

Tagore

*Clouds come floating into my life, no
longer to carry rain or usher storm,
but to add color to my sunset sky.*

Rabindranath Tagore

It usually takes many pages to unravel the words of a genius, and many men of words to get closer to the elevating spirit that still resides in the poems sung by the genius. And still one may miss it altogether - the simplicity and the genialness, the genialness of simplicity. The task befallen to me is of such kind – so easy to miss, so easy to fail. Shall I really say something about Rabindranath Tagore without missing something, without missing it all? Hell, no. I'll let him speak for himself, and I will let you simply watch and enjoy, even though you too may miss some of it.

When Day Is Done

If the day is done,
if birds sing no more,
if the wind has flagged tired,
then draw the veil of darkness thick upon me,
even as thou hast wrapt the earth with the
coverlet of sleep
and tenderly closed the petals of the drooping
lotus at dusk.
From the traveler,
whose sack of provisions is empty before the
voyage is ended, whose garment is torn and
dust-laden,
whose strength is exhausted,
remove shame and poverty,
and renew his life like a flower under the cover
of thy kindly night.

Journey Home

The time that my journey takes is long and the way of it long.

I came out on the chariot of the first gleam of light, and pursued my voyage through the wildernesses of worlds leaving my track on many a star and planet.

It is the most distant course that comes nearest to thyself,

and that training is the most intricate which leads to the utter simplicity of a tune.

The traveler has to knock at every alien door to come to his own, and one has to wander through all the outer worlds to reach the innermost shrine at the end.

My eyes strayed far and wide before I shut them and said 'Here art thou!'

The question and the cry 'Oh, where?' melt into tears of a thousand

streams and deluge the world with the flood of the assurance 'I am!'

Who is This?

I came out alone on my way to my tryst.

But who is this that follows me in the silent dark?

I move aside to avoid his presence but I escape him not.

He makes the dust rise from the earth with his swagger;

he adds his loud voice to every word that I utter.

He is my own little self, my lord, he knows no shame;

but I am ashamed to come to thy door in his company.

Biography

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was the youngest son of Debendranath Tagore, a leader of the Brahmo Samaj, which was a new religious sect in nineteenth-century Bengal and which attempted a revival of the ultimate monistic basis of Hinduism as laid down in the *Upanishads*. He was educated at home; and although at seventeen he was sent to England for formal schooling, he did not finish his studies there. In his mature years, in addition to his many-sided literary activities, he managed the family estates, a project which brought him into close touch with common humanity and increased his interest in social reforms. He also started an experimental school at Shantiniketan where he tried his Upanishadic ideals of education.

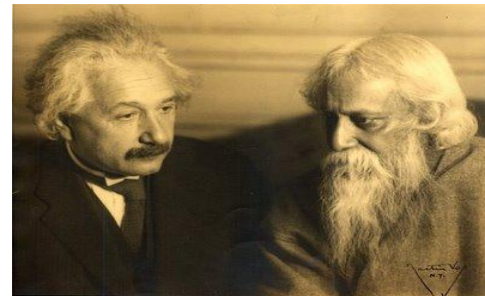
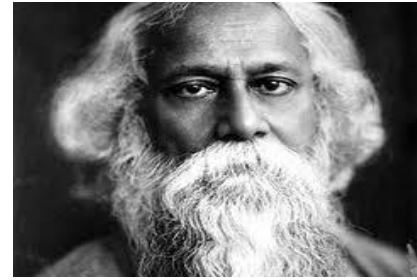
In 1913 he received Nobel Prize for literature, and two years after, in 1915 he was knighted by the ruling British Government, but within a few years he resigned the honor as a protest against British policies in India. Although Tagore wrote successfully in all literary genres, he was first of all a poet. Among his fifty and odd volumes of poetry are *Manasi* (1890) [The Ideal One], *Sonar Tari* (1894) [The Golden Boat], *Gitanjali* (1910) [Song Offerings], *Gitimalya* (1914) [Wreath of Songs], and *Balaka* (1916) [The Flight of Cranes]. The English renderings of his poetry include *The Gardener* (1913), *Fruit-Gathering* (1916), and *The Fugitive* (1921). He is also famous for his anti-nationalism sentiment expressed in the short book titled "Nationalism".

Rabindranath Tagore died on August 7, 1941.

Death is not extinguishing the light; it is only putting out the lamp because the dawn has come.

Rabindranath Tagore

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Einstein and Tagore



Tagore and Gandhi

Einstein on Tagore, co-written with Gandhi and Rolland:

He has been for us the living symbol of the Spirit, of Light, and of Harmony - the great free bird which soars in the midst of tempests - the song of Eternity which Ariel strikes on his golden harp, rising above the sea of unloosened passions. But his art never remained indifferent to human misery and struggles. He is the 'Great Sentinel.' For all that we are and we have created have had their roots and their branches in that Great Ganges of Poetry and Love.

By Vladan Cukvas (ID Zone 2011)

For more on R. Tagore visit

<http://www.schoolofwisdom.com/history/teachers/rabindranath-tagore/>