

Universal Wisdom: Vedic and Western Philosophical Perspectives in 'Goti Lo' and 'Imagine'

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Abstract:

This paper explores the convergence of Vedic and Western philosophical perspectives, utilizing the popular Gujarati folk song "Goti Lo" and John Lennon's "Imagine" as illustrative examples. Through a meticulous examination of the lyrical content, thematic elements, and underlying philosophical principles of these songs, the study seeks to reveal profound insights that go beyond cultural boundaries. "Goti Lo," deeply rooted in the Vedic tradition, and "Imagine," born out of Western modern thought, both capture fundamental human concerns such as unity, peace, and the search for meaning. This investigation highlights how these songs, regardless of their diverse cultural origins, express a common vision of a peaceful and enlightened world. Through a comparative analysis, this study showcases how the philosophical ideas expressed in these songs have a universal appeal, emphasizing the enduring and transcendent nature of human wisdom. In this paper, the focus is on the impact of music as a means of philosophical expression and its ability to bring people together across different cultures, promoting a shared desire for worldwide peace and harmony.

Keywords:

Vedic Philosophy, Upanishadic Teachings, Modern Lyrical Expression, Utopian Vision, Peace, Spiritual Fulfilment, Cultural Context, Comparative Analysis.

Introduction:

Music, being a universal language, often transcends socioeconomic and historical boundaries to convey profound philosophical ideas. "Goti Lo" by Aditya Gadhvi, featuring lyrics by Saumya Joshi, and "Imagine" by John Lennon are two songs that, despite their distinct cultural origins, both explore deep human dilemmas and aspirations. The objective of this research is to analyze and contrast the two songs, with a particular emphasis on their philosophical concepts and the backgrounds of their composers and singers.

"Goti Lo," included in the Coke Studio album during the early 2020s, integrates several aspects from the Vedic and Upanishadic traditions of India. It highlights themes related to spiritual contentment and the quest for inner serenity. The song embodies India's rich cultural and philosophical heritage, emphasizing the journey of self-discovery and the realization of one's true essence. Saumya Joshi, a renowned Gujarati poet, dramatist, and lyricist, eloquently expresses these timeless values via his writings. Aditya Gadhvi, a renowned vocalist celebrated for his significant contributions to Gujarati music, brings these words to life via his sincere and passionate delivery, thereby making profound philosophical ideas understandable and relevant. Gadhvi's musical foundation is deeply grounded in the traditional music of India, which places

great importance on spiritual and cultural expression. This, in turn, strengthens the song's relationship to India's profound intellectual legacy.

On the other hand, the song "Imagine" by John Lennon, which was published in 1971, is a product of the socio-political climate of the 1960s and 1970s. This era was marked by countercultural movements that advocated for peace, love, and social equality. Lennon, a prominent member of the iconic band The Beatles and a significant player in the music industry, composed lyrics that present an idealistic depiction of a society free from limitations, religious conflicts, and material goods. This utopia is defined by harmony, peace, and agreement. Lennon's prominent role in the global music business and his unwavering commitment to advocating for peace have led to his influence extending well beyond his musical achievements. His famous status as a musician amid a period of major cultural and political turmoil influenced his philosophical perspective, resulting in "Imagine" being a widely acknowledged anthem for the idea of global togetherness and brotherhood.

Through the application of several Eastern and Western philosophical perspectives, we may examine how the lyrics of these songs embody a range of philosophical traditions, highlighting concepts such as harmony, solidarity, minimalism, and the quest for profound significance. This comparison will emphasize both the widespread appeal and distinct cultural manifestations reflected in these two exceptional musical compositions.

Review of Related Literature:

The Upanishadic teaching of "*Tat Tvam Asi*" (Thou Art That) highlights the interconnectedness of the individual soul (Atman) with the universal essence (Brahman). This is evident in "Goti Lo," which promotes the exploration of profound spiritual truths (Sharma, 2002). According to Riley (2011), John Lennon's "Imagine" promotes a vision of global unity and brotherhood, which resonates with Western humanistic philosophies. "Imagine" promotes a vision of a harmonious world free from the limitations of religion and materialism, aligning with Western existential philosophies (Lennon, 1971). Nietzsche's examination of self-identity in "Beyond Good and Evil" revolves around personal freedom and existential angst. The book emphasizes the importance of individual authenticity and self-overcoming (Nietzsche, 1886).

Research Gap:

Although numerous studies have delved into the exploration of Vedic and Western philosophical themes, there remains a notable absence of a comprehensive analysis that compares how these philosophies are depicted in modern cultural forms such as music. Specifically, there is a lack of knowledge regarding how these philosophical ideas connect with people around the world through songs such as "Goti Lo" and "Imagine." Additional investigation is necessary to delve into the connection between these themes and global concerns like identity, purpose, and ethics. In addition, it would be valuable to conduct further studies exploring how these songs influence individuals' philosophical beliefs and behaviors in various cultural settings.

Methodology:

The present research applies a qualitative comparative analysis to examine the lyrics of both songs. The philosophical topics and their cultural ramifications may be found by closely analyzing each line. This approach enables a thorough examination of the parallels and discrepancies between the philosophical stances put out in "Goti Lo" and "Imagine."

Lyrical Insights: Comparing 'Goti Lo' and 'Imagine'

"Goti Lo" by Aditya Gadhvi

1. *Nathi je majhama / Khali vavata dhaja ma*

Translation: One who isn't pleased / with flags of vanity

Philosophical Theme: This line critiques superficial materialism and suggests a deeper search for true fulfilment. It reflects the Upanishadic emphasis on transcending material desires to find lasting peace and happiness.

2. *Evo had no pravasi gotilo / Gotilo tame gotilo gotilo gotilo*

Translation: O Find me such a zealous Seafarer (skeleton traveler) / Find him, O Find him

Philosophical Theme: Theme: The "skeleton traveler" symbolizes a quest for a profound spiritual bond beyond earthly existence. This aligns with the Vedic teachings that highlight the importance of the soul's journey throughout this lifetime.

3. *Kanthethi ja tu ja dariye / Dariye thi ja tu ja madhdariye*

Translation: Go, from the shore to the shallows / And from shallows to the sea

Quest for Inner Identity: This line underscores the progression of self-discovery and spiritual voyage. It illustrates the concept of progressing from a rudimentary comprehension (the shore) to a more fundamental awareness (the shallows) and, ultimately, to profound self-realization (the sea). This metaphor is consistent with the Upanishadic concept of spiritual evolution, which posits that one progresses through phases of introspection and learning in order to achieve ultimate wisdom and enlightenment. The perpetual pursuit of a more profound understanding and connection to the universal truth is symbolized by the journey from the shore to the sea.

4. *Vehva do vehva do vehva do jyan vahiye / Revado revado revado jyan chhaiye*

Translation: Let us flow, let us flow where we're flowing / Let us stay, stay where we are

Philosophy of contemplation: These lines promote the idea of embracing the natural rhythm of life, aligning with the Vedic concept of 'Rita' (cosmic order).

5. *Evo kon chhe khalasi mane kaidone / Ena tham ne thekana mane daidone*

Translation: Tell me who could be such a sailor man / Tell me his name and address

Conceptual Framework: Reflecting the Upanishadic search for a guru or enlightened being, this seeks an enlightened person who can bravely and wisely traverse life.

6. *Arre kharvo khalasi toh ee kehvey / ke je fanidhar nag jeva dariya ni hame utre*

Translation: A true seafarer is one / who can confront the ocean like a hooded snake

Theme of Reflection: This line represents the inner fortitude and determination required to confront the obstacles that arise in one's journey, a recurring motif in various spiritual practices.

7. *Potana j dariyama / Potanij dubkithi*

Translation: In the depth of your mind / Take a dive and find

Deep Reflection: This statement promotes the practice of introspection and self-exploration to reveal hidden truths. The Upanishadic tradition places great importance on inner spiritual journeys, where individuals can discover true wisdom and enlightenment by delving into their own thoughts and engaging in profound introspection and meditation.

8. *Jatnu amulu moti lo*

Translation: The priceless pearl of your soul

Philosophy of Enlightenment: A central theme in many spiritual philosophies is the ultimate goal of self-realization and spiritual enlightenment. It represents a pursuit of understanding and personal growth. This concept resonates with the profound teachings of the Upanishads, specifically "Tat Tvam Asi" (तत्त्वमसि) and "Aham Brahmasmi" (अहम् ब्रह्मास्मि).

"Imagine" by John Lennon***1. Imagine there's no heaven / It's easy if you try***

Philosophical Theme: Promotes a vision of a united world free of religious differences while challenging metaphysical and theological constructions.

These lyrics from John Lennon's "Imagine" have people thinking about what it means to be a believer and how religious ideas affect the bond between people. The song promotes a feeling of world peace and togetherness by asking listeners to imagine a future without heaven, one in which spiritual and theological distinctions are non-existent. The goal is to see beyond the conventional metaphysical barriers that frequently separate mankind and to envision a society in which religious ideas do not cause division among people. This philosophical position calls into question long-held beliefs about the afterlife and heavenly regions and advocates for an emphasis on the here and now and the shared human experience.

2. No hell below us / Above us, only sky

Philosophical Theme: This philosophy opposes ideas that are rooted on fear and instead promotes a peaceful and earthy way of life, highlighting the significance of the present moment.

John Lennon's words in these lines encourage listeners to envision a society devoid of the notion of hell, a realm typically linked to terror and retribution. By eliminating the concept of hell below and proposing a realm of "only sky" above, the song rejects the fear-inducing ideas that often prevail in religious teachings. Instead, it redirects attention to a tranquil, terrestrial existence where the significance of the current moment is of utmost importance. This viewpoint promotes a lifestyle focused on love, understanding, and shared human experiences, while eliminating the fear of everlasting punishment and advocating for living in harmony and peace. By dismissing the division between heaven and hell, Lennon's perspective transforms into a vision characterized by simplicity and serenity, firmly rooted in the physical realm we dwell in.

3. Imagine all the people / Livin' for today

Philosophical Theme: Promotes embracing the present moment and deriving happiness from the current experience, akin to mindfulness techniques.

The lyrics of "Imagine" promote a lifestyle that emphasizes the importance of living in the present moment, aligning with the ideals of mindfulness. Lennon advocates a concept of living in the present moment, encouraging folks to prioritize the current time rather than dwelling on past regrets or future worries. This approach is in line with mindfulness practices, which prioritize the cultivation of awareness and gratitude for the current moment. The concept promotes a communal transition towards completely embracing and engaging with life in the present moment, cultivating a feeling of tranquility and satisfaction. This statement implies that genuine happiness and satisfaction may be discovered in the present moments of everyday existence, rather than in far-off ambitions or abstract assurances. Embracing a present-focused mindset, individuals are encouraged to foster a profound bond with their inner selves and the external environment, fostering a state of balanced and blissful being.

4. Imagine there's no countries / It isn't hard to do

Philosophical Theme: Promotes international harmony and the elimination of barriers between nations. The lyrics of "Imagine" question the notion of national borders, urging listeners to imagine a world without geopolitical barriers. Lennon's suggestion that it "isn't hard to do" suggests that the elimination of these obstacles is achievable, encouraging a change in mindset towards worldwide harmony. The underlying concept here is cosmopolitanism, which views the globe as a unified global community, beyond any sense of nationalism. This vision advocates for the notion that mankind, when not fragmented by artificial

boundaries, has the potential to attain enhanced harmony, collaboration, and tranquillity. The proposal advocates for the elimination of divisions that frequently result in disputes, prioritizing the common human identity and overall welfare over regional loyalties. The song encourages envisioning a world devoid of national boundaries, so promoting unity and reciprocal esteem among individuals, cultivating a feeling of being part of a single global community.

5. Nothing to kill or die for / And no religion, too

Philosophical Theme: Advocates for the eradication of ideological disputes and religious differences in order to attain peace.

John Lennon envisions a future devoid of ideological battles and religious differences, resulting in genuine peace. The song highlights the negative consequences of fanaticism and strong ideas, which frequently lead to murder and conflict, by envisioning a world where there is no motivation to fight or die for anything. The line "and no religion, too" enhances this concept by suggesting a future devoid of religious conflicts. The topic promotes the elimination of divisive beliefs that create conflict amongst individuals, whether rooted in religious doctrines or other belief systems. The song implies that mankind may attain a more peaceful existence by eliminating these sources of strife. The concept supports the notion that peace may be achieved when individuals and communities transcend limited, exclusive beliefs and adopt a more comprehensive and cohesive worldview. This viewpoint promotes an emphasis on universal human principles and mutual objectives, cultivating a harmonious cohabitation free from the harmful conflicts arising from ideological and religious disparities.

6. Imagine all the people / Livin' life in peace

Philosophical Theme: Envisions a utopian society characterized by global tranquility and solidarity, surpassing all forms of discord and fragmentation.

The lyrics of "Imagine" succinctly capture the core concept of the song, in which John Lennon encourages listeners to imagine a future defined by harmony and solidarity. The subject highlights the potential for a peaceful coexistence in which individuals live together without any disputes or differences. This vision surpasses the limitations imposed by race, religion, nationality, and ideology, fostering a worldwide society united by reciprocal respect and comprehension. The song communicates a potent message of optimism and potential by envisioning a future where all people are "livin' life in peace." It encourages everyone to strive for a world where peace reigns. This work questions the existing state of society disputes and differences, proposing that a more desirable and peaceful world may be attained by working together and having a common dedication to harmony. This philosophical perspective urges mankind to transcend its disparities and forge a future in which peace and harmony serve as the bedrock of human engagement and cohabitation.

7. You may say I'm a dreamer / But I'm not the only one

Philosophical Theme: Expresses optimism for a shared ambition towards this utopian future while acknowledging the idealistic character of the concept.

These lyrics from "Imagine" acknowledge the idealism that permeates John Lennon's dream of a perfect society. By stating, "You may say I'm a dreamer," Lennon acknowledges that some people may find his views excessively idealistic or impractical. He responds, "But I'm not the only one," to this, emphasizing that he has many other people who share his desire for a better society. Here, community desire and optimistic idealism are the main themes. It recognizes that although the goal of world peace and unity may appear idealistic, many people who think that it is possible to achieve have the same aspiration. This shared optimism acts as a potent catalyst, implying that when enough individuals are motivated by the same goals, broad change may occur. Lennon creates a sense of community and common purpose among listeners by

highlighting shared ambitions and aspirations, which motivates a group effort to bring the ideal future envisioned in the song to reality.

8. *I hope someday you'll join us / And the world will be as one*

Philosophical Theme: Expresses an optimistic sentiment on the prospect of future cooperation and worldwide peace.

The lyrics of "Imagine" convey a deep sense of hopefulness for a future in which humanity unites to build a cohesive and peaceful global community. Lennon's statement, "I hope someday you'll join us," serves as an inclusive invitation, urging people to adopt this goal of worldwide harmony and solidarity. This aspiration is not limited to a privileged few, but rather encompasses all individuals, indicating that the active involvement of the entire community is crucial in attaining this ideal. The statement "And the world will be as one" represents the overarching objective of this vision: a global community devoid of barriers, where mankind coexists in a state of reciprocal esteem and comprehension. This philosophical concept is based on the conviction that unity and harmony are attainable, and that by sharing dreams and working together, a peaceful global society may be achieved. It highlights the significance of hope and the possibility of a future when all individuals are joined together in their shared humanity, coexisting peacefully and in unity.

Echoes of Utopia: Philosophical Insights from 'Goti Lo' and 'Imagine'

The ideas of paradise are apparent in both John Lennon's "Imagine" and the traditional ballad "Goti Lo," showcasing goals from both Eastern and Western intellectual viewpoints.

The Utopian Concept of John Lennon: John Lennon's "Imagine" portrays a utopian society characterized by unity, cooperation, and the eradication of dividing structures (Lennon, 1971). The lyrics inspire listeners to imagine a future devoid of national borders, religious ideologies, and material possessions, arguing for a vision of worldwide harmony. The song advocates for a utopian society where people live in harmony and are free from any form of strife or disagreement.

"Utopia" by Thomas More: Thomas More's "Utopia" introduces an innovative concept of a perfect society marked by the lack of individual ownership and the achievement of harmony via communal living and fair allocation of resources (More, 1516). More's utopian society is structured according to principles of egalitarianism and social welfare, mirroring the communal ideals depicted in Lennon's "Imagine." Both works center on the core concept of a community that lacks worldly ambitions and conflicts (Rao, 2011).

The Communist Vision of Karl Marx: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels propose a classless society in "The Communist Manifesto," where the means of production are jointly owned (Marx & Engels, 1848). The vision in question is consistent with the utopian ideas presented in "Imagine" since it advocates for equitable resource distribution and the elimination of social class-based inequality. Marx's ideas on social justice and community ownership are consistent with Lennon's vision of a world free from hunger and greed (Zimmer, 1951).

Sarvodaya, the Mahatma Gandhi: The concept of Sarvodaya, introduced by Mahatma Gandhi, encompasses the idealistic ideas of collective well-being and non-violence (Gandhi, 1944). Gandhi's idea of a society in which every individual works towards the common well-being aligns with Lennon's idealistic vision of a peaceful and serene world. The song's endorsement of peaceful coexistence aligns with the principles of non-violence and collective welfare in Sarvodaya (Radhakrishnan, 1956).

Buddhist teachings about peace and compassion: The Dalai Lama's teachings emphasize global compassion and peace, reflecting the utopian vision of a harmonious society portrayed in "Imagine" (Dalai Lama, 1999). Lennon's advocacy for ethical living and worldwide compassion exemplifies his call for a

society in which humans peacefully and harmoniously coexist. The similarity between Buddhist precepts and the content of the song emphasizes the broad appeal of these idealistic utopian notions (Bryant, 2007). **Vedic Philosophy Reflected in "Goti Lo":** Manifestation of Vedic Philosophy in "Goti Lo" has the Influence of Bhakti Movement and Devotional Songs. The Bhakti movement's focus on personal devotion and spiritual unity is reflected in the topics examined in "Goti Lo" (Bryant, 2007). The song's focus on devotion and surrender to the divine showcases the Bhakti concepts of creating a deep connection with a personal god via love and devotion. This method fosters a feeling of spiritual unity and societal harmony, which are essential elements of an idealistic vision (Shankara, 8th Century).

Dualistic Thinking and Advaita Vedanta: Advaita Vedanta is a philosophical framework that imparts the concept of the non-dualistic essence of existence. Shankara, an 8th-century philosopher, highlights the interconnectedness of Atman (the individual self) and Brahman (the ultimate reality). The ideas of unity and oneness in "Goti Lo" align with Shankara's teachings, suggesting that acknowledging this fundamental interconnectedness might lead to a peaceful and harmonious existence, which are crucial components of an ideal society (Nikhilananda, 2003).

Ahimsa and Non-Violence: Ahimsa, often known as non-violence, is a core principle in Hindu philosophy that corresponds with the calm and compassionate nature of "Goti Lo" (Radhakrishnan, 1927). The song's emphasis on non-violent activities and compassionate living is in accordance with the ideas of Ahimsa, which promote a society where individuals peacefully embody and promote utopian ideals (Radhakrishnan, 1953).

Four Mahavakyas from the Upanishads: The song "Goti Lo" also resonates with the Four Mahavakyas of the Upanishads, which emphasize the non-duality of reality and the self's union with the ultimate truth.

Prajnanam Brahma (Aitareya Upanishad): "Consciousness is Brahman" expresses the ultimate truth of awareness as the universe's fundamental principle (Radhakrishnan, 1927). This notion is repeated in "Goti Lo" by the deep spiritual consciousness shown in devotion (Chandogya Upanishad, undated).

Aham Brahmasmi (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad): "I am Brahman" represents the recognition of one's identification with the ultimate reality (Easwaran, 2007). This notion is present in "Goti Lo" through assertions of unity and oneness with the divine (Mundaka Upanishad, no date).

Tat Tvam Asi (Chandogya Upanishad): "Thou art That" underscores the soul's oneness with ultimate truth (Radhakrishnan, 1953). The song exemplifies the Mahavakya by encouraging spiritual oneness and union with the divine (Radhakrishnan 1953).

Ayam Atma Brahma (Mandukya Upanishad): "This Self is Brahman" emphasizes the connection of the self with ultimate reality (Radhakrishnan, 1927). The ideas of "Goti Lo" of personal dedication and realization are consistent with the Mahavakya, which advocates for self-realization as a way to spiritual harmony and societal peace (Gadhvi, 2023). More Sources on Utopian Thought.

Humanism and Ethical Living: Erich Fromm's humanistic perspective on love and ethics, as presented in his work "Goti Lo" (Fromm, 1956), provides a Western philosophical worldview that aligns with the devotional and ethical themes. The song promotes ethical living and human values that are in line with Fromm's principles, calling for a society that is compassionate, empathic, and morally upright.

Transcendentalism and Spiritual Connectivity: Ralph Waldo Emerson's transcendentalist viewpoint of the intrinsic connection between mankind and the natural world reflects the profound and nature-centered themes included in "Goti Lo" (Emerson, 1836). The song celebrates the divine presence in the natural world, aligning with transcendentalist beliefs. It suggests a condition of peaceful cohabitation, where individuals find spiritual fulfilment by connecting with nature, a crucial aspect of an idealistic perspective. We obtain a profound understanding of how "Imagine" and "Goti Lo" convey a universal vision of an ideal society that transcends cultural and philosophical limitations through a thorough analysis of both songs from both Eastern and Western philosophical perspectives, including the Four Mahavakyas of the

Upanishads. These writings offer a blueprint for building a flawless and peaceful society by emphasizing universal ideas of harmony, peace, devotion, and moral behavior (Zimmer, 1951).

Comparative Visions of Utopia: Insights from Plato, Callenbach, and Huxley:

Similarities can be observed between the concepts presented in contemporary works such as John Lennon's song "Imagine" and the story "Goti Lo," sung by Aditya Gadhvi and written by Saumya Joshi, and the universal knowledge found in Vedic and Western philosophical perspectives.

Goti Lo: The song embodies the principles of a fair and peaceful society, similar to Plato's concept in his influential book, Republic (Plato, around 380 BC). Plato's depiction of an exemplary community based on fairness and the notion of a philosopher-king has served as a crucial reference point for discussions on utopian societies.

Imagine: "Imagine" by John Lennon is akin to the modern utopian concept put out in Ernest Callenbach's Ecotopia (Callenbach, 1975) explores a sustainable and ecologically harmonious society, which is in line with John Lennon's appeal for harmony and peace in "Imagine."

In addition, the peaceful and enlightened society shown in Aldous Huxley's Island (Huxley, 1962) is reminiscent of the ideas of social harmony and individual enlightenment present in Vedic philosophy, which are also represented in the story of "Goti Lo."

CONCLUSION:

Both "Goti Lo" and "Imagine" exemplify how music can serve as a powerful medium for conveying deep philosophical messages and promoting universal values. Despite their distinct cultural and historical contexts, these songs share a common goal of inspiring listeners to seek inner peace, unity, and a better world.

"Goti Lo" by Aditya Gadhvi, with lyrics by Saumya Joshi, draws from the profound teachings of the Upanishads, emphasizing the journey of self-discovery and the realization of one's true essence. It reflects the Vedic tradition's emphasis on spiritual fulfilment and harmony with the cosmic order.

On the other hand, "Imagine" by John Lennon presents a Western perspective, envisioning a utopian world free from divisions and materialism. Lennon's lyrics advocate for global peace, unity, and human rights, reflecting the socio-political aspirations of the countercultural movements of his time.

This comparative analysis has shown how both songs, despite their different origins, converge on universal themes that resonate deeply with audiences worldwide. By highlighting these commonalities, we justify the title "Universal Wisdom: Vedic and Western Philosophical Perspectives in 'Goti Lo' and 'Imagine'" and demonstrate how music transcends cultural boundaries to promote shared human values.

Creating utopian citations involves referencing works and ideas from influential philosophers and texts that have contributed to the concept of utopia. Here are some example citations that you might include in a paper on utopian philosophy, especially in the context of interpreting "Imagine" and "Goti Lo"

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