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## HUMANISTIC PHILOSOPHY OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

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### Abstract

Humanism is considered as most influential term and it is a moral and intellectual concept. Humanistic philosophy emphasis that all human beings are born with moral value, and have a responsibility to help one another live better lives. Rabindranath Tagore was a most outstanding figure among all contemporary Indian Philosophers. Some of his stories and articles also reflect his philosophy of humanism. His poem, especially those written in his later life also reflects the same view. In his book, "The Religion of Man", Tagore has clearly sated "Religion inevitably concentrates itself on humanity, which illumines our reason, inspires out wisdom, stimulates our love, and claims our intelligent service"

### 1.00Introduction:

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was a most prominent figure of philosophical world. He was a poet, philosopher, educator, naturalist, writer who reshaped the development of Indian philosophy in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. He was a key figure of the Bengali Renaissance. He was also a humanist, Universalists, and strident anti-nationalist who received the Nobel Prize in 1913 as a first Indian, for his great writing named, "Gitanjali." His philosophical works are mainly focuses on the religious and ethical aspects.

The word "Humanism" comes from Latin word "Humanitus" which means "any outlook or a way of life centered on human need and interest and the development of the full potential of man." Humanism has a deep influence on modern society. Humanism is a belief which gives importance on the independence of human beings. Humanism emphasis on reason and critical thinking over the traditional religious faith. Tagore's universal humanism is mainly expressed through his concept of interpersonal relationship. His

internationalism was basically critique of the concept of nationalism and patriotism. His internationalism has expressed that all human beings have equal right to live in this earth and have treated equally regardless of the country or nation to which they belonged. His song “Jana Gana Mana” has reflects a strong humanistic approach among all Indian people.

## **2.00 Objectives:**

- To know better well about Humanistic view of Rabindranath Tagore.
- To discuss about the concept of Man
- To discuss about the relationship between Man and Nature.
- To know about importance of humanism.

## **3.00: Methodology:**

The study is based on secondary data collection from various websites, books, and journals. Descriptive method is adopted in this paper.

## **4.00 Concept of Man:**

Tagore gives the theory of spiritual humanism. He says that man is referred as the gospel of unity and harmony. He was a prophet of love, harmony and fellowship. Tagore’s spiritual foundations include peace, love and humanism. He was in the favour of spiritual equality. He prefers moral equanimity also. He desired the exaltation of the spirit of man. Tagore says that man is referred as a unique model of God. Man is regarded as the culmination of the creative process of a superior great power.

Tagore says that human must inculcate the feature of truth within itself. Tagore conceived man in such a manner that without affecting the Godness of God, he gives to man also a special dignity and uniqueness. Tagore is often considered as primarily a philosopher of humanity perhaps on account of the fact that in his philosophy man has been given a very key status. He traces the history of evolution of life and shows that with the advent of man evolution itself strikes a different note. Before man appeared on earth, evolution proceeded, more or less, in a mechanical manner. Tagore says, “The most important fact that has come into prominence along with the change of direction in our evolution is the possession of a spirit which has its enormous capital with a surplus for in excess of the requirements of the biological animal in man.” As an animal they (human being) are still dependent on nature, as a man they are sovereign who builds their world and rules it.

According to Tagore, there are two essential man’s nature, a lower one and higher one. The finite aspect of man’s nature Tagore describes that aspects of man which can be explained in terms of natural and environmental factors. The finite self is the natural or the ordinary man. According to Tagore, different kinds of desire that go to constitute the finite self. To fulfillment of these desires the finite individual performs his activities.

Tagore described the infinite aspect of man’s nature, called the ‘Universal in man’, the ‘Surplus in man.’ The most important character of the infinite aspect of man is that it constantly impels the individual to go beyond. In this stage man has yearning for mukti or immortality. Unlike other creature, man somehow has this feeling in spite of their obvious experience of the phenomenon of death. The infinite aspect of man’s personality is dynamic and

ever-growing. This aspect of man feels attracted towards nature. The physical man cannot have any feeling of kinship with nature. This aspect of man's nature is basically creative. By creativity Tagore does not mean the mere capacity to construct something new. Creativity is the capacity of having and giving expression to novel ideas; it is the power of having new and original visions.

### **5.00 Relationship between Man and Nature:**

According to Tagore nature is the best teacher to man. There is a strong relationship between man and nature. Both nature and man are created by supreme power. He said, "Education diverted from nature has brought untold harm to young children." Nature helps students because it provides a better environment to earn knowledge. Tagore also gives importance on moral and spiritual development. Moral and spiritual education is more important than bookish knowledge for an integral development of human personality which is possible through natural circumstances.

Tagore was considered as naturalist philosopher. According to him nature is manuscript of God. Nature will provide spontaneous development and natural growth of children. Contact with nature means contact with space outside which leads to being spacious within. Nature leads to expansion of soul. Tagore said, "Whenever the landscape is immense, the sky unlimited, clouds intensely dense, feeling unfathomable, that is the day where infinity is manifest, its companion is one solitary person."

### **6.00 Importance of Humanism:**

Tagore was considered as a great humanist. In his literary works, Tagore expresses the universal humanism. He gives importance on all round development of women and the poor people of Bengali. Tagore declares that Man is the architect of his own destiny. Tagore rejected the concept of hedonism and utilitarianism. He believes in the intellectuality and morality of human being. Tagore does not accept the existence of God as an absolute truth. He believes that this universe is not created by God, it is considered as the universe of human beings. According to him "In the large life of social communism, man feels the mystery of unity, as he does it music. From the sense of their unity, men come to the sense of their God."

According to Tagore, "In today's eternity none of us are different from another but rather we should have feelings that every human beings is identical between each other. We should not possess any vicious feelings about others." Tagore expressed that service to mankind is service to God. In "Gitanjali", Tagore expresses a humanistic thought, it is purely humanistic. He writes in "Gitanjali"-

He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground

And where the path maker is breaking the stones

He is with them in Sun and Shower

And his garment is covered with dust

Put off thy holy mantel and even like him  
 Come down on the dusty soil  
 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 forever.  
 Come out of thy meditations and leave aside  
 thy flowers and incense  
 What harm is there if they cloths become  
 tattered and stained?  
 Meet him and stand by him in toil and in  
 sweat of thy brow.

#### **7.00 Freedom of man:**

Freedom is the integral part of human development. As an educationist he wanted education to be natural in content and quality and the function of education is to bring the child's mind in contact with nature. He advocated that "Education has its only meaning and object in freedom from ignorance about the laws of univers and freedom from passion and prejudice in our communication with the human world." The main theme of Tagore's philosophy was man of God. Man enjoys some amount of freedom even in the physical realm. But according to Tagore, this freedom is inside a cage. The physical man is basically limited by the physical body.

Tagore describes the freedom of infinite nature of man that is spiritual freedom. It breaks the shackles of the finite body and to aspire for the realization of oneness or unity. Perfect freedom is possible only through the perfect harmony of relationship that is realization of the Universal within the individual.

#### **8.00 Inter-personal Relationship:**

"The Religion of Man" is the best philosophical writing of Rabindranath Tagore. This book mainly based on his fruitful lectures delivered at Manchester College, Oxford, in 1930, which contains his reflection on the spirit of religion, spirituality, divine experience and humanity. The main tenets of tagore's educational philosophy is that Spritualism is the essence of humanism. Tagore declares that Man is the architect of his own destiny. Tagore religion is religion of Man. But the term "religion", does not suggest that man is under the control of an infinite being like God. The function of religion is to be bring the individual into concerned with love, indeed with the Supreme Man, the Universal being. The reality of the Supreme Person is as much dependent upon

the personal being as the latter is dependent upon the former. So God is also a personal being like man. Tagore believed that the state of realizing our relationship all through as a union with the divine is the ultimate end and fulfillment of humanity. Therefore, the spirit of oneness in God has the many, for the realization of this unit and the truth behind this spiritual union is love. He thinks that man is above all a lover, his freedom and fulfillment is in love, which is another name for perfect comprehension. Though love, human society is set for the best expression of man, and that expression, according to its perfection, leads him to the full realization of divine in humanity.

### **9.00 Conclusion:**

Tagore's humanistic philosophy plays an important role in both Indian and western philosophical thought. He is considered as a central figure who expresses the humanistic thought through his writings. He is a tireless of messenger of truth relation to human dignity and rights despite his being a great creator of art, culture and literature. Tagore idealistic views is more important in our practical life that to find the ultimate truth which will liberate us from cycle of birth and death. Tagore saw nationalism as a recurrent threat to humanity, because with its propensity for the material and the rational, it trampled over the human spirit, human morality and human motion, obscuring his human side under the shadow of soulless organization.

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