

**Gurudev Ravindranath Tagore –
A Multifasceted Genius par Excellence**

The Home Coming – A Short Story

A Presentation By

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- ❖ An epoch making intellectual and educationist
- ❖ Spiritual leader, a mystic poet of God and nature
- ❖ A profound Social thinker,
- ❖ Global Philosopher,
- ❖ Global Orator
- ❖ Global Traveler
- ❖ A devoted social reformer
- ❖ A die hard worshipper of motherland
- ❖ A Dedicated Patriot .

Biographical Details:

❖ Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) also known as Gurudev, conquered the field of literature with his numerous forms of poems, stories, dramas and songs. Till this day, his contribution is deeply rooted in India and abroad.

❖ Born as Thirteenth Child to Debendranath Tagore and Sharda Devi Tagore – at Thakurwadi Mansion in Calcutta on 7 May 1861 in a rich and prosperous dynasty.

❖ Educated at home

❖ at seventeen he was sent to England for formal education. He was educated from Oxford and Cambridge but he did not finish his studies .

❖ Engaged in many sided literary Activities and thus came in close touch with common people between 1877-1925

❖ Tagore was nick named and was fondly called as **Rabi** in his family as well as among his friends and relatives.



❖ Tagore lost his mother in early childhood.

❖ Since childhood he was raised by his paternal grandmother and servants.



❖ His father used to be on Brahma Samaj Meeting tours and Lecture tours mostly .

❖ Tagore was restricted to stay and study at home by his parents.

❖ Tagore as a child had tremendous passion to know the outside world and nature.



❖ He also participated in Indian Nationalist Movement

❖ in 1901 at Bolpur near he founded Shantiniketan(Abode of Peace) an experimenting school in the lap of nature to study ,teach and learn Indian art and culture as well as the essence of Hinduism as expressed in the Upnishadhas free from the traditional Hindu Religion.

❖(1901-1932) later in 1921 it was converted into Vaswa-Bharti University.

❖In 1913 Tagore received the Nobel Prize of Literature for his literary masterpiece Gitanjali (Songs Offering) published in London in 1912.

❖Tagore was the first Indian and Non-European to receive this most prestigious honor that proved the metal of Indian literature on global platform.

❖ Tagore was conferred upon Sir Knighthood for his excellent and valuable contribution in literature by the British Government but Tagore renounced it against the protest of English exploiting policies and inhuman massacre of Jalianwala Bagh in Amritsar in 1919.

"The disproportionate severity of the punishments inflicted upon the unfortunate people and the methods of carrying them out, we are convinced, are without parallel in the history of civilised governments...The time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in their incongruous context of humiliation, and I for my part wish to stand, shorn of all special distinctions, by the side of my country men."

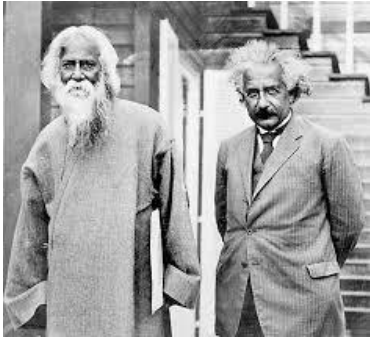
❖ Tagore used to write in two languages -
His Native Language or mother tongue - Bengali
Foreign /International Language – English

❖ His works have been translated in 94 languages from different states and countries and enriched the global literature.

❖ Tagore modernized Bengali literature by liberating it from rigid classical structures and shackles of Sanskrit.

- ❖ Tagore handled old English language (archaism) in his poems .
- ❖ All his works and poems have Indian spiritual and cultural references. Tagore devotes to Indian ethos and pathos in his works.
- ❖ Tagore harnessed his entire life to voice the Indian art, culture and literature on global platform.
- ❖ Tagore has been called –The Voice of India’s Spiritual Heritage
- ❖ He travelled throughout Europe, America, England, France, Russia, Germany, Italy , Srilanka , Ireland, Scotland ,Argentina , Bohemia, Israel to give the global identity to Indian spirituality , religion and culture.
- ❖ All his works are written in Bengali and some of them are transcreated or translated by Tagore himself in English except *Thought Relics* .

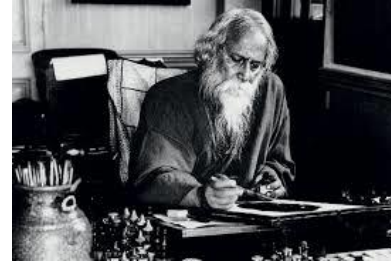
The Global Stature of Tagore:



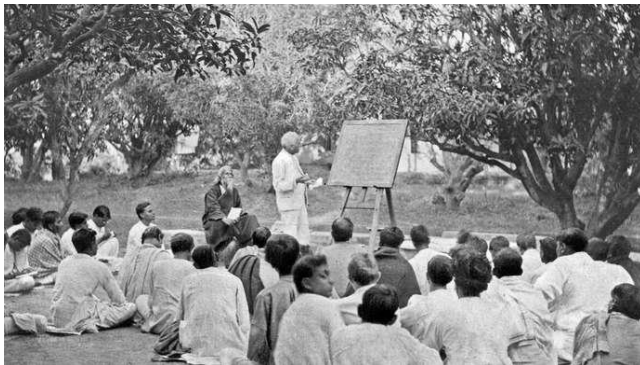
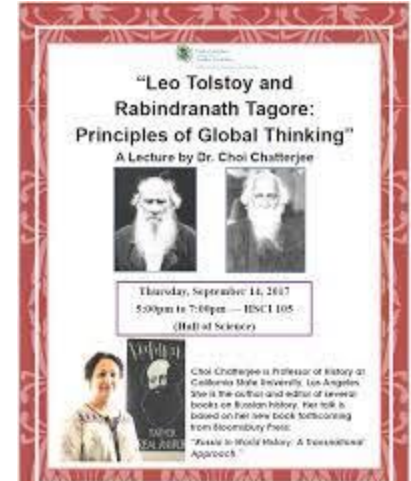
Tagore with Albert Einstein



With Gandhi



Deep delved in writing



Monitoring a class at Shantiniketan

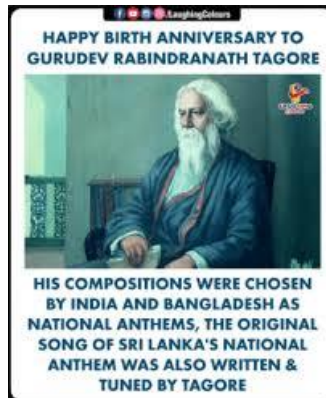


George Bernard Shaw Rabindranath Tagore Winston Churchill Leo Tolstoy



Abraham Lincoln Dr. G. C. Dey Rasputin

Among the world leaders



The composer of National Anthem of three Nations
India, Bangladesh and Shrilanka



Manuscript of Gandhi's Letter to Tagore

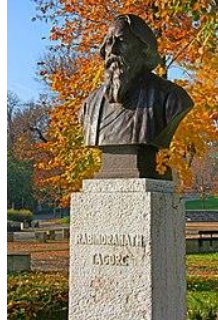


reciting poems to his students

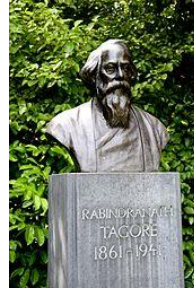
The world mesmerizes Gurudev :



Bohemia



Hungary



Dublin ,Ireland



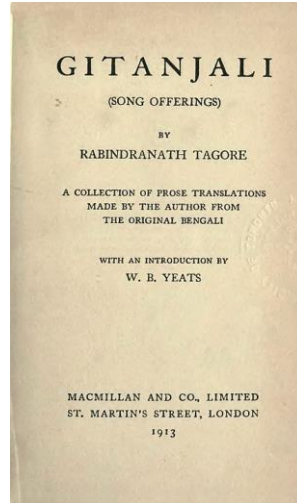
Jordan Square,
London



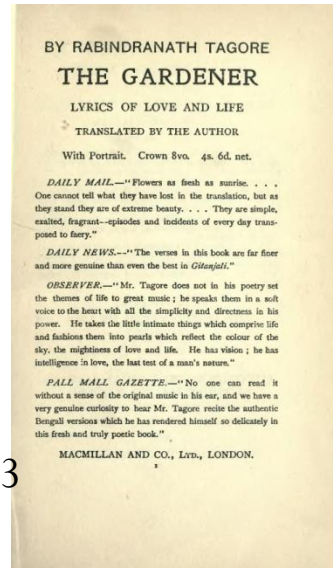
During his tour in Israel



An Inscription of Tagore's
Gitanjali at Gordon Square , London



Title Page-Gitanjali-1913



Book review of Gitanjali-
1913 in the Gardener,London , England



Nobel Prize-1913

The World adores his genius naming after Ravindranath Tagore:

- ❖ 04 Literary Awards and Prizes in three nations
- ❖ 02 Festivals in India
- ❖ 18 Universities and Institutions in 05 countries
- ❖ 10 Buildings in 04 countries
- ❖ 01 Bridge(Ravindra Setu formerly known as The Howrah Bridge, Calcutta(India)

- ❖ 07 Places in 07 nations
- ❖ 08 Musiums (India, Bangladesh and Srilanka)
- ❖ 08 Streets in 08 Countries

Tagore's genius sanctifying the shores of Indian Films :

- ❖ 16 Films have Bengali Adaptations of Tagore's novels and short stories.
- ❖ 11 Hindi films have adaptations of his novels and short stories.
- ❖ 03 Bengali and 01 Hindi documentary films have been released as a tribute to his genius.
- ❖ 03 Bengali bio pics have been produced by eminent persons in Indian film fraternity. Satyajit Ray, Rituparno Ghosh, Subhendu Roy, Anurag Basu etc.

❖ Tagore is a great psychologist of human mind.

❖ Tagore has different perceptions about the innocence of the children and the hardships of women . *The Post Office*- Amal , The Home coming – Phatik

❖ Tagore left for his heavenly abode on 7th August 1941 at the age of 80 after prolonged illness with his last poetic words as follows-

I'm lost in the middle of my birthday. I want my friends, their touch, with the earth's last love. I will take life's final offering, I will take the human's last blessing. Today my sack is empty. I have given completely whatever I had to give. In return if I receive anything—some love, some forgiveness—then I will take it with me when I step on the boat that crosses to the festival of the



Birth and Death place of Tagore in Calcutta
Jorasanko Thakur Bari, Calcutta, India



Tagore's room where
he breathed his last.

Literary Background-

❖ Tagore wrote his first short story *Bhikharini* in 1877 at 16 and it was the first short story in Bengali Language .

❖ The short story *The Home coming* was first published in Bengali as *Chutty* in one of the literary magazines *Sadhana* edited by Tagore in 1914 and then it was published in *Stories* by Ravindranath Tagore Book 2

What is short story-

- ❖ Short story is a piece of prose fiction that typically can be read in one sitting . It focuses on an incident or series of linked incidents with minimum characters.
- ❖ It is one of the oldest forms of literature and its seeds in the form of legends, myths, folk tales and fables in common dialect nurtured and followed in various ancient communities across the world.
- ❖ It is a crafted form in its own right.
- ❖ It uses plot and characters and other dynamic components as in a novel but typically to a lesser degree.

Tagore's genius as a story teller :

❖ Tagore portrayed various characters in his short stories but women and children are given special prominence.

❖ His women characters are revolting characters try to push the boundary of patriarchy.

❖ Exploitation and hardships of women due to orthodox customs are voiced in his stories.

❖ Tagore's stories speak of volumes about the emotional world of children and women folk .

❖ Tagore excels in dealing with adolescence psychology.

The Postmaster-Orphan girl

The Castaway- an orphan boy

The Homecoming – a village mischievous boy

Kabulliwalah – A small girl Mini and a Fruitseller from Kabul

❖ Conflicts and tensions between the new and old , love and hate, mercy and cruelty, crowd and solitude are focused in his stories.

❖ Tagore intermixed realism and poetic idealism which reflects contemporary life in rural and urban Bengal.

❖ Tagore's stories have moral and spiritual message.

❖ Tagore highlights his contempt for prevailing education system in his stories. *The Exercise Book*, *The Housewife*

❖ His stories sing the saga of the pathos of common life and appears as a humanist in his works.

❖ Through his works he envisions a better future for mankind despite of their rest less present.

❖ His stories are universal and eternal in appeal.

The Home Coming – A Short Story by Rabindranath Tagore

The word **Homecoming** has various implications –

- ❖ -literary meaning returning to home
- ❖ returning to the loved place or abode
- ❖ returning to the roots
- ❖ returning to the ideal place
- ❖ -getting satisfied and contented among the loved ones.
- ❖ - a holiday or relaxed moments
- ❖ -returning to the dust
- ❖ -returning to God
- ❖ -death and emancipation from all sufferings

Major Characters :

- ❖ Phatik Chakravorti – A mischievous teen ager of 14 years
- ❖ Makhan – His younger brother
- ❖ Phatik's mother – A widow who lost her husband in early youth and a disciplined woman
- ❖ Bishambhardas- Phatik's maternal uncle
- ❖ Aunt- the wife of Bishambhardas , a self centred woman and a vamp of the story

Minor Characters:

- ❖ Three children of Bishambhardas
- ❖ Friends of Phatik in the town
- ❖ School mates of Phatik in Calcutta
- ❖ Physician of Phatik
- ❖ The two police men
- ❖ People in town
- ❖ People in city

The setting of the story :

Indian Setting

- ❖ A small town in Bengal near Calcutta
- ❖ City of Calcutta

Simple thematic analysis of the story:

The story opens with a gathering of small children at shore of the river in a small town in Bengal. Phatick Chakravorty an adolescent boy of 14 being a leader of these children is pondering upon some mischief. Suddenly an idea flashes into his mind to drag a wooden log into the river which was to be shaped as a mast for the ship. Phatik and his friends want to enjoy the complaining gesture of the owner of the log. As the boys are thinking so they saw Makhan , Phatik's younger brother approaching towards them and Makhan sits on the log. The boys try to get him away but Makhan do not get agree with them. So Phatik orders his cronies to drag the log along with Makhan sitting over it. In this mischief of the boys Makhan is severely wounded and begins to cry. He also threatens Phatik to lodge his complaint against his annoyance to his mother. And Makhan leaves for home .

When Phatik returns to home he is falsely charged by his younger brother of beating him seriously.

He is severely irked by his mother for beating and torturing his younger brother. During the scuffle Phatik pushed his mother and it is mistakenly considered as beating by his mother. Phatik leaves the home in angry mood abusing his younger brother. While sitting and biting the grass on the shore a stranger comes to him and asks for the address of Chakravorti's home in the town. He does not pay attention to him but when the stranger enforced him about the home address ,he takes him to the expected address. The man who visits the house as a stranger he is the brother of Phatik's mother who is doing his job in Calcutta .

His mother is rejoiced to meet him after prolonged years. She narrates her pathetic tale about her miserable life and worry about Phatik's academic negligence . He comes to her help and wishes to take with him for his studies in Calcutta. Bishambhar takes him to his home in Calcutta being a father of three children.

His wife is a self centred woman who has no high regards for Phatik. She exploits him emotionally and physically. She assigns him house hold works , asks him to wash pots and utensils . She insults, humiliates and exploits him constantly. Phatik does not share his traumatic tale to his uncle, Bishambhardas. But he is severely torubled , tortured and tormented by his aunt. So one day he longs to return to his home and asks when holidays will come ? But he has to stay there upto November ,the month of holidays.

The conditions are dripping from bad to worst for Phatik with every sunrise. The mental tortures inflicted upon him are mounting day by day. This situations maddens him and looses his interest in studies and everything in Calcutta. One day he lost his books . When he asks for new books his aunt scolds in a harsh way and Phatik runs away craving for his mothers love and happy contended life in town.

Bhishambhar informs the police about his mysterious departure. The two policemen bring back Phatik with swollen eyes and extreme fever to his uncle's home. His uncle takes care of his illness and informs his mother. She immediately comes and embraces her child and Phatik utters his last words-mother, Holidays have come to take me and dies.

Tagore writes, "Phatik very slowly turned his head and, without seeing anybody, said: "Mother, the holidays have come." Thus Phatik sleeps forever craving for his mother's love and care. The story ends on a melancholy note on the tragic death of an innocent lad with crying heart for all the readers.

Points to ponder :

- ❖ The story opens with a mischief made by a mischievous boy of 14 in a light hearted way but it ends with a mischief of Phatik's tragic death by cruel destiny craving for his mother's love and affection.
- ❖ The word homecoming has very serious implications in the story though it is taken by light hearted way in the beginning.
- ❖ Phatik wants to escape from his miserable and disheartening life in his uncle's home and boredom in Calcutta but finally he is emancipated from his grief in the eternal sleep.
- ❖ Though Phatik dies in the end but constant tortures and humiliations of his aunt make him die emotionally gradually. This is the sentimental death of a child.

❖ Phatik becomes a silent sufferer and his merciless aunt becomes a silent murderer in the story. .

❖ Thus Phatik does not die a natural death but he is severely slaughtered by the cruel acts by his aunt in Calcutta.

❖ The happy and emotional world of Phatik is devastated by the follies human nature.

❖ It is a tragic story of grief, innocence, motherhood, solitude and seclusion.

❖ Like Tagore's Amal in *The Post Office*, Phatik also leaves for heavenly abode with his cravings of emancipation.

❖ Phatik falls victim to the negligence shown by his mother and later on his maternal uncle, Bishambhardas.

❖ Phatik has to pay a huge price for his negligence towards study and mischievous behaviour.

❖ The innocent world of Phatik is shattered into pieces due to his mischief mongering.

❖ Phatik remains deprived of his late father's love and care so he is deviated from his studies and even his mother hates him for his misconduct.

❖ The children who lost their father must be showered with love and affection by mother and others.

❖ The story highlights the contrast between the rural life and urban life.

Some expected questions :

1. How is Makhan according to his mother ?

- a) He is very smart and clever
- b) He is good for nothing
- c) He is very submissive and disciplined
- d) He is as good as gold, as quiet as lamb, and very fond of reading.

2. Who was Phatik for the boys in the village ?

- a) the idol
- b) the ringleader
- c) the master
- d) the companion .

3. What mischief got into the head of Phatik?

- a) to beat Makhan
- b) to play a prank on Bhishambhar
- c) to push a log into the river.
- d) to cut a coconut tree

4. Where had Bhishambhar gone after his sister had married?

- a) Bombay
- b) New Delhi
- c) Chennai .
- d)) Calcutta

5. What does Bhishambhar offer to his sister ?

- a) To take Makhan with him to Calcutta
- b) To take Phatik with him to Calcutta
- c) To take Makhan and Fatik to Calcutta
- d)) None of the above

6. What description does not fit to Phatik according to his mother ?

- a) He is a perpetual nuisance
- b) He is very clever and innocent
- c) He is lazy and disobedient
- d) He is naughty and wild

7. Where does Phatik's father work?

- a) He works in a factory
- b) He is dead
- c) He is a school teacher
- d) He runs a shop in town

8. How did Phatik feel in his aunt's house?

- a) welcoming guest
- b) unwanted guest
- c) desired guest
- d) lovable guest

9. Which statement describe Phatik's mental condition?

- a) He is the most backward boy in the school
- b) He felt of an attack of malarial fever
- c) his face and eyes were flushed red with fever
- d) He would dream of his village home and long to be back at home

10 The story The Home coming describes a feeling of

- a) Depression
- b) Loneliness
- c) Homesickness
- d) Rootlessness

