

Tagore's Humanism and Related Issues: A Brief Review

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Abstract

Humanism encompasses the values and principles centered around human welfare, dignity, and potentiality. It involves a belief in the intrinsic value of human beings and their capacity for reason, empathy, and moral agency. The present paper explores the definition, characteristics, and scope of humanism, indicating a philosophical exploration into what it means to be human and the ethical obligations that arise from this understanding.

The paper also highlights the social disharmony and unrest. It prompts reflection on the complexities of governance, socio-economic disparities, cultural dynamics, and historical legacies that contribute to societal challenges. Exploring these issues involves philosophical scrutiny of power dynamics, justice, equality, and the pursuit of the common good on the perspective of Rabindranath Tagore.

The examination of the relationship between the state and philosophical concepts like humanism and integral humanism involves critiquing different models of governance and their ethical foundations. It may involve considerations of political philosophy, constitutional principles, and ethical frameworks guiding statecraft. Philosophical analysis in this context aims to assess the moral legitimacy of state actions, the protection of individual rights, and the promotion of societal well-being.

The excerpt articulates a philosophical perspective on humanism, drawing from both ancient Greek philosophy and the intellectual tradition of *Vaishnava* philosophy in India.

Keywords: Humanism, Vaishnava, Philosophy, Ethics, Social, Governance, Philosophical, Moral.

Introduction: 'Humanism' is a well-known word to us, but if we want to understand the depth of this, then first we have to know the roots of this term and its definition, its uses etc. Hence, this paper first highlights the roots of humanism.

1. Historical Roots of Humanism: The text highlights the historical continuity of

humanistic thought, tracing its origins back to ancient Greek philosophers and *Vaishnava* philosophers in India.¹ This acknowledgment underscores the universality of humanistic ideals across different

cultures and epochs. Philosophically, it suggests that the concern for human welfare and dignity transcends temporal and geographical boundaries, reflecting a fundamental aspect of human nature.

The context in which humanism was born encompasses various historical and cultural developments that challenged traditional religious and mythological explanations of the world. Here's a brief overview:

1.a. Ancient Greece: In the 6th century BC, figures like Thales and Xenophanes attempted to understand the world through reason rather than relying on mythology and tradition. These early Greek thinkers can be considered to be the first humanists, as they emphasized rational inquiry and critical thinking.²

1.b. Early Christian Usage: The term "humanism" was first used in the early 19th century by an English clergyman to describe those who focused on Jesus' humanity rather than his miracles. This usage reflected a departure from supernatural beliefs towards a more human-centered interpretation of religious teachings.³

1.c. Indian Context: Indian society also witnessed a tradition of anti-miraculous anthropocentric thinking. Gautama Buddha, more than two thousand five hundred years ago, expressed scepticism towards miracles recorded in Pali literature. Throughout history, various Indian thinkers, including Rabindranath Tagore, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Manabendra Nath Roy, and Deendayal Upadhyaya, contributed to movements advocating for liberation, free thought, and human-oriented philosophies.

1.d. Modern Indian Thinkers: Rabindranath Tagore, a Nobel laureate, and Manabendra Nath Roy, a neo-humanist, made significant contributions to humanistic thought in the Indian context. However, it's Deendayal Upadhyaya's concept of integral humanism that is particularly emphasized in the project, highlighting his discussions on unbroken humanism and its contemporary social relevance.

For short, humanism emerged in various historical and cultural contexts as a response to the challenges posed by supernatural explanations and a desire to focus human welfare and rationality. Figures like Thales, early Christian thinkers, and Indian philosophers contributed to the development of humanistic thought, with Deendayal Upadhyaya's integral humanism representing a notable contemporary iteration.

2. Definition of Humanism: Humanism is described as a perennial philosophy that evolves alongside human civilization and environmental changes. Philosophically, this conception

aligns with the idea that humanism is not a static doctrine but a dynamic worldview that adapts to the evolving needs and aspirations of humanity. It emphasizes human welfare as the central tenet of humanism, reflecting a concern for the flourishing and fulfilment of human potential.

3. Scope of Humanism: The scope of humanism is delineated as encompassing the entirety of human existence and endeavor. It is presented as an ideology that is eternally relevant because it prioritizes human beings as the ultimate value in the world. From a philosophical standpoint, this assertion underscores the intrinsic worth of human life and the ethical imperative to prioritize human welfare in all spheres of society.

4. Value of Human Resources: Humanism underscores the unique value of human resources compared to other forms of capital, such as machinery and equipment. Philosophically, this observation aligns with the humanistic perspective that emphasizes the dignity and potential of individuals. It suggests that investments in human capital, such as education and development, yield enduring returns and contribute to societal progress and well-being.⁴

5. Development of Humanity: Humanism advocates for the holistic development of human beings, emphasizing the realization of their innate divinity and potential. Philosophically, this aligns with humanistic notions of self-actualization and personal growth, which are central to the humanistic worldview. It posits that the cultivation of individuality and human potential is essential for advancing collective progress and achieving societal flourishing.

Overall, the excerpt presents a philosophical perspective on humanism that underscores its historical continuity, universal relevance, and ethical imperative. It articulates a vision of humanism as a dynamic and aspirational worldview that prioritizes human welfare, development, and flourishing as fundamental values in society.⁵ This philosophical analyzed can be elaborated as-

5.a. Approach to Humanitarian Principles: Humanism is depicted as a strategy that focuses on philanthropic worries and standards, inferring an accentuation on propelling basic freedoms, government assistance, and nobility. From a philosophical stance, this is reliable with the moral perspective that puts accentuation on the government assistance and thriving of the two people and networks.

5.b. Philosophical and Moral Position: Humanism is characterized as a moral and philosophical position that underscores both singularity and collectively. According to a philosophical point of view, the accentuation on collectively suggests a comprehension of the reliance and network of individuals inside society, while the accentuation on independence

underlines the significance of individual independence, organization, and self-acknowledgment.⁶

5.c. Support for Subtle Thinking and Rationality: Humanism is said to generally support subtle thinking and rationality, indicating a commitment to critical inquiry, logical reasoning, and evidence-based decision-making. Philosophically, this aligns with the tradition of rationalism and empiricism, which prioritize the use of reason and observation in understanding the world and formulating ethical principles.

5.d. Merit-Based Movement and Ideology: Humanism is described as a merit-based movement and ideology, suggesting a commitment to principles of fairness, equality, and justice. Philosophically, this reflects an ethical stance that values individual merit and achievement over arbitrary criteria such as social status or religious affiliation.

5.e. Association with Atheism and Secularism: In its modern sense, humanism is associated with atheism and secularism, centered on scientific reasoning and skepticism towards religious beliefs, miracles, and superstitions. Philosophically, this reflects a worldview grounded in naturalism and empirical inquiry, which seeks to explain phenomena through rational, naturalistic explanations rather than supernatural or divine intervention.

Overall, the philosophical analysis presented in the passage portrays humanism as a comprehensive worldview and ethical stance that prioritizes human welfare, rationality, meritocracy, and secularism. It underscores the philosophical underpinnings of humanistic principles and their implications for individual and societal flourishing.

6. Tagore's View

Rabindranath Tagore's assertion in his essay "Crisis of Civilization" delves into a profound philosophical analysis of the challenges facing India. At its core, Tagore's concept of "*Swajati Preeti*,"⁷ or self-respect and self-love, emphasizes the importance of individuals and societies recognizing their intrinsic worth and value. This notion aligns closely with philosophical concepts such as self-actualization and human dignity.⁸

Tagore's critique of India's struggles resonates with existentialist and humanist philosophies, which emphasize the importance of individual agency and authenticity. He suggests that India's failure to embrace these principles leads to a crisis of identity and purpose, hindering its progress and development. Furthermore, Tagore's reference to the mechanisms utilized by the British to maintain their global dominance invites reflection on power dynamics and colonial legacies. Philosophically, this raises questions about the nature of power, authority, and cultural

hegemony. It underscores the importance of questioning and challenging dominant narratives that perpetuate inequality and injustice. Overall, Tagore's analysis offers a philosophical lens through which society to understand the complexities of India's challenges and the broader implications for human society. It prompts

contemplation on the significance of self-respect, cultural identity, and the pursuit of collective well-being in the face of adversity.⁹ Rabindranath Tagore's observation regarding the English rule and its success due to their unity offers a philosophical insight into the dynamics of power, governance, and collective identity. From a philosophical perspective, the English ability to maintain control over diverse territories through unity reflects elements of social contract theory and political philosophy. Philosophers like Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau explored the concept of social contracts wherein individuals surrender certain liberties to a governing authority in exchange for protection and order. In the case of the English, their unity can be seen as a manifestation of a collective agreement to support a centralized authority, which in turn reinforced their dominance over other nations. Moreover, Tagore's comparison between English unity and Indian disunity invites reflection on the nature of community and solidarity. Philosophers such as Hegel and Marx have explored the concept of collective consciousness and historical materialism, suggesting that societies evolve through conflicts and resolutions driven by shared interests and identities. In this context, India's lack of unity could be viewed as a hindrance to its social and political progress, allowing external powers like the British to exploit divisions and establish control. Tagore's observation underscores the importance of cultural and national identity in shaping political outcomes. Philosophers like Benedict Anderson have examined the role of imagined communities in nation-building, highlighting how shared narratives and symbols contribute to a sense of belonging and solidarity. In the case of India, the absence of a cohesive national identity may have weakened resistance to colonial rule and hindered efforts towards self-governance. Overall, Tagore's analysis offers a philosophical lens through which to examine the complexities of colonialism, power dynamics, and collective identity. It prompts reflection on the interplay between unity, governance, and cultural cohesion in shaping the trajectory of nations and societies.¹⁰

Rabindranath Tagore's editorial on the difference between Japan's thriving through industrialization and India's proceeded with battles in spite of self-administration offers a philosophical examination of administration, improvement, and moral contemplations.

According to a philosophical viewpoint, Tagore's perception prompts reflection on the ethical components of administration and cultural advancement. Scholars like John Stuart Factory and John Rawls have investigated the standards of equity and reasonableness in administration,

stressing the significance of approaches that advance the prosperity, everything being equal. Tagore's evaluate recommends that India's ongoing administration framework might be neglecting to maintain these standards, prompting stagnation and imbalance.¹¹

Besides, Tagore's examination between Japan's industrialization and India's circumstance brings up issues about the job of innovation and progress in the

public arena. Thinkers like Martin Heidegger and Jacques Ellul have analyzed the effect of innovation on human life, advance notice against its dehumanizing impacts when not directed by moral contemplations. Tagore's reference to Japan's success through hardware suggests that innovative progression alone isn't adequate for cultural turn of events; it should be joined by moral administration and an emphasis on human thriving.

Besides, Tagore's investigation into who is profiting from the ongoing administration framework features more extensive worries about power elements and abuse. Scholars like Karl Marx have broken down the designs of free enterprise and colonialism, contending that they frequently focus on the interests of the decision-making class to the detriment of the underestimated. Tagore's inquiry moves us to analyze the dissemination of force and assets inside society and to consider whose voices are being heard and whose necessities are being met.

Generally, Tagore's investigation welcomes philosophical reflection on the ethical obligations of administration, the connection among innovation and progress, and the elements of force and abuse. It highlights the significance of moral authority and strategies that focus on the prosperity and nobility of all citizenry. Rabindranath Tagore's impactful assertion digs profoundly into the multi-layered misfortune that he sees unfurling in India under frontier rule.¹²

6.a. Humanitarian Perspective: Tagore's notice of the absence of essential necessities like food, dress, training, and wellbeing features the compassionate emergency looked by numerous Indians. Thoughtfully, this summons conversations on civil rights and basic liberties. Rationalists like John Rawls would contend that an equitable society ought to guarantee that all people approach these principal merchandises as a feature of their fundamental freedoms and fair correspondence of chance.¹³

6.b. Ethical Governance: Tagore's reference to the "pretense of cultivated rule" proposes a scrutinize of expansionism and the pietism frequently intrinsic in radical plans. From a moral point of view, savants like Immanuel Kant would contend that pilgrim rule disregards the

guideline of regarding people as closures in themselves as opposed to as necessary evil. This evaluate reaches out to more extensive conversations on power, mastery, and the moral obligations of state-run administrations.

6.c. Cultural Personality and Unity: Tagore's notice of "ruthless dissidence among Indians" considers the fracture and division inside Indian culture during pilgrim rule. Logically, this brings up issues about social personality, patriotism, and the outcomes of expansionism on shared perspective. Tagore's accentuation on solidarity reverberations philosophical conversations on fortitude and local area, proposing that division debilitates social orders and sabotages their capacity to oppose mistreatment.

6.d. Comparative Analysis: Tagore's examination of the rebellion inside India to

that of Muslim independent nations outside India welcomes reflection on social elements and the impacts of expansionism on personality arrangement. This similar examination prompts philosophical investigations into the development of 'otherness' and the job of pilgrim heritages in forming intergroup relations.

6.e. Historical Materialism: Tagore's discourse on the circumstances in India can likewise be examined through a verifiable realist focal point, promoted by savants like Karl Marx. This viewpoint would analyze the financial designs that add to disparity and double-dealing, featuring the job of imperialism in propagating these shameful acts.¹⁴

Generally, Tagore's assertion fills in as a strong philosophical scrutiny of expansionism, social unfairness, and the disintegration of social solidarity in India. It welcomes profound reflection on the moral obligations of administration, the intricacies of character and patriotism, and the getting through effects of authentic treacheries.¹⁵

Rabindranath Tagore's declaration in regards to the Hindu-Muslim struggle in India being established in self-disregard exemplifies a perplexing exchange of verifiable, social, and mental elements. Momentarily, Tagore's assertion proposes that the absence of mindfulness, self-esteem, and taking care of oneself among people and networks adds to intergroup strains and clashes. Thoughtfully, this lines up with hypotheses of personality development and social brain research, which underscore the significance of individual and aggregate self-discernment in molding perspectives and ways of behaving towards others. Also, Tagore's perception welcomes reflection on the job of force elements, verifiable complaints, and cultural imbalances in fuelling intergroup clashes. It features the requirement for contemplation and self-assessment as vital stages towards tending to hidden pressures and encouraging common comprehension and regard. Tagore's examination highlights the interconnectedness of individual and aggregate characters with social congruity and compromise, underscoring the

meaning of mindfulness and taking care of oneself in advancing harmony and solidarity inside assorted social orders. Rabindranath Tagore's parable about the absence of disputes between Muslims and non-Muslims over the division of state power in Moscow serves as a brief commentary on the potential for coexistence and harmony among diverse religious and ethnic groups within a governance system.¹⁶

Briefly, Tagore's observation highlights the possibility of transcending religious divisions and fostering inclusive governance structures where individuals from different backgrounds can collaborate without conflict over political power. This anecdote suggests that societal cohesion and unity can be achieved through mechanisms that prioritize equality, justice, and mutual respect among all citizens, irrespective of their religious affiliations.

In essence, Tagore's parable illustrates the potential for peaceful coexistence and

cooperation in societies where individuals prioritize shared values and common interests over sectarian differences in the pursuit of political power and governance. But now the question is who will be responsible for our misery? We have to take responsibility for it. But the question is, if we take responsibility and try to solve it, is it possible to solve the problem completely? The answer is no. Rabindranath Tagore's inquiry into the responsibility for India's misery and the limitations of individual efforts to solve societal problems prompts philosophical reflection on the nature of responsibility, agency, and the complexities of social change.

6.f. Ethics of Responsibility: From a philosophical perspective, Tagore's questioning aligns with ethical theories that emphasize individual and collective responsibility for addressing societal injustices. Philosophers like Emmanuel Levinas argue that individuals have a moral obligation to respond to the suffering of others and work towards positive social transformation. Tagore's recognition of the need for collective action suggests an ethical imperative to engage in efforts to alleviate societal misery.¹⁷

6.g. Existentialism and Absurdity: Tagore's acknowledgment of the inability to completely solve societal problems echoes existentialist themes of absurdity and the human condition. Philosophers like Albert Camus suggest that while individuals can strive for meaning and purpose in the face of adversity, the inherent limitations of existence mean that some problems may remain insoluble. Tagore's recognition of the inherent challenges in addressing societal issues reflects existentialist insights into the complexities of human existence.¹⁸

6.h. Political Realism: Tagore's questioning also resonates with political realism, which acknowledges the constraints and complexities of political action. Philosophers like Niccolò Machiavelli argue that political actors must navigate power dynamics and practical limitations when seeking to address social problems. Tagore's skepticism about the possibility of completely solving societal issues reflects a realist perspective on the challenges of governance and social reform.

6.i. Critical Theory and Structural Analysis: Tagore's inquiry invites critical analysis of underlying structural factors that contribute to societal misery. Philosophers like Karl Marx emphasize the importance of examining economic, political, and social systems to understand and address systemic injustices. Tagore's recognition of the limitations of individual efforts to solve societal problems suggests the need for structural changes that address root causes of misery.

In essence, Tagore's questioning prompts philosophical engagement with the complexities of responsibility, agency, and social change. It highlights the ethical imperatives of responding to societal injustices, while also acknowledging the inherent challenges and limitations of individual and collective efforts to address

systemic issues.¹⁹

From an intellectual standpoint, the analysis of British colonial rule in India reveals a complex interplay of power dynamics, socioeconomic factors, and moral considerations.

6.j. Power Dynamics: The British colonial administration wielded immense power over Indian society, both politically and economically. The ruling elite, consisting largely of British officials and bureaucrats, held authority over key institutions and decision-making processes. This concentration of power allowed them to shape policies and practices that favoured their own interests, often at the expense of the Indian population.

6.k. Socioeconomic Factors: The colonial economic system was structured to extract resources and wealth from India for the benefit of the British Empire. This exploitative economic model perpetuated poverty, inequality, and disenfranchisement among the Indian populace. While the ruling elite enjoyed privileges and prosperity, the majority of Indians suffered from poverty, famine, and lack of access to basic necessities.²⁰

6.l. Moral Considerations: The complicity of the ruling elite in perpetuating societal misfortunes raises ethical questions about their moral responsibility. Despite being aware of the suffering endured by the Indian population, the British authorities often prioritized their own interests and the maintenance of colonial control over the well-being of the people they governed. This moral failure contributed to the exacerbation of existing miseries and the perpetuation of systemic injustices.

Overall, the analysis of British colonial rule in India underscores the inherent injustices and inequalities inherent in colonialism. It highlights the need for critical examination of power structures, socioeconomic systems, and moral responsibilities in understanding historical processes and their implications for contemporary society.²¹ The observation that the present society cannot be solely held responsible for its misfortunes, as the ruling class perpetuates and exacerbates these issues, invites reflection on the nature of power, responsibility, and social change.

6.m. Power Dynamics: Philosophers such as Michel Foucault have explored the dynamics of power and how it operates within society. The observation aligns with Foucault's critique of power structures, highlighting how the ruling class maintains its dominance by perpetuating social problems rather than addressing them. This analysis prompts questions about the distribution of power and the ways in which it is wielded to uphold existing hierarchies.

6.n. Responsibility and Ethics: Philosophical theories of ethics, such as utilitarianism and deontology, emphasize the importance of moral responsibility and accountability. The observation suggests that the ruling class bears a moral responsibility to address societal problems rather than perpetuate them for their

own gain. This raises questions about the ethical obligations of those in positions of power towards the broader society.²²

6.o. Social Change and Progress: Philosophers like Karl Marx have analyzed the mechanisms of social change and progress, emphasizing the role of class struggle and revolution in transforming society. The observation implies that genuine social change requires challenging and dismantling existing power structures rather than perpetuating them. This prompts philosophical inquiry into the possibilities and limitations of transformative action within society.

6.p. Critical Theory: The observation invites analysis of the ideological underpinnings that sustain social inequalities and injustices. Philosophers such as Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse have explored how dominant ideologies perpetuate systemic oppression. This analysis prompts reflection on the ways in which the ruling class manipulates discourse and ideology to maintain its privileged position and thwart efforts for social change.²³

In essence, the philosophical analysis of the observation highlights the interconnectedness of power, responsibility, and social change. It underscores the importance of critically examining power dynamics and challenging oppressive structures in the pursuit of a more just and equitable society.²⁴

The declaration that the decision local area propagates social issues for its own restricted advantages highlights a central pressure between cultural advancement and dug in power elements. Momentarily, this perception mirrors a basic examination of how those in, important, influential places focus on their own advantages over the aggregate prosperity of society. By sustaining social issues, the decision local area thwarts the progression of civilization, blocking

its development and advancement. This features the requirement for more noteworthy responsibility and moral initiative to guarantee that administration serves the more extensive interests of society instead of thin personal circumstances.

Conclusion

Humanism nurtured from the ancient period of civilization. In this paper first we discuss the root of humanism. After that we focus on the center of the topic. This paper highlights Tagore's view on Humanism. Rabindranath Tagore's reflections in *Crisis of Civilization* highlight the deep philosophical roots of India's social, political, and moral challenges. Through ideas such as '*Swajati Preeti*' (self-respect), he emphasizes the need for cultural confidence, unity, and moral leadership as foundations for national progress. By contrasting India's disunity with English cohesion and Japan's ethically guided modernization, Tagore reveals how power structures, colonial legacies, and internal divisions hinder India's development. His critique ultimately urges society to cultivate dignity, collective identity, and ethical governance so that true human flourishing—rather than mere technological or political achievement—can be realized.

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