CHAPTER 3
3.1: Introduction:

Rabindranath Tagore the greatest writer in modern Indian literature, Bengali poet, novelist, educator, and an early advocate of independence for India was born in Calcutta, 1861. He was very much influenced by the ancient Indian thoughts of the Upaniṣads and the Vedanta. Rabindranath Tagore was not only a poet but also a philosopher and spiritual humanist. He believed in the evolution of man to a higher destiny. Calcutta University conferred D.Litt. Degree to this distinguished personality in 1913. The eminent Bengali Renaissance poet, philosopher, essayist, critic, composer, and educator, Rabindranath Tagore became the first-ever Asian writer to be awarded a Nobel Prize in 1913 for his cycle of song-poems, GITANJALI, for which he made English free-verse translations of the original Bengali lyrics. His long and influential artistic, political, and pedagogical career helped to build a bridge between Western and Eastern thought. Tagore tried to combine traditional Indian culture with Western ideas and contributed significantly to Bengali literature and culture. The importance of Tagore as a figure in literary history is perhaps aptly illustrated by the fact that two countries, (India and Bangladesh), adopted as national anthems songs authored by him.
Rabindranath Tagore was a neo vedantin philosopher; as such Tagore follows the vedantin tradition. On the other hand being a neo vedantin thinker he reinterprets the vedantin thoughts in his own way. We know that Tagore was a poet and he express his philosophy through his poems. Much of Tagore's ideologies come from the teaching of the Upaniṣads and from his own beliefs that God can be found through personal purity and service to others. He stressed the need for new world order based on transnational values and ideas, the "unity consciousness." The soil, in return for her service, keeps the tree tied to her; the sky asks nothing and leaves it free. Tagore was a supporter of Gandhi, but warned of the dangers of nationalistic thought. He was unable to gain ideological support to his views and retired into relative solitude. Tagore's preoccupation with politics and strengthened his vision of the poet as a moral presence. He died on August 7, 1941.

Tagore has often been compared to Walt Whitman, whose transcendentalism, Romanticism, and mysticism appealed to the Bengali poet. While most of the uncanny correspondences in their poetry appear to be more the result of that curious literary phenomenon of spontaneous simultaneity, both Whitman and Tagore share a common theme: that art is a process of self-creation which uses the divine within the individual to grow toward an awareness of the larger purpose of existence. The main literary device by means of which Tagore communicated his religio-philosophical views was that of bridal mysticism. This entails seeing oneself as the bride of God, with a complete
submission to and adoration of the divine. Tagore was keenly sensitive to the world movements of his time and expressed his pain and despair over wars eloquently. His yearning for world peace was however not of a political nature. He desired it to be based on a true realization of the universal identity of mankind and indeed, of the whole of the entire sentient world.

In India, especially in Bengal, Rabindranath Tagore has transcended, as often happens in the Indian paradigm, the position of a writer-philosopher. Since great thinkers, who are often religious in their purview, are seen as gurus and close to Bhagavân by the Hindus, Rabindranath Tagore is especially revered. Hindus believe that by listening to the words of such wise and enlightened men, people are brought closer to Bhagavân. For this reason, he is affectionately known as Gurudeb, which means, literally, Teacher-God.

His spiritual journey was guided by the Upaniṣads, the traditional Hindu spiritual scriptures to which he had the opportunity of early exposure, being part of an upper-cast Brahmin family. The Upaniṣads, derived in turn from the Vedas, speak of the immanent Brahman; the supreme reality which differs from Western religious conceptions of God in that it is an all-suffusing force that transcends personality and any sort of description. The Hindu idea is that all things in the cosmos, even the famous Hindu deities, are only temporal manifestations of Brahman. The Hindu trinity being Existence, Consciousness and Bliss i.e. Satchidānanda, Rabindranath Tagore wrote in a universalistic strain about man's relation to Brahman. The experiences that lead to establish ultimate identity
with Brahman is the goal of Hinduism. The material world is regarded as Brahman’s manifestation by Upanishadic philosophy. Tagore says, "The human soul is on its journey from the law to love, from discipline to liberation, from the moral plane to the spiritual, Buddha preached the discipline of self restraint and moral life; it is a complete acceptance of law. But this bondage of law cannot be end by itself; by mastering it thoroughly we acquire the means of getting beyond it. It is going back to Brahma, to the infinite love, which is manifesting itself through the finite forms of law. Buddha means it Brahma-Vihāra, the joy of living in Brahma."¹

Among his literary works though poetry takes the centre stage, novels, essays, short stories, travelogues, drama, and no less notably, over 2000 songs (known as Rabindrasangeet) which many Bengalis perceive as cultural treasures. The Rabindrasangeets, which most frequently deal with love and spirituality, are immensely popular with speakers of the language. On his journeys and lecture tours Tagore attempted to spread the ideal of uniting East and West. While in Japan he wrote: The Japanese do not waste their energy in useless screaming and quarreling, and because there is no waste of energy it is not found wanting when required. This calmness and fortitude of body and mind is part of their national self-realization.
3.2: Analysis:

By following Indian tradition Tagore holds that man can attain liberation only by removing *avidyā* or ignorance. Here the point to be noted that Tagore does not mean that the positive or real should be destroyed. Man should have to remove those which obscure his vision of truth. Through the realization of the true nature of man he may attain the state of liberation. "It is joy", Tagore observes, "which detaches ourselves from us, and then gives it form in creations of love in order to make it more perfectly our own. Hence love has two types of elements, - the element of severance, which is only an appearance and the element of union which is the ultimate truth." In his philosophy Tagore has developed a spiritual conception of freedom Like Vivekananda and Aurobindo. Tagore believes that it is the realization of spirit within man and within the whole universe which may bring freedom for him. All the higher religions of India speak of the training for *Mukti*, the liberation of the soul. In this self of ours we are conscious of individuality, and, all its activities are engaged in the expression and enjoyment of our finite and individual nature. Tagore says, "In our soul we are conscious of the transcendental truth in us, the Universal, the Supreme Man; and this soul, the spiritual self, has its enjoyment in the renunciation of the individual self for the sake of the supreme soul. This renunciation is not in the negation of self, but in the dedication of it. The desire for it comes from an instinct which very often knows its own meaning vaguely and gropes
for a name that would define in purpose. This purpose is in the realization of its relationship between the individual and the infinite man. It is of this harmony, and not a barren isolation that the Upaniṣad speaks, when it says that truth no longer remains hidden in him who finds himself in the all.3

According to Tagore “As in the world of art, so in the spiritual world, our soul waits for its freedom from the ego to reach that disinterested joy which is the source and goal of creation. It cries for its mukti, its freedom in the unity of truth. The idea of mukti has affected our lives in India, touched the springs of pure emotions and supplications; for it soars heavenward on the wings of poesy.”4 The realization of the spirit within man frees himself from finitude as well as from the fear and death. As a unique creation of the God man possess rationality. Due to rational faculty man feels an urge within him to yearn for a spiritual vision which is nothing other than the vision of truth. In this regard Rabindranath says, “...age after age there has come to us the call of faith, which said against all the evidence of fact: You are more than you appear to be, more than your circumstances, seemed to warrant. You are to attain the impossible, you are immortal.”5 Tagore holds that realization of the vision of truth produces spiritual joy and this joy manifests the unity between him and the world. Realization of the spiritual joy is not possible through the theological discussions, or through ethical doctrines. It comes spontaneously. Tagore himself says, “I feel about it ... from vision and not from knowledge.”6
For Tagore, Man cannot attain spiritual freedom through external ceremonies and sacrifices. Man can realize spiritual freedom through inner sanctity. From the realization of spiritual freedom the consciousness of Universal Man evokes in the mind of man. Man can realize his imperishable as well as universal nature through realization of the Universal Man in his mind. This realization frees him from his ego centric limited existence. The ability of man to distinguish his egoistic self from soul may say to be the first step towards the realization of the ultimate reality. The Upanisads regarded the soul as the gateway of cosmic consciousness to consciousness of the Supreme. As Dr. Nilima Sarma in her book ‘Twentieth Century Indian Philosophy’ rightly observes that, Tagore’s concept of realization is more or less influenced by Vaisnava philosophy of rural Bengal. Once an ascetic explain to Tagore that first of all we have to know our own soul under the guidance of our spiritual teacher, and when we have done that we can find him, who is the Supreme Soul within us. Appreciating the ideas of the ascetic, Tagore says, “yes, he is right, ...................Man’s history is the history of his journey to the unknown in quest of the realization of his immortal self—his soul.”

Rabindranath laid emphasis on inner development of the individual. So he offered his prayer,

“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
Give me the strength never to disown the poor
or bend my knees before insolent might
Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles
And give me the strength to surrender my strength to
ty thy will with love”

The final freedom of spirit which India aspires after has similar character of
realization. It is beyond all limits of personality, divested of all moral or
aesthetic distinctions. It is the pure consciousness of Being, the ultimate reality,
which has an infinite illumination of bliss. Though science brings our thoughts
to the utmost limit of mind’s territory it cannot transcend its own creation
made of a harmony of logical symbols. In it the chick has come out of its shell,
but not out of the definition of its own chicken hood. But in India it has been
said by the yogi that through an intensive process of concentration and quietude
our consciousness does reach that infinity where knowledge ceases to be
knowledge, subject and object become one—a state of existence that cannot be
denied.

For the realization of divine spirit Rabindranath said, “Our
union with this spirit is not to be attained through the mind. For our mind belongs
to the department of economy in the human organism. It carefully husbands
our consciousness for its own range of reason, within which to permit our
relationship with the phenomenal world. But it is the object of Yoga to help us to transcend the limits built up by mind. On the occasions when these are overcome, our inner self is filled with joy, which indicates that through such freedom we come into touch with the reality that is an end in itself and therefore, is bliss." 9 We must realize not only the reasoning mind, but also the creative imagination. The love and wisdom that belong to the supreme person, whose spirit is over us all, love for whom comprehends love for creatures and exceeds in depth and strength all other loves. Leading to difficult endeavours and martyrdoms it has no other gain than the fulfillment of this love itself. Goodness represents the detachment of our spirit from the exclusiveness of our egoism. In goodness we identify ourselves with the universal humanity. Its value is not merely in some benefit for our fellow beings, but in its truth itself. Through which we realize within us that man is not merely an animal, bound by his individual passions and appetites, but a spirit that has its unfettered perfection. For Tagore "Goodness is the freedom of our self in the world of man, as is love. We have to be true within, not for worldly duties, but for that spiritual fulfillment, which is in harmony with the Perfect, in union with the Eternal. If this were not true, then mechanical perfection would be considered to be of higher value than the spiritual. In order to realize his unity with the universal, the individual man must live his perfect life which alone gives him the freedom to transcend it." 10

The thought of God has not grown in our mind through
any process of philosophical reasoning. On the contrary, it has followed the
current of my temperament from early days until it suddenly flashed into my
consciousness with a direct vision. This freedom of view and freedom of action
have been accompanied by an analogous mental freedom in man, through his
imagination, which is the most distinctly human of all our faculties. It is there
to help a creature who has been left unfinished by his designer, undraped,
undecorated, unarmoured and without weapons, and, what is worse, ridden by a
mind whose energies for the most part are not tamed and tempered in to some
difficult ideal of completeness upon a background which is bare. Like all artists
he has the freedom to make mistakes, to lunch into desperate adventures
contradicting and tourting his psychology or physiological normality. This
freedom is a divine gift, lent to the mortals who are untutored and undisciplined.
Therefore the path of their creative progress is strewn with debris of devastation,
and stages of their perfection haunted by apparitions of startling deformities.
But, all the same, the very training of creation ever makes clear an aim which
cannot be in any isolated freak of an individual mind or in that which is only
limited to the strictly necessary.

The remarkable feature in Rabindranath is that individuality
is not merged with the Supreme Being. Love is not one-sided. The Supreme
Being is poignant with love towards the individual, the partner. In this regard
the poet wrote-
The special mental attitude which India has in her religion is made clear by the word *Yoga*, whose meaning is to effect union. Union has its significance not in the realm of to have, but in that of to be. To gain truth is to admit its separateness, but to be true is to become one with truth. Some religions, which deal with our relationship with God, assure us of reward if that relationship be kept true. This reward has an objective value. It gives us some reason outside ourselves for pursuing the prescribed path. We have such religion also in India. Those that have attained a greater height aspire for their fulfillment in union with *Nārāyana*, then the supreme Reality of Man, which is divine is realized. But it is perfect when our consciousness realizes all things as spirituality one with it, and therefore, capable of giving us joy. Tagore says, “For us the highest purpose of this world is not merely living in it, knowing it and making use of it but realizing our own selves in it through expansion of sympathy; not alienating ourselves from it and dominating it, but comprehending and uniting it with ourselves in perfect union.” The infinite and finite are one as song and singing are one. The singing is incomplete, by a continual process of death it gives up the song which is complete. The absolute infinite is like a music which is devoid of all definite tunes and therefore, meaningless. Tagore writes-
"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
Give me the strength never to disown the poor or bend my knees before insolent might.
Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles.
And give me the strength to surrender my strength to thy will with love." 

It is significant that all great religions have their historic origin in persons who represented in their life a truth which was not cosmic and unmoral, but human and good. They rescued religion from the magic stronghold of demon force and brought it into the inner heart of humanity, into a fulfillment not confined to some exclusive good fortune of the individual but to the welfare of all men. This was not for the spiritual ecstasy of lonely souls, but for the spiritual emancipation of all races. They came as the messengers of man to men of all countries and spoke of the salvation that could only be reached by the perfecting of our relationship with Man the Eternal, Man the Divine.

In the Vedic verses, we find constant mention of conflicts between the original inhabitants of Ancient India and the colonists. There we find the expression of a spirit that was one of mutual distrust, and a struggle which was sought either wholesale slavery or extermination for the opponents, carried on in the manner of animals that live in the narrow segregation imposed
upon them by their limited imagination and imperfect sympathy. This spirit would have continued in all its ferocious vigour of savagery had men failed to find the opportunity for the discovery that man's highest truth was in the union of co-operation and love. Tagore declares. "We fulfill our destiny when we go back from forms to joy, from law to the love, when we unite the knot of the finite and hark back to the infinite." Salvation or moksha is a state of divine life on earth. Tagore is never in favour of escapism. According to him, God has created the cosmos for men as He is bound in love with men. As he says,

"Deliverance? Where is this deliverance to be found? Our master himself has joyfully taken upon him the bonds of creation; he is bound with us all for ever." This is a great fact of epic significance. Man, suckled at the wolf's breasts, sheltered in the brute's den, brought up in the prowling habit of depredation, suddenly discovers that he is Man, and that his true power lies in yielding up his brute power for the freedom of spirit.

The God of humanity has arrived at the gates of the ruined temple of the tribe. Though he has not yet found his altar, Tagore ask the men of simple faith, wherever they may be in the world. To bring their offering of sacrifice to him and to believe that it is far better to be wise and worshipful than to be clever and supercilious. Tagore asks them to claim the right of Manhood to be friends of men, and not the right of a particular proud race
ornation which may boast of the fatal quality of being the rulers of men. We should know for certain that such rulers will no longer be tolerated in the new world, as it basks in the open sunlight of mind and breathes life's free air. Every true freedom that we may attain in any direction broadens our path of self realization, which is in superseding the self. According to Tagore, "The unimaginative repetition of life within a safe restriction imposed by Nature may be good for the animal, but never for Man, who has the responsibility to outlive his life in order to live in truth." 16

Freedom in its process of creation gives rise to perpetual suggestions of something further than its obvious purpose. Freedom is for expressing the infinite. It imposes limits in its works, not to keep them in permanence but to break them over and over again, and to reveal the endless in unending surprises. This implies constant regeneration, a series of fresh beginnings and continual challenges to the old in order to reach a more and more perfect harmony with some fundamental ideal truth. We become aware of a profound meaning of our own self at the consciousness of some ideal of perfection, some truth beautiful or majestic. It gives us an inner sense of completeness, a heightened sense of our own reality. This strengthens man's faith, effective even if indefinite – his faith in an objective ideal of perfection comprehending the human world. His vision of it has been beautiful or distorted, luminous or obscure, according to the stages of development that his consciousness has attained. But whatever may be the name and nature of his
religious creed, man's ideal of human perfection has been based upon a bond of unity running through individuals culminating in a Supreme Being who represents the eternal in human personality. "The goal of human life according to Tagore was to shatter the bonds of his imprisoned self, to continue the struggle and to offer freedom and be free. Tagore found God in man; the search for God must be done through services to mankind."\(^{17}\) The perfect expression of this idea produces the wealth of truth which is for the revelation of Man and not merely for the success of life. But when this creative ideal which is dharma gives place to some overmastering passion in a large body of men civilization bursts out in an explosive flame, like a star that has lighted its own funeral pyre of boisterous brilliancy.

Tagore holds that some how man feels the truth finds its body in such perfection, when he seeks for his own best revelation he seeks a medium which has the harmonious unity, as has music. Our impulse to give expression to Universal Man produces arts and literature. They in their cadence of lines, colours, movements, words, thoughts, express vastly more than what they appear to be on the surface. They open the windows of our mind to the eternal reality of man. Tagore observes, "To increase life is called a blessing. For the increase of life realizes the eternal and yet grows tall and great. Its every inch maintains the rhythm of an inner balance and therefore even in its seeming extravagance it has the reticent grace of self control."\(^{18}\)
The races of mankind will never again be able to go back to their citadels of high-walled exclusiveness. They are today exposed to one another, physically and intellectually. The shells which have so long given them full security with their individual enclosures have been broken, and by no artificial process can they be mended again. So we have to accept this fact, even though we have not yet fully adapted our minds to this changed environment of publicity, even though we may have to run all the risks entailed by the wider expansion of life's freedom. Today, more than ever before in our history, the aid of spiritual power is needed. Therefore Tagore believes its resources will surely be discovered in the hidden depths of our being. Pioneers will come to take up this adventure and suffer, and through suffering open out a path to that higher elevation of life in which lies our safety. Chandra Mohan Das observes "There was an urge in Rabindranath to retain the individuality. The self is not lost or dissolved at the highest stage of religious experience. This was pursued due to emergence of Jīvan-devatā." Jīvan-devatā is not God. Jīvan-devatā is a source of inspiration towards the beauty and goodness. It is a creative urge like élan-vital in Bergson. There is one prevailing opinion that Jīvan-devatā is independent. But this opinion is not tenable. Jīvan-devatā and Viswa-devatā are two manifestations of the same universal reality. There is no separation amongst Jīvan-devatā, Viswa-devatā, and Universal reality. Chandra Mohan rightly observes that Jīvan-devatā will bridge the gap between the individual and the universe. The idea of Jīvan-devatā is really a novel idea in Rabindranath.
Jivan-devatā has become guiding principle towards realization of God. The Jivan-devatā, the lord of his life, was present throughout his life. When he was moved by the idea of humanity, Jivan-devatā was playing with him. According to some, Rabindranath’s Jivan-devatā will simply lead to silent union of the individual and supreme Being, being divorced from humanity. But that is not the correct view. Jivan-devatā is all along present in Rabindranath. Jivan-devatā is poet’s own expression. Jivan-devatā is the individual expression of the universal entity. Rabindranath said that relation of love could be established with Jivan-devatā. For the sake of this love heaven longs to become earth and gods become man. Rabindranath recognized the freedom of the individual. One may extend love or not. Love is the basis of this relation. So in his poem we find,

“Amar majhe Tomar lila habe
Taito Ami esechi ei Bhabe”\textsuperscript{20}

V.S. Naravane says, “Tagore’s Jivan-Devatā is nothing but the spirit of life in nature and man. It keeps all things alive and moving like the Heraditean fire.”\textsuperscript{21}

This wisdom came neither in texts of scripture, nor in symbols of deities, nor in religious practices sanctified by ages, but through the voice of a living man and the love that flowed from a human heart. Rabindranath further maintains, in the \textit{Upaniṣad} it is said, “The supreme being as all-pervading, therefore, He is the innate good in all. To be truly united in knowledge, love and service with all beings, and thus to realize one’s self in the
all-pervading God is the essence of goodness and this is the keynote of the teaching of *Upāniṣads*.”

Rabindranath visualizes *Visva-Devātā* in the harmony of man and nature. The harmony is the expression of supreme-being.

Man has his other dwelling-place in the realm of inner realization, in the element of an immaterial value. This is a world where from the subterranean soil of his mind his consciousness often, like a seed, unexpectedly sends up sprouts in to the heart of a luminous freedom, and the individual is made to realize his truth in the universal Man. The consciousness of the Real within me seeks for its own corroboration the touch of the Real outside me. When it fails the self in me is depressed. When our surroundings are monotonous and insignificant, having no emotional reaction upon our mind, we become vague to ourselves. For, we are like pictures, whose reality is helped by the background if it is sympathetic. The punishment we suffer in solitary confinement consists in the obstruction to the relationship between the world of reality and the real in ourselves, causing the latter to become indistinct in a haze of inactive imagination: our personality is blurred; we miss the companionship of our own being through the diminution of our self. The world of our knowledge is enlarged for us through the extension of our information. The world of our personality grows in its area with a large and deeper experience of our personal self in our own universe through sympathy and imagination. To quote Tagore “Thus my mind was brought up in an atmosphere of freedom-
freedom from the dominance of any creed that had its sanction in the definite authority of some scripture, or in the teaching of some organized body of worshippers. And, therefore, the man who questions me has every right to distrust my vision and reject my testimony. In such a case, the authority of some particular book venerated by a large number of men may have greater weight than the assertion of an individual, and therefore I never claim any right to preach. Further he says, “Freedom in the material world has also the same meaning expressed in its own language. When nature’s phenomena appeared to us as irrelevant, as heterogeneous manifestations of an obscure and irrational caprice, we lived in an alien world never dreaming of our swaraj within its territory, through the discovery of the harmony of its working with that of our reason, we realize our unity with it, and therefore our freedom”

Those who have been brought up in a misunderstanding of this world’s process, not knowing that it is one with them through the relationship of knowledge are intelligence, are trained as cowards by a hopeless faith in the ordinance of a destiny darkly dealing its blows. They submit without struggle when human rights are denied then, being accustomed to imagine themselves born as outlaws in a world constantly thrusting upon them incomprehensible surprises of accidents. In his own words it can be stated as Tagore said, “We have also seen that this relational world of ours is not arbitrary. It is individual, yet it is universal…….Therefore, it is not in my own individual personality that this reality is contained, but in an infinite personality.”
We have the age-long tradition in our country, as stated by Tagore. Through the process of yoga a man can transcend the utmost bonds of his humanity and find himself in a pure state of consciousness of his undivided unity with Parambrahma. There is none who has the right to contradict this belief; for it is a matter of direct experience and not of logic. It is widely known in India that there are individuals who have the power to attain temporarily the state of Samādhi, the complete merging of the self in the infinite, a state which is indescribable. While accepting their testimony as true, let us at the same time have faith in the testimony of others who have felt a profound love, which is the intense feeling of union, for a Being who comprehends in himself all things that are human in knowledge, will and action. For Tagore, “He is God, who is not merely a sum total of facts, but the goal that lies immensely beyond all that is comprised in the past and the present.”

We must realize not only the reasoning mind, but also the creative imagination. The love and wisdom that belong to the Supreme Person, whose Spirit is over us all, love for whom comprehends love for all creatures and exceeds in depth and strength all other loves. This difficult endeavours and martyrdoms have no other gain than the fulfillment of this love itself. Tagore said in one of his poem that when the child detached from its mother’s womb and it finds its mother in a real relationship whose truth is in freedom. Man in his detachment has realized himself in a wider and deeper relationship with the universe. In his moral life he has the sense of his obligation and his freedom at
the same time, and this is goodness. In his spiritual life his sense of the union and the will which is free has its culmination in love. He wins the freedom of opportunity for himself in nature's region by uniting his power with Nature's force. The freedom of social relationship he attains through owning responsibility to his community, thus gaining its collective power for his own welfare. In the freedom of consciousness he realizes the sense of his unity with his larger being, finding fulfillment in the dedicated life of an ever progressive truth and ever-active love. In this regard Tagore says, "Whatever might be their doctrine of God, or some dogmas that they borrowed from their own time and tradition, their life and teaching had the deeper implication of a Being who is the infinite in Man, the Father, the Friend, the Lover, whose service must be realized through serving mankind. For the God in Man depends upon man's service and man's love for his own love's fulfillment." 27

Rabindranath also laid stress on the cultivation of qualities like discipline of body and mind, *Brahmachārya*- to check diversion of energies and concentrate in a particular purpose, self-sacrifice, self-reliance, fellow feeling, love and friendship between man and man and refinement through art and literature. Tagore says, "To see all things in the light of cosmic consciousness and to do everything under the inspiration of cosmic sentiment- this is the highest achievement of man; this is the true religion for mankind." 28

In the process of attaining freedom one must bind his will in order to save its forces from distraction and wastage, so as to gain for it the velocity
which comes from the bondage itself. Those also, who seek liberty in a purely
political plane, constantly curtail it and reduce their freedom of thought and
action to that narrow limit which is necessary for making political power secure,
very often at the cost of liberty of conscience. The Universe cannot be so madly
conceived that desire should be an interminable song with no finale. And just as
it is painful to stop in the middle of the tune, it should be as pleasant to reach its
final cadence. According to Tagore, “There should be synthesis of individual
and social aspects. Synthesis of the two will prepare the individual to sacrifice
for the service of the country. Altruistic feeling will be developed.”
The truth which is not reached through the analytical process of reasoning and doesn’t
depend for proof on some corroboration of outward facts or the prevalent faith
and practice of the people. The truth which comes like an inspiration out of
context with its surroundings brings with it an assurance that it has been sent
from an inner source of divine wisdom. The individual who has realized it is
especially inspired and therefore has his responsibility as direct medium of
communication of Divine Truth.

As long as man deals with his God as dispenser of benefits
only to those of his worshippers who know the secret of propitiating Him. He
tries to keep Him for his own self or for the tribe to which he belongs. But
directly the moral nature, that is to say, the humanity of Good is apprehended,
man realizes his divine self in his religion. His God is no longer an outsider to
be propitiated for a special concession. The consciousness of God transcends
the limitations of race and gathers together all human beings within one spiritual circle of union. Rabindranath said “Our social ideals create the human world. But when our mind is diverted from them to greed of power, then in the state of intoxication we live in a world of abnormality where our strength is not health and our liberty is not freedom. Therefore, political freedom does not give freedom when our mind is not free.” 30 Also in the social or political field the lack of freedom is based upon the spirit of alienation, on the imperfect realization of the one. There our bondage is in the tortured link of union. One may imagine that an individual who succeeds in dissociating himself from his fellows attains real freedom, in as much as all ties of relationship imply obligation to others. But we know that, though it may sound paradoxical, it is true that in the human world only a perfect arrangement of independence gives rise to freedom. The most individualistic of human beings, who own no responsibility, are the savages who fail to attain their fullness of manifestation. They live immersed in obscurity, like an ill-lighted fire that cannot liberate itself from its envelope of smoke. Only those may attain their freedom from the segregation of an eclipsed life that has the power to cultivate mutual understanding and co-operation. The history of the growth of freedom is the history of the perfection of human relationship. “We have to find some basis that is universal, that is eternal, and we have to discover those things which have an everlasting value.” 31 Again he says, “As science is the liberation of our knowledge in the universal reason, which cannot be other than human reason,
religion is the liberation of our individual personality in the universal Person who is human all the same.”\textsuperscript{32} It has become possible for men to say that existence is evil, only because in our blindness we have missed something wherein our existence has its truth. If a bird tries to soar with only one of its wings, it is offended with the wind for buffering it down to the dust. All broken truths are evil. They hurt because they suggest something they do not offer. Death does not hurt us, but disease does, because disease constantly reminds us of health and yet withholds it from us. And life in a half world is evil because it feigns finality when it is obviously incomplete, giving us the cup not the draught of life. All tragedies result from truth remaining a fragment, its cycle not being completed. That cycle finds its end when the individual realizes the universal and thus reaches freedom.

Tagore believes that the eternal bond of union between the infinite and the finite soul, from which there can be no \textit{mukti}. Love is ultimate. It is an interrelation which makes truth complete. As absolute independence is the blankness of utter servility. The truth is not only of knowledge, but of devotion that we bow to him everywhere and over and over again. “The finite intellect reduces the universe to the opposites of self and not self, organism and environment and leaves us there without revealing to us ‘the final unity’ in which these relative opposites rest. The ultimate unity breaks itself in to the two factors of subject and object, man and nature. Intellect reads the manifestation, but misses the unity in which the two are gathered together.”\textsuperscript{33}
Therefore Rabindranath says, “The universe of intellect is like a railway station; but the station platform is not our home”

Truth is the infinite pursued by metaphysics; fact is the infinite pursued by science, while reality is the definition of the infinite which relates truth to the person. Reality is human; it is what we are conscious of, by which we are affected, that which we express. When we are intensely aware of it, we are aware of ourselves and it gives us delight. We live in it; we always widen its limits. Our arts and literature represent this creative activity which is fundamental in man. In the Upanishad it is said in a parable that there are two birds sitting on the same bough, one of which feeds and the other looks on. This is an image of the natural relationship of the infinite being and the finite self. The delight of the bird which looks on is great, for it is a pure and free delight. There are both of these birds in man himself, the objective one with its business of life, the subjective one which it’s disinterested joy of vision.

Tagore observes that he who is alone, above all colours, and who with his manifold power supplies the inherent needs of men of all colours. Who is in the beginning and in the end of the world, is divine, and may he unite us in a relationship of good will. Therefore dualism of appearance and truth arises in man’s freedom of will. His self-will is the appearance of freedom whereas love is the truth of it. By his finite zeal, when man tries to give infinite status to appearance, he victims to suffering. Everything possesses this dual character of appearance and truth, maya and satyam. Human self is māya, while
it is finite and takes its individuality as final. It is *stayam*, while it finds its very essence in the universal, in the eternal which is the supreme self or the *paramātman*. The individual self through moral and spiritual discipline attains the perfect harmony of freedom in the absolute self or the *paramātman*. This is the ultimate destiny of human being. From ages, men have yearned for, and achieved this final goal of humanity. To quote Tagore, "Then is its mukti, its deliverance from the thralldom of *māya*, of appearance which springs from *avidyā*, from ignorance; its emancipation in *santam, sivam, advaitam*, in the perfect repose in truth, in the perfect activity in goodness, and in the perfect union in love."\(^{35}\) The poet says further, "...the callousness of asceticism pitted against the callousness of luxury is merely fighting one evil with the help of another."\(^{36}\) Man can receive the bliss of God through the senses. According to Rabindranath,

"No, I will never shut the doors of my senses. The delights of sight and hearing and touch will bear thy delight. Yes, all my illusions will burn into illumination of joy, and all my desires ripen into fruits of love."\(^{37}\)

Rabindranath believed in the eternal flow of humanity. Through this eternal flow of humanity God does manifest Himself. Man also finds fuller expression. It is for dignity of being that we aspire through the expansion of our consciousness in a great reality of Man to which we belong.
We realize it through admiration and love, through hope that soars beyond the actual, beyond our own span of life into an endless time wherein we live the life of all men. Therefore, man cannot apprehend freedom in a contradictory way. In the words of the poet, "...our will can be free not towards the limitations of our self, not where it is maya and negation, but towards the unlimited, where is truth and love. Our freedom cannot go against its own principle of freedom and yet be free; it cannot commit suicide and yet live. We cannot say that we should have infinite freedom to fetter ourselves, for the fettering ends the freedom." 38

Man has the unique privilege of freedom and free choice, even if he chooses sin and is estranged from God. But this is not the real meaning of freedom according to Tagore. The freedom to choose sin and go against God is to be called in the real sense a negative freedom, the denial of freedom. Such a negative freedom lacks all moral and spiritual contents and so cannot be taken as freedom in the real sense of the term. To quote Rabindranath, "For this can only be relevant to the God who is God and man at the same time; and if this faith be blamed for being anthropomorphic, then Man is to be blamed for being Man, and lover for loving his dear one as a person instead of as a principle of psychology. We can never go beyond Man in all that we know and feel." 39

According to Tagore the real tragedy, however, does not lie in the risk of our material security but in the obscuration of Man himself in the human world. In the creative activities of his soul Man realizes his surroundings as his larger self, instinct with his own life and love. But in his
ambition he deforms and defiles it with the callous handling of his voracity. His world of utility, assuming a gigantic proportion, reacts upon his inner nature and hypnotically suggests to him a scheme of the universe which is an abstract system. In such a scheme of the universe which is an abstract system. In such a world there can be no question of mukti, the freedom in truth, because it is a solidity solitary fact, a cage with no sky beyond it. In all appearance our world is a close world of hard facts. It is like a seed with its cover. But within this enclosure is working our silent cry of life for mukti, even when its possibility is darkly silent. When some huge overgrown temptation tramples into stillness this living aspiration then does civilization die like a seed has lost its urging for germination. This mukti is in the truth that dwells in the ideal man. He never preaches renunciation for the spiritual liberation of man. To quote him-

"Deliverance is not for in renunciation.

I feel the embrace of freedom in

a thousand bonds of delight." 40

Again, "At midnight the would be ascetic announced;

'This is the time to give up my home

and seek for God. Ah, who has held

me so long in delusion here?'

God whispered, 'I', but the ears of

the man were stopped.

..... ..... ..... .....
The baby cried out in its dream,
nestling close to its mother.
God commanded, 'stop, fool, leave
not thy home', but still he heard not.
God sighed and complained, 'why
does my servant wander to seek me,
forsaking me'?'" 41

In India, the ancient land of spirituality where man was
awakened to the deepest mystery of life and reality. Even the illiterate and
simple village folk know the meaning of *karma, bandhana* and *mokṣa*. They
know that the betterment of life can be had not by running after worldly
prosperity but from *mokṣa* or spiritual liberation, from the attainment of the
Supreme, who is *anantam* and *advaitam*. Hence Tagore says, “Freedom is the
biggest for man. Nothing can be compared to nothing at all!” 42 An enlightened
person realizes the spiritual unity in human society above all the differences
of race and religion. He realizes that peace is found in the internal harmony
which lies in truth and not in external appearances. He apprehends that “...In the
society of mankind when we aspire for *Sivam* (the bliss), in our realization of
that bliss we give it a place between *Sāntam* and Advaitam; in other words,
borrowing the English thought, it means that the welfare of society is balanced
between the fulfillment of law and the fulfillment of love.” 43
3.3: Path of Liberation:

Tagore recommends that our acts of love and sacrifice, whose scope we keep on widening, must be expressed in suitable actions performed for the good of others. To work for the good of others does not necessarily mean to be a utilitarian, because the utilitarian’s love for others is based on personal consideration. Tagore’s maxim has a metaphysical foundation. To work for all would mean the recognition of the metaphysical unity of all and to work under that recognition. This would no longer remain a life of the finite; it would be living in the Infinite. That is so because soul finds its freedom in action. Action for others gives him a freedom in the outside world, and that is a prelude to his finding freedom within.

It is interesting to find that this has been designated by Tagore as Realization in Action in addition to, what he calls, Realization in Love. These are neither actually separate ways of realization, nor are they entirely different from each other. Tagore feels that any process that enables an individual to extend his consciousness beyond his ego and towards the universal is a way of realization. This is possible in love, and therefore there is a possibility of Realization in Love. This is possible also through action, and therefore, there is the possibility of Realization in Action. Aesthetic sensibility may also be of help, and so he talks about Realization of Beauty. These are all aspects of the same process; they all lead to the same goal- The realization of the Infinite.

Tagore has a reason for laying an emphasis on 'Realization
in Action’. Activity is the play of joy; it involves voluntary giving for the sake of joy. Even the self-centred man, who is otherwise lost in his egoistic designs, at times, craves for moments of joy. During those moments he also gives and makes sacrifices freely. Therefore, Tagore recommends that the aspirant for mukti must practice this kind of ‘sacrifice’ in all his acts. “Just as the joy of the poet in his poem, of the artist in his art...of the wise man in his discernment of truth; ever seeks expression in their several activities, so the joy of the knower of Brahman, in the whole of his everyday work, little or big, in truth, in beauty, in orderliness and in beneficence, seeks to give expression to the Infinite”  

Tagore talks about Spiritual Yoga also. But, he does not speak about the usual things that are normally associated with the word Yoga. For example, he does not talk about āsana, or about the different yogic postures. Yoga is taken in the sense of a discipline that demands sacrifice and renunciation. Renunciation consists in one’s giving up of his possessions and in his sacrificing his egoistic impulses. This does not mean that the lower self- the lower aspect of man’s nature - has to be killed altogether. It has to be raised higher- made more perfect. What is needed is the disciplining of the self- not its annihilation. In this respect Tagore’s view is similar to that of ethical perfectionism. He clearly says, “The renunciation is not in the negation of the self, but in the dedication of it.”  

The two ways, Realization in Love and Realization in Action have been discussed so far refer to the aspirant’s relation with the outer world
primarily. But the aim is to realize unity within. For this, some inner discipline and insight also have to be cultivated. Tagore is a poet, and naturally, he feels that the ‘sense of beauty’ has also a specific function to perform.

3.4: Estimation:

If we make an observation on Tagore’s view of liberation the most significant point is to be noted here that like other contemporary Indian philosophers Tagore has not used the word mokṣa for liberation. In his philosophy Tagore make use of the word mukti instead of mokṣa. Tagore has a great fascination towards Buddhist philosophy. As a result one may get influence of Buddhism in his view of liberation. He says that Buddha’s concept of Nirvana can be achieved only through love. Because the freedom of opportunity, “Nirvāṇa is the highest culmination of love.” According to Tagore, love is the final end. It is beyond all questionings and reasons. It is in itself the ultimate answer. Through love, man can discard his narrow selfish desires and can fulfill his nature as Man. Thus in perfect love man attains full freedom; for love’s sake, man acts freely, being even ready to face all kinds of pain and suffering. “Therefore working for love is freedom in action.” Rabindranath was deeply impressed by this middle path. Simplicity and universality of the religion of Buddha moved Rabindranath deeply. Buddhism observed tolerance towards other religion. Non-injury towards others is the
living principle of Buddhism. The contribution of Buddhism to Indian Culture is immense. Jainism also propounded the principle of Ahimsa. Buddhism and Jainism revolted against Vedic authority. Jainism did not believe in the existence of God. Empty rituals were rejected by Jainism. Man cannot ignore the importance of law and moral discipline in his way towards liberation. On the other hand it is only through them that the spiritual reality can be comprehended. It is also the teaching of Lord Buddha. Rabindranath also gives importance on moral discipline as well as the principle of Ahimsa for realization of mukti. Though Rabindranath was influenced by Buddhism and Jainism, he never revolt against Vedic authority.

Rabindranath rightly realized the ever-expanding longing for perfection in man has two, although mutually related aspects. One is personal fulfillment, the other social. There is no division between them. Personal achievements can never be absolute. The powers of those who have attained the highest positions among men are manifested through the powers of all: they are not distinct. According to Rabindranath “Where man is separated as an individual, where mutual co-operation is not intimate, there indeed is barbarism........The goal of civilized man is the cultivation of his mind in collaboration with others, the development of his powers in conjunction with others and the strengthening of his resources in co-operation with others” 48

Rabindranath was influenced by the songs of the Bauls. According to the essence of the songs of the Bauls, “The realization of our ultimate object is waiting for
us in ourselves”⁴⁹ They put emphasis on the divinity of humanity. “Therefore Humanity is a necessary factor in the perfecting of the divine truth. The infinite, for its self-expression, comes down into the Finite; and the Finite for its self-realization, must come into the unity of the Infinite. Then only is the Cycle of truth complete.”⁵₀

Rabindranath conceives that freedom involves two forms, positive and negative. Negative freedom is that of a man who is ego-centered and subject to ignorance, karma, and desires. He adopts the ego-centric attitude in human relationships. He is a mere finite individual, having no awareness of truth and reality. This is negative freedom. Positive freedom is that of a man who can discriminate between truth and falsehood, and who is aware of his deeper spiritual existence. He has attained a considerable measure of freedom from subjection to ignorance, karma, desire etc. Man’s will is free in order to search for its true path, to reach goodness and love. Goodness and love are eternal. Only in the eternal, man’s highest relation of freedom is possible.

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