

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Vol. 4. Issue.4., 2017 (Oct-Dec)

ISSN  
INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD  
SERIAL  
NUMBER  
INDIA  
2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

ROMANTICISM IN TAGORE'S WORKS: A CRITICAL STUDY

RAHAMATULLA

M. A. English, Kazi Nazrul University, Asansol, West Bengal  
Mail-mdrahamat.najrul@gmail.com



RAHAMATULLA

ABSTRACT

The present essay anatomizes the pathological notions and techniques of Tagore's ideological thoughts from his egregious works, not but what the grave growth of science and technology entirely prosperities the world, but it leads the world amiss from the natural thinking, the Modern world, the part of luxury, fleshpots, harmony as well as peace, Tagore collects the romantic devices and values from the occidental romantic poet, writer and dramatics, to flourish the notion of love-affair and romanticism calling for man's affair, freedom, emotion, passion, romantic feeling, perception, ideal love, imagination, aesthetic world, spiritual union, all these Tagore cites on his poems, plays, essays and novels. So he has been envisaged by the critic to be the prolific figure of romanticism in Indian English and Bengali literature, like Ram Mohan ROY, agent of Renaissance and reformation in Bengali, Tagore has been thought to be an altitude of the Renaissance and Romantic movement in the Bengali literary field as well as the stricture of his poetries, novels, plays and essays, Dr. A. Aronson remarks: "that Rabindranath's poetry could have been expected to fit in extraordinarily well not only with the 'jeweled raptures' of Francis Thompson, but also with the dreamy fairyland of W.B. Yeats, with the Irish folk-lore of AE (George Russell), even with the intricate and eccentric symbolism of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot's detached poetry of unrest and doubt" (1). This article focuses on the fruit of Tagore's particular romantic poems along with the occidental romantic poet's influence to show the romantic tone and value of the Bengali literature, the pathological outlooks of his poems flourish, as the part of romantic tradition, Modern Indian culture, literature and the romantic field, most of the Western romantic poets compare their sensible works to Tagore's aesthetic works, for that, Ezra Pound says: " ' I do not think I have ever undertaken so difficult a problem of criticism, for one can praise most poetry in a series of anti -theses. In the work of Mr. Tagore the source of the charm is in the subtle underflow'" (2). (Fortnightly Review, March 1913)

**Keywords:** Romanticism, aesthetic value, imagination, Renaissance, allusion and symbolism.

Being impacted by the occidental romantic poets like Wordsworth, Shelley, Byron, Keats, Yeats and Coleridge, he invents a new kind of romantic world and pervades romantic principles and sensibilities in the Eastern world literature by keeping protect the romantic genre. It can pertain the principles, allusion and

aesthetic thought both with Tagore's romanticism as well as Western romanticism. The crucial feature of the nineteenth century romanticism based on the imagination and fancy, therefore Edward Thompson remark, "Tagore is closely affiliated to Wordsworth, Coleridge, Tennyson and Browning in this respect" (E. Thompson 1948). The relationship between these two romantic worlds is manifested in the genre of the imaginative literary world, Dr. Aronson states, "Though Rabindranath was not an Irishman," The (critics) found affinities everywhere, however far-fetched they might be. Irish literary critics, indeed, took pride in establishing this parallel between the new Irish revival in poetry and Rabindranath" (3), "The poems of Gitanjali have been compared to the work of almost all the living or dead poets on earth, from Sappho to T.S. Eliot". (4) Tagore in his popular lecture "The sense of Beauty" talks about Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn" which tells, Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty (John Keats, 1990) and Tagore remarks:

Upanishads too tell us that all that is, is manifestation of his joy, His deathlessness. From the speck of dust at our feet to the stars in the heaven-all is a manifestation of truth and beauty, of joy and immortality. (Tagore, 1961)

The poetic genre and device of Wordsworth, Keats, Coleridge, Shelley and Lord Byron influence Tagore implicitly with their romantic notion and creative feeling, he represents love of beauty, divine faith, aesthetic thought, transcendentalism, self awareness, ideological and mystical sense, love of nature, worship of nature, trust on Gog in his romantic literary works. His rampant interaction with nature in the love poetry is the eye-catching aspect of romanticism, his creative feeling and imagination along with beauty of spring as well as song of nature are sprouted in the love-romantic poem, "The Gardener", he states:

Your feet are rosy-red with the glow of my heart's desire,  
Gleaner of my sun-set song! (R.Tagore, 1913)

He synthesizes the impressive beauty of romantic nature and the glamour of sun-set sky, being the romantic-love poet, his soul is full of nature sight like colour of natural ground, sound of stream, smell of ripen-grain, hence he remarks, "my heart dances like a peacock" (Poem). His creative thoughts are close interconnect between the romantic world as well as imaginative world, so romantic poet Wordsworth narrates: "The nurse", "the guide", "the guardian of my heart", and "soul of all my moral being", he shows nature as everything like God for them in romantic sense. Like him, Tagore narrates:

The evening air is eager with the sad music of water. Ah, it calls me out into the  
Dusk (*Gitanjali*).

My heart, with its lapping waves of song, longs to caress the green world of the  
sunny day (*Stray Birds*, R.Tagore 1916).

Tagore with the romantic heart of Eastern and Western shows the inseparable bond between romanticism and ideology of genuine being, he in his poetic world wants to create a transcendental world through his romantic feeling and language, then he unfolds his childhood passion for nature and its beauty, he proves poetically mental growth of romanticism and sensibility. He states:

From the lap of his mother he would break

And in the cradle of nature resume his play (The Poet's Story)

Tagore's love-nature poems including *The Lonely* (Ekakini), *Vasundhara*, *To the Sea*, and *Ahalya*, the theme of love, nature, spiritual, transcendentalism, romanticism, imagination and loneliness, like romantic poets, Tagore dedicates himself for the peace and harmony of nature and untold-story of nature, his *The Poet's Story's* theme is related to Shelley's *Alastor*. He, the admirer of P.B. Shelley who narrates:

Mother Nature, to pursue thy truth  
To the farthest end with the faltering wit of man  
By your grace, have I sought that far  
And shall ever seek (*Alastor*).

The authentic aspect of romanticism in the nineteenth century is a thick belief and current fidelity in the field of fancy and imagination. The romantic poets along with Tagore deflect their thinking from reason to romantic imagination, artifact to natural ideology, modern to ancient, Tagore's imagination, out of carnal, terrestrial sagacity, his quest for heavenly life unfolds the sagacity of Devotee's suffering, restless, oppressed, vex and aesthetic. He argues:

I will meet one day the life within me, the joy that hides in my life, though  
The days perplex my path  
with their idle dust . I have known it in glimpses, and its fitful breath has come upon me making My  
thoughts fragrant for a while I will meet one day the joy without me that dwells behind the screen  
of light –And will stand in the over-flowing solitude where all things are seen by their creator (8).

Tagore and Keats both are the pioneer of Beauty and Joy in their poetic field, Keats coined the romantic phrases, "Fancy and Imagination", as well as "Negative Capability" to make strong his poetic power and thought, similarly, being influenced by Keats' creative sense, Tagore along with the Eastern poets always nurtures the ideology of "Satyam, Shivam, Sunderam"-Truth, Piety, and Beauty. Hence, the technique and influence of the Occidental romantic poets on Tagore are bounded, in "The Prelude" (VI, 603), Wordsworth states: "Whether we be young or old, / Our destiny, our being's heart and home / Is with infinitude and only there". Tagore in Gitanjali narrates the theme of reality and infinitude: "He [God] is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path-maker is breaking the stones. He is with them in sun and shower, and his garment is covered with dust... Meet him and stand by him in toil and in the sweat of thy brow." (10) Here Wordsworth and Tagore become the worshiper of God with the notion of the faith and reality through the love-respect of man fellow. Tagore states: "The prosody of the stars can be explained in the classroom by diagrams, but the poetry of the stars is in the silent meeting of soul with..." (13). He takes notion of mysticism from the Sanskrit and Bengali poetry, the eminent person remarks: "He [Tagore] was born in Bengali, but in a Europeanized atmosphere, in which there was hardly any indigenous element, except, perhaps, a culture of the Upanishads. His mode of thinking is so essentially English that I appreciate his English translation of the Gitanjali far better than the original Bengali. Owing to his poetry being thoroughly imbued with Western idea, he appeals to his English reader more widely than to Bengalis. Amongst us, those only who have lost all touch with the old vernacular literature and with the life of the people, reading only European books, are his admirers. The rest are bewildered by his Bengali style, to which they are not accustomed and which, rendered in English, appears happier and more natural. The much admire mysticism of his poems is but a feeble echo of the message that the Upanishads have brought to us. His love poems have only fleeting emotions, and leave hardly any impression after one reading. If our country loses herself headlong in the sea of foreign culture, he will no doubt be harbinger of the new literary age. But if otherwise, I am sure his fame will fade and in the annals of our literature he will be remembered only as the head of a school that drew its inspiration from foreign sources. European appreciation does not weigh much with us, it only shows that he has acquired the poetical knack of saying things in such a way will readily appeal to the European mind". (14) The scholar here appreciates and shows Tagore's narrative and romantic skill, power of thought, philosophy, sagacity of nature from tradition to modern age. From his early-hood to the breath-closed time, Tagore pursues the romantic image, notions, philosophical scenes, variety of nature, spiritual feelings, comprehension of beauty, sagacity of natural affections around his Shantiniketan garden. All these poetic fragment have been found in the romantic study, he thus relates these techniques to his poem Reminiscences (R. Tagore 1923):

"So young muser, I sat listening  
To my fancy's wildest word-  
On a sudden, through the glistening  
Leaves around a little stirred  
Came around, a sense of music,  
Which was rather left than heard  
Softly it unwound me –  
From the world it shut me in-  
Like fountain around me." (Tagore, 1961)

### Conclusion

To conclude, it may fairly be stated, in his literary life, he contributes to the Bengali as well as Eastern English literature the concepts of romanticism, he, as a prolific figure, grapples firmly his romantic feelings and ideas for the conscience humanism of his contemporary life, at creating peace, harmony and

order of romantic doctrines in his philosophical works, he draws his fellow men back to the natural objects and romanticism, according to Yeats, birds and the leaves “ seem as near to Tagore as they are near to children.”... “when he [ Rabindranath ] was very young he wrote much of natural objects, he would sit all day in his garden...”(16), Again, every morning at three- I know, for I have seen it-he sits immovable in contemplation, and for two hours does not awake from his reverie upon the nature of Gog’ “(17). Thus Tagore became the permanent world-spokesman of the Occidental and Eastern readers, critics as well as romantic literature.

**Work cited**

- E. Thompson *Rabindranath Tagore: Poet and Dramatist*, Oxford University Press, 2nd ed, 1948
- R. Tagore from *Fruit Gathering*, xxi, *collected poems and plays of Rabindranath Tagore*, London, 1937
- John Keats “Ode on a Grecian Urn”, *Poetical works ed. H.W. Garrod*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1990
- R. Tagore, *On Art and Aesthetics*, ed. Prithwish Neogy, Orient Longmans, Calcutta, 1961 *Visva Bharati Quarterly*, Tagore Birthday Number, 1941, p.222.
- R. Tagore, *Gitanjali*, The India Society, London, reprinted Calcutta: Tulikalam, 1912.
- R. Tagore, *The Gardener*, Macmillan, London, 1913
- R. Tagore, *Stray Birds*, poem 29, Macmillan, London, 1916 .
- R. Tagore, *Poems*, Poem 20, VisvaBharati, Calcutta, 1942 .
- R. Tagore, *Sadhana*, Macmillan, London, 1913.
- R. Tagore, *My Reminiscences*, Macmillan (Indian Edition), Delhi, 1923.
- R. Tagore, *The Religion of Man*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1931, reprint 1970.