83)

Jayant Mahapatra’s poetry shows his belonging to the place of his land of birth, Orissa and to its landscapes. Orissan landscapes are the vast panorama of his poetry. He values the place and tries to search for his own ‘self’ in this belongingness-

“A man does not mean any thing
But the place
Sitting on the river bank throwing pebbles
into the muddy current
a man becomes a place” (Somewhere My Man) (84)

The lines express that the landscape, the river bank, the place has become a part of Mahapatra’s life and faith, rather a part of his body and his existence (self). Mahapatra tries to relate past and present through his poetry, sometimes centred on mythological and historical events. He describes that The river Daya of Orissa is the witness of Kalinga war in 261 B.C. When emperor Ashoka invaded Kalinga, countless innocent people were killed in this war, even the water of the river turned red with the blood. That terrible episode turned Ashoka, the Great into a religious man. Mahapatra feels dejected that people have forgotten the heroic sacrifice and efforts of our ancestors. It has just become a memory, the thing of past because the successors have proved themselves unworthy to keep the glory of their ancestors. Along with it, there is decline of values in present time-

“It is hard to tell now
what opened the anxious skies
how the age old proud stones
lost their strength and fell
and how the waters of Daya
stank with the bodies of my ancestors
my eyes close now
because of the fear that moves my skin” (Relationship) (85)

In Mahapatra’s opinion, the natural joys experienced in older times have become a thing of past. Man is lost in mechanical worries. He has no time, no sentiments to enjoy the beauty of nature-

“The dark eyes of boats are riveted
To the bank, as though they were
Expecting people, but there is none
To cross” (Afternoon) (86)

The poem ‘Again One Day, Walking by the River’ presents a very philosophical picture of the scenic beauty of the river-

“The same river, the same sun, the same town
Out of the corner of my eye
The barge loaded with golden hay
Trapped like a leaf in a basin of water” (Again One Day, Walking by the River) (87)

K.N.Daruwalla’s Landscape poetry is poetry of rivers. A very large number of poems may be called the River poems as ‘Dawn’, ‘Mother’, ‘Dip’, ‘Vignette I’, ‘Vignette II’ and ‘Vignette III’. The whole section ‘Crossing of Rivers’ in third book is about River as the motif. In the poem ‘Mother’ Daruwalla finds complete identification with the river-

“Sleeping on your banks
as you flow by,

Daruwalla’s poem ‘Boat-Ride along the Ganga’ depicts the scene of motor boat riding in river Ganga at dusk. The poem is not about any beauty or purity of Ganga River rather the whole poem is a description of burning ghats of Varanasi seen from a motor boat providing the context in which disease and death is seen-

“Slowly the ghat- amphitheatre unfolds
Like a diseased nocturnal flower in a stream
That opens its petals only at dusk
Palm-leaf parasols sprouting like freak-mushrooms
Brood over platforms that are empty” (Boat-Ride along the Ganga) (89)

The lines are full of picturesque description of ghat along the Ganga in Varanasi. The ‘ghat amphitheatre’ presents the sense of unreal where as the idea of disease is conveyed in the smile of ‘freak’. The focus of the poem is on death, the finality of fate-

“You face reality on a difficult plane
where death vibrates behind a veil of fire” (Boat-Ride along the Ganga) (89)

With a satire Daru Walla expresses-
“what plane of destiny have I arrived at
where corpse fires and cooking fires
burn side by side” (Boat-Ride along the Ganga) (89)

The river’s ghat scene is all about the bitter reality of life and death, passion and dejections. The Ganga River which is the river of gods and goddesses, the most sacred and pure, has become impure because of the carelessness of people and because of the artificial rites and rituals performed at the banks. The server falling into the Ganga in Varanasi arouses anger in Daruwalla’s heart-

“The sawer mouth trained like a canon
on the river’s flank” (Boat-Ride along the Ganga) (89)

That is why he ironically comments-
“Ganga flows through the land
not to lighten the misery
but to show it” (Vignette I) (90)

In ‘Vignette II’ Daruwalla describes how the people and pilgrims come to Varanasi to seek blessings of God and Ganga for different reasons and for which they perform religious rites and rituals on the bank of River Ganga-

“You go the rounds of the Panchtirath
starting from the ghat where Durga

(90) K.N.Daruwalla, ‘Crossing of Rivers’, page- 17
had dropped a sword
to where she dropped an earing
and the Panchganga ghat where four rivers
are said to meet the Ganga
like this river of faith going down
the stone steps to meet the river” (Vignette II) (91)

Daruwalla brings to light the rituals performed by the people on the bank of River Ganga-
“Tonsured heads explode along
the water surface
all is spider-thread ritual here:
sandal-paste and mantra
chanting of the Gayatri
shaved head and the pinddan” (Vignette II) (91)

The expression ‘spider-thread rituals’ shows how the clever and crafty priests design to trap
innocent people, ‘the river of faith’ indicates the blind faith of people and pilgrims to these false
‘pandas’. Then Daruwalla says that Ganga is a witness of all what is going on its banks, but she
does not say anything-
“Only the river does not speak here
She is thought itself
A soundless interior monologue” (Vignette II) (92)

Daruwalla’s poem ‘Dawn’ presents Ganga and holy city Varanasi on its bank in the light of
dawn-
“Coincidence of forms along the water front
Coincidence of silhouettes
in the spear grass street” (Dawn) (93)

Daruwalla asks Ganga if she remembers that purity and beauty now when she is laden with
filth-
“Can you recall
the abyss-floor at Rishikesh
the rapids of Bhabar
Your devotees at Haridwar?
Do you dream of them
the grottoes that nest led at your side,
ploughed fields- one vast furrow
across the mother silt,
mango groves” (Mother) (94)

(91) K.N.Daruwalla, ‘Crossing of Rivers’, page-17.
the poem ‘The Dip’ presents the warm and comforting sight of Ganga. All doubts vanish; all tensions disappear when we approach the River Ganga—
“These are the stone-banks
where the ship of doubts is wrecked” (The Dip) (95)

7. **Beauty of Indian Landscapes is a blessing of God**- According to Indian philosophy God is present in all phenomenon of nature. In each and every particle, God's presence can be seen. God Himself declares in Geeta, “Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind and understanding and self sense- this is the eight fold division of My nature.” VII/4 (96) “I am the taste in the waters, O son of Kunti, I am the light in the moon and the sun” VII/8 (97) “I am the pure fragrance in earth and brightness in fire” VII/9 (98)

Guru Granth Sahib says- “paun pani baisantar mahi, char kunt dah dise samahi”- “In wind, in water, in fire and in all the four quarters and in all the directions (everywhere), He is contained” (99)

God’s presence can be very well felt in the fragrance of flowers, in breeze of air, in chirping of birds, in the flow of rivers, in the twinkling of stars, The radiant glory of day dawn, the glow of sunset, the peace and pleasure of solitude, the grass and greenery, everything is a blessing of God. That is why people find so much comfort, peace and purity in the lap of nature. Toru Dutt expresses this soothing effect of Indian landscapes-

“How sweet and calm
It soothed at once his wounded pride
And on his spirit shed a balm
That all its yearning purified” (Buttoo) (100)

The lines beautifully express how the ‘wounded pride’ of Ekalaya finds solace and peace in nature because nature is God and God is nature. As the power of God’s Name purifies our soul from all ills and evils in the same manner, the beauty, purity and calmness of nature purifies our heart, mind and soul from all tensions and miseries, Nature works as God and Guru-

“A calm, calm life- and it shall be
its exceeding great reward!
No thoughts to vex in all I’ see
No jeers to bear or disregards-
All creatures and inanimate things
shall be my tutors: I shall learn
From beasts, and fish and bird with wings
And rock and stream and trees and fern” (Buttoo) (101)

(99) Shri Guru Granth Sahib 5/294
(100) Toru Dutt, ‘Buttoo’ Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan, page- 115.
The lines do not only glorify the godly beauty of Indian landscapes but also depict the keen sensitiveness of Toru Dutt towards nature.

Tagore’s poetry is par excellence to present Nature as the abode of God- “Hidden in the heart of things thou art nourishing seeds into sprouts, buds into blossoms and ripening flowers into fruitfulness” (Geetanjali/81) (102)

Very similar thoughts we find in Shri Guru Granth Sahib to reveal the super power and presence of Almighty God- “karan kaaran prabh ek hai, dusar nahi koi, nanak tis baliharne jal thal mahial soi”- “God alone is the Doer of all acts and there is none else. (Guru) Nanak says I am sacrifice to Him who pervades water, lands, nether regions and skies.” 5/278 (103) Nature, according to Tagore is the melody of God. The fusion of God and

Nature is a recurrent theme in almost all the poems of Tagore. He prays to God in ‘Crossing’- “Come to me like summer cloud, spreading thy showers from sky to sky.” (104) Tagore expresses how the soul of man communes directly with the living Soul of Nature that is with the spirit of God who dwells as life in all- animate and inanimate objects of nature-

“Thou art the sky and thou art the nest as well
O thou beautiful there in the nest is thy love
that encloses the soul with colours and sounds and odours.
There comes the morning with the golden basket in her right hand
bearing the wreath of beauty, silently to crown the earth,
And there comes the evening over the lonely meadows deserted
by herds, through trackless paths, carrying cool draughts of
peace in her golden pitches from the western ocean of rest,
But there, where spreads the infinite sky for the soul to
take her flight in, reigns the stainless white radiance, There
is no day nor night, no form nor colour and never a word” (Thou art the Sky) (105)

Sri Aurobindo declares with authority that God and Nature are synonymous with each other-

“God found in Nature, Nature fulfilled in God” (Savitri) (106)

It clarifies that Nature is the manifestation of God. Guru Granth Sahib says, “aap basant jagat sab baari”- “God Himself is the beauty of Nature and the whole Universe if His field.” Not even a single particle of this Universe is without the presence of Almighty God- Every thing, Every being and every activity is under His control-

“All can be done if the God touch is there” (Savitri) (107)
Even the day dawn begins with the Supreme Power and Presence of Almighty God-

“A message from the Unknown immortal light

(103) Shri Guru Granth Sahib 5/278.
(104) Ravindra Nath Tagore, ‘Crossing’, page- 64.
(107) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I Canto 1, page- 03.
Ablaze upon creation’s quivering edge,
Dawn built her aura of magnificent hues
And buried its seed of grandeur in the hours” (Savitri) (108)

God, man and nature are inseparable. This divine fusion can be felt by awakened souls. Sri Aurobindo says that Savitri, a spiritual figure by birth, an awakened soul, a symbol of Universal Mother felt this coexistence of God and Nature-

“Her nature felt all Nature as its own” (Savitri) (109)

Right from the very beginning of epic Savitri, we feel the touch with presence of Divinity in Nature-

“It was the hour before the Gods awake,
Across the path of the divine event
The huge foreboding mind of Night, alone
In her unlit temple of eternity,
Lay stretched immobile upon silence’ marge” (Savitri) (110)

These beautiful lines of Sri Aurobindo very well express that God and Nature are not two different aspects rather God is nature and nature is God. Sarojini Naidu also makes us believe the presence of God in the sanctuary of nature-

“Or perchance we may glean a far glimpse of the
Infinite Bosom,
In whose glorious shadow all life is
unfolded or furled” (Solitude) (111)

Sarojini’s expressions are quite inspiring to convey the message that nature is the abode of God and God is the source of all creation. Sarojini repeatedly points out that there is eternal peace and pleasure in the lap of nature because the beauty of nature in itself is a precious gift of God. According to Sarojini, worldly life is full of agony, anguish and pangs accompanying many fold strife which can have their end in the loveliness of nature-

“Come away, come away from this throng and
its tumult of sorrow,
there is rest, there is peace from the pangs of
its manifold strife
where in the halcyon night hold in trust the dear
songs of the morrow
and the silence is but a rich pauce in the
music of life” (Solitude) (112)

(109) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I Canto 1, page- 08.
(110) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I Canto 1, page- 01.
Sarojini Naidu never fails to find immense joy and strength in the beauty of Indian landscapes and sights. She feels the presence of God in the lovely corn fields and in lovely morning with the majestic spectacle of golden orioles rhythmically flying-

“When from the climbing terraces of corn
I watch the golden orioles of Thy Morn” (In Salutation to the Eternal Peace) (113)

Nature to Sarojini is the symbol of that root delight which is the resultant of beauty and harmony. Sarojini wants to display the philosophy that behind this charming beauty of nature is the consummate beauty of Truth (God) abiding-

“And spirit of Truth were the birds that sang,
And spirit of Love were the stars that glowed,
And spirit of Peace were the streams that flowed” (Song of Dream) (114)

To realize this Truth (sat), Love (chit) and Peace (ananda) is what spirituality means, the preaching of Indian philosophy, “The whole world is full of Lord. Open your eyes and see Him, this is what Vedanta teaches” (115)

According to Nissim Ezekiel, the state of communication with the Divine will transcend both space and time-

“The landscape in its geologic prime
Dissolves to show its quintessential slime
A million stars are blotted out. I think
of each historic passion as a blink
That happened to the sad eye of Time” (Philosophy) (116)

Jayant Mahapatra insists that it is the beauty of nature that opens the channel to communicate with soul. And soul is a part and parcel of God. Mahapatra says that spirit or soul will have no rest until the quest is undertaken-

“The long, dying silence of the rain
over the hills,
open one’s touch
a feeling for the soul’s substance” (The Indian Way) (117)

In Daruwalla’s poem ‘Crossing Chorhoti’ the Divine presence in nature is evoked when he describes ‘fifty Indian peaks’ with-

“Snow and the spray hangover
of icefalls and the blue of distance
as if some god had with a palette knife
honied the landscape with ethereal colours” (Crossing Chorhoti) (118)

8. **Seasons of India**- India enjoys the change of seasons to the cycle of time- Spring, Summer, Rainy, Autumn and Winter. In Indian literature they are mentioned six as Vasant, Grishma, Varsha, Sharad, Hemant and Shishir.

a) **SPRING SEASON**- Spring is the season of love and life, joy and excitement, freshness and revival, blooming and sprouting, colours and odours that is why everyone is thrilled to see the marvellous, majestic and magical beauty of spring season. Ravindra Nath Tagore refers this beauty of spring when the devotee is waiting to have a glimpse of his Beloved God-

“The leaves rustled over head, the cuckoo sang from the unseen dark, and perfume of babla flowers came from the bend of the road” (Geetanjali/54) (119)

Again Tagore mentions that the remembrance of God and longing to have glimpse of God is works like a breeze of spring season in the desolate dwelling of ruined temple. Here ruined temple means the blankness of heart without the presence of God and God’s Name-is like the breeze of spring season-

“In your desolate dwelling comes the vagrant spring breeze. It brings the tiding of flowers-the flowers that for your worship are offered no more” (Geetanjali/88) (120)

Sri Aurobindo creates a romantic atmosphere through the description of spring season in ‘Savitri’-

“Then spring, an ardent lover, leaped through leaves, And caught the earth-bridge in his eager clasp; His advent was a fire of irised hues His arms were a circle of the arrival of joy” (Savitri) (121)

Spring is personified as a lover in above lines and earth as a beloved. And when spring embraces earth, it provides the state of divine pleasure.

Sarojini Naidu takes a great delight in the renewal and change that earth undergoes from season to season. But she shows a woman’s partiality for Spring Season. Best of Sarojini’s lyrics belong to the charm and beauty of spring season. Or we can say that her poetry is frankly the poetry of spring season, the rituraj, the monarch of the seasons. Many of her poems even when they are not actually about the season are redolent with the imagery of spring. An entire section of ‘The Bird of Time’ entitled ‘Songs of Spring Time’ and the section entitled ‘The Flowering Year’ from ‘The Broken Wing’ contains charming lyrics on spring season.

I. **Spring is the season of revival and new life**- With the coming of spring, the whole nature burgeons with new life, the plants and trees turn green, the blossoming rich coloured flowers scatter fragrance and shining birds burst into melodious singing-

“Young leaves grow green on the banyan twigs And red on the peepal tree,

(117) Jayant Mahapatra, ‘The Indian Way’, page-
(121) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book IV Canto 4, page- 351.
The honey birds pipe to the budding figs
And honey blooms call to the bee” (Spring) (122)

Sarojini’s lines are remarkable for the lustrous beauty of spring. In reality, spring brings with it joy, novelty and freshness all around. The whole earth is loaded with brightness and beauty-
“The old earth breaks into passionate bloom
At the kiss of her fleet, gay foot” (In Time of Flowers) (123)

There are many references in Shri Guru Granth Sahib regarding the blooming beauty of spring season, “basant charya phooli ban rai” - “Oh spring has come with all its passionate blooming of flowers and fruits.”

The secret of the magical power of the spring is questioned by Sarojini. She asks the Spring to tell her the secret of her spell-
“Spring time, O spring time, what is your secret
The bliss at the core of your magical mirth
That quickens the pulse of the morning to wonder
And hastens the seed of all beauty of birth” (The Joy of Spring Time) (124)

The expressions ‘the bliss at the core’ and ‘the seeds of beauty of birth’ beautifully unfold the secret of spring that is revival and new life to whole atmosphere, Sarojini’s heart is deeply stirred to see this glory and gladness of revival-
“The Kimshuks burst into dazzling flowers
The seemuls burgeoned in crimson pride
The palm groves shone with the oriole’s wing
The Koel’s began to sing” (The Magic of Spring) (125)
There is new life, new birth and new hope everywhere-
“The fragile lilies appear,
Like the blood red jewels you used to fling,
O’er the maidens that danced at the feast of spring,
To welcome the new born year” (In Time of Flowers) (126)

ii) Enchanting beauty of spring season- Sarojini’s poetry is filled with ecstasy and sensuousness when she depicts the lustrous beauty of spring season, its scenes and sights, its sounds, its fresh gaiety, the colourfulness and the resurgence of life. She recreates the scene with Indian thoughts and images having Indian base and background. How beautifully she presents ‘Spring in Kashmir’ with the image of rapturous songs of birds-
“Heart, O my heart, hear the spring time is calling,
With her laughter, her music, her beauty enthralling
Thro’ glade and thro’ glen her winged feet, let us follow,
In the wake of the oriole, the sunbird and swallow” (Spring in Kashmir) (127)

Under the stress of emotions, Sarojini regards spring time as a laughing lady of enthralling beauty who spreads fragrance everywhere. With the coming of spring, the beautiful birds like the oriole and the swallows are commonly seen in every glen and glade. In another poem, spring is conceived by Sarojini as a bright and beautiful lady who lures all people by her magic flute. On the arrival of Lady Spring, the old earth breaks into passionate bloom-

“O love, you know, the spring is here
With the lure of her magic flute?———
The old earth breaks into passionate bloom
At the kiss of her fleet, gay foot”

“O love, do you know the spring is here?———
The dawn and the dark grow rife,
With scent and song and tremulous mirth
The blind rich travail of life” (In Time of Flowers) (128)

“The lure of her magic flute’ shows Sarojini’s deep fascination for the flute of Lord Krishna. As when Krishna used to play His flute, Radha and other gopies used to get lost in its sweet and enchanting music, in the same manner, the beauty of spring has a magic in it, so why everyone is enchanted by its charming glory and gladness.

Again there is a colourful sight of the western hills and valleys of the South with multicoloured sweet smelling flowers in the season of spring-

“Let spring illumine the western hills with blooming brand of fire,
And wake with road of budded flames the valley of the South” (Ecstasy) (129)

“Let spring unlock the melodies of fountain and of flood” (Ecstasy) (129)

With a keen and quick grasp of observation, Sarojini Naidu creates an atmosphere, producing sweet fragrance everywhere-

“The winds are drunk with the odorous breath
Of henna, sarisha and neem” (In Time of Flowers) (130)

The reference of ‘henna, sarisha and neem’ is totally Indian. Sarojini’s descriptions on spring season do not only appeal to our senses of seeing and smelling, she is excellent in presenting the enchanted music and rhythm of spring-

“Wild bees that rifle the mango blossom,
Set free a while from the love god’s string
Wild birds that sway in the citron branches,
Drunk with the rich red honey of spring,
Fire flies weaving aerial dances

In fragile rhythm of flickering gold" (A Song in Spring) (131)

Spring kindles life in the trees, flowers, birds, butterflies; everything seems to be loaded with beauty-

“When spring winds weakened the mountain floods,
And kindled the flame of the tulip buds,
When bees grow loud and the days grew long
And the peach groves thrilled to the oriole song” (The Queen’s Rival) (132)

Both the above beautiful descriptions remind Kalidas’s illustration on spring season—

“A stalwart soldier comes, the spring
who bears the bow of love
and on that bow, the lustrous string
is made of bees, that move
with malice as they speed the shaft
of blossoming mango flowers” (The Seasons Spring) (133)

iii) Rapture and Ecstasy of Spring Season- As spring is the season of new life and freshness, revival and change, joy and love, so the heart of everyone is excited to welcome spring and enjoy the marvellous beauty of nature—

“Heart, O my heart! Lo, the spring time is waking
In meadow and grove,
Lo! The mellifluous koels are making
Their paens of love
Behold the bright rivers and rills in their glancing
Melodious flight,
Behold how the sumptuous peacocks are dancing,
In rhythmic flight” (Ecstasy) (134)

In full rapturous mood, Sarojini wants to drink each and every drop of ecstasy spread in the realm of spring, with no consideration of any theology or metaphysics—

“Spring time, O spring time, what is your essence
The lilt of a bulbul, the laugh of a rose
The dance of the dew on the wings of a moon beam
The voice of the zephyr that sings as he goes
The hope of a bride or the dream of a maiden
watching the petals of gladness unclose” (The Joy of Spring Time) (135)

(133) Kalidas, ‘The Seasons (Spring)’ translated by A.W.Ryder, Quoted from ‘A Book of India’, page- 142.
Here the profusion of images has romantic association. Sarojini beautifully summarizes the essence of spring in the ‘lilt of a bulbul’, in ‘the blooming of a rose’, in ‘the dance of the dew’, in ‘the voice of west wind’, in ‘hope of bride’ and in ‘the dream of a maiden. No other poet has explored the secret of spring in such a charming way as Sarojini does. Not only Sarojini but the whole atmosphere is full of rapture at the advent of spring—

“where rapturous bulbul and marina and dove
Their carols of welcome are singing” (The calf of spring) (136)

iv) Influence of Spring on Human Beings- Human passions and emotions are co-related with the beauty of joy of nature as man is a part of nature itself. Spring is the season of love and life as it is the loving season of God. Lord Krishna Himself declares in Geeta, “ritunam kusumakarah” “of seasons, I am the flower bearer (spring)” X/35 (137) Spring is the season which comes with growing of new leaves on the branches, winging of bees, blooming of poppies and lilies, chirping of birds and vibrating life in each and every natural surroundings. So why it induces people to sing songs of love—

“Kamla tinkles a lingering foot
In the grove where temple bells ring,
And Krishna plays on his bamboo flute
An idyl of love and spring” (Spring) (138)

Krishna is typical Indian boy and Kamla is typical Indian girl. May be Sarojini wants to introduce the love legends of Radha and Krishna through the names of Kamla-Krishna. Whatever may be the reason, Sarojini’s ardent love for Krishna’s flute is very clear from the lines. Spring is the season of love, very dear to lovers whose hearts dance with the dancing of flowers. The maidens are excited with heart full of love and happiness to welcome the new born year- spring—

“Ho! Let us dance, let us sing
And wear saffron garments to welcome the spring
And pluck the new buds that are blowing” (Song of Radha, the Milk Maid) (139)

But the enchanting beauty and the charm of spring is of no use to the broken and sad heart or the people ‘of dream deferred and a heart grown old’—

“O spring how you grieve me
would you deceive with praise of your fragile
miraculous art?” (Mimicry) (140)

“There was a song I used to sing
But now I seek in vain, in vain

(137) The Bhagwad Geeta X/35, page- 266.
(139) Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Bird of Time’, page-
For the old lilting glad refrain
I have forgotten everything
Forgive, O my comrade spring” (The Coming of Spring) (141)

The lilting songs of koel and dhadikulas, the radiant colours of flowers and their intoxicating scent only give pain to Lilavati, a Hindu widow-
“O lilting koels, hush your rapturous notes
O dhadikulas, still your passionate throats,
Or seek some further garden for your nest
Your songs are poisoned arrows in my heart” (Vasant Panchmi) (142)

The spring however has a magical relief in itself which can remove all our sorrows, and grieves of everyday life. This has been beautifully depicted by Sarojini in following philosophical lines-
“Their joy from the birds and streams let us borrow
O heart, let us sing
The years are before us for weeping and sorrow
Today it s spring” (Ecstasy) (143)

Sarojini’s thoughts are totally optimistic and concerned with present-
“what O my heart, though tomorrow be tragic
Today is interwoven of rapture of the magic” (Spring in Kashmir) (144)

In Daruwalla’s poem ‘The Round of Seasons’, Vasanta (Spring) starts with the description of flowers and trees. Daruwalla depicts the scene that there are superstitions that “Ashoka blossoms at the touch of beloved feet”, “the bakula must be splashed” and “the tilaka must be hugged”. All this is necessary for the trees to break into bloom but in Daruwalla’s opinion there is no need of anything, not even the physical presence of beloved, only memory is enough to bloom-
“I quicken in flower
At the memory of your touch” (The Round of Seasons (Vasanta) Landscapes) (145)

b) SUMMER SEASON- Though the noons are hot and dry in summer season but the evenings are cool and shady and the greenery invites us to repose and rest. Toru Dutt sensuously and picturesquely describe the glowing sunset of Indian summer-
“A waving pampas green and fair
All glistening with the evening dew
How vivid was the breast high grass!
Here waved in patches, forest corn-
Here intervened a deep morass-

Here arid spots of verdure shorn
Lay open- rock and barren sand-
And here again the trees arose
Thick clustering- a glorious band
Their tops still bright with sunset glows-
stirred in the breeze the crowding boughs” (Buttoo) (146)

The lines are excellent to depict the wonder ful sight of sunset in summer evening which rises before us when youth Buttoo (Eklavya) passes into the forest and sees the beautiful and green pampas waving and shining with the evening dew on them, a deep marsh and beyond that marsh, high trees shine with the light of the sunset.

To Tagore nature is alive, as nature is the manifestation of God. The whole of the universe is permeated by one life, one soul of Divine. Tagore in the moment of inspiration, beautifies the summer evening by realizing the oneness of Nature and God-

“Today the summer has come at my window with its sighs and murmurs and the bees are plying their minstreisy at the court of the flowering grove. Now it is time to sit quiet, face to face with thee, and to sing dedication of life in this silent and overflowing leisure” (Geetanjali/5) (147)

He refers summer season in his poem ‘Crossing’ to convey a vision of spiritual order-
“Come to me like summer cloud spreading thy showers from sky to sky”

“Come to me like a summer cloud stirring my heart with the promise of hidden life and the gladness of green” (Crossing) (148)

It explains that as summer clouds come with the message of rain to soothe and comfort the hearts in the hotness of summer, in the same manner Almighty God must come to comfort the burning hearts in midst the worldly affairs.

With the wealth of imagery, music and picturesqueness, Sri Aurobindo describes the hot, violent noon of summer season as-
“Across the burning languor of the soil
Paced summer with his pomp of violent noons
And stamped his tyranny of torrid light
And the blue seal of a great burnished sky” (Savitri) (149)

Sarojini Naidu also describes the hotness and dullness of summer season at noontime when the earth scorches in bright light-
“When the earth falters and the waters swoon
With the implacable radiance of noon,
And in dim shelter koels hush their notes
Buy fruit, buy fruit, steals down the panting street” (Street Cries) (150)

(149) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book IV Canto1, page- 349.
The noons are hot but the evenings are cool in summer season. One likes to take rest under the shade of peepal and neem tree or walk along the river side or cool oneself by bathing in pools—

“O let us fling all care away and lie alone and dream
‘Neath tangled boughs of tamarind, molsari and neem
And bind our brows with jasmine sprays and play
on carven flutes,
To wake the slumbering serpent kings among the bunyan roots;
And roam at fall of eventide along the river’s brink
And bath in water lily pools where golden panthers drink” (Summer Woods) (151)

The reference of tamarind, molsari and neem are totally Indian—very common to our eyes and ears. The calmness, coolness and tranquillity of summer evenings invite us to repose and rest—

“Here shall my heart find its haven of calm
By rush fringed rivers and rain fed streams
That glimmer thro meadows of lily and palm” (June Sunset) (152)

In June, when there have been a few monsoon showers, the clouds move about, and then the whole atmosphere has a moisturous effect and drowsy rest. Sarojini Naidu produces a lovely and sensuous scene of summer evening when upon the earth, garden world of nature shines like gold.

“And thro’ the wet earth the gentian pushes
Her spikes of silvery bloom
Wher’er the foot of the bright shower passes
Fragrant and fresh delights unfold;
The wild fawn feed on the scented grasses
Wild bees on the cactus gold” (June Sunset) (153)

‘Fringed gentian and scented grasses’ attract everybody to take rest in the sanctuary of peaceful nature. Sarojini’s expressions vibrate with artistic sincerity and aesthetic pleasure when she deals with the rare beauty of Indian landscapes in summer season. How majestically she paints the colourful scene of June Sunset, when the sun is sinking and the whole sky glows with radiant colours—

“Here shall my soul find its true repose
Under a sunset sky of dreams
Diaphanous, amber and rose
The air is aglow with the glint and whirl
Of swift wild wings in their homeward flight,

Sapphire, emerald, topaz and pearl,
Afloat in the evening light” (June Sunset) (154)

Summer evenings are famous for their freshness and colourful sights. People enjoy the calm and cool atmosphere everywhere and want to forget the fever and fret of worldly life in contrast with the peaceful sight of nature as expressed in Sarojini’s poem ‘Summer Wood’-

“Love, come with me where koels call from
flowering glade and glen,
far from the toil and weariness, the praise
and prayers of men” (Summer Woods) (155)

It is a season when-
“A brown quail cries from the tamarisk bushes
A bulbul calls from the cassia-plume” (June Sunset) (156)

Though Sarojini has written only two poems in reference to summer season, ‘June Sunset’ and ‘Summer Woods’ but in both the lyrics, is painted the abode of peace and contentment, which is the far cry of the people in today’s time.

We do not find the calm and cool summer evenings in Ezekiel poetry rather Ezekiel mentions the hotness of sun in summer season in his poem ‘Enterprise’-

“ ————————— The second stage
Explored but did not test the call
The sun beat down to match our rage” (Enterprise) (157)

Ezekiel wants to convey that the hotness and dryness of Bombay life is like that of the dryness and hotness of summer season-

“The city like a passion burns

______________________
Away from beach and tree and stone
To kindred clamour close at hand” (Urban) (158)

A.K.Ramanujan refers the hotness and dryness of summer season in his poem ‘A River’ in which he vividly creates the scene that river Vaikai which flows in Madurai, dries in every summer-

“Every summer
a river drives to trickle
in the sand
baring the sand ribs
straw and women’s hair

clogging the watergates
at the rushy bars” (A River) (159)
The images used here, depict the picturesque effect of dryness.

In Kamala Das’s poem ‘Sepia’ the hotness of sun in summer is presented as a source of
scorching heat that dries up the very marrow of the bones and destroys the real charm of life-
“It’s time to hold anger
Like a living sun
And scorch
scorch to the very marrow” (Sepia) (160)

Jayant Mahapatra’s poem ‘Indian Summer’ presents the main features of a typical Indian
summer through highly evocative images, entirely as an example of compactness-
“Over the roughing of the sombre wind
priests chant louder than ever,
the mouth of India opens,
crocodiles move into deeper waters
mornings of heated middens
smoke under the sun” (Indian Summer) (161)

c) RAINY SEASON- The Rainy Season or ‘Sawan’ in India is one of the best season of the
year as it brings with it the freshness, blossoms and exhilaration. After the drought and fierce
heat of the blazing sun of summers, the rains are most welcomed to everybody in the country.

Ravindra Nath Tagore presents the reference of ‘Rainfall’ in Geetanjali to express the
boundless Love and Grace of Almighty God, but the devotee (human being) does not know how to
attain this Grace (rain) of God.

“The sky is overcast with clouds and the rain is ceaseless. I know not what this is that stirs
in me. I know not its meaning” (Geetanjali/27) (162)

Sarojini Naidu beautifully depicts a very rapturous and romantic image of rainfall-
“With crystal rods the necromantic rain
Touches deed loveliness to life again
Revives on withered meads and barren rocks
Pastures and gleaming pools for wandering flocks
And sows wet fields with red and ivory grain” (In Gokhale’s Garden) (163)

All the adjectives used for rainfall are fit to produce a lovely picture of renewed beauty of
nature in rainy season. In fact, rainfall is always soothing to our hearts. All the sights and scenes
shine and glitter with brightness after rainfall. It appears as if some new charm, new life has blessed
India with its scenic beauty of fields and crops. There is thrilling beauty all around-

“Behold the bright rivers and rills in their glancing
melodious flight,
Behold how the sumptuous peacocks are dancing
In rhythmic delight” (Ecstasy) (164)
It is pleasant to enjoy-
“the diaphanous silver of rain” (Love and Death) (165)
“when the breezes of shrawan are blowing” (Song of Radha, the Milk Maid) (166)

If there has not been any rainfall, there have not been any crop and when there has been not any crop or food, and then there has not been any life survived. It means rainy season is the blessing of God to nourish and secure our lives. That is why the farmers of India invoke and pray to mighty God Indra-
“Thou, who with bountiful torrent and river
Dost nourish the heart of forest and plain
Withold not Thy gifts, O Omnipotent God!
Hearken, O Lord of Rain” (Hymn to Indra, Lord of Rain) (167)
There is also an invocation to Lord Varuna, the sender of Rain, Lord of water, that fosters their crops-
“Lord of the rainbow, Lord of the harvest,
Great and beneficent Lord of the Rain!
There is the mercy that cherished our furrows,
There is the mercy that fostered our grain———
O sender of rain and dewfall, we hail thee,
We praise Thee Varuna, with cymbal and pipe” (Harvest Hymn) (168)
The rainy season arrives with best hope for agriculture along with glowing beauty of nature. But it arouses pathetic touch in the heart of departed lovers. River overflow their banks, peacocks dance at eventide, the chatak birds are happy but the love lorn maiden pines for her lover as she listens to the cry of Papeeha-
“I see the soft wings of the clouds on the river
And jewelled with rain drops the mango leaves quiver
And tender bough flower on the plain———
But what is their beauty to me papeeha,
Beauty of blossom and shower, papeeha,
That brings not my lover again” (A Love Song from North) (169)

It is a common belief that when ‘rim jhim’ of Sawan starts, beloved pines for her departed lover and wife pines for her departed husband. The rain drops act as arrows on their depressed hearts.

Kalidas, the greatest poet of India, confirms the fact-
“The cruel arrows of rain,
smite them who love, apart,
From whom they love, with stinging pain
And pierce them to the heart” (The Seasons) (170)

Rain on one hand, is the nourisher of our crops and grains, our fields and agriculture, but it can cause destruction when it advances in an awful majesty. Thunder, storm and lightening are its companions. Sarojini presents the fearful feelings of an Indian village girl in stormy weather and heavy rainfall-
“The Jamuna’s waters are deep———
The Jamuna’s water rush by so quickly
The shadows of evening gather so thickly,
O! If the storm breaks what will betide me?
Safe from the lightening where shall I hide me” (Village Song) (171)

Nissim Ezekiel refers the continuous heavy rainfall in his poem ‘Night of the Scorpion’. Heavy rainfall and darkness give way to evil in the form of scorpion-
“Ten hours of steady rain had driven him
to crawl beneath a sack of rice” (Night of Scorpion) (172)

Ezekiel, the poet of city life, presents the thickly populated city Bombay in monsoon weather-
“Barbaric city sick with slums
Deprived of seasons, blushed with rains” (A Morning Walk) (173)

Ezekiel also mentions the soothing site of rain-
“This large sprawling town is able
To cool itself, soothed by the rain” (Town Loro) (174)

Kamala Das suggests the plankness of love making stepped in the sense of death with sense of life through the reference of heavy rainfall-
“——— a July, full of rain and darkness
Trapped like smoke, in the hollow of the sky and
That lewd, steamy smell of rot, rising out of the earth” (Gino) (175)

Rain is the most favourite theme of Jayant Mahapatra’s poetry. He has written so many poems on rain- ‘In Night of Rain’, ‘A Day of Rain’, ‘Rains in Orissa’, ‘Another Day in Rain’, ‘The Rain Falling’, ‘A Rain’, ‘After the Rain’, ‘Four Rain Poems’ etc. According to Mahapatra rain evokes memories and desire therefore represents not only past and future but also the present-
“I see

(170) Kalidas, ‘The Seasons’ (Rainy Season) translated by A.W.Ryder, Quoted from ‘A Book of India’, page- 139.
It play over people, piled up to their silences
It creates an impression of vastness
It quietly opens a door” (A Rain) (176)
Mahapatra writes that rain compels a person to peep into the past-
“All night I have waited for the rain to end
the forbidden memories ringing, compelling
foot balls among the ruins, the day’s last sun smoking
in an unending fields soaked in innocence” (Four Rain Poems) (177)
Mahapatra feels a kind of self-realization during and after rainfall-
“Rain stands on the margins of my time
A discovery, like theft,
making me careful how I lay the hour down” (Again the Rain Falls) (178)
We find a description of rainy season in Orissa-
“The sky’s face expressionless
An oriole call echoes away in the sullen grayness,
The book of earth throbs with the light of things,
A pond heron floats wearily in a rainpool,
Its face a mask, it pauses for another look around,
Grass everywhere is huge and moves forward to kill” (Rains in Orissa) (179)
Sometimes he describes ‘Rain’ as-
“the beauty soar into the sky
into the tangles of cloud and rain
of that drowsy, voice calling
from other people’s lives” (Relationship) (180)
Then he refers ‘rain’ to insist that the soul will find no rest until the
quest is undertaken-
“The long, dying silence of the rain
over the hills open one’s touch
A feeling for the soul’s substance” (Indian way) (181)
Here the silence suggests the inner quest of the soul. Again rain brings to him the deep philosophy-
“Rain’s frightened hands
Drop the comic book of our history
On to the weathered stones” (Living in Orissa) (182)

(179) Jayant Mahapatra, ‘Rain in Orissa’ ‘A Rain of Rites’, page- 09.
“Hear the rain tapping against the door 
So persistently and you think 
The dead themselves are trying to come in” (1992, Shadow Space) (183)

Whatever may be the reason or philosophy, his concern to rain is immortal. Rain is not only the symbol for him but it is metaphor of life. He loves rain as he loves his life, that is why he states-
“In the end
I come back to the day and to the rain” (In the Fields of Desolate Rice) (184)

d) AUTUMN SEASON- Autumn, in India, is the season symbolising sadness, depression and blankness. There are no leaves and flowers on the trees. Only the dry, yellowish brown leaves wither here and there like ghosts. Dry winds blow making the whole atmosphere dull and sad. There is note of wistful melancholy everywhere. But Sarojini Naidu with her art of delicacy, colour and imagination has beautified this dry season of autumn. She presents very impressive and pictorial description of the sunset in autumn season ‘with clouds hanging fallen leaves fluttering and wild wind blowing’-

“Like a joy on the heart of a sorrow 
The sunset hangs on a cloud, 
A golden storm of glittering sheaves, 
Of fair and frail and fluttering leaves, 
The wild wind blows in a cloud” (Autumn Song) (185)

The beloved is sad, weary and alone in Sarojini’s poem because all her dreams and hopes have shattered like the fluttering leaves in autumn-

“My heart is weary and sad and alone 
For it dreams like the fluttering leaves have gone 
And why should I stay behind” (Autumn Song) (185)

The simile ‘the dreams like fluttering leaves have gone’ has a note of poignant pathoes. Toru Dutt has described a pen portrait of the fallen leaves in Autumn Season in somewhat similar manner-

“The autumn has bestrewed the vale 
with withered leaves- the woods were left 
bare and of mystery bereft 
And voiceless was the nightingale 
Sad, almost dying in his dawn 
A sick youth wandered slow in tears 
Once more in places for withdrawn 
That had loved in earlier years” (A Sheaf) (186)

Kamala Das expresses the blankness of her love and life through dry autumn -
“Too early the autumn sights
have come, too soon my lips
have lost their hunger, too soon
the singing birds have
left” (Too early the Autumn Sights) (187)

e) WINTER SEASON- Winter is the season of chilling cold and snow, silence and sacredness. Ravindra Nath Tagore sings delightful songs in praise of winter-
“Early winter spreads her filmy veil
over midnight stars,
And the call comes from the deep,
“Man, bring out your lamp”
The forests are bare of flowers
the birds have ceased to sing
the river-side grass has shed its blossoms———
The stars are dimmed
the night is disconsolate,
and the call comes from the deep,
“Man, bring out your lamp” (Poems- Section II) (188)
K.N.Daruwalla describes a winter scene in somewhat similar manner-
“Nothing is new
around this place
except the snow
except the quiet
Monastic vows
of wizened bark
on skeleton tree
The ribs too are a monastery
when seasons do not change within” (In My Father’s House) (189)

9) Indian Trees and Flowers- The amazing beauty of Indian flowers and trees has been lamented again and again by poets and writers. Toru Dutt’s poetry is full of sensuousness, when she describes the lovely beauty of Indian flowers and trees-
“What glorious trees! The sombre soul
on which the eyes delight to rest,

The betel nut- a pillar tall,
with feathery branches for a crest,
The light-leaved tamarind spreading wide,
The pale faint scented bitter neem
The seemul, gorgeous as a bride
The flowers that have the ruby’s gleam” (Buttoo) (190)

The reference of ‘neem’, ‘tamarind’ and ‘seemul’ create an Indian touch, very common to our eyes and ears. Here Toru Dutt is very similar to Sarojini Naidu-

“O let us fling all cares away and lie along
   and dream
‘Neath tangled boughs of tamarind and molsari
   and neem” (Summer Wood) (191)

Toru Dutt shows her deep fascination for Indian flowers especially ‘Champak’ and ‘Sirisha’-

“The Champc, bok and south sea pine
The nagessure with pendant flowers,
Like ear rings- and the forest vine
That cling over all, embowers,
The Sirish famed in Sanskrit song
Which rural maiden love to wear,
The peepal giant like and strong,
The bramble with its matted air” (Buttoo) (192)

The description is highly picturesque and sensuous. Ravindra Nath Tagore refers the golden beauty of Champa flowers through a child fancy in the poem ‘The Merchant’-

“Mother, do you want heaps and heaps of gold?
There by the banks of golden streams, fields are full of golden harvest.
And in the shade of the forest path the golden champa
   flowers drop on the ground
I will gather them all for you in many hundred baskets” (The Merchant) (193)

Sri Aurobindo mentions the lovely beauty of flowers and trees while admiring the glowing beauty of his motherland-

“O land of love and flowers, the spring bird’s call
And southern wind are sweet among your trees” (Bankim Chandra Chatterjee) (194)

Sarojini’s lyrics are vivid and vital, full of concrete and sensuous imagery when she deals with lovely Indian flowers-

“If a lovely maiden’s foot
Treads on the ashoka root,
Its gold branches sway and swell,
So our eastern legends tell
Into a gleaming flowers,
vivid clusters of golden-red
Or her marriage bower” (Ashoka Blossom) (195)

The lines show how beauty leads to love. The girl who happens to walk on the Ashoka roots must be beautiful. Relying upon the transforming power of Ashoka Blossoms, Sarojini says-

“If your glowing foot be prest
O’er the secrets of my breast———
Love, my dreaming heart would wake,
And its joyous fancies break,
Into a lyric bloom” (Ashoka Blossom) (196)

With the touch of ‘glowing foot’ of lover, the joyous vision would bloom into dulcet lyrics as the Ashoka branches on the touch of a lovely maiden’s foot burst into gleaming flowers.

Champak Blossoms, full of rich scents, cast a magic spell on forest field and glade. They are of variegated colours-

“Amber petals, ivory petals,
petals of carven jade”

“They live anew in the luscious harvests,
of ripening yellow or red” (Champak Blossoms) (197)

Their magical perfume ravishes the wind-

“O radiant blossoms that fling,
Your rich voluptuous magical perfume
To ravish the winds of spring” (Champak Blossoms) (197)

Then Sarojini presents the charming beauty of very fragrant greenish yellow Sirisha flowers in the opening stanza of her poem ‘The Garden Vigil’-

“Alluring scent of the Sirisha- plain” (Love and Death) (199)
“The winds are drunk with odorous breath
Of henna, sarisha and neem” (In Time of Flowers) (200)

The Kadamba tree, with its large shining leaves and with its orange coloured flowers has its reference in Sarojini’s poem ‘The Flute Player of Brindavan’. Every Hindu heart has image of Lord Krishna, with a crown of peacock plumes on His head, a garland of Jasmine buds around His neck and playing His flute under the Kadamba tree, Radha captivated by His flute, says-

“Why did’st thou play thy matchless flute,
‘Neath the Kadamba tree,
And wound my idly dreaming heart

With poignant melody———?” (The Flute Player of Brindavan) (201)

Sarojini Naidu shows her deep love and fascination for lotus, the National Flower of India, for its purity and sanctity. Born in a muddy pool, the lotus remains clean, pure and unsoiled. Water or mud does not cling on its petals or leaves. Lotus has mythological association with Lakshmi- the Lotus born, Saraswati- who is seated on Lotus, and Buddha meditating upon the Lotus throne etc. Lotus has spiritual value also. The human being, who is truly united with Divine Being, is compared with Lotus, because of its pure nature. The Bhagawad Geeta says, “He who performs actions offering them to God, renouncing attachment remains untouched by sin as a lotus leaf by water.” Praising the mystic beauty of Lotus, Sarojini writes-

“O mystic Lotus! sacred and sublime
In myriad-petalled grace inviolate,
“Deep rooted in the waters of all Time,
“Thine ageless beauty born of Brahma’s breath” (The Lotus) (202)

It is Sarojini’s rare reach that she has eulogised the grace of “myriad-petalled” beauty of Lotus as a symbol of spiritual greatness of Gandhi Ji, and also for the continuity and vitality of Indian culture

Sarojini depicts the picture of Lord Buddha represented as seated on Lotus, lost in meditation-

“Lord Buddha, on thy Lotus throne
With praying eyes and hands elate” (To a Buddha Seated on a Lotus) (203)

In another poem ‘Lakshmi the Lotus Born’ all the four stanzas conclude with the line “Hearken, O Lotus Born”-

“Thou who did’st rise like a foam of the ocean
whose beauty surpassth the splendour of morn,
Lo! We invoke thee with eager devotion,
Hearken, O Lotus Born!” (Lakshmi, the Lotus Born) (204)

Sarojini’s poem ‘To my Children’ expresses her deep fascination, for lotus flower when she addresses to her daughter-

“Lotus maiden, you who claim
All the sweetness of your name
Lakshmi, fortune’s queen defend you-
Lotus born like you” (To My Children) (205)

Sarojini’s heart seems to thrill with joy to see the gently swaying of lotus buds in the wind-

“O soft! The lotus buds upon the stream
Are stirring like sweet maidens when they dream” (Leili) (206)

Besides these traditional Indian flowers like sirisha, kadamba, champak, ashoka, kimshuka and lotus etc, Sarojini has also revealed the beauty of those flowers that came to India in recent centuries and have become naturalized in their new home. The sight of lovely Gulmohar Blossom arouses in her heart many associations romantic and suggestive-

“What can rival your lovely hue,
O gorgeous born of the spring?
The glimmering red of a bridal robe,
rich red of a wild bird’s wing?
Or the mystic blaze of the gem that burns
on the brow of a serpent king?” (In Praise of Gulmohar Blossom) (207)

The dazzling beauty of gulmohar is associated with the brightness of the gem that glitters on the brow of King Cobra. It is Sarojini who can present such similes in praise of the lovely hue, colour and brightness of gulmohar. The bright and golden cassia flowers which are said to be which are woodland flowers arouse romantic feelings in Sarojini’s heart-

“Or golden lamps for a fairy shrine
or golden pitchers for fairy wine
perchance you are, O frail and sweet
Bright anklet bells from the spring’s feet” (Golden Cassia) (208)

Spring is presented as an Indian girl wearing anklet bell and the simile like “bright anklet bells” emphasize the brightness of golden cassia.

With remarkable novelty Sarojini describes the beauty of Nasturtiums by the use of mytho-poetic images of immortal heroines of Indian mythology-

“Your leaves interwoven of fragrance and fire
Are Savitri’s sorrow and Sita’s desire,
Draupadi’s longing, Damayanti’s fears,
And sweetest Sakuntala’s magical tears” (Nasturitiums) (209)

Referring the glorious names of Indian Womanhood and comparing them with fragrance of Nasturtiums is really outstanding achievement.

Amazed at the beauty of Lily Flowers, Sarojini exclaims with joy-

"Who lit your clustering lantern,
All in fringed fire to make,
Rosered and amber carnival
In woodland bower and brake,
And lure the purple moth to search
Her rich wings at you blossoming torch" (The Glorisa Lily) (210)

The red Glorisa Lilies look like a lantern in the forest. Describing the alluring splendour of water hyacinth, Sarojini writes-

"Magical, mist purple, pale,
In alluring splendour spread,
Snaring pool and river head,
In your perilous and frail
Far flung subtly painted veil" (The Water Hyacinth) (211)

Lovely roses flood the poet’s senses by their enchanting beauty and ravishing fragrance-

"How they lure wild bees to capture
All the rich mellifluous rapture
Of their magical perfume
And to passing winds surrender
All their frail and dazzling splendour
Rivalling your turban-plume" (The Time of Roses) (212)

Then Sarojini presents the marvellous beauty of roses in the garden and also near tombs and towers-

"Love, it is the time of roses,
In bright fields and garden closes
How they burgeon and unfold!
How they sweep o’er tombs and towers
In voluptuous crimson showers
An untrammelled tides of gold" (The Time of Roses) (212)

Such description of beauty and blossoms of Indian flowers are very rare in post-independence Indo-English poetry rather the flowers are dry to them. Nissim Ezekiel’s poem ‘Island’ describes the dryness of city life-

“Unsuitable for song as well as sense,
the island flowers into slums
and skyscrapers, reflecting
precisely the growth of my mind
I am here to find my way in it.” (Island) (213)

But instead this dryness of flowers and trees, dryness of Indian landscapes, Ezekiel confirms his serene acceptance and love to India and Indian landscapes-

“The Indian landscape sears my eyes
I have become part of it” (Background Casually) (214)
CHAPTER TEN

Indian Festivals and Celebrations
Indian Festivals and Celebrations

India is a land of festivals and celebrations. There is festival for every season and for every reason. These festivals, celebrations, feasts, fairs, fasts, rituals, holy baths and the observance of sacred days are the part and parcel of the great cultural heritage of India, and act as a stimulus to our taking an intelligent interest in our customs and traditions. Such a stimulus is the best means of preserving the spirit of Indianness and its values and thereby making India and Indian people self conscious, united, prosperous and glorious. They also lend zest, variety, colour and grandeur to day to day human life. Not a single Indian festival, however unimportant and simple, is not without a religious basis or principle behind it, therefore, all the festivals and celebrations prevalent in India are as sacred as religion itself and provide a great source of moral and spiritual enrichment.

Marriage in itself is a great feast and festival, ceremony and celebration. In India, marriages are held with great pomp and show, customs and traditions, faiths and concerns. Because here in India, the union of husband and wife is considered a very pure and chaste relation, the marriage of two minds, blessed by God and sanctioned by the society, a whole spectrum ranging from the sensual to the spiritual. This sacred relationship of husband-wife is not to be got simply or purchased but to be striven for through ‘tapasaya’ giving at all levels of experience. From engagement to marriage, many ceremonies are held according to the different castes, religions and faiths. Rich decorations, happy gatherings of relatives and friends, colourful dresses, jewellery, dances, songs, music, lightening and delicious food stuffs, all create joyful atmosphere and provide a splendid recognition to Indian marriages which ultimately leads to a lively celebration making everyone happy and charming. Toru Dutt beautifully depicts the rich feast of Savitri’s marriage which her parents arrange in Madra and its celebration with great pomp and show-

"Great joy in Madra, Blow the shell
The marriage over to declare
And now to forest-shades where dwell
The hermits, wend the wedded pair,
The doors of every house are hung
with gay festoons of leaves and flowers
And blazing banners broad are flung
And trumpets blown from castle towers" (Savitri, part II) (1)

The bride Savitri and the groom Satyavan are the centre of attraction-

“To see the bride, the hermits wives
And daughters gathered to the huts
Women of pure and saintly lives!
And there beneath the betel nuts” (Savitri) (2)

“And gossip add——— good sign abound,
Prosperity shall on her wait” (Savitri) (2)

And when the ceremony is over, the bride goes to the hermitage, the abode of her husband-

“And now with rice and gold, all bless
The bride and bride groom and then go
Happy in other’s happiness
Each to her home, beneath the glow” (Savitri) (3)

The line ‘All bless the bride and bride groom”, throws light on the rites and rituals held at the marriage occasions with the blessings of all family members, relatives, friends and other guests.

Sarojini Naidu beautifies the spirit and occasions of Indian festivals and celebrations along with faith and enthusiasm of Indians while celebrating these festivals.

**DEEPAWALI** - It is one of the greatest festival of India, the festival of light and happiness and celebrated throughout the country with great joy. It falls on the last day of the dark half of Kartik. As a matter of fact, it is five days long festival, but the main celebration takes place on the day of Deepawali. Though this important and popular festival is associated with several legends but primarily it is celebrated in the happy memory of the victory of Ram over Ravana, the victory of virtue over evil. All men and women celebrate Diwali with extreme happiness, fun and zeal. The whole atmosphere is filled with gaiety, mirth, festivity, greeting and gathering. Lots of sweets are prepared and exchanged along with gifts and greetings. Houses are decorated with help of earthen lamps, candles and electric lights. There is an impressive illumination all over the buildings inside and outside the houses and bazaars on this happy occasion of this great festival. Sarojini’s character ‘Saraswati’ in the last stanza of her poem ‘Spinning Song’ chants about the kindling rows of silver lamps and remembers the Festival of Lights-

“Saraswati “My sister sang at evenfall
‘A hymn of ancient rites And kindled row of silver lamps
For the Festival of Lights” (Spinning Song) (4)

‘Kindling row of silver lamps’ and singing the hymns of ancient rites convey the traditional way of celebrating Deepawali with religious touch. This religious touch, this religious background behind each celebration is the main attraction that makes India unique. “To the other nations of the world religion is one among the many occupation of life, there is politics, there are enjoyment of social life, there is all that wealth can buy or power can bring, there is all that senses can enjoy, among all these, there is perhaps a little bit of religion. But here in India, religion is one and the only occupation of life.” (5) Sarojini’s line, ‘singing hymns of ancient rites’ is marked by religious faith of Indian on the auspicious occasion of Deepawali.

Deepawali is also deeply associated with Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth and fortune. It is believed that at Deepawali night, Goddess Lakshmi roams and visits the houses of people. Therefore, people tidy up their homes, establishments and shops and decorate them lavishly to welcome Goddess Lakshmi, in the hope of her bringing more and more wealth and prosperity to them and the hope of more good luck and happier days in their life. Many rites and rituals are performed to worship Goddess Lakshmi to seek her Grace. Sarojini Naidu is typically Indian to present the faith of Indian people through a devotional song (which was composed on the exact day of Lakshmi Puja in 1915) in which Goddess of Fortune is invoked-

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(4) Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Bird of Time’ ed Edmund Gosse page-114
“Prosper our cradles and kindred and cattle,
And cherish our hearth fires and coffers and corn
O watch o’er season of peace and of battle
Hearken, O Lotus born!” (Lakshmi, the Lotus Born) (6)

People are shown worshipping Lakshmi not just an Image, but as the Ultimate Reality. “There is a single Reality but it has many forms and names in relation to its multifarious functions, attributes, aspects and the form of fulfilment sought from it by the seeker. The same ‘Reality’ becomes Brahma in its creative aspect, Vishnu in preservation, Shiva in dissolution, Lakshmi or Sri in benignity, Kali or Durga as a fierce female energy and so on. What Lord through Geeta is the very same thing, ‘I am the ritual, I am the sacrifice, the oblation and the herb. I am the prayer and the melted butter, the fire and its offering’” (7) “Even those who are devotees of other gods if they worship with faith are sacrificing to me alone, though not adhering to the rule.” (6) Sarojini has constituted the spirit of faith, piety and devotion of Indian people while offering their prayers to Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth. The cathartic spirit is always there. This cathartic spirit is the way to real happiness and prosperity in India.

Diwali also marks the advent of new season and sowing of new crop seeds. “The new ‘Vikram Era’ begins on this day and new account books are opened. The famous King Vikramaditya, after whom the era is named, was crowned on this day. People greet each other and distribute sweets. In Bengal, Kali is worshipped with great fervour and devotion on Deepawali. The Jains celebrate Deepawali as the day of final Liberation and Moksha of Lord Mahavira. Similarly, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj attained Salvation on this day. The great Swami Ram Tirtha also entered his final Jal Samadhi on this tithi. At great Jain Shrines like that of Pavapuri in Bihar and Girnar in Gujarat, special Puja festivals are held, sacred scriptures are read and recited and Lord Mahavira is worshipped. Thus Diwali, the great festival of lights symbolises man’s urge to move towards the Light of Truth from darkness of ignorance and unhappiness” (9)

**VASANT PANCHAMI-** This is one of the other great festivals of India in the welcome of spring season. “The Hindu Calendar begins with spring. The month of Chaitra and Vaisakh constitute the proper spring season. Chaitra is called so, because during this month, the moon stands in the constellation of Chaitra on the full moon day. All the other eleven months are named after the constellation in which the moon stands on purnima. During chaitra and vaisakh, the nature is in full bloom and the season is at its best, vasant has rightly designated as the king of seasons. Vasant is also a close associate of Kamdeva.” (10) On Vasant Panchami day, people love to wear saffron (Basanti) garments to welcome Spring or Rituraj, as spring is the season of love and happiness, freshness and revival, thrill and charm. It appears that the heart of everyone is dancing to see and feel the revivifying influence in nature. Intoxicated with life, Sarojini Naidu records the extreme joy and excitement in the words of Radha and her comrades to welcome Vasant-

“Ho let us dance, let us sing

(7) The Bhagwad Geeta, IX/18, Page-245
(8) L.H. Niblet, ‘Diwali’ The Festival of Light, India a Fable, Verse and Story, Quoted from A Book of India, Ed : B.N. Pandey, Page -272
And wear saffron garments to welcome the spring
And pluck the new buds that are blowing” (Song of Radha, the Milk Maid) (11)
Wearing saffron garments on this happy occasion of Vasant Panchami expresses inner happiness and love of Indian people towards nature. There is a romantic charm and grace in the whole atmosphere, mustard glow with delicate golden colour in all the fields, golden poppies bloom everywhere, butterflies flutter their wings on the wind rose hedges. This sprouting and blooming of buds, leaves and flowers along with the feast of rich colours, captivates the heart of everybody. Saffron symbolises love, gaiety, faith and courage. Wearing saffron colour on Vasant shows the traditional faith of Indians. Religious touch is always there. Indeed, Vasant Panchami is the day of ardent passions and excitement to share the harbinger of joys and novelty in nature. With her minute observation, Sarojini presents the joy and excitement of people on coming of Basant-

“O’er the maidens that danced at the feast of spring,
to welcome the new born year.
O Love! Do you know the spring is here?———
The dawn and the dusk grow rife,
With scent and song and tremulous mirth,
The blind rich travail of life
The winds are drunk with the odorous breath
Of henna, sarisha and neem.........” (In Time of Flowers) (12)
The line ‘the maidens danced at the feast of spring’ emphasizes the extreme joy of Indian people at the feast of spring when-

“The old earth into passionate bloom” (In Time of Flowers) (12)
“Young leaves grow green on the banyan twigs
And red the peepal tree
The honey birds pipe to the budding figs,
And honey blooms call the bee” (Spring) (13)
Making an eloquent description about the charm of spring season, Sarojini Naidu is no less than Kalidas who describes spring season as such-

“Their blossom burden weighs the trees
The winds in fragrance move
The lakes are bright with lotuses
The days are soft, the evening clear
And charming everything
That moves and lives and blossoms dear
Is sweeter in the spring

The groves are beautifully bright
For many and many a mile
with jasmine flowers that are as white
As loving woman’s smile” (The Seasons) (14)

In India, festivals and feasts are generally connected with the advent of seasons. Basant Panchami is a call of nature to all people to join in a joyous celebration of life. It is a time for renewal and fresh hopes which nature in itself brings in the form of festivity. Sarojini admires the lovely beauty of the festival of Vasant Panchami in her poem ‘Spinning Song’ when the first Spinner Padmini remembers the Festival of Spring when her sisters used to pluck green leaves to decorate the golden swing-

“Padmini “My sisters plucked green leaves at morn
To deck the garden wings
And donned their shining golden veils
For the festival of spring————————” (Spinning Song) (15)

The children, maidens and women wearing saffron garments and enjoying the swings are a common sight on the day of Vasant Panchami. Hence Sarojini has depicted a realistic picture of the celebration in above lines. Sarojini Naidu also refers this festival of Vasant Panchami in her poem ‘Vasant Panchami’ and presents a group of Hindu girls and married women carrying gifts of lighted lamps and new grown corns as offering to goddess of spring-

“O joyous girls who rise at break of morn
with sandal soil your thresholds to adorn
Ye brides who steamward bear on jewelled feet
Your gifts of silver lamps and new blown wheat,
Your radiant salutations to the spring” (Vasant Panchami) (16)

In real meaning, Basant is the season of love and pleasure, revival and freshness and so the festival Vasant Panchami is observed with gaiety and enthusiasm. People enjoy the feast and love to wear new clothes especially saffron (basanti). The day is considered auspicious and new ventures are started. The festive day begins with rituals, prayers, songs and continues till evening. At many places, games and sports are organized, cultural activities are held to celebrate Vasant Panchami.

NAG PANCHAMI- The festival of Nag Panchami is observed on the fifth of the bright half of Shravan (July- Aug). On this day, nagas, cobras and snakes are worshipped with milk, sweets, flowers, lamps and even sacrifices. “As the ancient Aryans worshipped nature by worshipping certain animals having special characteristics of the elements they desired to worship and as the serpent happened to symbolize the highest form of wisdom and one commonly considered sacred and hence greatly venerated.” (17) So serpents have been held in sacred reverence by the devout Hindus. On the day of Nag Panchami- the festival of serpents, the devotees go in search of serpents to caves and sacred banyan roots which are the chosen temples of the shining ones, in order to

give them offering. "Nag Panchami is a feast in the honour of snakes. It falls on the Marga Sirsa Sukla fifth, celebrated to commemorate the return of Krsna from the bank of the Yamuna after destroying the great serpent Kaliya. This feast is mainly observed in Maharashtra specially by the agriculture cast women. They meet in bands, dancing in circles and later worship earthen snakes images. This feast is probably a survival of the ancient snake worship in the country." (18) With intellectual and aesthetic sense, Sarojini Naidu in her poem ‘The Festival of Serpents’ presents how the devotees bring for serpents the gods milk and maize, wild fogs and golden honey. They kindle fragrant incense to hallow all the air. With devoted hearts they praise the serpent deities that they may bless their offerings and listen to their prayers-

"Guard our helpless lives and guide our patient labours,
And cherish our dear vision like the jewels in your crest,
O spread your hooded watch for the safety of our slumbers,
And soothe the troubled longing that clamour in our breast" (The Festival of Serpents) (19)

The prayer is proceeding out of the depth of the devotee’s heart. The prayer expresses the universal longing. The lines are full of religious faith. Thinking the snake deities as the symbol of Universal God, the Almighty One, the devotee worship the serpents so that they may guard their ‘helpless lives’ and ‘soothe the troubled longing of their hearts’.

The festival of Nag Panchami is supposed to be dedicated to serpent Ananta upon whose coils God Vishnu rested between universe. So the offerings are made to snake images. It is believed that snakes with their ageless wisdom, fertility and serenity will keep the evils away from home. Sarojini Naidu expresses the immense faith of Hindu devotees towards the serpents in their prayer on the day of Nag Panchami-

“Swift are ye as streams and soundless as the dewfall
Subtle as the lightenings and splendid as the sun
Seers are ye and symbols of the ancient silence,
Where life and death and sorrow and ecstasy are one” (The Festival of Serpents) (20)

Sarojini, here, does not pay her tribute of devotion to snakes as mere snakes, on the contrary, the lines express her aspiration towards a higher existence away from the oppressing world to one of the serene wisdom and silence of which snakes are symbols. Serpents in general stand for wisdom, fertility, bounty and the treasures of nether world but Sarojini’s addressing them as ‘seers’ and ‘symbols of ancient silence’ touches to the height of their grandeur. “Snakes and cobras are held in awe and reverence in India. The various Puranas like Agni Purana, Skanda Purana, Narad Purana etc give detail reverence of snake worship and its significance. The Nagas as mythical creatures are semi divine beings. They are said to have sprung from Kadru, the wife of Rishi-Kashyapa and inhabit Patal where they reign in great splendour. They roam about the land wearing lustrous jewels and ornaments. The thousand hooded Shesh Nag or Anant is the most powerful of them and revered even by the gods. He bears the whole earth like a chaplet on his crown. When he

nods or yawn, the earth with its oceans and mountains begin to tremble” (21) That is why Sarojini
calls them-
“Swift are ye as streams
Subtle as the lightening
Splendid as the sun” (The Festival of Serpents) (22)

But the line when Sarojini address them as the ‘symbol of the ancient silence’ `where life
and death and sorrow and ecstasy are one’ is unique one as it points out the spiritual philosophy of
India. “Be free and glorious by going beyond. No more is there life, therefore no more is there
death. It is bliss unspeakable, indestructible beyond everything” (23) When the ‘life and death and
sorrow and ecstasy’ are one, that is the position of Perfection- Sat Chit Ananda, the central teaching
of Indian philosophy. Through the prayer devoted to snakes on Nag Panchami Day, Sarojini has
laid before us the mystic philosophy of spirituality. Sarojini has referred the festival of Nag Panchami
in one another poem ‘Spinning Song’ when the second spinner Mayura remember the festival of
serpents when she along with her sisters used to knead the saffron cakes and gather honey from
the hives and serve as offering to snakes-
“Mayura “My sisters sat beside the hearth
Kneading the saffron cakes
They gathered honey from the hives
For the festival of snakes” (Spinning Song) (24)

**NAREIL PURNIMA-** It is also called Nirjala Purnima. “On the full moon day of Shravan is celebrated
Nirjala Purnima to appease the fury sea God Varuna. It also marks the end of monsoon and is
primarily observed by sailors, fishermen and others living in the coastal areas of sea. They offer
coconut to the sea on this occasion. If the sea happens to be far away, people got to some nearby
tank, pool, river or some other source of water and offer the coconut.” (25) Sarojini’s poem ‘The
Festival of the Sea’ deals with Nirjala Purnima or Coconut Day. It marks the identity of the sea folk
with the sea, when the people living on sea coast, particularly in Western India pay homage to the
Sea God by offering the auspicious coconut to the sea and pray.

Sarojini Naidu sets forth her conviction that all people who depend upon the sea for their
livelihood- fishermen, sailors, merchants and the women of the sea faring people, sing songs in the
form of prayers. The fishermen, living in huts of palm leaves are interested in sea because of the
living harvest of fish. They cannot carry out their vocation unless they and their boats are safe from
the storm of the sea. So they ask for a successful fishing season which will provide them food and
money and also desire the health and children-
“Grant to us corn and coin
Vigour of Limb and Loin

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(21) A.L.Basham, ‘The Wonder that was India’ (Snake Spirit-nagas), page- 278.
Peace to our palm huts and Sons to our bride” (The Festival of Sea) (26)

Hence, the song of the fishermen expresses their love for professional as well as domestic prosperity. Along with this, it also deals with the complete identification of the fishermen with the sea to whom they address as Bountiful Mother and invoke her blessings for:
"raft and oar, rudder and sail" (The Festival of Sea) (26)

Then the sailors, being sea lovers, appreciate the marvellous beauty of the sea. The sea is their ‘mistriss’ and they are her ‘lovers’ who long for her embrace. The sailors greet her as the ‘radiant and magical’ mistress and say-

“Thou art our meadows of bliss and our cavern
Of dreams, thou our blossoming garden of foam
The field of our battle, our temples and tavern
Our bier and our bridebed, our heaven and home” (The Festival of Sea) (27)

The song of sailors brings out their extreme love as well as passion for the sea. In form of thanks giving song, the sailors are offering their prayers and worshipping Sea Goddess as Universal God. Such type of prayers filled with humility and the feel of surrender, not only purifies the heart and soul, but also fortifies self confidence and generates new energy to face the daily ordeals of life. In Sarojini’s poem ‘The Festival of Sea’, the merchants are shown calling the sea as their ‘Wondrous Queen’ and offering their bright gifts and imploring her protection. Last of all, the women of the sea faring folk worship the sea for the reason of their own. The Sea is the Giver of joy and grief and hope for them- there is joy for the women on the safe return of their men, there is grief when the men are drowned and as long as the men are on the sea, there is always a hope for their safe return. The women therefore, pay their tribute and pray to Sea Goddess and God of Ocean, Varuna-

“We worship thee with chaplet of devotion,
Cherish our dear desire,
And guard the lives we yield thee, sacred ocean
Lover and Son and Sire” (The Festival of Sea) (28)

Sarojini records and admires the highly devoted nature of Indian women for their men as well as the religious spirit behind their prayers. It is the special feature of Indian people’s life that whether they are praying or worshipping, any god or goddess, the reason is one and the same that is to seek the grace and mercy of Universal God, “That which exists in one, sages call it by various names, the whole history of India you read in these few words. The whole history has been a repetition in massive language with tremendous power of that one central doctrine. It was repeated in the land till it has entered into the blood of the nation, till it began to tinge with every drop of blood that flowed in its veins, till it became one with life, past and parcel of the material of which it was composed and thus the land was transmuted into the most wonderful land of toleration, giving the right to welcome the various religions as well as all the sects into the old Mother Country” (29)

Same spirit of faith that God is one, the names are different can see when Sarojini Naidunpresents

before us the women of sea faring folk paying their tribute and prayer to Goddess of Sea and addressing them as Lakshmi, Chundee, Saraswati, the Goddess of Hindu Mythology—
“from folly and from fear our hearts deliver
set from all sorrow free
of joy and grief and hope, O triune giver
Lakshmi, Chundee, Saraswati” (The Festival of Serpents) (30)

RAKSHA BANDHAN— It is one of the most popular and colourful festival of Hindus especially celebrated in North India. The festival falls on Shravan Purnima, in July-August, when sisters as a token of their affection for the faith in their brothers put coloured and ornamental tassels or thread called ‘Rakhi’. Sarojini expresses this sacred bond of love—
“Beloved I offer to you,
In tender allegiance anew
A bracelet of floss, Let me twist
And violet, to girdle your wrist” (Raksha Bandhan) (31)

Although ‘Rakhi’ is a tender bracelet of floss, yet it is a powerful means to unite the two loving souls of brother and sister with unbreakable and steadfast bond of love. Sisters put tilak on the forehead of their brothers before putting coloured bracelet round their wrists. “While applying of Tilak (vermilion) on brother’s forehead by the sister remind him of the true identity and image of his inner self as a soul in point of light form in the forehead between eyebrows the piece of coloured thread round his wrist is supposed to signify his pledge for purity in life and his promise of fellow feeling and brotherhood in society” (32) In fact, the word ‘Raksha’ means protection and ‘Bandhan’ means tie or bond so Raksha Bandhan is a bond of protection. On this auspicious day of Raksha Bandhan, girls and women tie an amulet like thread round the right hand wrists of their brothers as a promise of protection against evil during the ensuring years. The brothers give their sisters gifts of money, clothes and other variable things in return. Sisters feed their brothers with sweets, dry fruits and other delicacies on this occasion. Priests and Brahmans also tie this kind of coloured cotton or silk twisted thread ‘Rakhi’ round the wrist of the right hands of their patrons and receive gifts. They recite ‘mantras’ while doing so to charge the thread with the power of protection from every possible evils.

Our history is replete with incidents when Rakhi in its most colourful and decorated garb has served as a harbinger of peace, harmony, fraternity and friendship. During several foreign invasions starting from Greeks to Mughals, Hindu women as a matter of expediency utilized ‘Rakhi’ to communicate sisterly love and relations even to the invaders sometimes in anticipation of no harm or damage to self or to the kingdom. The history tells us that Greek hero Alexander during his invasion of India had received a ‘Rakhi’ and ‘Request’ from King Puru’s wife to save her husband’s life in the battlefield. Mughal emperors like Humayun and Akbar also had extended their hands of help and protection to Hindu queens and ladies in danger as a mark of rare respect to Rakhi.

Sarojini Naidu idealizes the sacred festival- Raksha Bandhan- a symbol of pure feelings, selfless love and a sense of caring and sharing among brothers and sisters-

“Accept this bright gage from my hand
Let your heart its sweet speech understand
The ancient high symbol and end
In wroght on each gold-threaded strand
The fealty of friend unto friend” (Raksha Bandhan) (33)

The ‘sweet speech’ of this tender thread of Rakhi can be very well understood by the hearts of brother and even friend to friend, steeped in the words of purity, virtuosity and righteousness in thoughts and actions. Sarojini’s use of ‘The Ancient high symbol’ for Rakhi shows its historical importance. “The Rakhi festival is also known as ‘Vistodak’ (Vice Demolishing) and ‘Punya Pradayak’ (Merit giving Parv) in scriptural and spiritual parlance. The historical origin of Raksha Bandhan is normally traced back to Vedic period when Brahmans used to tie ‘mauli’ (red saffron thread) round the wrists rudimentary form of mauli, made sacred by Brahminical chanting of hymns used to be taken as a token of divine protection” (34) Even today this sacred and religious thread of Rakhi serves as a cultural form of establishing an emotional bond (Bandhan) of brotherly love and protection (Raksha) for a sister. In South India, it is celebrated as Avani Avittam. In Bombay, coconuts are offered to ‘Sea God- Varuna’, on this occasion. Reciting the Vedas, religious mantras and remembering the Rishis and Gurus whom we are indebted to for their guidance and spiritual knowledge are other highlights of this festival. Indeed, the silken and delicate thread of Rakhi added with social and religious faith becomes a unique symbol of deep love of sisters for their brothers and of the pledge of brothers to protect their sisters. According to Sarojini the valuable thread of Rakhi is-

“A garland how frail of design
our spirits to clasp and entwine
In devotion unstained and unbroken
How slender a circle and sign
of secret deep pledges unspoken” (Raksha Bandhan) (35)

Sarojini wants to convince that the thread of Rakhi may be frail and weak but it binds two pure spirits of brother and sister in unstained and unbroken devotion. The delicate tassels of Rakhi have as powerful effect as magical circles and signs believed to have.

If Toru Dutt has described the festivity of Indian marriage, Sarojini has depicted the celebrations of Indian festivals. The main attraction lies in the fact that Sarojini has captured the religious devotion of Indian people while celebrating these festivals because Religion is the Soul of India. How beautifully she expresses the religious sentiments of people in worshipping Goddess Lakshmi on ‘Lakshmi Puja Day’, Hindu girls and married women carrying gifts and lighted lamps and new born corns as offering to Goddess of Spring on Vasant Panchami Day, Hindu women offering their prayers to serpents on Nag Panchami Day and then women of sea faring folk paying their tribute and prayers to Goddess of Sea on Nirjala Purnima Day. It is noteworthy that while describing the festivity, Toru Dutt or Sarojini Naidu, both do not forget to mention the religious feelings and faith of Indians which is the basic characteristic of Indian Culture.

(34) R.N.Saletore, ‘Encyclopadie of Indian Culture’, page- 1174.
CHAPTER 11
The poetry of both Pre and Post Independence Indo-English poets is not only Indian in spirit, thought and vision, but also Indian in poetic craft. To create Indian atmosphere, the poets have successfully brought us all to a sublime world of Indian images, Indian symbols, Indian words and phrases, Indian myths and legends.

Toru Dutt’s ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ needs no introduction to clarify whether it is Indian or not. The title itself is very Indian by name as well as by thought where as Indian philosophy dominates the whole work from the beginning to the end in portraying the immortal characters- ‘Savitri’, ‘Lakshman’, ‘Dhruva’, ‘Buttoo’, ‘Sindhu’, ‘Prahla’ and ‘Sita’. With rare gift of lyrical wealth, remarkable faculty of storytelling, distinctive narrative skill, and excellent use of Indian words and phrases, Toru Dutt beautifully explores the Vedantic philosophy of human life and its aim through the mouth of Savitri-

“I know that in this transient world
All is delusion – nothing true
I know its shows are mists unfurled
   to please and vanish. To renew
its bubble joys, be magic bound
   In Maya’s network frail and fair,
is not my aim!” (1) (Savitri)

Toru Dutt creates the total Indian atmosphere with the right choice of words and phrases-

“The sirisha famed in sanscrit song
which rural maidens love to wear
The peepal gaint-like and strong
The Bramble with its matted hair” (Buttoo) (2)

Toru Dutt’s frequent use of Indian words add a unique touch of Indianness in the description-

“Deep in the forest shades there dwelt
   A muni and his wife” (Sindhu) (3)
“A belt of Bella trees hemmed round” (Sindhu) (3)
“The Champa, bok and south-sea pine” (Buttoo) (4)
“The bamboo boughts that sway and swing
‘Neath bulbuls as the south wind blows” (Buttoo) (5)
“Ho, Sunkha pedlar! pass not by,
   But step thou in, and share the food” (Jogadhya Uma) (6)

“Its bubbles joys, be magic bound
   In Maya’s network frail and fair
Is not my aim” (Savitri) (7)

All Tagore’s lyrics especially of ‘Geetanjali’, is a rich treasure house of fresh, original and meaningful images which have a typical Indian flavour. Through these highly rich, colourful and picturesque images, he recaptures the theme and spirit of Indian philosophy and vividly creates an old world of atmosphere especially of India’s classical epoch. Image means an expression evocative of an object of sensuous appeal and serves the medium to illustrate and illuminate the thought. In the very beginning of Geetanjali, Tagore uses the image of ‘vessel’ to explore the theory of rebirth and immortality of soul- “Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure. This frail vessel thou emptiest again and again and fillest it ever with fresh life.” (Geetanjali/01) (8) The uses of archaism like ‘thee’ and ‘thou’ imparts antique flavour and convey the sense of Tagore’s intense yearning for reunion with God.

Geetanjali is a prayer to God, an offering of the finite to the Infinite. It is the soul’s journey to Eternity, the realization of God through self-purification, love, constant prayer, devotion, dedication and surrender to God through service to humanity. The conception of God has been presented in many forms- God as Father, God as Mother, God as Child, God as Lover, God as Master, God as Friend God as Boat Man and God as King and to explore the great mystic spiritual philosophy of God realization Tagore has woven the texture of Indian images mostly drawn from nature as birds, flowers, sky, stars, sun, moon, sea, river, stream, light, darkness, Indian seasons, clouds and rain, the boatman and the traveller. These images and symbols are firmly rooted in the Indian philosophy and reveal a highly personal quest for the Divine.

“In one salutation to thee, my God, Let all my senses spread out and touch this world at thy feet. Like a rain cloud of July hung low with its burden of washed showers; Let all my mind bend down at thy door in one salutation to thee.” (Geetanjali/ XIII) (9)

In these above lines Tagore has used nature imagery to express Soul’s yearning for complete identification with the Supreme. Tagore says that the human body is the temple of soul and human soul is the temple of God. And the human soul is not only God’s temple; it is also Krishna’s flute-

“At the immortal touch of thy hands, my heart loses its limits in joy and gives birth to utterance ineffable” (10)

There is superb example of ‘sword image’ in lyrics LII and LIII of Geetanjali- “Thy sword is with me to cut as under my bonds and there shall be no fear left for me in the world. But more beautiful to me thy sword with its curve of lighting like out spread wings of the divine words of Vishnu perfectly poised in the angry red light of the sunset.” (11) The image of sword expresses the spiritual strength. Very similar thoughts we find in Bhagwad Geeta when Lord Krishna says to Arjuna-

“With the sword of wisdom of the self clearing asunder this ignorance born doubt dwelling in thy heart, be established in yoga, stand up, O Bharata.” (The Bhagwad Geeta IV/42) (12)

Tagore uses the sky image to symbolize the immensity and eternity of Almighty God-

“Thou art the sky and thou art the nest as well” (13)

According to Tagore, the clouds symbolise God’s mercy-

“Let the clouds of grace bend below from above like the tearful look of the mother on the day of the father’s wrath.” (14)

Tagore’s images are highly symbolical and suggestive. Simplicity and sublimity run together to communicate spiritual feelings. Indian words like ‘flute’, ‘lotus’, ‘cow herd boy’, ‘the king’, ‘the chariot’, ‘the palace’, ‘earthen lamp’, ‘vina’, ‘temple’, ‘flower’, ‘fragrance’ etc, are found in abundance. Indian seasons, orchards and landscapes, birds and animals and the great elemental powers like the sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, the cloud, the water, the sea etc occur again and again to create unique Indian flavour and taste. The sublimity of thoughts, the intensity of the rich feelings, sincerity of personal experience and of Indian imagery serve to vivify Tagore’s musical lyrics and its ‘mantric quality’ which is unrivalled in itself.

Sri Aurobindo’s ‘Savitri’ is a spiritual epic of a very high order to express Indianess in its poetic craft. It is both a legend and a symbol, concerned with the life and penance of King Aswapathy who is childless, the birth of Savitri, Savitri’s marriage with Satyavan, Satyavan’s death and Savitri’s victory over death. The original story of Savitri and Satyavan occurs in the Mahabharata as well as the Puranas. With the great use of mystical symbols, Sri Aurobindo creates a new Vedic and Upanishad age of poetry. Savitri symbolises the Universal Mother, the supreme creative splendour of the Divine-

“Her spirit opened to the spirit in all
Her nature felt all nature as its own

Her strength was founded on the cosmic mights
The Universal Mother’s love was Hers” (Savitri, Book I Canto 1) (15)

Savitri is the issue of Aswapathy’s Sadhna. Aswapathy, the name of the father of Savitri, means the Lord of Life, the symbol of life energy or vital power. In his quest for eternity, he soars higher and higher till his soul achieves release from earlier bonds and is in an illumined condition. He prays to Divine Mother-

“Let a great word be spoken from the heights
And are great act unlock the doors of fate” (16)

The Divine Mother grants his prayers-

“A seed shall be sown in Death’s tremendous hour
A branch of heaven transplant to human soul” (17)

Satyavan is the symbol of Truth and cannot die. Savitri the symbol of Beauty, Love and Power (the power of devotion and chastity) allied to Truth (Satyavan) can dare anything, achieve anything. Savitri’s struggle with Yama, the Lord of Death symbolises victory of love and truth over death and ignorance. ‘The Dawn’ with which Book I Canto 1 of the epic ‘Savitri’ begins, is symbolic of the physical light as well as of the light of creation and the light of wisdom. And similarly, night is the symbol of darkness of chaos as well as of ignorance.

“It was the hour before the God’s awake

(11) Ravindra Nath Tagore, ‘Geetanjali/LII and LIII’
(15) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I Canto 1, page- 08.
Across the path of the divine event
The huge foreboding mind of night, alone
In her unlit temple of eternity” (Savitri, Book I Canto 1) (18)
The epic begins with the symbol of dawn- the beginning of creation and ends with the spiritual
message of the aim of Savitri’s life-
“To bring God down to the world on earth we came
To change the earthly life to life divine” (Savitri, Book II Canto 1) (19)
So Sri Aurobindo’s poetry is par excellence to fuse the legendary story of Savitri and Satyavan with
symbolical representation revealing the mystic philosophy of India in dignified and refined manner.
What makes Sarojini Naidu’s poetry so charming, so fresh, so original and so lively is its lyrical
wealth mingled with Indian ethos. Lyricism simply means two things- expression of individual or
personal emotions and song like quality. Sarojini’s poetry possesses both the qualities in abundance.
There is spontaneous overflow of her own emotions steeped in Indian spirit and they roll onward in
a lyrical manner. Sincerity of feeling and vividness of imagery combine with the moving music of
her verses. This fusion of feeling imagery and music in expressing Indian thoughts and philosophy
makes her the immortal poet of India that is why she is aptly known as ‘Bharat Kokila’, ‘Nightingale
of India’, ‘Bulbule Hind’ etc. With the help of this lyrical wealth, this bird like quality, she beautifully
sings to interpret the heart of India and create a genuine Indian atmosphere throughout her work.
She has attempted chiefly short lyrics each of them dealing with single emotion. They deal with
various subjects like Indian concept of love, common life of Indian people, beauty of Indian scenes
and sights, philosophy of life, patriotic sentiments of Indians etc. A lyric is generally characterised
by simplicity, brevity, spontaneity, emotional intensity, compactness of thought and vision, music
and melody and it is essentially these qualities which her poetry has. With simplicity and directness,
Sarojini has conveyed the philosophy of human life in her poem ‘Indian Weavers’. It is the symbolic
presentation of life’s journey from birth to death. Then her poem ‘Song of Radha, the Milk Maid’ is
true and sincere poetic piece to create India’s deepest spiritual experience so simply and directly-
“But my heart was so full of your beauty Beloved,
They laughed as I cried without knowing
Govinda! Govinda!
Govinda! Govinda!” (Song of Radha, the Milk Maid) (20)
The utterance of ‘Govinda! Govinda!’ does not only produce a kind of mantic effect but also
presents the mystic vision of transcendental experience and deep consciousness of the Supreme
Soul.
Lyric after lyric seems to arise out of Sarojini’s heart and may be meant to go straight to the
heart of readers. With intensity of emotions, spontaneity and naturalness, Sarojini beautifully
intensifies the Indian flavour of folk songs-
“Why O why was I tempted to tarry

(18) Sri Aurobindo, ‘Savitri’ Book I Canto 1, page- 01.
Almost every lyric of Sarojini Naidu is marked with compactness of thought, vision and single emotion. The lyrics written in a manner of Indian folk songs such as ‘Palanquin Bearers’, ‘Indian Weavers’, ‘Wandering Singers’, ‘Village Song’, ‘Indian Dancers’ are highly appealing because of their musical effect as well as of the variegated life and living of Indian people. Sarojini turns herself totally mystic and thoughtful in the songs ‘Life’, ‘The Soul’s Prayer’, ‘Death and Life’, ‘To a Buddha Seated On a Lotus’, ‘A Challenge to Fate’, ‘Transience’, ‘In Salutation to the Eternal Peace’ etc spreading the optimistic message to live and enjoy life despite of all sorrows and sufferings. ‘The Flute Player of Brindavan’ is fully steeped into the Indian philosophy of bhakti marg and conveys a feeling of ecstasy in love and devotion. The musical flow of lines seems to match the majestic melody produced by Krishna’s flute-

“No fear of time unconquered space
Or light untravelied route Impede my heart that pants to drain
The nectar of thy flute” (The Flute Player of Brindavan) (22)

Sarojini is a class by herself in composing highly musical poetry and set them to some of Indian tunes as in ‘To a Buddha seated on a Lotus’, ‘Cradle Song’, ‘Wandering Singers’, ‘In Praise of Henna’, ‘Street Cries’ etc. To produce the wonderful richness and melody in her verses she has used different metrical measures and stylistic devices like that of refrain, repetition, triplicity, comparison and contrast. Besides the lyrical wealth, Sarojini Naidu seems to be accomplished in her handling of diction and verification. She skilfully uses Indian images, Indian symbols, Indian phrases, and Indian words for the desired effects of Indian life. Her poem ‘Leili’, ‘Past and Future’, ‘The Snake Charmer’, ‘In Praise of Gulmohar Blossom’, ‘Golden Cassia’, ‘Coromandel Fishers’, ‘Indian Love Song’, ‘Cradle Song’, ‘Palanquin Bearers’ etc are the catalogue of Indian images put together-

“A caste mark upon the azure brows of heaven
The golden moon burns sacred solemn bright” (Leili) (23)

To compare the ‘caste mark’ with moon is highly original, fresh and a brilliant example of Indian imagery steeped in Indian ethos.

“The new hath come and now the old retires
And so the past becomes a mountain cell,
where love, apart, old hermit memories dwell
In consecrated calm” (Past and Future) (24)

Only an Indian poet could compare a memory to a hermit and the past to a mountain cell where the hermit lives. How beautifully Sarojini expresses her deep love for India using a sublime image-

(22) Sarojini Naidu, ‘The Broken Wing’, page- 162.
“And like a bride high mated with the spheres
Beget new glories from thy ageless womb.” (India) (25)

Sarojini shows her mythmaking skill in ‘Lotus’, ‘Summer Woods’ and ‘The Flute Player of Brindavan’.

“Companions of the lustrous dawn, gay comrades of the night,
Like Krishna and like Radhika encompassed with delight” (Summer Woods) (26)

“To Indra’s golden flowering groves,
where streams immortal flow” (The Flute Player of Brindavan) (27)

“Thine ageless beauty born of Brahma’s breath” (Lotus) (28)

Sarojini’s poem ‘Lotus’ is very valuable to symbolize the sacredness and sublimity of Gandhi Ji, as well as the continuity and vitality of Indian culture, ‘Indian Weavers’ as symbols of the pattern grave and gay woven by life, ‘Corn Grinders’ symbolise the philosophy of universal pathos, and in ‘Bangle Sellers’, different coloured bangles symbolize the different stages of Indian womanhood etc. Her poems abound in significant Indian phrases- ‘the koel haunted river isle’ in ‘Village Song’, ‘the mystic silence’ in ‘The Bird of Time’, ‘silver breast moon, beam of desire’ in ‘Snake Charmer’, ‘sacred and sublime’, ‘faith that sinks and feet that tire’, ‘the heaven ward hunger of our soul’ in ‘To a Buddha seated on a Lotus’ etc. Sarojini’s brilliant use of Indian words as ‘Lira! Liree! Lira! Liree!’, ‘Ram re Ram’, ‘Kokila’, ‘Shrawan’, ‘papeeha’, ‘Govinda! Govinda!’ etc add a rare Indian touch to her poetry.

Nissim Ezekiel, one of the most versatile poets, the law giver of Modern Indo-English poetry has shown that craftsmanship is as important as the subject matter. Ezekiel’s poetry works as a link between pre and post Independence poetry. He avoids sentimentality and looseness of structure. His poetry is poetry of human expressions of Indian people and their life and living. He expresses the Indian philosophy of five basic elements of universe and the knowledge of spiritualism in very simple, conversational directness and ease-

“God grant me privacy
God grant me certainty
In kinship with the sky
Air, earth, fire, sea-
And the fresh inward eye” (The Morning Prayer) (29)

The ethical note of ‘Atithi Devo Bhav’-

“You are going
But you will visit again
Anytime, anyday” (The Patriot) (30)

“If you are coming again this side by chance
Visit please my humble residence also” (The Professor) (31)

(30) Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ page-238.
(31) Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Hymns in Darkness’ page-239.
He uses right words at the right moment suggesting his purpose-
“My mother only said
Thank God the scorpion picked on me
And spared my children” (Night of the Scorpion) (32)

The free verse lines beautifully show the warmth of human relationship- the mother’s affection for her children.

Ezekiel’s poetic approach is creative and constructive, intellectual and urban, rational and balanced showing his deep concern for Indian environment-
“I cannot leave the island
I was born here and belong”
“Let me find my song, where I belong”

Ezekiel’s quest essentially concerns how to live happily, calmly, ethically as an integrated human being. Sometimes Ezekiel uses symbols to create Indian atmosphere as in ‘Enterprises’ the journey Symbolises the journey of life, and also stands for the voyage into one’s inner self, the voyage of self experience.

“Home is where we have to gather grace” (Enterprises) (33)

Here ‘Home’ symbolises the place where one lives as also one’s ‘inner self’. Ezekiel’s poem ‘Night of Scorpion’ is the symbolical presentation of the forces of darkness and light. Darkness gives way to evil in the way of scorpion. The accurate placing of words like ‘candles and lanterns’, neighbours/insects and ‘the rain ’evokes the symbol of light and darkness. But the force of life gains an upper hand over the evil and life is restored once again.

“After twenty hours
It lost its sting” (Night of Scorpion) (34)

Ezekiel artistically recreates Indian milieu by using vernacular words and imagery drawn from the common scenes and sights of India to evoke a sense of Indianness and at the same time to bring the situation or incident alive to the readers which they can participate in.

“I am standing for peace and non-violence
Why world is fighting, fighting.”
“One day Ram Rajya is surely coming” (Patriot) (35)

In some of his poems, Ezekiel has tried to create typical Indian flavour by the use of common Indian words as ‘Guru’, ‘Ashram’, ‘Chapati’, ‘Puri’, ‘Mantra’ etc. With the right choice of words, images and symbols he has vividly depicted the multitudinous panorama of Indian life in ‘A Morning Walk’, ‘The Truth about the Flood’, ‘Entertainment’, ‘Guru’, and ‘Ganga’ etc. His poetry remains unique to express a modern Indian sensibility in a modern way.

(34) Nissim Ezekiel, ‘The Exact Name’, page- 130.
A.K.Ramanujan’s poetry is an expression of Indian sensibility nourished by Western environment, a fusion of East and West, traditional and modern. With the great use of simplicity, felicity of expression, epigrammatic terseness, ironic and imagistic mode, A.K.Ramanujan reveals his typical Indian experience of his search for ‘self’, his family concerns, his philosophic vision of life, use of Indian myths and legends and his invocation to Indianness in all its complexity.

“See Karma
In the fall of a tubercular sparrow” (Entries for a Catalogue Fears) (36)

“Actually see the one in many” (Entries for a Catalogue Fears) (37)

The lines present the Indian belief of oneness of life; Ramanujan uses apt and meaningful words which help him to achieve terseness and condensation. His poem ‘Extended Family’ is a beautiful example of the ever-continuity of life with individual mere vessels holding the flow temporarily-

“The naked Chicago bulb
A cousin of the Vedic Sun” (Extended Family) (37)

What a contrast with fresh Indian image, Indian phrase and Indian symbol- ‘Vedic Sun’ is! Here is a fine and subtle blending of past and present to deal with the subject of family relation, memory and heritage. With economy of words and inanimate motives of world, Ramanujan says that there is no Vedic Sun in Chicago; only a naked bulb is available which can be taken to be a cousin of the mythical Sun. Ramanujan remains fully aware of the Indian culture and historical past. There is frequent reference of Indian myths, rituals and legends in his poetry. With free flow of rhythm he uses the myth of Lord Vishnu as the embodiment of primeval water in its very structure-

“Not only prophets
walk on waters——” (The Striders) (38)

In the poem ‘A Hindu to His Body’, he highlights the essential oneness of life and hints the idea of the spirit leaving the poet’s body and moving to the trees-

“You brought me. Do not leave me behind” (A Hindu to His Body) (39)

Ramanujan treats the subject with detachment, concreteness of experience, precision but this modern poetic manner is deeply rooted in his Indian past and the traditional Indian sensibility. Kamala Das remains essentially modern Indo-English surcharged and guided by her emotions, impulse and instinct. Words come to her from her heart, exposing her own feelings, frustration and failure in love. Lyricism, naturalness, simplicity and lucidity are the hall marks of her poetry. The repetitive application of words, phrases and expressions help her to suit the purpose and makes her truly musical-

“Oh God
Blessed be your fair name, blessed be the religion” (Inheritance) (40)

(36) A.K.Ramanujan, ‘Entries for a Catalogue Fears’ ‘The Striders’
With clarity of emotions and expressions, she opens her heart to the readers. Sometimes she seems to be a philosopher to preach the universality of womanhood—

“we are all alike, we women” (Composition) (41)

Her application of words and language is excellent one in accordance with her outlet of emotions as well as the purpose—

“I want to be simple, I want to be loved” (The Suicide) (42)

“I am sinner, I am saint” (An Introduction)(43)

This only line is quite enough to speak mystic universal message that life is in our own hands, we ourselves are responsible to make our fate. The use of imagery of the four basic elements the fire, the earth, the water and the air are very common in Kamala Das’s poetry. But the image of ‘sea’ is the most powerful and appealing in her poetry. The mythical symbols of Radha and Krishna also have a special reference in Kamala Das’s poetry. Sometimes she becomes Radha seeking the divine love of Krishna—

“Ghanshyam
You have like a Koel built your nest
In the arbour of my heart” (Ghanshyam) (44)

Jayant Mahapatra, the great gifted poetic artist remains unique in demonstrating India’s cultural and religious past running into present, rootless and emptiness modern existence. With variegated Indian myths, images and symbols, words and phrases, Mahapatra vividly portrays the Orissa landscapes, religion and psyche and the intricacies of human relationship. The poems ‘Dawn at Puri’, ‘Indian Summer poem’, ‘A Missing Person’, ‘Events’, ‘Moon Moments’ etc are imagistic in real sense.

In ‘Indian Summer Poem’, Mahapatra reveals true Indian sensibility through Indian images and symbols- auditory as well as visual—

“Over the roughing of the sombre wind
Priests chant louder than ever
The mouth of India opens” (Indian Summer Poem) (45)

The ‘priests chant louder than ever’ seem to be Indian opening his mouth and articulate the spiritual spirit of India, to create the impression of holiness and ‘the mouth of India opens’ can be a symbol to represent the mouth of Lord Krishna when he opened to reveal his universal form to Arjuna in Mahabharata. In Mahapatra’s poem ‘Grass’, there is a symbolical interpretation of omnipresence of God when the poet looks below at the grass which seems to be chanting a hymn in the glory of omnipresent God—

“I watch a little hymn
Turning the ground beneath my feet,

A tolerant soil making its own way in the light of the sun” (Grass) (46)

In ‘Taste for Tomorrow’ metaphor has been aptly used ‘a huge holy flower swaying in the wind of great reason’ to stress the blind ritualistic faith.

In ‘Myth’, Mahapatra expresses an encounter between ancient religious rituals and modern sensibility. Mahapatra’s ‘Relationship’ is a masterpiece of art to show his unbreakable relationship with rich religion, culture, rituals, traditions and myths of Orissa and Konark which ends with the message that deliverance lies in the acceptance of the myth-

“We are delivered by the myth” (Relationship) (47)

Indian myths, landscapes, seasons, sky, stone, flame, trees, walls, rain, distance, crows etc provide evocation images and symbols to Mahapatra’s poetry. His poems have a compact and close knit structure. His poetry is a realistic depiction tinged with satire of contemporary India, the contemporary socio-political concerns, the gloomy vision marked by loss, dejection, grief, alienation and suffering. He ironically and sarcastically exposes the despair, angst and sheer hopelessness of common people- women, beggars, unemployed youth and feels dejected and says-

“What is wrong with my country”

“It failed to correspond exactly with the Promised Land” (Old Violin of Legends) (48)

‘Promised Land’ symbolizes ‘Ram Rajya’- a land of peace and prosperity. But Jayant Mahapatra is optimistic. In this sad state of existence, he presents poetry of humility, hope and wish for the betterment of his beloved India-

“I want the flames to warm the empty heart of love” (Another Ruined Country) (49)

So feeling and form blend together to express what Mahapatra wants to say. His poetry is poetry of Indian sensibility polished by images and symbols, epigrammatic expression, metaphysical conceits and modern flavour.

K.N.Daruwalla remains the most gifted poetic artist to express India and Indianness in a very modern way to capture the attention of modern intellectual. His poetry has depth of feelings, language economy, originality of sensibility, rhythmic flow of words, subtle use of irony and satire, and the use of functional images, landscape painting, refinement of diction, spontaneity, naturalness and simplicity.

“Man is so pliant, adaptable, bury him
and he is stead fast as the earth” (Ruminations) (50)

It is a philosophical approach in modern poetic manner to reveal the adaptable nature of a human being. With naturalness and simplicity he expresses his thematic concern-

“In every season, comes a crossing of rivers” (Crossing of Rivers) (51)

The song like quality can be seen in the concluding lines of ‘Migrations’ in ‘Landscapes’-

“Our villagers walking out with their head loads, an ant-line following

The scent of a moist roof” (Migrations) (52)
There is precision and compactness in Daruwalla’s poetry packed with meaning-
“Players change but not the crime”
“On the abacus of time
History rearrange beads” (On Brutus and Borges) (53)
There is cluster of images and symbols to create Indianness as well as to suggest the thought hidden in words-
“I quicken into flower
At the memory of your touch” (The Round of Season) (54)
It is to suggest the blossoming of ‘Ashoka’ at the touch of beloved feet in Vasanta Season (Spring) but here only the memory of beloved is enough to break into bloom. There is colourful imagery when ‘Dawn’ comes as-
“Dawn will come as it always has
Escorted with pearls” (Lorca) (55)
In Vignette I, ‘The Ganga flows swollen with hymns’ and in Vignette II, the river is silent-
“Only the river does not speak here
She is thought itself
A soundless interior monologue” (Vignette II) (56)
The concluding lines of the poem ‘The King Speaks to the Scribe’ evoke the image from Hindu mythology-
“Mind you, Kartikeya, between me and them is blood
Your words will have to reach across to them
Like a tide of black oxen crossing a ford” (The King speaks to the Scribe) (57)
The ‘tide of black oxen’ brings to mind the image of Yama (Lord of Death) riding a black bison.

As a satirist, Daruwalla exposes various evils gripping the society and the nation especially the politics and political leaders. With touches of irony and sarcasm, he exposes the contemporary Indian socio-political world, its evils of communal tensions, riots exploitation, greed, criminalisation of greed and dowry etc and wants to aim at the social reform. For example, the population explosion is a serious problem-
“Lord we are sick of ourselves,
No more men! No more women”
He puts satire at the corrupt politics, criminals and anti social elements-
“freeing rapists and robbers on Republic Day”
He wishes for the purity of politics, purity of social reforms, purity of Ganga, purity of the whole country as it was in past. He refers to Hindu myths and rituals in the poems ‘Waterfront’, ‘Parijat Tree’ and ‘Boat ride to Ganga’. The shade of Parijat Tree is an ideal place for performing yogic practices.

“All yoga was here, all the asans”


“With clay altered to replicate
The luminous transparencies of the soul”

“This veil that veiled nothing”

“The goal was transmuting the earthly into celestial” (The Glass Blowers) (58)

AN ASSESSMENT

While studying Indianness in Pre and Post Indo-English Poetry, we can safely conclude
that the poetry of Toru Dutt, Ravindra Nath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu, Nissim
Ezekiel, A.K.Ramanujan, Kamala Das, Jayant Mahapatra and K.N.Daruwalla is Indian through
and through. Though these leading poets have adopted English language as the vehicle of
communication, but their thoughts and expressions are purely Indian, steeped in Indian
ethos and Indian philosophy. With the sincerity of emotions, vividness of imagery and rhythmic
flow of words, the pre independance poets beautifully present their own rich country with its
varied life, its vast and ancient culture, its traditions and values. The poetry of post
independence is all about the contempory reality, a protest against the current socio political
evils, a longing for great and glorious India as it was in past.

Thematically, their poetry is truly characterised by the quality of Indianness. A glance
at the themes dealt with by them reveals the fact that all the themes are related to Indian
social, religious and cultural life. ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ of Toru Dutt is
essentially religious in thought and outlook and suggest Toru Dutt’s love and familiarity with
Indian Mythology - the legendary heroes and heroines of India with the best exposition of
Indian philosophy. The title in itself is completely Indian. The stories and characters of
Ancient Ballads are drawn from Ramayana, Mahabharata and Vishnu Purana, the great
epics of Hindu religion to interpret the soul of India. Savitri, and Sita are the ideal
representatives of Indian womanhood where as Satyavan, Lakshman, Bharat, Dhrupa, Buttoo,
Sindhu and Prahlad are the subtle male characters of India’s idealism. Tagore’s ‘Geetanjali’
-‘the offering of songs’ is closely related to the theme of spirituality- the philosophy of India,
stressing upon how to communicate with God and attain the state of Sat-chit Ananda. In
‘Geetanjali’ many themes are interwoven- God and human soul, God and Nature, Nature and
Soul and the Soul and humanity but the central theme of all these theme is Soul’s voyage to
Eternity and realization of God through self purification, devotion and dedication to God and
service to humanity. Geetanjali is an offering to God, for God and about God-

“At the immortal touch of thy hands, my little heart loses its limits in joy”

Sri Aurobindo’s epic ‘Savitri’ is totally Indian in spirit tone and expression. The theme
of the poem is Savitri’s struggle with Yama and the conquest of love over death.

Sarojini Naidu has sincerely treated the themes of Indian philosophy and Indian values
Salutaton to the Eternal Peace’, ‘Death and Life’, Indian Mythology in ‘Kali the Mother’,
‘Lakshmi the Lotus Born’, ‘Kanhaya’, ‘Damayanti to Nala in Hour of Exile’, common life of
etc, beauty of Indian Landscapes in ‘Spring’, ‘The Magic of Spring’, ‘June Sunset’, ‘Champak
Blossoms’ etc, the patriotic zeal of Indians in ‘The Anthem of Love’, ‘To India’, ‘Awake’, ‘The
Gift of India’ etc.
Nissim Ezekiel, the law giver of Modern Indo-English poets, expresses the experience of the educated and urbanized Indians. His poems are mostly about Bombay life by Bombay poet. In his volume ‘The Third’, ‘The Unfinished Man’, ‘The Exact Name’ etc most of the characters, objects and situations have an Indian air of the Indian reality.

“I am standing for peace and non violence
why world is fighting fighting” (The Patriot)

“If you are coming again this side by chance
visit please my humble residence also” (The Professor)


A.K.Ramanujan’s poetry is an expression of Indian sensibility nourished by American environment especially the poems dealing with family relationships. Many of the poems from ‘The Striders’ and ‘Relations’ like ‘Still Another for Mother’, ‘Chicago Zen’, ‘Small Scale reflection on a Great House’, ‘Death and the Good Citizen’, ‘Conventions of Despair’ are totally of Indian experience. In his own words ‘my first thirty years in India, my frequent visits and field trips, my personal and professional preoccupation with Kannada, Tamil, the classics, and folk lore give me my substance, my inner forms, images and symbols’.

Kamala Das’s poetry is a mirror of her own life revealing her experiences, her anguishes, her frustration, humiliation and suffering, which are the stock themes of confessional poetry. Her poetry is in search for true love. The theme of love, sex, death and decay dominate with feminine sensibility ‘Summer in Calcutta’, ‘The Descendants’, ‘The Old Play House’, and Other Poems. There is also a longing for her ‘parental home’ and for her ‘great grandmother’s house’. She never forgets to confess-

“I am an Indian, very brown, born in Malabar” (An Introduction)

Through feminine themes and feminine longing, Kamala Das mainly reflects her restlessness as a sensitive woman moving in the male dominated society and raises her voices against the male tyrannies as in ‘A Relationship’, ‘Summer in Calcutta’, ‘An Introduction’ etc.

Jayant Mahapatra is a poet of socio-political reality in modern India. The Orissa Landscapes, religious and cultural heritage of traditions, mythic consciousness are major themes of his poetry. His poetry has remarkable relationship with his environment that is why locale details, temples and shrines have main concern in his poetry. The existential angst, loneliness and alienation of the modern man also find vivid expression in Mahapatra’s poetry

There is fusion of the past and present in A.K. Ramanujan’s poetry having family and memories of past as the central metaphors. K.N. Daruwalla has cultivated a modern India to capture the attention of modern intellectuals with touches of irony and sarcasm; he expresses and exposes the evils of corruption, exploitation, communal tensions, criminalisation of politics and dowry after independence. His experience as police officer has clearly helped him in this respect. His soul cries how great India was in past and how it has turned now. In the volume ‘Under Orion’ we have strange experience of the poet about the ‘robber in Chambal Valley’, ‘a beggar’, ‘Curfew in a riot city’, ‘Epileptic Pestilence’ etc. The book ‘Apparition in April’ lays more contradictions in Indian life. It also has poems on mythical characters like ‘Karna’ and ‘Charvak’. Daruwalla’s poem ‘The King speaks to the Scribe’ in ‘The Keeper of the Dead’ is a dramatic monologue in which the speaker is great Mauryan King Ashoka who after the Kalinga War speaks to the Scribe with remorse and then History is turned into poetry. The poem ‘The Glass-Blower’ in ‘A Summer Tiger’ is as much about the people of India as about the place. The whole section of ‘Winter Poems’ and ‘Crossing of Rivers marks the ‘Landscape poetry’-a widespread network of rivers, hills, plains and pastures especially of North India. The landscape is not merely to set the scene but to lead to an illumination.

With sarcasm and irony, anger and activism, Daruwalla expresses the Indian socio-political conditions both in cities and country-side. His thematic variety is permeated with Indianness. His famous poems ‘Crossing of Rivers’, ‘The Parijat Tree’, ‘Winter Poems’, ‘The Ghagra in Spate’ are suffused with Indian sensibility. In many poems, he refers Indian words such as ‘pinddan’, ‘mantra’, ‘Gayatri’, ‘yoga’, ‘asan’ etc.

Besides the themes, the poetry of pre and post Independence Indo-English poets is successfully marked by Indianness in thought and vision. As religion is the very foundation of Indian life and culture. Toru Dutt, mentions this basic principle not only in one or two poems but almost all the poems of ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ are steeped in religious and spiritual thoughts. The title in itself is totally religious. Toru Dutt is excellent to describe all the basic aspects of religious philosophy of India- the omnipresence and omnipotence of God, the existence of soul, the immortality of soul, the state of sat chit ananda, the theory of rebirth, the theory of karma, Idol worship and rituals. How beautifully she expresses the supreme power of Almighty God through the spech of Prahlad-

“There is one God- One Only- Mark!

To Him is all our service due” (Prahlad)
There are not two three Gods, rather God is One and One only who is present everywhere, every time and in every being. The entire world is His manifestation. He is present in every human being in the form of soul. To realize God within through the efforts of bhakti, gyan and karma is the ultimate aim of human life, that is the knowledge of spirituality, the only true knowledge. Toru Dutt says-

“That is the true Knowledge, which can make
us mortals saint like, holy pure” (Prahlad)

It is our own deeds that make our life and luck and help us to attain Perfection. Toru Dutt explores the theory of Karma through the mouth of Suneetee, the mother of Dhruva, who teaches her son-

“The deeds thou hast done
The evil happily in some former life
Long long ago, who may alas! annual
or who the good works not done supplement?
The sins of previous lives must bear their fruit” (The Legend of Dhruva)

Ravindra Nath Tagore’s ‘Geetanjali’ is like an epic of spirituality stressing upon the Supremacy of Almighty God, the efforts to realize God and the state of ecstasy after the union of Soul (atma) and Supreme Soul (parmatma). The whole of Geetanjali (offering of songs to God) is about Glory of God, Glory of efforts to communicate with God and at last Glorious state of sat chit ananda-

“Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure. This frail vessel thou emptiest again and again and fillest with fresh life.” (Geetanjali/01)

These precious lines of Tagore not only convince the Supreme power of God but also the theory of rebirth, theory of existence of soul, immortality of soul revealing the fundamental fact that human soul is always a part and parcel of Supreme Soul. And the cycle of births and rebirths continue until the soul gets permanent unity with Supreme Soul. Tagore says that man is the image of God so we should love every creature- the poor, the naked and the hungry, the sick and the stranger. “He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path maker is breaking stones” “Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee” (Geetanjali/11)

Sri Aurobindo’s epic Savitri, the epic of classical lore is completely suffused with all the fundamental principles of religion and spiritualism. Savitri is the issue of Aswapathy’s Sadhna, the incarnation of Divine Mother who is determined to know herself fully and realize her inward divinity. She conquers death showing her radiant Divinity to him and gets back Satyavan’s soul from the clutches of Lord Yama. She argues with authority to God of Death. “Death’s grip can break our bodies not our souls”.
After conquering over death & bringing back her husband’s life she along with Satyavan will live on earth, the field of her realization because her only aim is-

“To bring God down to the world on earth we came

To change the earthly life to live Divine” (Savitri)

Indeed, human life on this earth is nothing but a short period of separation from the Infinite. That is why “heaven ward hunger” of the human soul always persists to make a union with Divine.

Sarojini Naidu expresses this deep urge-
“The end elusive and afar
Still lures us with its beckoning flight
And all our mortal moments are
A session of the Infinite” (To a Buddha Seated on a Lotus)

The whole philosophy of Vedas is hidden in these two lines- ‘all our mortal moments are a session of the Infinite.’ In fact God is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of this universe and man lives by the working of the Supreme power of God. In the poem harvest hymn Sarojini’s only line, ‘Lord of Universe, Lord of our being’ is quite enough to explore the omnipresence and omnipotence of Almighty God from whom all beings get projected, in whom all live and to whom all have to return. This return journey to God is the art of spirituality. All our efforts of prayers, rituals, worship- the bhakti yoga, gyan yoga, karma yoga are to attain the goal of ‘Goal Realization’. When this goal is achieved, there is joy everywhere, ecstasy everywhere-

“They laughed
When I cried without knowing,
Govinda! Govinda! (Song of Radha, the Milk Maid)

Sarojini wants to convince that by meditation upon the Name of God with love and devotion, soul can be merged into Supreme Soul. Sarojini touches the depth of realized and realizable through Radha’s subconscious utterance of Govinda! Govinda. This is the state of perfection, the state of Sat chit ananda. Then there is no sorrow of life or death, doom or terror. Until this happens, the cycle of birth, death, rebirth continues. Sarojini expresses-

“Death unweaves the web of life” (To a Buddha Seated on Lotus)

Toru Dutt speaks the reality of death, birth and rebirth - “Death comes to all at soon or late”

“Is death annihitation, No.
New words will open on my views” (Prahlad)

Shri Aurbindo in his epic savitri beautifies death

“Death is our road to immortality” (Savitri)
In a very similar way, Kamla Das describes death in a positive manner.

“understanding it like a night fall
just a temporary phase
which brings no loses
for what was there
before sun down will be here tomorrow when light shall reveal it”

(Death brings no loss)

Nissim Ezekiel shows the philosophy of births and rebirths in his poem ‘Night of Scorpions’, when all the villagers pray to paralyze the scorpion and save the mother-

“May the sins of your previous birth be burned away tonight” (Night of Scorpion)
Ezekiel expresses the firm faith of Indians in God and God’s Name-
“And buzzed the Name of God a hundred times” (Night of Scorpion)

“Listen to the voice of God” (The Great)

“Here the mills of God are never slow” (Philosophy)
In very clear tone and straight manner, Ezekiel throws light on all the basic concepts of spirituality-

“Know your mantra, meditate
release your kundalini
get your shakti awakening
and float with the spirit
to your destination” (Healers)
Ezekiel prays to God in ‘Morning Prayer’-

“God grant me certainty
In kinship with the sky
Air, earth, water, sea
and the fresh inward eye” (Morning Prayer)

Here Ezekiel shows his fascination and concern with the basic elements of body as well as of the universe. Sometimes Ezekiel stresses upon Karma yoga to achieve the goal-
“He does not meditate day and night on any thing,

“His delight is in action”

It clarifies that work is true worship of God. Life and luck, births and rebirths depend on the theory of Karma. A.K. Ramanujan reconciles himself to the theory of Karma-

“See karma
In the fall of a tubercular sparrow
in the newspaper deaths in Burma
of seventy one men, women and children” (Entries for a Catalogue Fears)
The Indian belief in essential oneness of life is presented in various poems of A.K. Ramanujan. Life of human beings and life of all around us is the manifestation of one Divine spirit. This fact is highlighted in ‘A Hindu to His Body’ which hints the idea of the spirit leaving the poet’s body and moving to the trees.

“You brought me. Do not leave me behind” (A Hindu to His Body)

A.K. Ramanujan presents the omnipresence of Almighty God- the concept of Brahma in every object of the cosmos-

“Actually see the one in many” (Entries for a Catalogue Fears)

There is frequent reference of Indian myths, rituals and legends to reveal our cultural heritage and tradition for example in ‘Striders’ Ramanujan uses the myth of Lord Vishnu as the embodiment of primeval water in its very structure. And the poem ‘Prayer to Lord Murugan’ is a recreation of the myth of Lord Murugan- a six faced God with twelve hands, to seek his blessings to the devotees for their prosperity.

Kamala Das shows her fascination for religios spirit and her faith in God in these lines-

“Oh God, Blessed be your fair name, blessed be the religion purified in the unbelievers” (Inheritance)

She seems to be Meera Bai in pursuit of Lord Krishna, the true divine lover, to have permanent ties of marriage with Him-

“Vrindavan lives on in every woman heart and the flute, luring her”

Kamala das expresses the efforts for spirituality through the example of swimming and sea -

“Go swim in the great blue sea but if you learn to cross it even sinking would make no difference then”

(Advice to fellow swimmers)

Kamala Das expresses the existence of soul with revealing the fact that ‘Anhad naad’ of Almighty God can only be realized through ‘soul’-

“Only the souls know how to sing” (The Suicide)

Kamala Das beautifully applies the four basic elements of the universe to weave the texture of the poem-
“Not the deaf, blind speech
of trees in storm or of monsoon clouds or of
rain or the incoherent muttering of the blazing
funeral pyre” (An Introduction)

Jayant Mahapatra presents the omnipresence and omnipotence of God through his
poem ‘Grass’ when he looks below at the grass which seems to be chanting a hymn in the
glory of Omnipresent God. It eases and consoles him-

“I watch a little hymn
turning to the ground beneath my feet
a tolerant soil making its own way in the light of sun” (Grass)
He expresses the existence of soul-

“Words looking for what in the dark of soul” (Last Night of the poem 34)

Sometime the bitter reality of life and death, decline and degradation disturbs him, but
he finds all solace and peace magic moments of mythology-

“How quickly we learn
that within the pain of living and the reality of dying,
there is a magic moment
that’s a part of one’s mythology
and can go on to fill the world with its glories” (Another Year Beginning)

Though Daruwalla has frequently written about disease and death, hunger and misery,
the stillness and loneliness and the burning ghats, but he does not forget to mention the
Indian’s faith in God and His power-

“from your womb all proceed
into you all recede” (Crossing Chorhoti)

These two highly philosophical lines are quite enough to describe the Supreme Power
of God. Though the lines are written in the glory of Mother Goddess Dolma, but very well go
according to the Indian philosophy of Omnipotence of God, Daruwalla expresses the divine
presence in the beauty of nature while describing ‘Eifty Indian peaks’ with-

“snow and the spray hangover
of ice falls and the blue of distance
as if some god had with a palette knife
honied the landscape with ethereal colours” (Crossing Chorhoti)

The noble aspect of Indianness expressed in Pre and Post Independence poetry is the
deep and passionate love for Motherland India. Toru Dutt delivers the message of true
democracy through the speech of Buttoo-
“What is rank or caste
In us is honour or disgrace
not out of us” (Buttoo)

She expresses her passionate love of liberty-

“Thoughts, Freedom, Truth, quenched aminous
whence then shall hope arise for us
plunged in the darkness all again” (France)

It is the great patriotism of Toru Dutt that she has produced the great work like that of
the ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ steeped in Indian philosophy and Indian
values. Tagore’s ‘Geetanjali’ is par excellence to explore Indian philosophy of spiritualism- the
attainment of the goal of God Realization through Bhakti Marg. Within Geetanjali we also hear
the voice of great patriot longing for true freedom of India-

“Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments
by narrow domestic walls,
Where words come out from the depth of truth,
Into the heaven of freedom, Let my country awake” (Geetanjali/35)

Sri Aurobindo, the ardent lover of Mother India, puts same words and thoughts of true
democracy and spiritual freedom into the mouth of ‘Savitri’-

“A lonely freedom cannot satisfy
A heart that has grown one with every heart
I am a deputy of the aspiring world
My spirit’s liberty I ask for all” (Savitri, Book II Canto 1, page- 692)

Sarojini Naidu an undaunted fighter of India’s freedom lived in the age of national
upsurge and witnessed the time of struggle for Independence of India. Many of her poems
vibrate with an overpowering passion of love for Mother India. In the very first stanza of her
poem ‘To India’ she asserts the vitality of India, her power to regenerate from temporary
dejection and regain her creativity-

“O young through all thy immemorial years!
Rise, Mother, rise, regenerate from thy gloom” (To India)

Sarojini believes that the united efforts of all Indians despite all their differences of
religions, castes and creeds will lead India to its ‘destined goal’ of freedom and to the
achievement of its former glory and greatness-

“One heart are we to love thee, O our Mother
One undivided, indivisible Soul,
Bound by one hope, one purpose, one devotion
Towards a great divinely destined goal” (An Anthem of Love)


Nissim Ezekiel sings the glory of ancient India in somewhat modern manner-

“Ancient Indian wisdom is 100% correct  
I should say even 200% correct  
But modern generation is neglecting  
Too much going for fashion and foreign thing” (Patriot)

Ezekiel feels distracted, disturbed and disappointed to see the corruption, exploitation and violence in the changed situations of modern India as well as of world He speaks with authority-

“I am standing for peace and non violence  
Why world is fighting fighting  
Why all people of world  
Are not following Mahatma Gandhi” (Patriot)

He confirms his deep love, belongingness to India-

“I don’t want to go abroad  
Let me find my song  
where I belong” (Language of Lovers)

A.K.Ramanujan’s poetry expresses his intense yearning for Indian roots. His love for India and patriotic fervour can be seen in his poem ‘Death and the Good Citizen’ when he says that even after his long stay for over two decades in U.S.A, he is so thoroughly Indian that even his dead body would not assimilate with dust after burial and would not flower into jasmine and fruit in the alien soil-

“Or abroad,  
they will lay me out in a funeral, parlour, embalm me in pesticide,  
bury me in a steel trap, lock  
one so out of nature,  
till I’am oxidized by left-over air, withered by own vapours into grin and bone.  
My tissue will never graft,  
will never know new print,  
ever grow in a culture  
or be mold and compost  
for jasmine, eggplant  
and the unearthly perfection  
of municipal oranges” (Death and the good Citizen)
In the poem ‘Inheritance’ Kamala Das sings the glory of her city as well as of her country-

“blessed be
our sacred city, blessed be its incarnadined glory” (Inheritance)

Mahapatra shows his deep belongingness to his land of birth-

“A man does not mean anything
But the place” (Somewhere My Man)

He shows his deep and passionate love for his homeland Orissa as well as India-

“Where I live
My coming home defends my smile” (Going out for a Walk)

To see his heroic land suffering under the threat of terrorism and violence (Punjab riots), Mahapatra feels dejected-

“Was everything you did
Gandhi Ji, only an act you put on for prosperity
With India, our India, barely worth roping” (Dispossed Nests)

Like a true patriot, K.N. Daruwalla, through his highly philosophical and symbolical poem ‘Hawk’ teaches and preaches the message of love and hope that the reign of tyranny, corruption, anarchy and exploitation would end and the society would usher into a just and peaceful kingdom for all-

“During the big drought which is surely going to come
The daves will look up for clouds and it will rain hawks” (Hawk)

India is recognised throughout the world because of its eternal values of truth, love, peace, dutifulness, self-discipline, contentment, compassion, forgiveness, fearlessness and respect for elders and guests (Atithi Devo Bhav) etc. The poetry of pre and post independence, poets, pulsates with Indian values. Toru Dutt’s ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ is a world of idealism of India- Lakshman as ideal brother, Savitri and Sita as ideal wives, Prahlad and Dhruva as ideal devotees, Eklavya as an ideal disciple revealing the values of devotion, obedience, truth, love, faith in God, dutifulness, courage, humility and sacrifice. How Toru Dutt teaches and preaches the great Indian values through the mouth of Suneetee not only to Dhruva but to all of us-

“Be meek, devout and friendly, full of love
Intent to do good to the human race
And to all creatures sentient made of God” (The Legend of Dhruva)

She stresses upon the virtuous life -

“Virtue should be the aim and end of every life
all else is vain” (Savitri)

“The right is right the true is true” (Prahlad)
Ravindra Nath Tagore’s Geetanjali is an immortal work of Indian values of love, truth, humanism, faith in God, devotion and dedication to God as well as to duty. Tagore declares with authority that work is true worship of God-

“Leave this chanting, singing and telling of beads! Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut?——— “

“ He is there where tiller is tilling the land”

(Geetanjali/11)

Modern poet Ezekiel speaks of karma yoga in modern way -

“He does not meditate day and night His delight is in action”

(Latter Day Psalms)

Sri Aurobindo’s spiritual epic Savitri is an epic of love, truth, self discipline, self respect, fearlessness, sincerity, sacrifice, struggle and courage to win the battle of love over death. How beautifully Sri Aurobindo expresses Savitri’s fearlessness in love-

“Let fate do with me what she will or can
I am stronger than death, greater than my fate” (Book VI Canto 2)

Because Savitri embodies love and compassion, spirituality, self discipline and strength-

“Even her humanity was half divine
Her spirit opened to the spirit in all
A deep of compassion, a hushed sanctuary
A continent of self diffusing peace
An ocean of untrembling virgin fire
The strength, the silence of the gods were hers” (Book I, Canto 1, page-8)

Sarojini Naidu symbolically conveys the fundamental Indian values of truth, love and peace-

Satyam Shivam Sundram in her poem ‘Song of Dream’- 

“All spirits of truth were the birds that sang
All spirits of love were the stars that glowed
All spirits of peace were the streams that flowed” (Song of Dream)


There are many references of great Indian values in Nissim Ezekiel’s poetry like that of non violence, humility, humanity, peace, universal brotherhood, self respect and dutifulness. Ezekiel stresses upon peace and non violence, the basic message and principle of Indianness. He conveys the unity in diversity of India along with the feel of ‘Atithi Devo Bhav’-

“Come again
All are welcome whatever caste” (Irani Restaurant Instruction)
Kamala Das expresses the importance of basic Indian value of love in many of her poems. She mentions this aspect in remembering her grandmother’s house where she used to enjoy her childhood and receive limitless love—

“There is a house now far away where once
I received love,
How often I think of going
there” (My Grandmother’s House)

Sometimes her blank heart exclaims in longing for love—

“I want to be simple, I want to be loved” (Suicide)

Her approach is mystical sometimes to explore the theory of Karma in relation with life and she speaks like a sage—

“I am sinner, I am saint
I am beloved and the betrayed” (An Introduction)

This means that everything is in our hands. We ourselves are responsible for our life and luck.

Jayant Mahapatra regrets and repents at the degradation of ancient Indian values—

“The land some call holy
is not the one I want to live in” (The Land that is not) (Random Descent)

But he hopes and wishes, that again Ram Rajya of truth and love will come, India will flourish with its ancient glory and dignity as it was in past—

“I want the flames to warm the empty heart
of love, not burn a city with pitiable hatred”

“I want my government to hover like a butterfly over a garden” (The Land that is not)

K.N. Daruwalla sometimes explain the Indian philosophy of non violence (Ahimsa)—

“Ahimsa is a positive creed
We will not submit to aggression” (Apparition in April)

And in the poem ‘The King speaks to the Scribe’ he shows that how the Indian values of compassion and forgiveness lead to non violence (Ahimsa) when after the death and destruction, Ashoka’s sorrow is difficult to express—

“First Kartikeya, there is no pride involved
nor humility, understand this, I speak
of atonement, that is if blood can ever
be wiped away with words” (The King speaks to the Scribe)

If clarifies that Ashoka’s burden can only be lightened if he reaches to people, even to the poorest and simplest people and talk to them and they will forgive him.
India’s people are all strength and all power to India. The pageantry of Indian people’s life with its customs and beliefs, traditions, superstitions, aspirations, simple joys and concerns, occupations form the most important part of pre and post Indo-English poetry revealing Indianness. Toru Dutt’s ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ is an exploration of the customs, traditions, faith and concerns of Indian people- their simplicity and purity- ideal wife, ideal son, ideal brother, ideal discipline, obedience to Guru and parents. How beautifully Toru Dutt describes the love, purity and simplicity of Indian people in participation with others in the poem ‘Savitri’-

“To see the bride, the hermits’ wives
And daughters gathered to the huts
women of pure and saintly lives” (Savitri)

And how Savitri performs all her household works with love and comfort at her husband’s place, her new home-

“As to illumine all the place;
She sickened not, not sighed, nor pined,
But with simplicity and grace
Discharged each house hold duty kind
Strong in all manual work- and strong
To comfort, cherish, held and pray” (Savitri)

The line ‘to comfort, cherish, held and pray’ is excellent to describe the dutiful, loving, humble and adjustable nature of Indian people. Then Toru Dutt presents a realistic picture of loving sentiments of a son to his parents in her poem ‘Sindhu’ (Shravan Kumar) who, at the time of his death, is only worried about the thirst of his parents-

“So I die- a bloody death-
But not for this I mourn
But for my parents, who are blind
And have no other stay-
Bear thou the pitcher, friend-tis all
I ask-” (Sindhu)

Such ‘Matra Pitr Bhakti’ of Shravan Kumar is only possible on the land of India.

The delightful presentation of variegated Indian life is something of eternal value which does not only separate Sarojini Naidu from other Indo-English poets but also lift up to the height of appreciation. All her Indian folk songs ‘The Palanquin Bearers’, ‘The Coromandel Fishers’, ‘Wandering Singers’, ‘Indian Weavers’, ‘The Indian Gypsy’, ‘The Snake Charmer’, ‘Cradle Song’, ‘Bangle Sellers’, ‘In Praise of Henna’, ‘Harvest Hymns’, ‘Street Cries’ remain magnificent to the form and spirit of Indianness and show her deep insight into the inmost life of Indians. Her poem ‘Palanquin Bearers’ is one of the most charming in this respect because of its lyrical and dramatic wealth steeped in the admiration of Indian beauty-
“Gaily, O gaily we glide and we sing
We bear her along like a pearl on a string” (Palanquin Bearers)

Sarojini sings the song of Indian festivals and celebrations with same efficiency. She beautifully recreates the scenes of Lakshmi Pooja, Diwali celebration, Vasant Panchami, Naag Panchami, Narjeli Purnima etc with novel Indian images and regal splendour. How efficiently she describes the sacredness of ‘Rakhi’-

“How slender a circle and sign
of secret deep pledges unspoken” (Raksha Bandhan)

Nissim Ezekiel’s poetry is a vast gallery of portraits representing various Indian people, their professions, their daily tasks and their ways of life. The poems ‘Railway Clerk’, ‘Enterprises’, ‘Morning Prayer’, ‘The Truth about Dhanya’, ‘Night of the Scorpion’, ‘Good Bye Party for Miss Pushpa’, ‘Urban Background Casually’, ‘Patriot’, ‘In India’, ‘The Truth about the flood’ etc depict common life of Indian people, their thoughts and ways. ‘Night of the Scorpion’ is a realistic picture to show the simplicity of Indian people and their concern with each other in sorrow and happiness-

“The peasants came like swarms of flies
and buzzed the Name of God a hundred times
to paralyse the Evil one” (Night of the Scorpion)

A.K.Ramanujan’s poems ‘A River’, ‘Small Scale Reflection on a Great House’, ‘of Mothers among other thing’, ‘A Hindu to his Body’ and ‘Self Portrait’ are designed strongly to certain aspects of Indian people, Indian life and situations.

Kamala Das’s poems ‘Farewell to Bombay’, ‘A New City’, ‘My Grandmother’s House’, ‘The Inheritance’ and ‘A Hot Noon in Malabar’ are tinged with human emotions and relations of Indian people. With strong philosophical mood, Kamala Das advises her fellow men that life should be accepted with all its challenges, sufferings and obstacles then only success can be within reach. Through the example of ocean and swimming, Kamala Das emphasizes that by overcoming one’s own self; one can escape from suffering and attain the goal of perfection-

“go swim in the great blue sea
where the first tide you meet in your body
the familiar pest,
but if you learn to cross it,
you are safe, yes beyond if you are safe,
for even sinking would make no difference then” (Advice to fellow swimmers)

In the similar manner, Sarojini advises to face the life as challenge-

“Till ye have battled with great grief and fears,
And borne the conflict of dream shattering years,
wounded with fierce desires and worn with strife,
Jayant Mahapatra’s dominant concern is with the vision of grief, poverty, loss, suffering, dejection and rejection in Indian people’s lives. But he wishes that-

“I want the flames to warm the empty heart
of love, not burn the city with pitiable hatred” (The Land that is not)


There is a great glorification of Indian myths and legends in Pre and Post Independence Indo-English poetry. Toru Dutt’s ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’ is by name as well as by thought is completely soaked in the description of Indian mythology. The nine ballads or legends of ‘Savitri’, Lakshman, Jogadhya Uma, The Royal Ascetic and the Hind, Dhruva, Buttoo, Sindhu, Prahlad and Sita, all speak the glory of ancient India. Here with her own medium of expression, her own choice of diction, Toru Dutt has immortalised her own native themes. Sri Aurobindo’s greatest epic ‘Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol’ is based on the life and aim of legendary heroine Savitri, the story taken from Mahabharata. It is divided into 12 books. From the divine birth of Savitri till the conquest of her love over death is the spiritual theme of Savitri.

Sarojini’s poems ‘Kali, the Mother’, ‘Lakshmi the Lotus Born’, ‘Hymn to Indra, Lord of Rain’ and ‘Harvest Hymn’ show her keen insight into Indian mythology.

In K.N.Daruwalla’s ‘Apparition in April’, we have two notable poems about mythological characters- the one is about ‘Karna’, the wronged son of Kunti in Mahabharata and the other poem is about ‘Charvak’ (the one who speaks beautifully) the character from Mahabharata who is finally burnt-

“As flesh and myth are ushered to the flame
You wind up like kama” (Charvak)

Mythic consciousness prevails in the poetry of Jayant Mahapatra when he deals with Orissa landscapes, history and culture especially describing the shrines and temples. He concludes that deliverance lies in the acceptance of myth-

“We are delivered by the myth
Which exhorts our sleep and our loses” (Relationship)

Both Pre and Post Independence Indo-English poets have skilfully dealt with almost all the aspects of Indian Womanhood. Being a woman Toru Dutt is excellent to describe the
innocence, beauty, love, service, sacrifice, courage, strength, secret and sorrows through her poems ‘Savitri’, ‘Sita’, ‘Jogadhya Uma’. Sri Aurobindo’s ‘Savitri’ is all about woman- the divine birth of Savitri, her grown up beauty, her marriage with Satyavan, the death of her husband, her struggle with God of Death and the victory of her love over death. Sarojini Naidu with her lively observation brings out the innocent joy, eagerness and simplicity of Indian maidens in ‘In Praise of Henna’, ‘Song of Radha, the Milk Maid’ and ‘Village Song’; Indian concept of love steeped in humility, devotion and sacrifice in the series of love poems ‘The Temple’; sincerity, courage and strength in “Indian love Song,” ‘Suttee’, Damyanti in ‘The Hour of Exile’; pathetic condition in the poems like ‘Dirge’, ‘Vasant Panchami’, ‘Purdah Nashin’, ‘The Old Woman’ etc. According to Sarojini, an Indian woman is the real symbol of love, service and sacrifice-

“Whose hands have cherished, whose love has blest” (Bangle Sellers)

In many of Nissim Ezekiel’s poems, we find the reference of love, beauty, husband wife’s sacred relationship, and mother’s greatness. In very simple words, Ezekiel conveys the unselfish love and sacrificing nature of Indian mothers-

“My mother only said
Thank God the scorpion picked on me
and spared my children” (Night of the Scorpion)

And very similar emotions we find in A.K.Ramanujan’s poem in describing the affectionate nature of mother-

“and I see my mother run back
from rain to the crying cradles” (of mother among the other things)

Being a woman and a wife, all poetry of Kamala Das is a minute and thorough knowledge of feminine sensibility- its sufferings, its hurts and its anguishes- a search for true love-

“I want to be simple, I want to be loved”

There are many references of simplicity, sufferings and sadness of Indian women in Jayant Mahapatra’s poetry. The description of Indian women as silent, submissive, meek, lovely and calm is not only precise but picturesque and suggestive-

“It stands simply framed in the door, white in the air
an Indian women, piled up to her silences
waiting for what the world will only let her do”

The poetry of Indo-English poets is full of love for Indian landscapes, seasons and flowers. Toru Dutt is said to be the Keats of India because of her description of beautiful Indian landscapes. Her love for nature comes out so vividly in Ancient Ballads that produces so many charming and lengthy descriptions of natural beauty specially in the poems ‘Sindhu’, ‘Buttoo’, ‘Savitri’ and ‘Jogadhya Uma’-
“What glorious trees! The sambre saul
on which the eye delights to rest
the betel- nut------------------------ “ (Sindhu)

The lovely description of the sight of flowers, trees, honeybees, dark night, clouds, songs of birds, the filling of pitcher at the fountain and the fading flowers show the romantic attitude of Tagore towards the beauty of Indian landscapes. The following lines from Geetanjali reveal his unique talent as a colourist and painter of the natural beauty of Indian landscapes-
“The morning sea of silence broke into ripples of bird songs and the flowers were all merry by the road side, and the wealth of gold was scattered through the rift of the clouds”

Sri Aurobindo becomes somewhat mystic in revealing the beauty of nature- “The dawn outbreaks from the dense darkness”. Everywhere ‘the revelation and the flame’ “illumines”. It is-

“A glamour from the unreached transcendences
Iridescent with the glory of the Unseen” (Savitri, Book I Canto 1)


“The winds are drunk with the odorous breath
of henna, sarisha and neem” (In Time of Flowers)

Though the post independence Indo-English poets do not have such lovely description of blooming beauty but their poetry is totally related to Indian environment, sights and scenes. ‘Rain’ forms the major theme in Mahapatra’s poems, whereas the theme of ‘River’ dominates in K.N.Daruwalla’s poetry and also occasional touch in A.K.Ramanujan’s poems. Kamala Das uses nature to symbolize the relations. Nissim Ezekiel is the poet of urban sights and scenes especially of Bombay though there is no description of greenery or flowering but even then, Ezekiel says with authority-

“The Indian landscapes sears my eyes
I have become a part of it”

The poetry of pre and post Independence Indo English poets is Indian not only in their themes, thought and vision but also Indian in poetic craft through their frequent use of Indian images, Indian symbols, Indian words and Indian phrases.

To sum up, Pre and Post Independence Indo-English poetry is strongly marked by the quality of Indianness. Their poetry is Indian in sensibility and content. It is true that the poetry of pre independence poets is more religious and spiritual in tone where as post independence poets show more concern with contemporary reality and problems according to the demand of time. And in depiction of Indian people and their lives, society and norms there is a range
of emotional variation as of anger, protest, pity, sarcasm and irony. But both pre and post Independence poets are Indian by heart. If Sarojini Naidu convinces the message of universal brotherhood of India-

“All men are our kindred, the world is our home”

Nissim Ezekiel is no less than Sarojini to convey the same spirit-

“All are welcome whatever caste”

If Sarojini describes the ecstasy of soul realization -

“They laughed when I cried without knowing
Govinda! Govinda!”

Kamla Das also confirms-

“Only souls know how to sing”

Nissim Ezekiel speaks in same tone -

“How delight the soul with absolute sense of salvation” (Island)

If Tagore says work is worship -

“Leave this chanting.......He is there where tiller is tilling the land”

Nissim Ezekiel speaks with authority -

“He does not meditate day and night, his delight is in action”

“No lord, not the fruit of action is my motive”

If Toru Dutt stresses upon Indian value of ‘Athiti Devo Bhave’

“Welcome are all to this repast the, rich and poor, the high and low, come wash thy feet and break the fast” (Jogadhya Uma)

Nissim Ezekiel beautifies this value -

“If you are coming again this side by chance visit my humble residence too” (The professor)

If Toru Dutt preaches and teaches the theory of Karma-

“The sins of previous lives must bear their fruit” (Dhruva)

Nissim Ezekiel also conveys this fact -
“May the sins of your previous births be burned away to night”

(The night of Scorpions)

If Sri Aurobindo speaks the ultimate aim of human life -

“To change earthly life to life divine”

(Savitri)

K.N. Daruwalls points the same spiritual goal -

“The goal was transuting the earthly into the celestial”

(The glass blower)

If Toru Dutt speaks the glory of Almighty God-

“There is One God One Only Mark!
To Him is all our service due” (Prahlad)

Kamala Das shows her firm faith in God and His name-

“Blessed Oh God be your fair name, blessed be your religion”

A.K. Ramanujan speaks the omnipresence of God,

“Actually see one in many”

If Tagore has a vision of free India, free from all evil practices, blind beliefs, dogmas, old habits and superstitions-

“Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls” (Geetanjali/35)

Mahapatra hopes and wishes for the same flourishing India-

“I want the flames to warm the empty heart of love
I want my government to hover like a butter fly over the garden” (The Land that is not)

In the same tone Nissim Ezekiel wants to see

“I want human balanced humanity”

If the Poetry of Pre Independence Indo-English poets is filled with their love for India and Indian religious philosophy, the beauty and joy of Indian life and living, the richness of Indian culture and patriotic zeal of Indian people, the Poetry of Post Independence is no less than Pre Independence era to bring into play a modern sensibility in confronting the confusion and bewilderment in presenting of contemporary reality and consciousness all steeped in Indian thought and Indian sensibility. Toru Dutt’s ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’, Tagore’s ‘Geetanjali’, Sri Aurobindo’s ‘Savitri’, all four volumes of Sarojini are the Jewels of Indian thought and Indian philosophy to convey the message that “complete self surrender to God with true action and devotion leads to realization of Divinity”.
Whereas according to the demand of time, Nissim Ezekiel, A.K.Ramanujan, Kamala Das, Jayant Mahapatra, K.N.Daruwalla, like the true sons and daughters of Mother India raise the voice of protest against exploitation, social injustice and degradation of ancient Indian values and want to convince again and again-

“Ancient Indian wisdom is 100% correct
I should say even 200% correct
But modern generation is neglecting
Too much going for fashion and foreign things” (Patriot)

So both the Pre and Post Independence Indo-English poets are very Indian in spirit, only the mode and manner of expression is different. We have to follow the teachings and expressions both of these groups to tread upon the path of truth and justice, action and devotion. The day is not far when India will come forward as ‘Jagad Guru’ with her light of spirituality and illuminate the track of humanity by holding high the lamp of her ancient wisdom, by giving form and shape to the great and noble dreams that were cherished by the immortal prophets and patriots so that the whole world would accept that the light has come from the East to save the West from doom and destruction. India is the best, Indianness is the best and very best are the efforts of both Pre and Post Independence Indo-English poets to convince the glory of Great India. If the spiritual teachings of pre Independence poets can illumine the path of divinity, the protest of post indepence poets againsts the exploitation, corruption and degradation of values can bring a revolution for the betterment of india,- to make India heaven upon earth with the messages of Ezekiel -

“I am standing for peace and non violence”

“One day Ram Rajya is surely coming”
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