



**RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S UNIVERSALITY AS A POET-SEER AND HIS
RELEVANCE IN MODERN TIME**

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ABSTRACT:

Rabindranath Tagore represents the millennium in him reflecting the ancient Indian wisdom through the raptures of his lyrics and mystic vision. His metaphysical bent of mind was quite rooted to the realities of his time inasmuch as he served as an anchor of intellectual moorings upon which the emerging nation state was to set foot on to shape a new course of journey. As a liberal humanist he advocated for Inclusive nationalism. Though the English translation of his poems and other literary works lost the vitality of language, the melodious rhyming quality, lyrical beauty and the word-magic but the power of his vision continues to be a source of great inspiration for whoever reads them. This paper is attempted to illumine on Tagore's universality and his poems relevance in modern time when the world is still reeling under indeterminacy of post modern fluidity that continues to witness global terrorism, religious hatred, racism, corruption and discrimination of various sorts. Hence, it is worth that the myriad minded man, 'the East of Suez', may be reviewed afresh for his universality and relevance ever. The whole life of Tagore just evokes a sense that a Himalayan saint in previous birth, incomplete in his search of truth, is sent back by God to complete his journey through poetic vision.

Keywords: *Universality, poetic vision, East-West, eternal, globalization, liberal humanist, religion, Renaissance and truth.*

INTRODUCTION

Tagore was always ahead of his time. He could visualize the future of India and the world and hence, he advocated for a world order based on pure love for humanity, cutting across all the narrow bounds hitherto. He was not happy the way Indian freedom struggle was heading to as all selfish motives and divisiveness were gaining ground. He did not actively participated in politics, yet took upon himself the responsibility to correct the temper of people's mindset through his songs and essays. He was criticized of his aloofness from the mainstream politics, but he remained calm of such adverse remarks as he had a greater role to play as the Indian guru to correct the society with intellectual honesty and nourishing it with the spirit of universality by his sheer poetic power. As a man of action and pure in heart, he always responded to the needs of the people and reacted at an appropriate moment. The world is well aware of his historic letter to Lord Chelmsford, the British viceroy, repudiating his Knighthood in protest for Jalianwalla Bagh mass killing of unarmed protesters. The letter reflects the strong sense of his commitment to the nation. Tagore is relevant in the present condition of unchecked corruption and economic crisis of India that needs such committed people.

India is a vast land with diversity in its language, tradition, and culture. Yet, the country is visited because of the mosaic nature of its culture. This has its firm roots which are intrinsically woven into the fabric of life. Indians know to co-exist without forgiving their identity. This demands a lot of tolerance, self-respect, respect for others and unbounded love



for the Nation. This strong sense of Patriotism has evolved in their blood naturally and no external force or separatist tendency can uproot this.

Rabindranath Tagore, renowned Bengali writer, poet, novelist and play writer has been acclaimed universally. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature for his masterpiece “GEETHANJALI”. He was the first Indian, first non-European to be awarded. Tagore’s poetry is the endowed with the ideas of Nationalism and University. His writings are Philosophical in nature. He strived for completeness. He was deeply bothered by the dehumanizing effects of capitalism. He longed for unity, Internationalism, and Freedom. Many of the people today may not know about his works but all are committed to his values. The world is now facing unprecedented challenges from overpopulation, global warming, and environmental degradation. Tagore is an increasingly compelling voice against deterioration of values. It is very vital to keep in mind his vision of India. It would have a powerful effect on the transformation of India into a powerful Nation.

Tagore is one of the creative geniuses who make us feel privileged to be a human. Let me quote a few lines from his poem

“Remember me, still remember me,

If I go for away

Still, remember me

If old love gets covered by a mesh of new love

Still, remember me

If I stay close by

Yet you cannot see whether, like a shadow

I am present or not

Remember me

Still, remember me

If tears come to your eyelids

If tears come to your eyelids

If play ceases one day, one spring night

Still, remember me.”

Tagore’s novels mostly deal with the contemporary problem. Here, the term contemporary has a wider sense applicable to all ages. Tagore’s writings are timeless. But the tragedy is the language barrier. Most of us do not know Bengali. Even those Bengalis just like any others in India are keen to walk away from their native tongue. The native language



offers no help to them in attaining worldly property. They start shifting to foreign languages valued in global transactions and this is the age of I.T where the language of Information Technology is influencing the people across the world. The translation often fails to carry the original fragrance of one's writing. Tagore's writings are like an elixir which makes people and their values immortal.

He is the sage of 'Santhinikethan' and has a unending quest for freedom. He believes in "Freedom is the oxygen of out" In this world of mass migration, where Individual Identity dominates torchbearer who shows us the path from darkness to light. His writings would be an answer to our prayer.

"Asatomasadgamaya

Tamasomajyotirgamaya

MrutyormaAmrutangamaya"

Lead me from falsehood to truth from darkness to light from death to eternal life when the time he came out of his solitude that is required of a writer.

During the time when Tagore had to be declared as zamindar on a hierarchical basis, seating arrangements were made with a lot of demarcation according to rank and on the basis of caste and religion. This was strictly opposed by Tagore. This is an example of the Nobel nature of the Nobel awardee. This clearly indicates Tagore to be a societal activist.

In 1901 Tagore founded Santhinikethan on the ideal of ancient Indian Tapovan. The vision of the school changed with Tagore's Internationalism and humanist Universalism. He felt that Santiniketan must become India's link with the world. In the 1920s, when he founded Viswabharathi University, he stressed the schools in India should be the meeting ground of the East and the west.

The zamindari for him was not an avenue for wealth creation to be spent on luxuries, but an opportunity for service. In his letters and essays, Tagore repeatedly said that the heart of the country lay in its villages and that no real Progress could be possible without the development of agriculture and alleviation of poverty in the countryside.

He strove for Freedom from every possible limitation of the human mind.

In "Personality" he wrote, " To live will be as easy to man as to breathe and his spirit will be free to create his own world".

In his poem "Creation", which he wrote a few months before death, He says " This gigantic creation is a fireworks display of suns and stars across the skies" on a cosmic timescale.

I too have come from the external and the imperceptible like a spark in a tiny remote corner of space and time".



In his “ Religion of Man”, a Publication of his lecture, he writes “ The idea of the humanity of our God or the divinity of Man the external is the massive subject”.

He understands the role of Technology in development.

In “Srinikethan” he stressed upon the aspects of rural reconstruction.

He introduces many trades lime weaving, carpentry, leather work etc.

He nurtured in himself the scientific spirit and weaved it into the very fabric of his philosophy.

Their generations of Tagore'shadturned green the vast landscape inSantiniketan through afforestation This tree planting ceremony was turned in to an annual festival. In one of this letters to his subordinates, Tagorewrites,” put all your heart and mind into the effort to win over people’s hearts, you will see all hurdles will disappear. It is not possible to have everyone on your side when you are trying to do your duty, but the people should be made to understand that you really deserve their respect, that all your effort are dedicated to their service. If you can achieve this, they all obstacles are bound to recede ”

Initially,Tagore felt European civilization as a trendsetter in bringing about a change in our ideology. He admired the rational outlook, scientific abolition of slavery and other thing but after the second world war Tagore overcame his illusion and expressed his disgust,

“I see the crumbling ruins of a vastcivilization, strewn like a vast heap of the facility”

Tagore is an integral part of the Indian ethos .his great noble values and his ideology would continue to inspire and motivate the future generation to come. His writing would continue to be coherent and relevant to the situations prevailing in the contemporary world his perception would be a ready reference for problem-solving in a critical situation the ideological remarkability of Tagore would sustain the imperishable human values from the face of the earth. His patriotic fervor should be imbibed by every Indian to fight against the separatist tendencies and to combat cross-border terrorism.

Hail to the great spirit,

Hail to the great soul,

“ Jana Gana Mana Adhinayakajayahe”

CONCLUSION

The present era of globalization was anticipated and translated in reality through his International university as a global platform of cross- cultural interaction in which each one realizes that “artists in all parts of the world have created forms of beauty, scientists discovered secrets of the universe, philosophers solved the problems of existence, saints made the truth of the spiritual world organic in their own lives, not merely for some particular



race to which they belonged, but for all mankind' Thus, Tagore's advocacy on infinity or mysticism could hardly hold any belief that any metaphysical forces can govern human life.

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