

## **TAGORE'S GENDER-CONSCIOUSNESS IN HIS PERCEPTION OF THE DIVINE IN HIS "POOJA": DEEPER FOLDS OF ANXIETY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Tagore's devotional song offerings to the omnipotent, omniscient divine in the "Pooja Porjay" of *Gitabitan*, reveal an intriguing perceptual contingency, especially regarding the gender of the divine. What is interesting is the conscious use of language that problematizes gender-consciousness. Tagore's divine is often essentially masculine – the friend, master, husband, father or beloved while the poet concomitantly assumes the role of the submissive spouse, lady-love or friend in strikingly intimate humane anger, affection, allegations or unconditional self-surrender. Much has been said about the Vaishnava influences on Tagore and the affiliation to the concept of "Hladini-shakti", but the striking similarity to the Judaeo-Christian and Greco-Hellenic concept and subsequently the Christian figural elasticity of the Son of God, that perceives "logos" as the confluence of the human self and the divine calling, brings forth intriguing queries regarding the true nature of the devotional songs as well as the overlapping gender-positions in Tagore's conscious use of language. What remains a perplexity is the linguistic fluidity in the continual shifting of paradigms, arching over multifarious cultural portfolios; the devotional songs remaining anxious quest for the true essence of the divine, attempted through continual wrestling with the words and playing with gender-positions.

**KEYWORDS:** Divine, Masculine, Logos, Devotion, Words, Ambiguity