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हिन्दी भाषा के द्वारा
सारे भारत को
एक सूत्र में पिरोया
जा सकता है।

-महर्षि दयानन्द सरस्वती

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Naturalism in Ravindernath Tagore's Poetry

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Abstract :-

Tagore's Nature poems not only treat the transient beauty of Nature by describing whatever is arresting and stunning in Nature, but they penetrate the visual beauty within and speak of a divine presence revealed to him in its splendour. His whole being was infused by this divine presence. Contacts with Nature, as depicted in his poems, almost invariably imply the presence of something beyond.

Tagore's view of Nature was sympathetic and decidedly infused with a high religious element. However, he adroitly contained and combined his religious view of Nature with his deep love for it into a synthetic vision of reality. Being a lover of beauty and harmony, his poetic mind knew the trick of reconciling contradictions into harmony.

From his extensive writings about the relation of man to nature, we discover that the experience of the world i.e., 'Vishva-bodh' is not isolated from the experience of Nature i.e., 'Prakriti bodh'

What is beautiful is beneficent :

O goddess Nature, in your beauteous world

No harm can ever happen. - Tagore

Tagore was a great lover of Nature and he bestowed a very important place to Nature. To him education divorced from nature has brought untold harm to young children. He wanted human beings to have a close communication with the natural surroundings.

Tagore's concept of nature was influenced by his childhood perception. Indian philosophic thought, Kalidasa's writings, Vaishnava poetry, Western romanticism and so on shaped his thoughts and ideas. In his Reminiscences he writes of his early conception of nature as a companion and symbol of unlimited freedom. This came to him at a time when he was confined within the house: ?

"Beyond my reach stretched this limit less thing called the Outside" he writes ? "flashes, sounds and scenes of which used momentarily to come and touch me through interstices. It seemed to want to beckon me through the shutters with a variety of gestures. But it was free and I was bound – there was no way of our meeting."

(Rabindra Rachonabali. Visva-Bharati)

It is true that despite his independence of mind he looked for his inspiration to the past, to nature, and that his theme is man's relation to these and to God; he was never consumed with the complexities of psychology, as many poets who followed him in Bengal have been. He may have achieved his great and lasting popularity just

because he was a poet of hope. Toward the end of his life he was stricken with horror by the Nazi march through Europe and Japan's ravages in China. And yet the keynote of his life was struck in such lines as these, from his collection called *Kaplana* :-

Even though slow and sluggish evening comes,
and stops as with a gesture your song;
even though you are alone in the infinite sky,
and your body weary, and in terror you utter
a silent mantra to horizons hidden by the veil- bird, O my bird,
though it is darkening do not fold your wings. (Das.263)

It speaks of an intense yearning of the heart for the divine who is in man and not in the temple or scriptures; in images and symbols. The worshippers, in the modern Indian religion assert that they have deities of different names, forms and mythology. A beggar belonging to the Baul sect of Bengal says:

Temples and mosques obstruct thy path,
And I fail to hear thy call or to move,
When the teachers and the priests angrily crowd round me. (Das.129)
He goes on to say that the Supreme Reality manifests in the form of God-man.
For the sake of this love heaven longs to become
Earth and gods to become man. (Das.130.)

Rabindranath Tagore is very famous Bangali poet. Bangali literature has its own trends as concerning with nature. We find that it has like other Indian vernaculars, a long ancestry of seasonal songs. Its traditional 'baramasas' describe the ever fresh was of love to which each reason gives a new poignancy. The use of nature as a source of poetic imagery which was an important literary inheritance from Sanskrit did not gain by its second lease in Bangali. Infact it killed what ever desire the poet might have had to observe nature for himself. Description of nature in this poetry is rare and when ever they occur are incidental to other themes. (Roy)

The position is summed up in Sen's remark, 'in old and medieval Bangali description of nature occur no doubt at intervals but nowhere are they given pronounced, not to speak of independent interest. They are introduced because they reflect the soul of an individual, often simply set off the narrative, and that is the most that can be said of them. A part from this nature has no position in pre-British literature.'

Nature as an independent motif came to Bangali poetry after the middle of the 19th century, though it had been adopted along with other themes in the transitional verse of Iser Gupta. Although both Hem and Nobin accepted the main tenets of the creed, it was truly established by Biharilal who took it up as a cause, embellished its advocacy with his considerable, talents and preached its dogmas with the zeal of a convert. He eulogized the moral and educative influence of nature, the beatitude of the peasant's life and the primitive state.

Nature then has two aspects. In nature we find the presence of joy in beauty that is called softer side of nature and the prance of law in truth that is known as harsher side of nature. The former and deeper aspect of nature is viewed as a symbol of leisure and repose, as the perfect expression of beauty and peace. There is an abundance of word pictures of the quiet and gentler side of nature in the poetry of Tagore. Its importance resides,

not in our commercial but in our spiritual kinship with it. Beauty, not utility, is its essential quality. The colours and sounds of nature enter into our hearts as a harmony of beauty.

However, this does not mean that Tagore is only a poet of the softer side of nature. His love of nature is realistic, comprehensive and all inclusive. He loves nature for her more dynamic, vaster and wilder aspects. He is also aware of all that is harsh, ugly and cruel in nature. Nature red in tooth and claw was not unknown to him. Picturesque descriptions of nature in her terrible mood abound in the poetry of Tagore.

Under the latter aspect of nature in outward or physical, under which nature is viewed as a casual mechanism, to be investigated by science and harshness by technology to meet our needs. From the technological perspective, nature is viewed through the lens of utility. But Tagore's care for nature is not concern with this utility concept but on a non-utilitarian ground. Tagore's environmental concern may be better understood by invoking, once again, his idea of surplus that animals are very nearly bound within the limits of its necessities. But there is a vast excess of wealth in man's life. When so taken, the idea helps to explain why Tagore is so anxious that the natural environment be defended against unnecessary tempering and intrusion. He is drawn towards nature because its harmony evokes our aesthetic appreciation, because it gives us spiritual joy, and thus fulfils the demands of the surplus or spiritual component in us. (Ghosh)

The point being made here emerges more clearly in Tagore's insistence as noted already, on the relation of love we enter into with nature in our aesthetic contemplation of it. The point here is that when we love anyone or anything, he cannot think of seeing his beloved either in the light of any usefulness for him or as something purely external to his being, something in 'his world' as well as the actual world. It is this relation of love, Tagore claims that we have with nature in our aesthetic experience of it. It is in this relation of love that he is intensely aware of nature, not as an object either for detached equity or practical use but as belonging to the expanded sphere of his being. Tagore was in favour to protect nature not for its practical utility but for its inner harmony with human.

Tagore's mind extremely responsive and sensitive to nature. Throughout his poems, songs and dramas, we meet bright sunshine, mellow evening, calm night and many other aspects of nature. His soul seems to have to seat comfortably, as he says, in the arms of nature without missing a practical of its light, its air, its scenery of nature, with the melodies coming from the murmur of running water, from the songs of birds, from the rushing of leaves. He expresses an eagerness to enter deep into the great festival of nature. He talks about nature in a consummately significant way. He talks about nature in as 'the most sacred place for pilgrimage', and expresses his own profound sense of intimacy close to my life, permeated by a subtle touch of kinship which enhanced the value of my being'. His awareness of the divine in all the forms that Nature displayed - the river, the sky, and the birds - pulsates in his poems. Even in the seasonal change of Nature Tagore found a divine touch. He welcomed this change by offering prayer to Almighty. He sang,

In the fragrant days of sunny April through the forest path
he comes, comes, ever comes.

In the rainy gloom of July nights on the thundering chariot of clouds he
comes, comes, ever comes. (Gitanjali. 57)

The contrast between the narrow world of man and the ampler world of Nature, between the home and

sky is suggested in these lines :-

My house is small and what once has gone from it can never be regained But infinite is thy mansion, my lord, and seeking her I have come to thy door.²³ (Gitanjali. 72-73.)

Nature was benign and so Tagore was of the view that nature was not opposed to the self and its aspirations. The two - Nature and self - are both parts of the Absolute. "Nature and society are revelations of the divine spirit. The same light dwells in the world outside and the world within." (Roy. 16)

The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.

It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers. (Gitanjali, 66).

In spite of all this bonding, Tagore still longs for a spiritual companionship with Nature herself, for a more complete sense of identity with it. Those rare and intimate moments of communion, when nature will enclose his soul with her colours, sounds and odours fill the poet with infinite joy and delight.

Ah my heart dances like peacock,
the rain patters on the new leaves of summer,
the tremor of the crickets' chirp troubles the shade of the tree,
the river overflows its bank washing the village meadows'

My heart dances. (Tagore, Poems, 334)

According to Tagore, nature reveals an inner harmony within itself, among the countless different items that constitute it. Any disharmony or lack of unity that we perceive in nature is therefore only apparent. This is the point he makes in the following analogy with waves and the sea of which they are integral parts.

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