



Gitanjali LVI: The Divine Union of The God and the Poet

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ABSTRACT

Rabindranath Tagore, sobriquet Gurudev spiritualizes his life-philosophy through the beautiful verses of Gitanjali. The strain of Vaishnavism, the influence of Jayadeva and Vidyapati, impressions Vedanta and Srimad Bhagavad Gita and poetic introspection have turned the Gitanjali— a collection of verses offering heart-felt obeisance to the lotus feet of God. The poet emphasizes the power of pure love and devotion for the Divine consciousness and spiritual attainment. The poetic love forms, condenses and compels the Supremo to manifest His spontaneous ethereal presence and bliss in the heart. In Gitanjali LVI, the poet enshrines the sublimity of Divine love. The Poet-speaker has imagined himself as beloved-devotee and the God as lover-supremo. The poet is happy as he is blessed and loved by Him. The poet asserts the importances of devotee—without her presence His magnificence and majestic elegance would not been disclosed to the universe. Though the poet is a little worshipper, but He loves her adoration, serving and dedicated hymns. The God's multitudes of plans for this universe are surged through the life of the devotee in varied forms. Lord, the controller of the universe attracts the devotees' heart by His majestic grandeurs and glorified appearances. In different ages, for the sake of "Dhrama" He has incarnated Himself in various forms. He is the God of devotees and Threat to Demons. The bud of love which blooms in the very core of the devotee's heart is also the elucidation of God, the Ocean of Love. The fulfillment of the love will be done in divine union—when the poet's soul (Jivatma) mingles with the Super-soul (Paramatma). The poet refers to the ultimate aim of human soul—to seek the Absolute Truth. The Vaishnava poet philosophizes the essence of supreme spirituality— "BhagavadPrem" (Divine Love). The poet upholds the depth and magnificence of "Radha- Prem", the simulacra of esteemed platonic love. In this research paper, I shall analyze the poem Gitanjali LVI— "Thus it is that thy joy in me is so full" from varied perspectives.

Introduction:

Rabindranath Tagore is one of the greatest Renaissance humanists as well as the towering personality with magical lyricism, India has ever produced. Rabindranath sobriquet Gurudev is the poet of the world. He is also a renowned short-story writer, essayist, novelist, lyricist, and dramatist. Edward Thompson praises his jugglery of poetic diction as an “impeccable metrical achievement.” Verghese opines that his poetry has “humanistic essence combined with a spirituality, a love of nature and man, the expression of beauty and splendor of the earth. The poet’s spiritual message does not, however, enjoin us to run away from the ‘fret and fever of life’ and seek shelter in a hermitage....” He is greatly influenced by the ancient poet Kalidasa. The strain of Vaishnavism, prevalent in Bengal from Sari Chaitanya’s era imbued his poetic oeuvre deeply. Towards the second phase of his poetic career, Tagore philosophizes the different stages of his spiritual voyage through “Utsarga” (1903) and Kheya (1906). In Gitanjali (1912), Gitimalya (1914) and Gitali (1914), Tagore is on the acme of realization— life’s philosophy, quest for God, continual progress towards absolute truth, devoid of ‘maya’ (illusion), identification of thyself, unconditional surrender of soul and ultimately divine union. To Tagore, God is the eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, the controller of universe, the ocean of Mercy, Friend of the poor Devotees, Creator of creatures and the Guardian of mankind. Human being (Jivatma) is the inseparable part of the Creator (Paramatma). Tagore believes that the divine vibrance pulsates through the human being. Human being unaware of that sensation cannot realize the Divine Presence in him. Tagore philosophizes that everything ends to the feet of God as everything comes from Him. Human being cannot perceive His internal presence within our soul. That immanent spirit throbs into the man’s soul. Tagore says—

“He it is, the innermost one, awakens my being with his deep hidden touches.”

Rabindranath’s idea of salvation is different, celestial enough. Tagore cherishes to serve God; wishes to be blessed spontaneously and to relish the divine jouissance. His spiritual oneness refers the mingling of finite with Infinite. Rabindranath is deeply overwhelmed by the medieval Bengali “Vaishnav Padabali” which recites the divine dalliance of Radha-Krishna. The dearest devotee Shree Radha’s various love phases—her secret adventurous journey (Abhisar), yearning for lover (Anurag), frivolous quarreling (Kalahantarika) and ultimately Radhika’s soulful surrender to Krishna—are narrated there. In every poem of Gitanjali, we get that divine glimpse. As Radhika yearns for her divine lover Shree Krishna, similarly the poet yearns to unite with the Paramatma, the Lord. In Gitanjali, Tagore prays—

“I am only waiting for love to give myself up and last into his hands

I want thee, only thee.”

For Tagore, Love is his religion, his offerings, and his thread of surrender. Love is superior to knowledge. Love is the only way of salvation. Tagore wants to unite with Paramatma through the devotion of love. Spiritual love enkindles human consciousness which recognizes God ultimately. Shree Radhika steals the heart of Krishna with her pure, ethereal love. The poet also tributes to the lotus feet of God through the songs of Gitanjali dappled with pure emotion, utmost devotion, and heartfelt love.

Tagore’s magnum opus ‘Gitanjali’ is translated into English by Tagore himself. “Git” means song/ music and ‘Anjali’ means tribute/ offerings. The lyrical cadences, philosophic theme, devotional tone, and subtlety of thought appeal the 103 songs of Gitanjali as universal. It is not only Tribute of Tagore to God, but of also every Vaishnava devotee. Every lyrical verse touches the very core of the heart. Being spellbound, the famous Irish Poet-Laureate W.B. Yeats in the introduction of Gitanjali asserts – “I have carried the manuscript of these translations around with me for days at a time, reading it in railway trains, or on the tops of omnibuses, and in restaurants. I have often had to close the book because I was afraid some stranger might see how moved I was by it.”

Gitanjali-56: The Union of Soul andSupremo:

The poem exuberates the sublime stage of devotional love. When the devotee gets calm; meditates lord assimilating pure love for Him, God awakens their conscious heart (Bhagavad Chetana) and manifests His Divine grace. The poem is the spontaneous overflow of poetic love for lord. The poet is lovable devotee and the Lord is lover-spirit—the Friend, Philosopher and Guide.

The Poet-speaker has imagined himself as beloved and the God as his Divine Lover. The poet starts the lyrics in a happy tone, full of ardour. The poet is happy as her lover— The Lord loves her very much. The poet claims that due to the power of her deep-delved love, Lord has come down from Heaven to Earth. Addressing the God of Universe, the poet claims that if she would not been there, His love, kindness, mercy, and affection would not been reflected. The magnificence of His glory would not been disclosed. That is why, the Lord has unfolded his varied creations, worldliness— ‘Samsara’. In the heart of the devotee, the dalliance of the Lord jingles in full swing. The God’s divine intent and varied plans are undulated through the life of the Devotee in diverse forms. Through the poet, God’s divine exuberance and abundance is manifested. Lord, ‘the King of all Kings’ has decorated himself in various incarnations. God’s majestic elegance, Divine stature, paradisaal aroma, ostentatious ornaments and glorious appearances touch the heart of the poet. The beloved-poet’s cordial love which is also manifested through God’s love hails

Him to come down for the perfection of love which will be fulfilled in divine mingling of beloved—Poet and Divine-Lover. The perfection of love will be accomplished when the love of devotee (Jivatma) and the love of God (Paramatma) will get united.

In the poem LVI, the poet glorifies the magnificence of pure love. The lover and the beloved are in innate consummation of love. The beloved-poet is so enamoured in the Divine love that he has lost his existence. His affination towards God is so determined that HE has manifested his divine presence in him. The poet asserts that without him, HE would not have been known as –t “Achyuta”, Ocean of mercy, Friend of Pauper, Simulacra of Kindness, and the ‘Poorna-Purushottam’.

The poet says that he is fulfilled adoring HIM; HE is absolute complete loving him. The God loves the poet’s humble adoration. So, HE has created the universe along with him. HE is the KING of all Gods; He is the Divine Cowherd of Vrindavan, The Emperor of Dwaraka. To keep the request of the devotees, Lord has incarnated himself in various forms. To keep the promise of devotees; to save His disciples; to rescue His pious saints from the deadly torture of Asura; to establish the ‘Dharma’; to advocate the principle of equality, morality and humanity; to proclaim the spirituality of Vaishnavism— God, the Controller of universe has descended from Heaven in diverse incarnation and various forms— some of them are eerie, some horrible; calm and serene; very few forms are gracious, pleasant and debonair. To grace the disciple’s request, respect, and faith, HE descends from paradise and manifests celestial happiness in the very core of the devotees’ heart. In Srimad Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 4, Verse-7, Lord Krishna Says—

“yadayada hi dharmasya glanirbhavati Bharata
abhyutthanam adharmasya tadatmanam srijamyaham”

(Whenever there is a decline in righteousness and an increase in unrighteousness, O Arjuna, at that time I manifest Myself on Earth.)

In Vaishnava tradition from a sagacious perspective, God and the Devotee are worshipped together. But Tagore’s philosophy of spirituality is different. He does not want to mingle with the God’s self; he being the beloved-devotee wants to adore, tribute and appease his Lover Lord. His platonic love for Lord is expressed—

“And for this thy love loses itself in the love of thy lover, and there art thou seen in the perfect union of two.”

The person who relishes the rarest nectar of “Bhagavad Prem” transcends the illusion of mundane existence. The same case happens with the Poet—beloved. We can deeply analyze this poetic fervidity with the throbbing ardencies of Srimati Radhika’s love for Krishna. Shree Radhika’s yearning, restlessness, perturbation, estrangement, love-lorn ardencies, divine dalliance, and soulful

union with the Almighty Lord Shree Krishna can be recollected reading the poems of Tagore's Gitanjali. In this poem LVI, Shree Radhika, the divine devotee of supremo becomes the mouthpiece of the poet. Srimati Radhika's unparalleled ardour, unprecedented bewilderment, irremediable love-sickness, relentless thoughts, and empyreal love is so enamoured that compels Shree Krishna to appear frequently. In Sri-Chaitanya-Charitamrta, Adi Leela, Chapter-4, Sloka-85, the magnificence of Radha-Prem is described:

“Krsna-mayi— Krsna yarabhitarebahire
yanhayananetrapade tanha Krsna sphure”

(She whose within and without are Lord Krsna, sees HIM wherever she casts Her glance.)

Conclusion:

Reading the poem LVI, we realize the depth of Tagore's spirituality. Tagore is in sublime stage where the poetic soul seeks spiritual tranquility. Poetic sublimity rests on surrendering the soul with pure love and devotion. The poetic lyricism and heartfelt rendition emanate his depth of devotion. In this verse, the poet claims the importance of devotee for realizing God's glory. God is fully complete with the presence of Devotee. The poet says that though he is an infinitesimal devotee but his adoration, worshipping is so loved by Him that he has come down to him. The poet procures his spiritual attainment at the very end of the poem— through mingling with Paramatma. The poet philosophizes the theory of 'Bhagavad-poem'. The poet verses what should be the ultimate aim of a human soul.

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