



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Jibandebata, The Pursuit Of Rabindranath Tagore

1st Author

Rajesh Gupta

Assistant professor, Dept. of Philosophy, Sagardighi K.K.S. Mahavidyalaya, India

2nd Author

Sarbamoyee Bandyopadhyay

M.A in English, Visva-Bharati, India

Abstract- The idea of God in our minds is not only important but also a matter of debate. For example, some of us think that God predetermines our fate or God can control our fate and it is happened accordingly our deeds in the previous birth. On the other hand, there are some people who completely believe in their works and they think that we can create our fate by our good deeds and most importantly we can control and manage ourselves. In this article we are going to discuss about Tagore's concept of 'that power' by which we can make our lives. Accordingly to Tagore this 'power' is called 'Jibandebata' who is unseen but who's existence in our lives cannot be denied. Generally we think that Tagore's 'Jibandebata' is another name of God himself. But we come to know that Rabindranath Tagore never wants to mean God by his 'Jibandebata'. The religious texts always highlight that God who represents the world but Tagore's 'Jibandebata' is completely different from him. He says that 'Jibandebata' can be felt and he is special to everybody. He is the life and existence as well. Human beings have nothing else apart from him.

Keyword- 'Jibandebata', Nature, Atmaparachay, koutukmoyee, Viswaprakriti, Tagore, Anagoto.

It is thought that Tagore can first realize the presence of his 'Jibandebata' when in 1890 he has to go to Shilaidah from Kolkata to look after the zamindari. This 'Shilaidah days' is a very important part in Tagore's life because the environment he feels here, the people he comes across and the unceasing waves of river Padma help him to read the meaning of living more deeply. It can be easily said that if Tagore never gets opportunities to spend a long time in the bank of the river Padma then his 'Jibandebata' also remains elusive. Although the natural beauty of river Padma and the environment of Shilaidah take an important part in Tagore's realization of 'Jibandebata' but according to Tagore in his whole life he has faced the 'Jibandebata' in different ways at different times. In other words, he has felt his 'Jibandebata'(The God of life) in regular different forms.

One aspect of Tagore's spiritualism is his vision of this 'Jibandebata'(The God of Life). In *Gitanjali parba* Tagore's represents the 'supreme power' in various different manners. Here it is important to note that Tagore believes in a particular rule of law which always tries to suppress the biggest truth behind every creation. When we observe any creation in this world we always concentrate on the present situation of that creation. For example, when the flowers bloom we think that it is the main objective of a tree to bloom a flower or bear a fruit. But we never care about the hidden cause behind the blooming of a flower and bearing of a fruit because an illusion is made in front of our eyes that we can't easily realize that a beautiful flower is only meant to bear fruit and very importantly fruit is not the ultimate creation of a tree, fruit has already turned the seed into a womb. According to Tagore this illusion is happened only for the particular rule of law. And he thinks that this rule of law is also effective in his poetry. That's why in a certain point of time Tagore feels that the collection of his tireless poems seem to be just an occasion for him. They become same to him and Tagore refers this sameness as 'Anagata'. It is completely unknown to him that for so long he has been composing 'Anagata" and nothing else. Here comes the role of 'Jibandebata' whom Tagore emphasize again and again not only in his spiritual but material writings also. Rabindranath Tagore thinks that this 'Jibandebata' is the only one who has created all creations of Tagore. It means that 'Jibandebata' is the ultimate creator of everything but common people are not able to feel his presence in their lives. So, when a great person like Tagore can feel his presence for the first time ,he thinks that he hasn't created anything but the Supreme creator makes him create all his poetry and writings. Every possible thing in this world is controlled by him and he is the one who like a *Bangsibadok*(flutist) has created Raga-Ragini by combining all the tunes. And this supreme creator is Tagore's 'Jibandebata' who is not so called the God but the soul maker for whom we can identify our true selves and can understand the importance of existing in this world.

In his '*Atmaparichay*'(*Of Myself*), Tagore says- " The creative power deep within me that I have written of in this letter, the power that confers unity and significance on all the joy and sorrow and circumstance of my life, is weaving onto one stand the myriad forms of myself and my chain of lives,through which I can feel the unity within the universe. It is this that I addressed as Jibandebata"(page-7, Rabindranath Tagore of Myself, *Atmaparichay*) This sentence indicates that the inner creator who influences the Poet to write his innumerable writings is a poet self of Tagore himself and according to Tagore this poet self is no one but Kabi's 'Jibandebata'. In *Atmaparichay*, Rabindranath says that only for his 'Jibandebata' he can feel his existence. He can realize that in each and every moment he exists in this world, through his writings he can express whatever comes into his mind and ultimately he is able to endure all the happiness and sorrows of this world and finds a joy in this endurance.

One thing is very clear that Poet's understanding of his 'Jibandebata' has a connection with his understanding of nature. The romance and love he talks about in *Atmaparichay* probably indicate how he falls in love with nature after realizing the presence of the supreme creator in his life. He says-

“You have welcomed me. What hopes
you had I cannot tell.

Monarch of Life, did you delight
in my dawn and in my night,
in my labour, in my play,”

In winter, autumn, monsoon, spring,
all the songs my soul would sing -
alone upon your throne, did you

discern that melody? “(page-8, Rabindranath Tagore of Myself, *Atmaparichay*)

In this paper we have two main objectives. The first is to find out the gender identity of Tagore’s ‘Jibandebata’ and the second is to know those two or three people who are in love with each other as mentioned by Tagore in his *Atmaparichay*. Are these two Tagore and his Jibandebata or Jibandebata and prokiti(Nature)?

If we deeply read Tagore’s *Atmaparichay*, we can realize that this ‘Jibandebata’ is a male, the inner soul of Tagore himself, and above all he is *Param Brahma* for whom Tagore gets the taste of liberation (Mukti). He wants to get this liberation by enjoying the beauty of this world. He says-

“Renunciation’s no escape for me.

Rather as one tied down endlessly

I’ll taste salvation’s joys...”(page-13, Rabindranath Tagore of Myself, *Atmaparichay*)

Tagore argues that he is in love with his Jibandebata and through this, he perceives nature in its various forms. Here nature represents feminity. So she is sometimes known to the poet as his ‘priya’(lover), sometimes as a mother and also a beloved of Jibandebata -

“Then break up the court of today

and bring new forms, a new array

of beauty. I the ever old

you take again as new.

Bring me within life’s bond, I pray,

that wedding tie renew.”(9)

Again he says -

“Take me back, O Earth, and draw

this child of your lap within once more,

beneath your mighty garment's fold.

Mother, mixed in your clay's mould,

I reach out everywhere with the quick joy

of Spring.”(page-10, Rabindranath Tagore of Myself, Atmaparichay)

We have indicated nature as the beloved of Jibandebata because according to Tagore Jibandebata manifests himself through Prakriti (Nature) as far as we understand Tagore, he wants to mean that the world cannot be understood only by realizing the presence of Jibandebata in our lives. Rather, we have to know the harmony of nature (Paramaprariti) with Jibandebata (Parampurush). Tagore says –“At moments of leisure on life's journey, when I have taken the opportunity to look at the world clearly and unwaveringly, another sensation has overwhelmed me. The sense of an unbroken link between me and the natural universe an ever old oneness of being has exerted a deep pull. ”(page- 10, Rabindranath Tagore of Myself, Atmaparichay)

Thus Tagore's Jibandebata i.e supreme creator has shown Viswaprakriti(World nature) to him. It is probably this Viswaprakriti whom Tagore refers to as 'koutukmoyee' in the beginning of Atyaporichay-

“Say whatever-new jest is this,
mistress of life's jests, I pray?

Say what space you will allow

for the worlds that I would say?”(page-1, Rabindranath Tagore of Myself, Atmaparichay)

Thus Viswaprokriti indirectly informs Poet about the presence of 'Jibandebata' in his life. Poet writes-

“But where and when was my dawn's hour?

Hiding in my life your power,

amid what images of yours

did you make flower?

Eternal old one still again,

again, you fashion me.

You were ever at my side,

ever you will be.”(page-6, Rabindranath Tagore of Myself, Atmaparichay)

The most interesting fact is how like a spectator Tagore enjoys the harmony and love between Viswaprokriti and Jibandebata with unflinching joy. According to Rabindranath, the realization of 'Jibandebata' is the same as the realization of the soul. Sometimes, Poet puts himself in the place of Jibandebata and becomes romantically involved with the world (Viswaprokriti) -

“Deepest of all,

Within my soul’s depth now you fall,

and have you slaked your thirst?

With a thousand streams of pain and pleasure.

I have filled your cup’s full measure,

wringing my heart with a pressure cruel-

kneading it to grape-burst!”(Page-7,Rabindranath Tagore of Myself, Atmaparichay)

Another important point is that in Tagore’s *Atmaparichay* we notice a clear influence of Vaisnavism especially when he thinks of himself as a part of Viswaprokriti (world nature) and falls in love with his Jibandebata (Parambrahma or Parampurush). Just as Chaitanya dev sometimes manifests himself as Radha, so Poet seems to think of himself as the beloved of his Jibandebata. In his *Bhanusingher Padabali*, this Vaisnavic influence comes when the poet writes:

In the densely flowering forest grove

The flute sings softly of tender love.

Shame and scruples cast aside,

O beloved friend,

Come, step outside! (‘Gohono kusumo kunjo majhe’, Bhanusingher Padabali, translate by Radha Chakravarty)

Above all, Jibandebata is nothing but a power that leads our lives. In *Advaita Vedanta* our world is compared with *Brahma* (supreme power) and this Brahma is also present in everybody’s life. Tagore can realize the presence of Brahma whom we cannot put in the so-called stereotypical gender identity. Jibandebata is particularly neither man nor a woman. In Tagore’s writings, he has repeatedly manifested himself as a male and sometimes as a female. Beyond everything, for Tagore, to know Jibandebata is to know all of himself.

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