

## **Dynamics of Love: Weaving the Vision of Love of Rumi and Tagore**

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### **Abstract:**

Love, in its innumerable forms, stands as one of humanity's most enduring and complex subjects of inquiry, explored across cultures and centuries through philosophy, theology, and literature. While universally acknowledged as a profound force, the interpretation of love's "dynamics"- its origin, function, and ultimate purpose- varies dramatically depending on the cultural and spiritual lens through which it is examined. The concept is not a static ideal, but a vibrant, evolving process that shifts in response to the human experience.

Two unparalleled voices in this discourse are Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi (13th century), the revered Persian Sufi mystic, and Rabindranath Tagore (20th century), the Nobel laureate and Bengali polymath. Both thinkers articulate a vision of love that is central to their respective worldviews. However, they approach the subject from fundamentally different starting points and chart distinct ultimate destinations for love's journey. Rumi's perspective is steeped in esoteric Sufi tradition, while Tagore's is rooted in humanistic universalism and the realization of unity within the material world.

This study aims to evaluate how Rumi philosophizes the concept of love and its dynamic nature in transcendental reality, whereas Tagore traces love from the physical to the transcendental to the divine. The goal of this research is to examine how Rumi and Tagore agree on the fundamental idea that love is the ultimate, unifying force that binds the finite to the infinite and the human to the divine. With an emphasis on their different paths, the study offers a deeper understanding of the profound dynamics of love through Tagore's journey from the human to the divine and Rumi's journey into divine unity.

**Keywords: Love, Organic Unity, Transcendentalism, Supra-Rational, Divine, Reality.**

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**Introduction:**

Love is the most enduring and complex subject of inquiry, explored across cultures and centuries through philosophy, theology, and literature. The perception of love's "dynamics"; its origins, function, and ultimate purpose, varies greatly depending on the cultural and spiritual prism through which it is analysed, despite the fact that love is widely recognised as a powerful force. The idea is a dynamic, changing process that adapts to the human experience rather than a static ideal.

The renowned Persian Sufi mystic Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi (13th century) and the Nobel laureate and Bengali polymath Rabindranath Tagore (20th century) are two unmatched voices in this discourse. Though they approach the topic from essentially different starting points and track different "ultimate destinations" (Rumi 15) for love's journey, both thinkers express a picture of love that is crucial to their own worldviews. Tagore's viewpoint is based on humanistic universalism and the understanding of unity within the material world, whereas Rumi's is deeply established in the esoteric Sufi tradition. The dynamics of love are illustrated diversely by Rumi and Tagore, in accordance with its ultimate destinations. Beginning in the transcendental realm, Rumi sees earthly love as a mirror or a way to return to the cosmic realm, where love is the guiding principle and leads to divine unity. Tagore, conversely, focuses on physical and finite human experience. He meticulously traces the essence of love from these roots towards its transcendental fulfillment. For him, love is the divine current flowing through the mortal realm.

### **Statement of the Study**

The study argues that the dynamics of love are illustrated distinctly by Rumi and Tagore, primarily driven by their different philosophical and spiritual foundations. According to Rumi, love is a transcendent power that leads to mystical connection with the Divine via an exuberant way of annihilating the ego (fana). Conversely, Tagore interprets love as an immanent realisation of unity, where the infinite is discovered through human connection and a profound engagement with the everyday world. Through a textual analysis of their poetry and prose, this paper will analyse how these two paths, one emphasizing a journey toward the heavens and the other emphasizing a discovery of the divine within the mundane, offer rich yet divergent understandings of love's true nature and purpose.

In the end, this study aims to investigate how Rumi and Tagore agree on the fundamental idea that love is the ultimate, uniting force that binds the finite to the infinite and the human to the divine. Rumi achieves this through an emphasis on 'supra-rational' cosmic unity and the dissolution of the ego in the transcendental fire of love. Tagore achieves it through the concept of 'Amrita', highlighting love's divine nature as the sustaining and immortalizing force within mortal life, guiding it towards its transcendent purpose. Their contrasting paths are quite obvious. Rumi's descent into divine unity and Tagore's ascent from the human towards the divine offer a more detailed understanding of the profound dynamics of love: its power to dissolve boundaries, transcend reason, unite existence, and serve as the ultimate bridge between the human soul and the reality of the Divine.

### **Dynamics of Love in Rumi's View**

Maulana Jalal al-Din Rumi's mysticism, especially his notion of ecstatic transcendence, centers on a love that rejects rationalisation. This is where abstract theories of love diverge sharply from living reality. While poetry resonates with profoundness and wordless emotions, Rumi's work transcends mere lyrical expression. For him, love is an enigma as vast as existence itself. It is indefinable like existence. He argues that love resists explanation because it mirrors life's own ineffability. To him, music is the language of love. Though the music manifests love, it embodies a paradox. It is "poison and antidote" at the same time, in which joy and sorrow intertwine. Unlike logic, music cannot fully capture love's essence. It merely drapes the unfathomable mystery of love in sensory form, allowing it to flicker into the tangible world. He says...

"My secret is not far from my plant, but ear and eye lack the light (whereby it should be apprehended). The body is not veiled from the soul, nor the soul from the body, yet none is permitted to see the soul." (Mathnavi, i. 7-8).

Though Rumi's mystical experience of love refuses verbal articulation, this does not hinder him from conveying a philosophy of love to those unfamiliar with such transcendence. Rumi's teachings resonate with Platonic thought, particularly the notion of a transcendent 'Reality' and 'Eros' as a universal force. Rumi's experience of love remains intensely personal. His concept of love is beyond intellectual construction. His articulation of the philosophy of love must be analysed within the historical and philosophical background that influenced him. Even as words fail to capture Rumi's mystical union with love, he persists in offering a philosophical

roadmap to the inexperienced. Rumi's journey into love stands apart from the theoretical scaffolding he uses to explain it. He states...

"If there had not been love, how should there have been existence? How should bread have attached itself to you and become (assimilated to) you?" (V. 2012).

Rumi's philosophy of love fundamentally opposes the concept of rationalism, privileging irrationality as the gateway to existential truth. In general perception, reason is considered the supreme tool for accessing reality, while Rumi inverts this hierarchy and declares that love is the ultimate force. For Rumi, reason is bound by dualistic logic and fragmentation. Reason cannot grasp the perfect unity of existence. He presents a Sufi vision in which the ego is destroyed and merged with the Divine by love rather than intelligence. An ineffable, dynamic presence, the sense of existence, and the Reality are attainable only through Love's irrational surrender. Thus, Rumi's crafted metaphysics helps us to understand that 'Reason guides, but Love transcends.'

The idea of rationality leaves no conceptual space for what might be termed as the "ultra-rational" or transcendently ineffable. Rumi's notion of *Ishq* (divine love) opposes all such systematisation. For Rumi, the soul and the Divine exist in a realm that transcends rationality entirely. This is a 'supra-rational' dimension where binaries of logic, such as 'self/other' and 'subject/object', collapse into unity. Rumi's *Ishq* is an uncontrollable conflagration; a wildfire that burns the mind's venture of categorisation or of understanding the Divine. The union of the soul with the Divine is not an intellectual puzzle to be solved but a mystery to be lived. It is an experiential annihilation (*fana*) of the ego. On the other hand, rationality, with its dependence on language and duality, becomes a veil rather than a lens that cannot notice the ineffable communion that occurs when the lover dissolves into the Beloved.

"How should the intellect find the way to this connection? This intellect is in bondage to separation and union." (IV, 3699)

Rumi reimagines truth as a dynamic and a "silent melody" heard only when the mind ceases the clamour of thinking. In this silence, the soul does not comprehend the Divine; it becomes the Divine. While scholars strive to understand the forms via reason, Rumi's lover joins the chaos of *Ishq* and surrenders to a power that destroys the rational self to reveal a unity that no syllogism could ever explain. Thus, while an intellectual's universe is a well-ordered cosmos of ideas, Rumi's universe is a boundless ocean of 'supra-rational love'; a realm where the map of reason burns away, leaving only the luminous ashes of ecstatic union.

Rumi's teaching prioritises the vitality of life over abstract ideals such as truth or divine knowledge. He finds wisdom in the fluid, ever-changing rhythm of nature, growth, decay, and rebirth by seeing them as deeper reflections of existence than fixed metaphysical systems. Love, for Rumi, flourishes in contradiction: to receive, one must give, to truly live, one must surrender to death, and to be reborn, one must dissolve. This mirrors nature's unstoppable flow. The flow of lifeless matter which nourishes plants, plants become sustenance for animals, and each transition demands a surrender of form to fuel a greater vitality. Therefore, evolution is not mere change but a sacred dance of loss and renewal. It is a cyclical journey toward transcendence, where endings give birth to higher beginnings.

"Because in the spirit there is no separating and uniting, while (our) thought cannot think except of separating and uniting." (Mathnavi, IV, 3695-3696)

At the heart of Rumi's thought, there is a celebration of paradox. Love, he suggests, opposes logic. Love exists through emptying oneself so that we become whole. This mirrors the world's relentless metamorphosis: stone breaks down to feed the root, then the wilting flower becomes the breath of life in creatures. For Rumi, rigid doctrines lose significance in front of this organic truth. Existence is not static but a spiral of ascent and descent, sacrifice and regain. In spiritual development, evolution itself becomes a metaphor, with each death advancing one towards more interwoven realms of being. Transcendence in this context refers to a departure from the infinite rather than a return.

In contrast to rigid intellectualism, Rumi's philosophy maintains that the organic rhythms of growth and transformation are the best way to understand the core of existence, not any reserved logic or mechanical explanation. Rumi believes it is pointless when people try to link body and soul with chains of physical cause and effect. He observes the alchemy of nature. When food transcends its form and dissolves into consciousness, it is surrender to flame, with matter turning into mind. These transactions are not linear; rather, they involve quantum leaps and disruptions that make fun of mechanical predictability. For Rumi, reality is an ever-evolving stream of extensive becoming in which no change is equivalent. The unstoppable inventiveness of life weaves cause and effect together like threads in a tapestry rather than links in a chain.

"There is a union beyond description or analogy between the Lord of Man and the spirit of Man."

(iv. 760)

To the untangled mind, the truth needs no proof; only the skeptic demands maps for roads already walked. There is always a tension between unknowable mechanism and self-evident

truth, while emphasising Rumi's argument for symmetry between material and spiritual principles.

"Everything except love is devoured by love; at the beak of love, the two worlds are (but) a single grain." (V. 2726)

"Again, they crushed the bread under their teeth: it became the mind and spirit and understanding of one endowed with reason. Again, when that spirit became lost in love, it became "as that which rejoiceth the sowers after the sowing" (i. 3167-3168).

In Rumi's vision, Love (*Ishq*) is not a bridge to the Divine but the collapse of all bridges. Assimilation demands not ascent but erosion. The self, like wood in a blaze, ceases to be itself to feed a greater fire. Plato's Eros, with the abstract concept of Form, keeps the soul at the centre of the Absolute. *Ishq* breaks the gate of absoluteness. It is the moth's wings break down (convert into the smallest particles or atoms) into heat. The lover's breath dissolves into God's whisper. Therefore, it can be said that Plato seeks what Rumi becomes. Eros is a map, and *Ishq* is the land or a sea in which drowners are remade as currents. Their individualities are restored into the undying tapestry of the Real.

"As (for instance) water and bread, which were not our congeners, became homogeneous with us and increased within us (added to our bulk and strength)." (i. 801).

"How would the spirit sacrifice itself for the sake of that breath by the draught whereof a Mary was made pregnant?" (vv. 3853-3856)

"That Unity is beyond description and condition: nothing comes into the arena (domain) of speech except duality." (vi. 2034).

### **Dynamics of Love in Tagore's View**

Rabindranath Tagore's literary legacy lies in his ability to illuminate love's universal power. From human intimacy to cosmic spirituality, his poetry stretches across love's vast spectrum. Initially, his works depict romantic bonds. His later works ascend to metaphysical heights, articulating an intensive devotion to the divine and a profound connection to the natural world. Even in addressing earthly passion, his verses maintain a dignified balance that is rooted in the traditional Indian values. His greatest achievements are ultimately found in the spiritual sphere, where the human spirit's unmatched need for God's grace is revealed.

Despite acknowledging the physical aspect of love, Rabindranath Tagore constantly emphasises the transcendental nature of love over the limited physical world. According to him, love that is reduced to nothing more than pleasure ultimately leads to suffering, while love that is entwined with sacrifice and grief achieves immortality. His poetic expression of achievement through sacrifice appears as "a smile that flickers behind a tear." *Fruitless Desire*, his early poetry, embodies this idealism by portraying love as a spiritual force apart from sensual desire. "Are the two, love and desire, utterly different?" is a question that appears in his later works, which blur the lines between the two. The conflict between strict idealism and lived emotion illustrates how Tagore's examination of love has become more nuanced over time.

Love and desire are inextricably linked, like a vase filled with aroma. This is a desire that pulls us in. When detached from transcendental phenomena, love that is solely confined to the body loses its tranquility and turns into a hollow echo. Chitra, Tagore's protagonist in *Chitrangada*,

exemplifies this struggle when she exclaims, "Alas!" My paltry body has surpassed myself". Chitra desires her physical form to overshadow her inner self. In fact, she is trapped in a dilemma. When a woman's value is determined by transient charms rather than an enduring spirit, she feels as if her soul has been dislocated. Tagore examines this dilemma in his introduction of the play. He spans the boundary between the sacred and the erotic by emphasising the spiritual aspect of love. Nonetheless, he consistently conveys the intensity of the longing through Chitragada and other characters. According to Tagore, the core of the truth of love lies in this conflict between sensual need and spiritual longing.

Love, for Tagore, is the 'Amrita'; the Upanishadic nectar of immortality that gives mortal existence a holy purpose. He suggests that Maitreyi's need for immortality is fulfilled by love rather than renunciation or ceremony, reimagining Maitreyi's search for Amritatva. Tagore perceives this 'Amrita' as the core capacity of love for transformation. It liberates humans from the shackles of the ordinary things and guides them toward a sublime horizon where the soul transcends time and space. Love, thus, becomes the bridge between the finite and the infinite, the mortal and the immortal.

In his poem "My song has put off her adornments" from *Gitanjali*, Tagore celebrates humble, heartfelt devotion to God. He compares divine love to a bride's pure bond with her lover. The bride (representing the poet) discards fancy clothes and jewellery, which symbolise worldly pride and distractions, in embracing simplicity.

"My song has put off her adornments. She has no pride of dress and decoration...

"...Like a flute of reed for thee to fill with music." (*Gitanjali*, 5)

Just as ostentatious ornaments ruin the intimacy between lovers, poetic embellishments or arrogance block true connection with God. Tagore stresses that genuine love requires sincerity, not vanity. Like a simple reed flute waiting to be filled with music, the poet dismantles pride to become a vessel for divine harmony. True union with God, he says, comes only through humility and a heart free from ego.

In *Gitanjali*, Tagore weaves divine love into a tapestry of luminous threads. Like scattered strands of human affection for art, nature, and earthly bonds, each thing is drawn into a grand design. Then it shines into a whole and is scattered again. This divine weave transcends the fragments and blends them into compassion and boundlessness. Here, poetry becomes the loom. Its ultimate purpose is to reveal love not as fleeting threads but as the eternal fabric of the grace of God. Such is the beauty of a devotion that gathers all loves into one timeless truth. Thus, the beauty of love for God is expressed by Tagore...

"From dawn till dusk I sit here before my door...

...Air is filling with the perfume of promise." (173)

For Tagore, divine love is a limitless source of inspiration, intriguing a restless desire to unite with God's cosmic song. It is a quest marked by both wonder and humility. He posits that true surrender allows the soul to echo God's harmonies, becoming an instrument of celestial music. Tagore finds love's splendour in its paradoxes: a 'Divine Wrath'. When it is viewed through devotion, it becomes an expression of boundless care. Through unwavering faith, lover and beloved fuse into one, dissolving separation. Tagore asserts this sacred bond expands the

heart to embrace all beings because divine love cannot exist in isolation. He elevates love as life's highest truth, a force more potent than artistic triumph or public adoration.

"If you are busy and fill your pitcher...

"...Eyes like birds from their nests." (220)

For Tagore, the bond between the divine and humanity is profoundly reciprocal. Neither God nor man exists in isolation; each fulfils the other. Tagore states, "This longing is not only mine but also yours," by emphasising that divine love thrives on mutual yearning. This concept mirrors Chaitanya's philosophy of *bhakti*, where devotion transcends hierarchy, becoming a dance of interdependence. God, in Tagore's vision, attains completeness through human adoration, just as humanity discovers purpose by surrendering the ego in love. This reciprocity clarifies Tagore's portrayal, in *Gitanjali*, of divine love refused by human persistence, resulting in self-inflicted suffering. Grace, here, is not a force or compulsion but an invitation to choose communion freely. As Tagore pleads, "Thy love for me still waits for my love," he emphasises humanity's active role in embracing the divine. His poetic pleas, "Let only that little be left of me", reveal a quest to dissolve all barriers, allowing the soul to merge absolutely with the Infinite through continuous and conscious devotion. (23, 32, 34)

Though imagination illuminates truth, Tagore insists it is love that completes the journey. Love dissolves the ego, enabling humans to merge with others. In doing so, love leads the individual to a deeper reality. Creation itself reflects this duality; entities exist in solitude and symbiosis. Recognising unity amid multiplicity requires loving engagement with the world, which is a conscious embrace of interdependence. For Tagore, love is not passive. It is the act of

weaving oneself into the cosmos, transforming perception into participation and isolation into wholeness. That is why Tagore writes in *The Religion of Man*...

“The achievement of truth goes far beyond... (man's) need and the realisation of his self-strives across the frontier of his individual interest. This proves to him his infinity and makes his religion real to him by his own manifestation in truth and goodness.” (127)

Tagore, thus, explains that true peace emerges when we rise above our attachments, freeing ourselves to love every facet of existence. Only then does the fragmented world reveal its cardinal unity. Tagore, in *Sadhana*, asserts that love dissolves life's paradoxes. He writes, “In love, all contradictions...are lost.” He adds that love expands the consciousness and becomes a bridge to ‘infinite joy’. Vasanti, a character in his play *Sanyasi*, epitomises this ideal. Her love transcends humanity, embracing all creation. Her divinity is acknowledged even by the ascetic Sanyasi, who senses in her touch a connection to the ‘great darkness’, the primordial nothingness where the soul meets eternity. Such love is sacred, according to Tagore, and a submission to the cosmic unity that reconciles separation.

### **Contextualising the concept of Love**

Rumi and Tagore's common stance that love is an active, moral, and spiritual practice that is desperately required in a fractured modern society is what makes them relevant today. Their relevance today lies in their shared insistence that love is an active and dynamic practice, urgently needed in a fragmented modern world. At a time marked by individualism, alienation, and superficial relationships, Rumi's call to dissolve the ego and Tagore's call to expand the self through compassion offer powerful antidotes. They remind contemporary readers that love is a force that heals divisions, awakens unity, and gives meaning to human life. Together, Rumi and

Tagore provide a timeless framework for reimagining love as the bridge between self and other, human and divine, and personal desire and universal harmony.

### **Conclusion:**

The dynamic aspect of this essential human and cosmic phenomenon is profoundly revealed by this comparative study of Rumi and Tagore's concepts of love. While both poets advance their philosophical trajectories, they also shed light on various approaches to comprehend their fundamentals and ultimate truth.

Ultimately, the comparison of Rumi's and Tagore's philosophies reveals that the "dynamics of love" are not a singular, monolithic phenomenon but a profound reflection of the cultural and spiritual paradigms from which they emerge. The two perspectives, while seemingly divergent, one charting an ecstatic flight to the transcendent Divine (fana), the other advocating an immanent realization of unity within human experience (Advaitam), are not entirely contradictory. Rather, they highlight two essential poles of the human spiritual condition: the yearning for escape from selfhood and the yearning for deep engagement with the universal self in the here and now. The dynamic of love, as illustrated by these thinkers, functions as the bridge in scenarios, whether it is connecting the mortal coil to the infinite spirit or connecting the individual soul to the universal human spirit.

The study challenges contemporary readers to reject simplistic definitions of love as merely an emotion or a social contract. Instead, Rumi and Tagore compel us to recognize love as a transformative practice. Their enduring relevance lies in their insistence that love is an active force that demands growth, awareness, and a conscious shift in perspective. In a modern world

often fragmented by individualism and superficial connections, these ancient and recent voices collectively underscore that true love is fundamentally a journey; a dynamic process of continuous expansion of the self, whether that expansion is directed toward the mystical heavens or the shared ground beneath our feet. The function of love is explicitly analysed through this comparative study to turn the limited physical experience into the limitless earthly existence with sacred meaning and purpose, which can only be fulfilled by the dynamic force of love.

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