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It has been a greatly rewarding experience passing through not merely academic but also a touching taste for higher experience. Undoubtedly a study of Basava and Tagore's writings opens the doors of mind and heart to the higher possibilities of human potentialities to be realized in this world. It is a rare thing that one gets a double advantage of benefiting and enriching one's own course of life academically and personally. That is how this concluding chapter expresses a certain sense of fulfillment.

Chapter I of the thesis begins with the discussion of why we need spirituality as the only panacea to remedy the ills of human beings. Chapter II elaborates the necessity, conditions and benefits of the comparative study. In chapter III as a preliminary task we have discussed the nature and meaning of mysticism. Chapter IV deals with Mystic Language. Mystic language is said to be metaphorical to bring home to others the difficulty of expressing the mystic experience. Biographical details relevant for strengthening our account of mystical element in Basava and Tagore are given in Chapter V. There is unity in the personal life of both Basava and Tagore. Further in Chapter VI we have discussed the nature of Mystic Way as communicated by Basava and Tagore in their writings. In the modern world, we live our lives in such a way that as if something is more important than life itself. This way of living may add years to life and not life to years. In this context of the study of mystical element in both Basava and Tagore, it is important to ask why people are not happy or contented in spite of so much scientific and technological progress? This situation is aptly summed up in the words of T.S. Eliot:
Where is the life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?
The cycles of Heaven in twenty centuries
Bring us farther from God and nearer to the Dust.¹

What is at stake here is the question of ultimately what is the truly best way of life? Are we living a life worthy of homosapiens? Basava, Tagore, T.S.Eliot, great seers and Saranas have given the law of God: “I have given you my Law and you set up Commissions.”² This is how man’s higgle-haggling with the law or dharma that makes clever men to set up commissions to meddle and then attempting to justify the things anyway they want to do instead of facing the real issue of ultimate meaning of life. It is in this context that the days of monotheistic prophetic religions are over. As David Frawley surmises: “The age of religions is over and we should be entering on an age of spiritual search without boundaries.”³ This is what we have tried to show in this thesis: Mystic Element in Basava and Tagore: a Comparative Study. Their spirituality utters no dogma, no command, only an appeal. It calls to our spirits. It only wins its battles because of its secret appeal to the spiritual element in its enemy, that humane element from which man, in his utmost effort to be brutal, cannot quite shake himself free. Their spiritual life helps the development of soul-force. It raises man to an unparalleled quietness of higher orders of harmonious experience called peace or mystic experience.

Generally speaking, spirituality in Basava and Tagore means transcending worldliness of selfish life. It lifts man above the physical and provides the basis for man’s capacity to reach up toward God, the ultimate good. It stands for higher aspirations and ideals. It is realized in and through the bodily means turned to higher orders of experience. Both Basava and Tagore believe that spirituality is infinitely more significant because it has immanence as well as transcendence corresponding to the sakara and nirakara

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aspects of God or Brahman. For them value or purpose or meaning is essential to understand spirituality recognizing the dignity and sanctity of man. God and man are mutually valuable to each other. Both Basava and Tagore insist upon significance of expression in the life of man. A deep force is added to the doctrine of bhakti or loving devotion and universal love. For both the highest concentrated experience of loving devotion is the mystic element. The moral force of their mysticism is certainly more impressive than that of any other mystic in the world. This comprehensive and undeniable account of what they say and do, are the essential expressions of their spiritual nature and spiritual aspirations in life and culture. In terms of any adequate definition of the spiritual they cannot understand how these attitudes and beliefs can be called unspiritual. Any capacity, any aspiration, and any action that helps to transcend the natural and enable man to seek the best that is within him and to emulate the best in the universe viz., God is clearly spiritual. Both Basava and Tagore never accept the restricted meaning of spirituality as applied to few selected mystics of history. The demand for pure spirituality is foreign to both Basava and Tagore and the great tradition of Indian thought and religion. Such a demand is a tragic distortion and travesty of evidence and experience. Accordingly the formulae “one without a second” and “all this is Brahman” are equally imperative for understanding the spiritual tradition of India inherited by Basava and Tagore. The finite soul aspiring for the infinite in a transcendent relationship is common to both Basava and Tagore. It is the transcendence of the ego reaching the divine not only by the realization of truth and goodness but also the beautiful. [Satyam Sivam Sundaram]

But it is a tragedy that modern day Indian intellectuals denigrate their own culture and spirituality in blind imitation of westerners’ contempt for Indian culture. They do not see independently the value or otherwise of their own cultural past. A people who do not understand their past do not carry
their country forward. David Frawley has aptly put this point in the following words: “There is probably no other country in the world where it has become a national pastime among its educated class to denigrate its own culture and history...only by reclaiming its own cultural mentality and spirituality can the country really go forward...If a nation does not face its true history, it has no future and its present remains confused.” 4 Accordingly it is the genius of Basava and Tagore, which can inspire the present generation to vitalize the past and carry forward to new heights of creativity.

Spirituality makes man modest, gentle and unfailingly kind. It quickens in man the sense of personal dignity, self-respect, sanctity and sacredness of soul. Its influence in producing naked simplicity in our ways of living is captivating. Tagore says: “The more one lives alone on the river or in the open country, the clearer it becomes that nothing is more beautiful or great than to perform the ordinary duties of one’s daily life simply and naturally. From the grass in the field to the stars in the sky each one is doing just that; and there is such profound peace and surpassing beauty in nature because none of these tries forcibly to transgress its limitations... And, indeed, what little of beauty and peace is to be found in the societies of men is owing to the daily performance of small duties, not to big doings and fine talk.” 5 Its sincerity is transparent and devotion to the truth of dynamic perfection inexorable. Material considerations, worldly cares and ambitions have long since vanished from such an aspirant’s life. The effect of spirituality is to redress the aspirant’s pride in his intellect, to reduce his conceit and his complacency, that he will be better fortified to face the ordeal of reality. Mankind is afloat on a frail life raft.

Spirituality understands the monsters of the deep and the storms that come up in the night. The spiritual aspirant practices restraint, which the modern man in his zeal for promiscuous consumerism has forgotten. Therefore spirituality can be the only panacea for all the ills of our present
day world - crime, conflicts, discords, disputes, hatred, all forms of violence, terrorism and so on. Somehow or other man finds ingenious ways of missing truly real life. The ignoble temptations trick man into different ways of self-deception calling the unfruitful activities as life, which in truth is death. This is so because it comes in the way of higher orders of experience, the real meaning, that man ought to be in search of. It also shows whether the core of aspirant’s character is on the side of nobler ways or on the side of demonizing impulses. If only the aspirant has self-observing and self-critical intuitive insights into the inner struggle of the soul then only there is the likelihood of his crossing the Rubicon of animal passions. In this respect both Basava and Tagore are fully aware of the difficulties that the mystic aspirant has to face in overcoming the hazards of the dark night of the soul. In the opinion of this thesis Basava has given a more vivid and detailed description of the living actualities of the aspirant’s struggling endeavor than Tagore. It has been shown that the mystic way is not a smooth sailing easy path. The aspirant must have had the courage of conviction to face the rough weather of violent passions, which would otherwise sweep off his feet. He may even be plunged into a sense of alienation by being forsaken by God. This viraha experience intensifies the agony of yearning. In this mood the aspirant may be lead even to accuse God of being devoid of mercy. Face to face with the mysterious machinations of the baser impulses and beset by the dangers the aspirant instinctively turns for help from powers other and greater than him. Basava says:

Even as harlot - begotten son,
I cannot say to any one,
O Father, Father!
Cennayya is my father; his son I
In the Great House
Of Kudala Sanga,
Basavanna, the treasurer
Is a child of charity. (VB, 346)
The aspirant yearns for the company of Saranas and the grace of God. He knows fully well that God responds only to those who have firm faith in God and surrenders all his egoistic tendencies to him. How the aspirant is pitch forked into closer union with God is already elaborated in chapter VI. We have also explained therein the kind of mystic union and its ineffability in a kind of metaphorical language halting behind intuition. This is so because what cannot be said must never the less be left unsaid. Furthermore, we have discussed the status of soul as it is in union with God. We have shown how both Basava and Tagore reject the position of the identity of the soul merging into God and maintaining its distinction equally enjoying blissful union mutually.

Philosophical underpinnings of soul and God and their nature, status, relation are discussed in chapter VII. Soul is the center without which all our experience, inquiry, literature, civil law etc., cannot be rendered meaningful. We do not need philosophy to dismiss elements insistently experienced. Any thought must account for and not explain away the facts of experience. There is a prevalent notion that reality must be conceived in non-relational terms. But such a view runs in the face of experience and logic. Even to say that such a thing exists it must be related to experience. Accordingly both Basava and Tagore have insisted that reality must be conceived in relational terms. It is the imperishable merit of these thinkers that only on the basis of relation can aesthetics, morality, religious mysticism and the whole of social existence be rendered intelligible.

Both Basava and Tagore accept the sanctity and sacredness of temporal world. They have an affirmative outlook on life. They attach positive value to every element of human personality in proportion to their goal of life. Here Sarana Siddharama says:
If a bhakta is enamoured of a woman,
He'd better marry and live with her;
If a bhakta is enamoured of land,
He'd better buy it and build a house;
If a bhakta is enamoured of gold,
He'd better labour to own it,
Look you, Kapila Siddha Mallikarjuna! (VS292)

Similarly Basava says:

Bridling your senses, all you do
Is starting maladies:
For the five senses come and stand
And laugh into your facet
Did Siriyala and Cangale
Give up their nights of love
As wedded man and wife?
Did Sindhuballala give up
His amorous pleasures and dalliance?
Before Thee I avow:
Should I but covet another's wealth or wife,
Let me be banished from Thy feet,
O Kudala Sangama Lord! (VB 638)

Both believe in the higher possibilities of human existence - here as well as here after. In line with Indian tradition self-discipline, and the vision of the greatness of experience, such perfection is concerned with the realization of values, intrinsic to each experience. This perfection of inner life is open not only to their people but to the whole of humanity. The way in which they have sketched the method of attaining the goal of mystic union is so powerful, profound and captivating that even the ordinary people can be lured by it. Here Basava's account is more detailed and charmingly analytical. Both have used poetic prose poems to express the mystic journey

*Vacanas of Siddharama*
experience. We find Tagore in the circumstances of modern life giving lectures and publishing them as prose writings. Mystical experience of both Basava and Tagore is inspired by the intuitive experience of religion. Also the charming beauty of the nature and the aesthetic qualities of music and painting have influenced Tagore. Basava also had the aesthetic quality of experiencing music. He says:

*Make my body, Lord, the pole;
Make of my head, the gourd;
Make of my nerves the wires, O Lord,
And of my fingers the plectrum make;
Intone Thy two-and-thirty notes;
Press my heart and play,
O Kudala Sangama Lord! (VB 498)*

Both were steeped in *bhakti* and mysticism. Basava is called *Bhakti-bhandari* the treasure house of devotion. In this research, apart from other aspects of his personality Basava’s greatness consists in his picturesque account of inner development of man’s character. It is this spiritual technology of man’s internal development that is a real contribution to the fullest development of human spirit. Being born in this both Basava and Tagore were close observers of the world, being familiar with it. What was worthy of retention in tradition they absorbed relevantly to their times. They “vitalize those old streams with fresh currents.”

In their integral approach the Indian mind conceives the claims of all our potentialities to be realized in a balanced harmony giving each element its due place and function in the fuller development of man’s life here and hereafter. Dharma is the framework in which both Basava and Tagore have cast life. Nothing can escape or take a holiday from this dharma or cosmic law governing the course of the universe including human activities. In Basava the principle of *kayaka* is work which helps to earn for oneself and
others without undermining the dignity and sanctity of oneself and others to whom part of the earning was contributed. Similarly in Tagore as a zamindar “one must not help a person however much one may be moved to do so if his self-respect suffers as a result of receiving such help...”  

Tagore has had the advantage of modern knowledge and criticisms of Indian thought and spirituality by foreigners and their Indian counterparts. Being convinced of the greatness and validity of the truths of Indian spirituality and the overall philosophical outlook Tagore refutes the unjust criticism of Indian philosophy. He says: “Some modern philosophers of Europe... maintain that the Brahma of India is a mere abstraction, a negation of all that is in the world. In a word, that the Infinite Being is to be found nowhere except in metaphysics. It may be, that such a doctrine has been and is still prevalent with a section of our countrymen. But this is certainly not in accordance with the pervading spirit of the Indian mind.”

In contrast to both Basava and Tagore in the West the term religion (applied) means a belief system of an organized religion like Christianity and Islam. They believe in one and only God, one and only prophet, and only book of revelation. The whole of humanity is divided into believers and non-believers. It is believed that the believers go to heaven non-believers go to hell. So if the non-believers are to be saved from damnation, they should be converted. Thus conversion is salvation. The monolithic belief systems have formulated their beliefs in simple and uncomplicated terms taken to be absolute statements appealing to the emotional believers. These beliefs are only assumptions open to criticism and critical objections. Is truth so simple to be narrowed down to suit our prejudices? The complexity and abundance of life mocks at such unverifiable dogmatic beliefs. Why should God choose only one son or prophet when everything proceeds from him and spiritual capacity is found in all people? Why should God be addressed in masculine
terms and not in feminine or neuter gender? Or if God is infinite and eternal should not he be beyond sex? Why should there be only one book and not any number books? Can mere belief bring about salvation without in actuality undergoing the intimacy of living experience of transformation of the baser elements into the force and consciousness of higher consciousness? Those so-called beliefs may satisfy the needs of the ego of man for certainty and security. The truth of things is self-evident and speaks for itself. Is it necessary to shout to the world that fire burns or that the Sun shines? Mere belief cannot be a substitute for direct experience of God in so far as any numbers of beliefs, sets of indifferent religions are a distinct possibility. Why should one set of beliefs be preferred to another set as absolute truth? Should it not be a battleground for conflicts? Such dogmatic beliefs take us far away from truly direct spiritual experience. This is so as Dr. David Frawley says, “Belief is the identification of God or truth with a book, person, church or religion...Belief can be in any number of things and has no finality...that Truth transcends all human opinions...It does not matter what we believe in but how we live...If there is only One God or Truth then there cannot be two humanities, the believers and non-believers. If reality is one, then humanity must also be one...This requires the common dharma of human nature, which is to seek the eternal, not to place people under restrictive religious identities.”

Since organized religions (and their scriptures) have created divisions among peoples and promoted an intolerant, violent, hate-mentality among groups of humanity it is necessary to return to a most universal all-comprehending concept of Dharma to avoid such violent clashes. Sri Aurobindo ashram’s mother, Pondicherry, says: “The conflict of religions arises because each one claims the exclusive truths and demands a complete adherence to it by the method of dogma, ritual, ceremony and prescribed acts. The solution would be first to recognize that the truth of religion is in
the spiritual experiences of which it is an outer formulation… It is not by insisting on religion that India and the world can be reconstructed. The new world will transcend religions and will insist on the purity of spiritual experiences.”

This is so because spiritual truth transcends organized religions (based on dogma), which have political ends. They can hardly be called religions. In the true sense therefore they have to be recast and transformed in the direction of experiential spirituality – inward and personal experience – characteristics of truly universal religion. Such a universal religion is not limited by any person, space or time considerations. It is open to all. It is the law of being called dharma. Since we are living in an inter-dependent world, exclusivism has to be given up. Dharma as the cosmic law of being governs the universe including human activities. It emphasizes higher aspirations on the part of living creatures according to their own inner being. Dharma recognizes the sanctity and sacredness of pluralism of things. Insofar as the same cosmic law operates everywhere there is unity emphasized in all beings. In Indian tradition it is called rta dharma. The keeper of the rta dharma is called God. Thus Basava and Tagore in their framework of dharma have formulated it: “As your mind is so thy glory is.” Dharma upholds the sanctity, sacredness and dignity of each creature. But in these days of brutal practicalities dharma seems to have been buried alive or is exiled. Indian wisdom has found that if you uphold dharma it will protect you, if you violate or injure dharma it will harm you. So nothing can escape the sway of dharma. There is no alternative but to submit to it since it is a universal law being above all individual whims and fancies. As David Frawley writes: “To follow the Dharma requires living in harmony with the universe attuned to the consciousness of the Universal Being. Discovery of the Dharma is possible only through direct perception, which requires freeing the mind from its conditioned responses. It does not rest upon belief or speculation. The cultivation of Dharma... means developing awareness that is
clear enough to perceive things as they are. If we emphasize Dharma rather than religion there will be no more religious conflicts in the world.” 9 In this thesis we have developed a common thread running through the sayings of Basava and Tagore culminating in the mystic union of soul and God. Basava calls this Lingangasamarasya and Tagore describes it as peace and harmony in the following words:

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 unshed showers let all my mind bend down at thy door in one salutation to thee.

Let all my songs gather together their diverse strains into a single current and flow to a sea of silence in one salutation to thee.

Like a flock of homesick cranes flying night and day back to their mountain nests let my life take its voyage to its eternal home in one salutation to thee.10

Basava and Tagore are only particular examples among a large majority of Indian spiritual teachers giving voice to the humanity’s truth of experience. Their account of mystic element given here is applicable to all transcending caste, creed, race, and nationality. It is of universal relevance and thus can go global. As Basava says:

The man who slays is a pariah
The man who eats the carrion is low—caste person
Where is the caste here-where?
Our Kudala Sanga’s Sarana
Who loves all things,
He is the well-born one! (VB 590)

This is the life-breath of the true Indian spirituality having a local and extending its locus to the entire humanity. True spirituality is not confined to any particular religion. It is wider than any organized religion. It gives full
freedom to the individuals to practice religion as a direct relation of communion between the individual soul and its God. It is the yogic experience, the ideal of human life. It emphasizes freedom and unity. It is a living experience in the intimacy of the whole of life. It is the instinct of the Indian mind in general and that of Basava and Tagore in particular.

But the sadhaka finds that the established forces of ordinary life are opposed to it and may even deny it or try to prevent it. Thus the aspirant finds these forces to be obstinate impediments in the life of the spirit. Unless the aspirant accepts the ideal of self-realization whole-heatedly and is ready to face all the difficulties by giving up everything past in the service of divine union, he cannot achieve the ultimate goal of God-union. It demands inward and upward self-concentration being open to the influence of God’s lure. However this does not mean that he can do anything that he likes. Persistent survival of brutish impulses mocks at man’s attempts to achieve purity by temperance and discipline. Violent rush of appetite lays bare the predatory creature hidden beneath nature’s beneficent surface. This is so because something invisible in him tricks the aspirant away from his ideal. Also he has to conform to the conditions for the descent of the divine grace. In other words a firm will and rigorous inner discipline are necessary to pursue doggedly the psychic call to go through to the end of mystic union. It is like climbing difficult terrains in the mountaineering adventure. All this is a negative side of mystic journey.

The baser impulses have to be purified and sublimated in the service of positive spiritual adventure. The more this animal nature is purified the more fit the aspirant will be to receive the descent of God’s grace. It requires patience on the part of the aspirant to undergo transformation into the higher consciousness of the divine. Many a times the aspirant has to endure the dark despair of Dark Night of the soul before he is pitch forked into the divine
illumination. It is his study, reflection and the company of wise that can help him to get out of Dark Night and be able to proceed along the higher ranges of divine experience, which Basava calls Lingangasamarasya. Basava describes it as river flowing into river. This life is for those keen souls capable of spiritual adventures. If it is to reach the spiritual needs of the masses spirituality has to be filtered. Basava and Tagore have done this in their own way. Such efforts are precious little drops in the vast sea of spirituality.

It is a tragedy in the modern world that there is decreasing happiness in the midst of increasing comforts. The deeper tragedy is that man suffers from stress, depression, unrest, burnout, dope, loneliness, pressure, heart diseases and diabetes are wrecking one's psyche. At a time when all the elevating forces of thought, feeling, will and the driving forces of spiritual culture are virtually discarded by the ruling classes and intellectuals it is worthwhile to see the relevance of spiritual forces as the prime movers of human action. It is unfortunate that in India every mind-set is swept off by the fear of being left behind in the rat race. An uncertainty of unsettled drifting life drives most people to spirituality. But true spirituality or real religion cannot be commercialized. However mental planning can indicate the work for certain faculties that slumbered in man. As he responds more fully to the music developing his potentialities, his inner and outer vicissitudes are transcended. Through vigorous discipline of his body, mind and heart man can hear the faint intimations of the spirit and respond positively to the higher orders of experience to realize his divine potentiality. In this respect the relevance of the precepts and principles of both Basava and Tagore are couched in a language that can render intelligible to the learned and the lay.

The radical problems of living life worthy of human-divine potentialities are basically the same wherever we are, and the wisdom of Basava and Tagore's experience is vital for all of us, whatever its source. The
appeal and acceptance of religious mysticism should not depend on miracle-mongering and blind faith. It must be weighed in the scales of true spirituality, rationalism, humanism, perfection of inner life and the truth of mankind’s experience.

The mysticism of Basava and Tagore is a free and open spiritual enterprise encouraging and focusing on self-realization. As Dr. Frawley says: “This spirituality is more intimate, more interior and less capable of being transmitted in an outer, mechanical or mass-produced way than other aspects of culture.” We find in Basava and Tagore an irrepressible search for the ultimate meaning of life in contrast to the well known saying “ We have had experience but missed its meaning.” They both have ensured that everyone can have true spiritual freedom to adopt any path to reach and unite with the God of his choice enjoying equally blissful union. It is a way of freeing the human mind from regimentation by blind beliefs, rigidities of dogmas imposed from outside as in Semitic religions. As Sita Ram Goel puts it: these Semitic “ creeds stand for self-stupefaction, self-righteousness and self-aggrandizement ... It is a sin to regard them as religion in any sense of the term, and to extend Samabhava towards their exclusive and intolerant dogmas.”

It is a pity that a mindset drilled in closed creeds finds spiritual freedom to be chaos since it does not fit into the rigidities of its mental moulds to which Semitism is wedded. As an American writer, Gore Vadal puts it ” Now to the root of the matter. The great unmentionable evil at the centre of our culture is monotheism. From a barbaric Bronze Age text known as the Old Testament, three antihuman religions have evolved—Judaism, Christianity and Islam.” It must be obvious by now that the truly spiritual path of self-exploration, self-purification and self-transcendence is the real solution to the problem of life and character. As shown in the foregoing exposition, mysticism of Basava and Tagore is a travel inwards and upwards reversing the raw human nature proceeding outwards and downwards. It is attained by an inner opening.
REFERENCES:


2. Ibid, p.115.


10. Rabindranath Tagore: Gitanjali poem No. 103.


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