



## Human liberation through Nonduality and Pantheism in Rabindra Sangit

Koil Banerjee

Research Scholar, Dept of RSDD, Sangit Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, banerjeekoil@gmail.com

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### ABSTRACT

Where there is a thought that this whole world is an illusion, only the Brahma, the Almighty, is truth; Rabindranath thought differently. In his eyes this whole universe is a part of Him. When the Upanishad says that every material is a part of the Supreme Being, then how could it be different from us? Rabindranath's thought was that we and nature are identical, and our work is the only purpose of our lives. Our work is our revered religion and absolute bliss. He put work above all. He thought meditation or quietism is not the only medium, but it is work that can relieve us from our limitations. In his philosophy we are part of this infinite flow, and we should put ourselves in the highest realm, overstepping this petty attire. This can be done by our work and our worship, which will lead to salvation from bondage and help us to get redemption. Rabindranath believed that Brahma is our father, our friend, and our family, "*Sokatore Oi Kandiche Sokole, Shono Shono Pita*". He has expressed his belief in his songs that Param Brahma is present everywhere, He is one and uniform, and this universe is a manifestation of His love. He believed that this human life can unite to that Mighty Energy in every way of grief, joy, pain, or delight, and there is no difference in human beings or religions; all are one. So, blissful Brahma has expressed himself in every form of this universe, and we are here to glorify His vast expansion. In light of the Upanishad, Rabindranath's nonduality is to accept Param Brahma within us, "*sobar majhare tomare swikar koribo he...*" and his belief in pantheism can lead to human



liberation. His creations depict his thoughts, his philosophy, and his belief. His heart did not refrain from concern about the progress of the human race and our redemption.

## Introduction

From early time Nonduality (Advaita) was explained and spread by many hallows and saints. It is a consciousness which can make us feel that we are part of Brahama and this whole world or reality is a seamless part. Even five elements of life Earth, Water, Air, Fire and Space are Brahama, “*Esho Brahama, Esho Indra, Esho Prajapati, Ete Sorbe Debah, Imani Cha Panchamohavutani...*” (Oitoreyoponishad 3/1/3”). Among many of them, Shankaracharya and Ramanuja are famous and have influenced many lives. Their philosophy was this universe is part of Him, created by Him and will be delitescent within him, “*Sarbong Khalwidang Brahama Tajjalaniti Shanta Upasita*” (chandogyopnishad 3/14/1). While Shankaracharya’s thinking was “*Brahama Sattyang Jaganmithya, Jibo Brahamoiba Naparah*”, creations are not different from creator and this reality is illusion. While Ramanuja philosophy was we are disciples and we should worship to Him to have knowledge and it is the only way to redemption. Some great minds like Maharshi Debendranath practiced and promoted monotheism (Ekeshwarbad), that there is One who has created all these and we are to worship Him.

But there was one whose songs, writings or words has shown the concept of nondualism in a practical way. He is Rabindranath Tagore. He also thought that this whole world and reality is continuous and nothing is illusion. He felt that work is our worship and through work we can feel Him, Brahama, “*Hetha Dur Hoite Dur... Kache Tumi Kormotot Atma Totinir...*”, even we get same reference from Upanishad, “*Kurbannebeho Karmani Jijibisheshatang Samah...*” (Ishoponishad 2). His thought was that in every aspects of life, grief, joy, sorrow, happiness we can touch Brahama and get to reach to redemption. He felt that this reality is a real happiness, “*Bohe Nirantara Ananta Anandadhara*”. To him the Supreme Being, Brahama, was like our father, friend or family and he felt that He is in everything.

This paper will propound Rabindranath’s belief in nondualism and pantheism through his songs and his thoughts, proposed by others.

## Methodology

Rabindranath was remarkable by his ideology with sharp and prejudice free. His philosophy was and is an asset to us and his songs are gems on them too. His life and choice of acceptance, whether it is



Mantras from Upanishad or philosophy of intellectuals has shown the way to understand him better. Views and thoughts of others about Rabindranath are considered for this study.

### Literature review

Rabindranath's philosophy was not ready to accept scientific way for nondualism. His thought was that there is no existence of anyone without their work, workless life is meaningless. Quietism was not his way for redemption. Either by Upasana or by enjoying the material world everyone is being with Brahama. He had huge influence of Vedanta and Upanishad from his childhood though he was not agreed to all of their thoughts. Philosopher Surendranath has admitted that Rabindra-Dorshon "*are statement of any traditional philosophy*" is not. Rabindranath never thought that all '*Sastras*' were applicable to him, '*Rabindranather Monodorshon*' mentions that Rabindranath's nondualism was from his inner consciousness and above the traditional rituals. Rabindranath's feeling was like Brahama exist in every subtle thing. Even five elements of Earth are in their own way, being Brahama itself. He never felt himself detached from this material world or this world from him (*Rabindranather Chintajigot Dhormochinta*).

Rabindranath felt like "*Isha Basyamidam Srbong Yat Kincha Jagatyang Jagat*" (*Ishoponishod 1*). He was not pleased with quietism to get redemption, "*Boiraggya-Sadhone Mukti, Se Amar Noi*". His philosophy was heartless work to be free from bondage is not his pursuit. According to him redemption or liberation is not truth of human lives, but it is a true path to follow, not alike Shankaracharya.

His philosophy was that our lives are to get involve in to different works, and in our working way we will acquire knowledge to get enrich and that will bring happiness. He never accepted these materialistic worlds is not for enjoying or a barrier to liberation. He felt that this world is real and we have to be in it, accept it, and our honest work is our purpose, our worship and that will lead to liberation.

He felt that Brahama is the only truth (Amiyaratan Mukhopadhyay in his book *Rabindranather Monodorshon*) but he desired to be alive among humans (*Kori O Komal*).

Amiyaratan Mukhopadhyay has named Rabindra-Brahama as Ved-Brahama, not as Vedanta-Brahama. Only those concepts of '*Upanishad*' which imparts color of human lives and their redemption were accepted by Rabindranath, not all. Once coating a story of Chandranath Bose he said that "*Liberation is not by killing love, but it is by extending love*".



His concept of religion was about life and make the life better and better. From 'The Religion of Man' we get, *"and therefore true enjoyment can never be had through the satisfaction of greed, but only through the surrender of our individual self to the Universal self"*, it indicates his thought about our purpose and the path to get to zenith.

*'Rabindranather Chintajogot Dhormochinta: Rabindraroohana Sonkolon'*, explore his thought about religion, that he had mentioned, *"religion is preeminent to us, but to make it suitable for us it's preeminence is spoiled definitely"*, this statement explains the concept of religion to him.

Writing about Dharma, he had coated *"Anondaddhebo Kholwimani Vutani Jayante..." (Toittirioponishad 3/6)* and written that, all sayings about God, this is the simplest among; we don't have to think, create, go far away or to wait or long; bliss of Brahama runs in us breathe as we become eager to know Him. His thought was that, daylight waits for blooming our eyes but bliss of Brahama doesn't wait for awakening of heart. *"Amar Praner Manush Ache Prane, Tai Heri tai Sokol Khane"*.

He had described his dogma about religion (dharma) In Atmaorichoy (Published in 1943) that, *"pure love between lives (jibatma) and supreme being (Brahama) is understanding religion. In this love-energy, beauty, glory, limit, limitless all are one. Which accept the past of this reality and this world while this acceptance helps to go beyond this reality with understanding religion"*.

A statement by Prabhatkumar, *"Rabindranath had established Upanishadik Sadhana"* (Rabindrajiboni, 2<sup>nd</sup> vol., 1961)

## Discussion

We live a life with problems which might contrast to the situation or leaving its consequences as we hide our incompetence. How can we live happily or in peace? We are dealing with situations but not living our lives, not even enjoying it. Way to redemption should be our living purpose, so that we can feel the essence of being a part of Him. But how? Many have shown us ways to merge into large ocean of Brahama. Advaita concept of Shankaracharya show us that we are one but we make it different by our work. Ramanuja has shown his concept of Upasana to acquire knowledge and devote ourselves as devotee to Him. But how can we relate this reality to Brahama? Is this truly an illusion? Is our daily lives not accountable to obtain Him?

Rabindranath has shown the world that Brahama is truth and we can feel him in everything. His concept is that our lives is a purposeful practice, and it is not without work. His thinking is water has its own property in its state, fire has its own, in that way humanity is the property of human.



He did not think only about redemption of human, but also thought enrichment of the race. If we enjoy our work and live moments of our life, whether it is happiness or sorrow, we can feel the presence of Brahama in everything in our surroundings. We don't have to think ourselves as special neither deprived, no need to be someone to acquire quality to get to Him. We can be with Him as we are and we can feel Him within ourselves and within others.

The discussion shows that we should experience our lives to understand it. Rabindranath has shown us that it is not necessary that what is written or said earlier are to be true or acceptable. His life taught us the change and evolution of thinking. Eagerness to identify own self by involving into work, can lead to the stage of redemption.

### Conclusion

Nondualism and pantheism to Rabindranath was simple and practical. He had accepted all substances and elements of this world in his life to live and to enjoy, "*Ananda Dhara Bohiche Vubone*". According to him when Brahama is in everything then why we think to leave these materials and why can't we see others as Brahama. This reality is for us and we are here to glorify it, "*Jogote Anandajogge Amar Nimontron*". This can lead to an end of discrimination of different religions, different colors, different races or different persons, "*Eso He Arya, Eso Anarya, Hindu Musalman...*". We can accept nature as Brahama, as he had, "*Akash Vora Surjyo-Tara, Biswavora Pran, Tahari Majhkhane Ami Peyechi More Sthan, Bismoye Tai Jage Amar Gaan*". We can think ourselves among others. "*Cholo jai Kaaje Manob Somaje, Cholo Bahiriya Jogotero Majhe*".

He felt Brahama being alive in this reality and our work which is our worship, "*Sudhu Nirjon Dhyaner Asone Nohe- Tobo Sangsar Jetha Jagroto Rohe, Korme Sethai Tomare Swikar Koribo He*" is being in a Sadhana by being in this reality. He felt Brahama from finite to infinite, "*Simar Majhe, Asim, Tumi Bajao Apon Sur*", and did not find Him as in a definite form, his search for Him was in formless, "*Arup, Tomar Bani; Ange Amar Chitte Amar Mukti Dik Ani*". He had accepted Brahama as One and only Truth and prayed to him to make him free from bondage of illusions, "*Toma Bine Anath Ami Ati He... Kaato He E Mayabondhon Rakho Rakho Chorone E Minoti He*".

Human liberation is not the liberation of an individual. It is an enrichment of entire community, race. His thoughts, philosophy can not only make us feel that we are a part of the seamless flow, unity, Brahama, but also unite us. "*Biswa Sathe Joge Jethai Biharo, Seikhane Jog Tomar Sathe Amaro... Sobar Jethai Apon Tumi Sethai Apon Amaro*".



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