

# A Search of Indian & Bengali Literature from Rabindranath Tagore's Perspective

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**Abstract:** *This paper gives a brief prospect of Rabindranath Tagore's literary work. The writer believes after summarizing the literature work of Rabindranath Tagore that he erected the issues of society with a lucid style. As an exponent of the Bengal Renaissance, he advanced a monumental canon that comprised paintings, texts, songs, poetries, stories, sketches and doodles and novels. He has rejuvenated Bengali art by repudiating rigid classical forms and resisting linguistic structures. He first got acceptance in native Bengal but soon because of his translations he became rapidly known in the West. His fame attained a lustrous height.*

**Keywords:** Issues of society, Bengal Renaissance, Bengali art, linguistic structures

## 1. Introduction

Rabindranath Tagore was a creative writer whose works bracketed from poetry and songs to short stories, novels and plays. He believed in global humanity and his love for humanity was illustrated in his works. Tagore commenced writing poetry when he was eight years old and at the age of sixteen he released his first assemblage of poems 'Bhanusimha'. He composed three national anthems for three different countries:

- 'Jana Gana Mana' for India
- 'Amar Sonar Bangla' for Bangladesh
- 'Nama Nama Sri Lanka Mata' for Sri Lanka

He underlined on the concept of compassion and living in the way for the welfare of others. He was the creator of Shanti Niketan based on practical activities. He was awarded with Noble Prize for literature in 1918.

## 2. Early Life & Tagore's Work

Rabindranath Tagore was born on May 7, 1861 in Calcutta. His father's name was Debendranath Tagore and mother's name was Sarada Devi. Tagore's mother had died in his early childhood and his father travelled extensively so he was brought-up mostly by the servants. Tagore was the youngest amongst thirteen surviving children of his parents. He was trained Indian classical music by Dhrupad musicians who were called and welcomed by his father. Tagore execrated formal education – his scholarly travails at the local Presidency College. He took in notice that proper teaching does not explain things infact it ignites curiosity. He learned anatomy, geography, drawing, history, Sanskrit, literature and English. Tagore along with his father went on a tour to India for several months. That time Tagore read Sanskrit, modern Science, biographies, History, Astronomy and assessed the classical poetry of Kalidasa. He was greatly impressed by melodious Gurbani and Nanakbani which was sung at Golden Temple for which father and son were routine visitors. He was the writer of six poems unfolding to Sikhism and a gigantic collection of which in Bengali magazine about Sikhism. He began his journey of short-story writing with 'Bhikharini'. In the

same year he published 'Sandhya Sangit' which was keeping the crowd of poems 'Nirjharer Swapnabhanga'.

As Debendranath, the father of Rabindranath wanted his son to become a barrister so he pithily read law at University College London but he left school and returned to Bengal without degree. After returning he incessantly published novels, stories and poems. These left impact within Bengal but received little consideration nationally. He started taking care of his familial estate in Shelaidaha. Here, he published his poems 'Manasi' in 1890 amongst his preeminent work. Tagore criss-crossed the Padama river in decree of the Padma, the plush family barge. He started collecting token rents and sanctified villagers who in turn honoured him with flowers, dried rice and sour milk. He met with Baul Lalon Shah whose folk songs greatly prejudiced Tagore. Tagore worked for him to get popularityty for his songs. It was notified that the period 1891-1895 was Tagore's most prolific period. During the period he wrote more than half the stories of three volumes which were inclusive of 84 stories 'Galpaguchchha'. Its ironic and grave tales criticised the voluptuous poverty of an idealized rural Bengal.

Tagore moved to Santiniketan in 1901 which was an ashram. Here, he lost his wife and two children. Tagore's life became sturdy when his father died in 1905. He was on the income from the Maharaja of Tripura. He sold the family's jewellery, his bungalow and received 2000 rupees as book royalties. He had a string of Bengali and foreign readers after publishing 'Naivedya' in 1901 and 'Kheya' in 1906. He also translated the poems into verse. Tagore was the recipient of Nobel Prize in literature. He was exceedingly acknowledged for his idealistic work. Tagore in synchronization with agricultural economist Leonard Elmhirst set up the Institute for Rural Reconstruction which was renamed to 'Shriniketan' or 'Abode of Welfare'. He also gave lectures against abnormal caste consciousness and untouchability. Later on he was booming in opening Guruvayoor Temple to Dalits.

Since 1932 to 1941, the segment of Tagore was described by Dutta and Robinson as one of a 'peripatetic litterateur'. It avowed his opinion that human divisions were shallow. It was in 1932 visit to a Bedouin encampment in the desert of

Iraq, the chief of tribal told him that “Our prophet has said that a genuine Muslim is he by whose words and deeds not the least of his brother-men may ever come to any harm...” Tagore confided in his diary. “I was startled into recognizing in his words the voice of essential humanity.” In 1934 Tagore was struck at the end when he was scrutinizing prevailing attitude because of earthquake which hit Bihar and killed thousands. He pointed out poverty of Calcutta and socioeconomic demur of Bengal and expressed this in his hundred-line poem which was personalized by Satyajit Ray for his film ‘Aparajita’. Tagore published fifteen new volumes few of them are prose-poem works Punashcha in 1932, Shes Saptak in 1935 and Patraput in 1936. Tagore sustained his experimentation in his prose-songs and dance-dramas. Chitra in 1914, Shyama in 1939, Chandalika in 1938, Devi Bon in 1933, Malancha in 1934 and Char Adhyay in 1934 are Tagore’s few works where we can remark a total different perception of him. His poetries were filled of naturalism and verisimilitude. Last five years of his life were in constant pain, he remained in comatose and died on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1941. He wrote his last dictation to A.K.Sen, brother of the first Chief Election Commissioner. In which he wrote that I have given the whole lot whatever I had and in return I received some love, some amnesty and then I will take these with me when I step on to the boat that crosses the worldless end.

Tagore is well known for his poetries and songs. His poetries are well-known for lyrical nature, rhythmic essence and optimistic feel. Tagore experimented with linguistics and spirituality. He wrote essays, lectures and travelogues and were successfully compiled into different volumes. On his 150<sup>th</sup> birthday an anthology titled ‘Kalanukromik Rabindra Rachanabali’ was published in which entirety of his works were published in sequential order in Bengali. It is inclusive of all versions of each work and of about eighty volumes. The association of Harvard University and Visva-Bharati University initiated to make public the anthology titled ‘The Essential Tagore’. When the writer notified the work of Tagore in terms of drama it was sought to articulate ‘the play of feelings and not of action’. Tagore integrated philosophical and allegorical concepts in his dramas. The Dak Ghar, Chandalika, Raktakarabi, Chitrangada and Shyama are the few plays that have the aroma of dance and drama. Tagore wrote many short stories. He began writing stories since 1877 when he was simply sixteen with his debut story ‘Bhikharini’. The period of 1891-95 was known as Tagore’s Sadhana (meditation) Period. This was the period when Tagore yielded many more stories in three volumes. Amongst them was ‘Galpaguchchha’ which was the collection of eightyfour stories. These stories give the manifestation of Tagore upon his surroundings, on modern and fashionable ideas and on interesting mind puzzles. Tagore was constrained to only a kind of writing, he tried novels too. He well-liked the changes in writing style and also acknowledged. He took the patriotism, nationalism, religious zeal, Hindu-Muslim violence and other aspects of the society in a free way and penned very strikingly on the paper. Tagore was the first person outside Europe to get Nobel Prize for his best collection of poetry. Tagore’s most pioneering and mature poetry embodies his revelation to Bengali rural folk music, which included mystic Baul ballads such as those of the bard Lalou. These were

rediscovered and popularised by Tagore. Tagore captivated new poetic concepts which allowed him to further develop a unique individuality. Tagore was a plentiful song composer and about 2230 songs he composed. These were well known as Rabindrasangit.

### 3. Conclusions

Rabindranath Tagore was a Bengali poet, story writer, songwriter, musician, dramatist, essayist and painter. Tagore had a foremost role in introducing the best of Indian culture and introducing India from Western culture and generally considered to be an extraordinary creative artist of modern India. He is the Nobel laureate of the world. Through the Bengali literature, there was an era of new life in Indian cultural consciousness. He is the first Nobel laureate in Asia. He is the only poet whose two works have become the national anthem of two nations: The nation of India, Jan Gan Man and The national anthem of Bangladesh, Amar Sonar Bangla. He brought the Indian and Bengali literature to a next level which shone globally.

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