

THE BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF TAGORE SONGS

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ABSTRACT

Our lives have a deep connection to Tagore's songs. Whenever we hear or listen to his songs, naturally, a few questions arise in our minds about when and where the poet wrote the songs. For example, was there any particular reason behind the composition? It also makes us question who made the notations of the compositions. His melody brings life to the lyrics and touches our hearts. Sometimes it feels like the songs have been arranged like this for a long time. Some of them are songs of worship, some are of love, and some are for nature. After hearing his compositions, we don't always get, or it is very difficult to get, a clear picture of when Tagore had written what song at what age. There might not always be a story or an event behind his songs. However, the goddess of music relied on him, and one song after the other would be created spontaneously.

Keywords- Rabindranath Tagore, Song, Nature, History, Composition, Create.

Introduction

Rabindranath's musical genius and temperament developed within the musical environment of the Tagore family. In shaping this environment, the person who played the pioneering role and whose contribution was the most significant was the very soul of the family—his father, Maharshi Debendranath Tagore. In Rabindranath's childhood, the influence of music came broadly in three ways: the impact of elder relatives, the influence of eminent musicians, and the effect of various family-based musical gatherings. Rabindranath's songs are eternal and everlasting (unchanging truths). For more than a hundred years these songs have continued to flow. Why this music still flows in the same way today is something we need to understand.

Whenever we perform these songs, we often wonder—where were they composed, when were they written, or whether any incident is associated with them? The curiosity grows. And when we come to know the story, our eagerness to perform the song deepens even further.

We begin to feel the aesthetic necessity of binding Rabindranath's songs into a single thread along with the flow of time. As we listen to his music, many questions keep accumulating in our minds. It seems that if his songs were arranged chronologically, would we not then be able to sense, through that arrangement, the subtle history of the evolution of his inner world?

The innermost experiences of his life—the history of his joys, sorrows, and sufferings, his intimate life story—have all left profound imprints on his songs. How much of Rabindranath the human being emerges from within Rabindranath the artist?

The scenery and Context of Tagore Songs

An element of significant timelessness operates behind all of our ideas and experiences when it comes to Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore's songs. We think that these songs have been arranged like this since time immemorial and forever for us. This is how devotional and love songs were arranged so methodically that includes songs about rainy and spring seasons. We now can not imagine the situations when these songs did not exist.

However, one of the biggest contributors to this confusion is the famous book itself, *The Gitabitan!*

The compositional period of the songs is not given appropriately, and the compositional period of these songs is also not being arranged accordingly. We are so used to arranging these songs that we don't remember listening. that a 16-year-old boy who wrote "Gahan Kusum Kunj Mahe." A 27-year-old youth wrote, "Taby mone rekho..." or even an eighty-year-old but young at heart wrote, "Amar Onge Sur Toronge Deckhechhe Baan, Roser Plabone Dubiya Jai..." We do not even remember at times that it took twenty-seven long years to finish one hundred twelve songs for the rainy season that includes songs from "Sawano Gogone Ghor Ghana Ghata " to "Eso Eso Ogo Shyam Chhaya Ghono Din!"

Around September of 1895, Rabindranath Tagore wrote "Aami Chini Go Chini Tomare Ogo Videhisini" while residing in his boat on Padma river at Shilaidaha.

While describing the origin of the song, the poet wrote in his memoirs - "In childhood I heard only one of those songs about who gave you a videshini's look!

The words drew such a beautiful picture in my mind that even today that line is in my mind.

Rumoring inside. One day I also wrote a song under the shadow of that song I sat down to write. I wrote the first line with a humming tone "Aami Chini Go Chini Tomare Ogo Videhisini". We came to know that around January of 1921, Tagore sang this song in the presence of Helen Keller.

Rabindranath's songs are closely related to Bengali life. It is very much involved when we listen to these songs. Sometimes various interesting questions arise in our mind about the poet's work. When and where Tagore wrote the song? Was there any special reason behind the composition, if any? The impact of the event stirred the poet's mind? Also we want to know about who composed the notation of the song, what is the melody that brings the lyrics to life? Does our soul go through the swing? That is, the context of the song or the history of composition. Many of us are eager to know. This results in the image of the song in the mind of the listener. The rapport between the composer and the listener becomes meaningful when captured closely.

On his way to the Himalayas with his father, Maharshi Devendranath, Tagore wrote "Gogoner khale Rabichandra Deepak Jwale..." This was during their Amritsar stay. Although this was not an original work, it was just a literal recitation of a Sikh hymn. A musical career of 66 years came to an end shortly before his 80th birthday. But the song "Hey Natun Dekha Dikh Ar-Bar" was written on that occasion. On this long journey, Rabindranath composed approximately 2000 to 2500 songs, but there is no direct cause or event or story behind all of them. One after another spontaneously arose when Goddess Saraswati rested on him.

Again, there are many songs that refer to melody during composition, yet they were first published as poems. But much later, during various occasions such as drama staging, Maghotsav, birthdays, New Year festivals, etc., Tagore composed poems and turned them into songs. During this transformation, in many situations he made various changes in his earlier works. There are also numerous examples of converting songs to poems. Also from the Bengali year 1287 to 1328, the conversions were made as follows: 323 for 31 Maghotsavs, 99 for 10 Monsoon Festivals, including tree planting, halkarshan, Bengali New Years, etc.

When we hear or read the songs of Rabindranath, then the song can be reimagined. If the story or event behind the composition is known, For example, the song "Sukher Majhe Tomai Dekhechhi (I saw you in happiness)" was written for an expedition during a tragic ending on the way from Shilaidah to Sajjadpur by boat in stormy conditions of Padma river. Tagore wrote all these songs while sitting on a rickety boat, yet he created the pictures of serene, calm nature.

After the death of Jatin Das, a revolutionary in Lahore Jail, the poet expressed anger in the song "Sarab Kharbatare Dahe." Rabindranath is worldly in song as he has shown the way out of pain and suffering. After his youngest son's death of Shamir, he wrote "Anthar Mamo Bikishito Karo..." He has written, "Alpo loiya thaki, tai mor jaha Jai Taha Jai..." as he was attending Nitindranath's sick bed or to absorb his own scattered mind.

His effortlessly written "Baje Baje Ramyaveena" songs are a part of that example. On the other hand, in view of the joyous events, Tagore wrote the following:

"Eso Eso Hey Trishnar Jol," "Sakhi Protidin Hai," "Olo Soi Olo Soi, Amar Ichcha Kore Toder Moton Moner Katha Koi," etc. The songs are not only the consonance of the melody with the words but also mixed with history and much more, for sure.

Now let's talk about this song, "Shanti Karo Barishan." Another song comes with the theme of this song, "Shanto Ha Re Maamo Chitta Nirakul..."

Gaganendranath's elder son, Gehendranath, got married on 13th March, 1904. As there was splendor in this marriage, it was the same in Thakurbari.

Doubt it ever happened. Purnima Rani Tagore has a detailed description of that splendor in Thakur's book of the Tagore family. The curious reader should read it of such an era of a lost essence of the festival and will get what seems like a fairy tale to us today. An organ was then famous, and that was Lobo Sahib's band party. He gave the following details:

Mohanlal Gangopadhyay, grandson of Gaganendranath's brother Abanindranath, said, "Various musicians came to the Gehendranath's wedding." There were no megaphones/loudspeakers or long-playing records in those days. But there were different groups. Each group played a different kind of music. Most music was a collection of hoarse, shrill sounds, so Gagan was not fond of it. He wanted to put together an acceptable band party.

But Soudamini (mother of Gaganendranath) said, "Do not worry at all. It is your older son and my eldest grandson. Arrange a very good wedding celebration and make sure that nothing is left out; rather, invite all the teams that are the best. Don't worry about the cost." He arranged all kinds of musical bands according to his mother's orders. It was above average three teams, Druml group, Flute (Sahanai), and above all, Lobo sahib's band party came. This was in those days when Portuguese Mr. Lobo was very popular in the bridal ceremony market. Those who can afford it? They used to call that Lobo on the occasion of a marriage ceremony. Gagan summoned Lobo and said, Sir, will Tagore's songs come out with these instruments of yours? Lobo

said, "Is it impossible that this ever happens?" Gagan said, Why not? Lobo said, "Well, Mr. Tagore, you are happy just singing by using your vocal cords. We should not be like that. Our type is different." Gagan said, "Tell me what kind of style? Make me understand, Mr. Lobo." Lobo said, "Our songs always have notation. We cannot play these types of songs. We have violinists, cellists, saxophonists, and even cymbals, drums, and all. The musicians kept the notation in front of them and played the instrument". Gagan said, "Well, then, if I can write the notation of Tagore's song, then can you? Lobo said, "Yes, I can give it a try when I get the notation." Gagan wondered how to get the notation. At the end, Gagan approached Ravi uncle. Rabindranath listened and thought for a while. He thought and said, Take this song. I will write the notation of it. Then again for a while he thought silently and said, "But it won't happen if it's just music notation. Lobo's band plays various instruments. So it needs to be harmonized. That's enough. I am requesting Bibi. Let Bibi sit down and harmonize ". Tagore selected two songs—" Shanto Ho Re Momo Chitto Nirakul Shanto Ho Re Ore Deen..." and the other one was "Shanti Koro Barishan Nirob Dhore Nath..." After a while, the band orchestra rang. Wait a second! Which Lobo is this?

Is Lobo reborn or what? What tune is playing in Lobo's band? This is a pure Indian tone! Tagore's song became noticed after a short while. Lobo's western band is playing Tagore's song. When the songs came to an end, everyone cheered immediately. One more song, and that too Tagore's tune. Wow!

The second song is "Bohe Niranthar Ananta Anandhara." This song was composed during autumn of 1897. The writer and journalist Amal Home heard this song in Rabindranath's own voice. He wrote in his book 'Purushottam Rabindranath'—"He can not recall whether it was that year or the following year," but I heard his song for the second time. "This was during the wedding reception of Mr. Anandamohan Basu's eldest daughter Ms. Nalani Davi (niece of Acharya Jagadish Chandra Basu), and Professor Nagendra Chandra Nag. Tagore played the organ himself only once. He witnessed Rabindranath playing the organ or some musical instrument along with his newly composed song. He sang "Bahe Nirantar Ananta Anandhara."

Conclusion

There is no lexicon of perspectives from which to view Rabindranath Tagore. When contemplating his songs, we recognize that many of his compositions have an unseen backstory. In circumstances both ordinary and extraordinary, he composed, set to tune, and sang his songs. If we can know the background stories of a few hundred such songs, then on the one hand it will profoundly enrich our listening experience, while on the other hand, perhaps, from some new angle of light, a secluded area of that mysterious concept called 'Rabindranath' might become illuminated.

Maybe it will be seen that the opening lyric was sprung out in his mind from a flashback of some seemingly trivial outer scenario—but by the time the song ended, it had come to a place that had no connection with its starting point. Such had happened many times.

Hence, these stories are of immeasurable significance in helping us understand the inner history of Rabindranath's life.

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