

## Rabindranath Tagore's Vision of Poetry

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### Abstract

Rabindranath Tagore was a pioneering and internationally recognized poet. His popularity achieved a luminous height. His poetry glorified Indian culture and this glorification attained global excellence. His originality, different textures of themes, romanticism, his mysticism, lyricism, conception of love, his humanity, amazing technical devices and versification made his poetry unique and remarkable. His poetry has the odour of mysticism and romanticism. His nature poetry is supreme. Like a painter, he painted the objects of nature with different shades and colours. His poetry is suffused with humanity. His poetry seems to be a perfect destination for profound philosophical quest and the union with the Supreme.

**Key words:** luminous, glorification, mysticism, versification, romanticism.

### Introduction

Rabindranath Tagore is one of the greatest and the brightest stars on the world Literary map. Tagore's original literary pieces are written in Bengali and then recreated in English. Tagore was a poet par excellence. His early poetry was imitative and sentimental which at the last stage touched the spiritual height. For Tagore, poetry interprets to us the lessons of nature and mystery of God. The pivotal object of poetry is "to elevate man's soul from materialism and to erect a perfect communion between man and his surrounding and the ultimate reality. To achieve creative unity of the individual with the universe should be the ultimate goal of the poet.

Rabindranath Tagore once stated, "I am a poet and nothing else." Every literary piece of his work is abounded in poetry. He said, "My religion essentially is a poet's religion. Its touch comes to me through the same unseen trackless channels as does the inspiration of my music. My religious life has followed the same mysterious line of growth as has my poetical life." Buddha deva Bose states: "The range of his verse technique will carry us from Wyatt and Surrey across Spenser, Dryden, Shelley and Swinburne, right up to the early Ezra Pound... his ballads excel Scott's, his child poems, more abundant than Blake's blend innocence with almost sophisticated humour."

Tagore's poetry glorifies Indian Culture and this glorification achieved International excellence. His English translations enjoy a recognized position in Indo English Literature. His originality, different textures of themes, romanticism, his mysticism, lyricism, conception of love his humanity, wonderful technical devices and versification make his poetry unique and remarkable. Tagore's poetry is tied with the variegated threads of different themes having originality both in thought and expression. Undoubtedly, his mysticism and romanticism, love of nature, love lyrics, humanism, lyricism, diction, style, imagery, versification and universality of appeal touched each and every poetic heart.

Rabindranath Tagore's Poetry has the odour of mysticism and romanticism. Tagore's mysticism and romanticism are interdependent and issue from the common sources-the Upanishads, the Vaishnava poetry, sufism, Buddhism and the works of Kalidas. Tagore's mysticism is a practical way of the realization of the universe with a pious soul. Mark the views of S. B Mukherji on his mysticism:

“It is a mysticism of limpid clarity, a vision made concrete, even sensuous. Nature's mystery, the mystery of the primordial unison of the soul with her, the joy and wonder of it- all woven into the texture of the poems and vivified with an imagination that can externalize an intuitive vision with symbols and images startlingly new.”

Mysticism is a very striking characteristic of Tagore's Poetry. He realizes “one undivided changeless life in all lives, one Inseparable in the Separate.” Dr. Radhakrishnan states:

“Being a poet Rabindranath uses the visible world as a means of shadowing forth the invisible. He touches the temporal with the light of the eternal. The material world becomes transparent as his spirit moves in it”

Tagore's "Gitanjali" is a supreme literary piece expressing his mysticism. His quest for Almighty finds expression in the lyrics of “Gitanjali”. In “Gitanjali” he states:

“I know not how thou singest, my master! I ever  
listen in silent amazement.

The light of thy music illuminates the world. The  
life breath of thy music runs from sky to sky. The  
holy stream of thy music breaks through all stony  
obstacles and rushes on.”

Rabindranath Tagore believed in the immortality of soul. Death should be welcomed as it leads to the path towards Divinity. The poet's final cry is:

“Like a flock of homesick cranes flying night and day  
back to their mountain nests let all my life take  
its voyage to its eternal home in one salutation to thee.”

Moreover, Tagore's poetry reveals a superb blend of mysticism and romanticism. He was a mystic romantic poet who like William Wordsworth, added a new dimension to what he saw and heard through his imaginations:

“the gleam  
The light that never was on sea or land,  
The consecration and the poet's dream.”

Really, his romanticism is bestowed with typical Indian flavor. Mark the comments of S. B. Mukherji on his romanticism:

“For the romantic elements in his poetry, his true inspiration stemmed not from any of the great Romantics of the west but from multiform streams of Upanisadic and Vaisnavic thought of his own country.”

Tagore's romanticism finds expression when he depicts nature, expresses his pious faith towards divinity and when he worships childhood. Like William Wordsworth and Blake, Tagore realizes a divine power in children. He finds innocence, humour, and a natural bloom in them. In glorifying childhood, his romanticism soars high. He describes as how a child is very near to God. He (child) sees a divine light and this realization is because of pure heart and soul. In “The Crescent Moon”, Tagore writes:

“Bless this little heart, this white soul that has won  
the kiss of heaven for our earth.

He loves the light of the sun, he loves the  
sight of his mother's face.  
He has not learned to despise the dust, and to  
hanker after gold. Clasp him to your heart  
and bless him."

Besides being a mystic and romantic poet, his contribution to Nature poetry is also remarkable. He was a great poet of Nature. He like a child enjoys whole-heartedly all the objects of Nature. Trees, flowers, honeybees, thorns, clouds, chirping of the birds provide boundless pleasure to him. Like a painter, he paints the objects of nature with different shades and colors. His early love for nature finds expression in these lines:

"I had a deep sense, almost from infancy, of the  
beauty of nature, and intimate feeling of companionship  
with the trees and the clouds, and felt in tune with the  
mystical touch of the seasons in the air. At the same  
time, I had a peculiar susceptibility to human  
kindness."

Tagore is a great landscapist in words. The very perception and description of natural objects add unique colours and odours to his Nature Poetry.

"The Fugitive and other Poems" describes how beautifully and minutely he depicts Nature:

"I have looked upon this picture in many a month of  
March when the mustard is in bloom - this lazy live  
of water and the gray of the sand beyond, the rough  
path along the river bank carrying the comradeship  
of the field into the heart of the village.  
I have tried to capture in rhyme the idle whistle  
of the wind,  
the beat of the oar-strokes from a passing boat.  
I have wondered in my mind how simply it stands  
before me,  
this great world: with what fond and familiar case it fills  
my heart, this encounter with the Eternal  
Stranger."

However, his mature Nature poetry portrays a Spiritual aspect where each and every mortal wishes to relax. He realizes that Nature, Man and God are interdependent. Tagore uses Nature images to symbolize the ardent desire to unite with supreme. Mark the lines of "The fugitive"

"How often great Earth, have I felt my being years  
to flow over you, sharing in the happiness of each  
blade that raises its signal banner answer to  
the beckoning blue of the sky. I feel as if I had

belonged to you ages before I was born....”

Tagore like William Wordsworth believed in cordial relationship between man and Nature. This mother child relationship gives solace and motivation. Nature serves as a moral teacher and at every step guides him/her Nature acts as a counsellor also and advises him to follow the path of virtue. Mark the following lines of Tagore:

“We do not want now-a-days temples of worship and outward rites or ceremonies. What we really want is an Ashram. We want a place where the beauty of nature and human soul meet in union.”

Moreover, Tagore's poetry describes that Nature is the dwelling of God. The various features of Nature are symbols of Eternity. Really, Tagore's conception of nature is multi-faceted and romantic. He spiritualizes Nature and his Nature Poetry is remarkable.

Tagore's poetry is suffused with humanity. He advocates “Liberty, Equality and Fraternity” His poems are marked “with a surging love of life and a mighty desire to merge into the rushing stream of humanity.” Rabindranath opposed all religious rituals and orthodoxies which marks a line of division in society. He is a firm believer that man is the image of God. He should love each and every naked, hungry and sick with equal eye. Tagore is a spiritual humanist who sees spiritual significance in the commonplace activities of life and finds God in humble cottage not in shrines.

Tagore is a poet of happiness and hope. He envisions a brighter future for mankind, despite present woe and sorrow. He expresses his vision of universal brotherhood and oneness of humanity. In "Gitanjali", he sings:

“He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path maker is breaking stones. He is with them in sun and in shower, and his garment is covered with dust. Put off they holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil.”

To, sum up, it can be stated that Rabindranath Tagore is a poet unsurpassed. His poetry is the epitome of Indian culture which achieved international recognition. His poetry is interwoven with the variegated threads of romanticism, mysticism, love, nature and humanism. Tagore is a spiritual realist as well as his lyrics are melodious songs of unique beauty and deep feeling. Undoubtedly, Tagore's poetry has left memorable imprint in the galaxy of Indo-Anglian Literature.

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