

Translation – The Variant of Ecological Consciousness Through The Select Poems of Tagore’s Gitanjali and Amitav Ghosh’s “The Hungry Tide”

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Abstract

This Paper focuses on how the translated Poems of Rabindranath Tagore, the towering figure of Bengali literature and the novel “The Hungry Tide” of Amitav Ghosh, the much acclaimed fiction writer of Indian Writing in English propagate Eco - consciousness. Here translation holds the role of adverting Eco- consciousness to a wider audience. This paper also accentuates the literary nuances of these two legends of India through their skills of weaving nature, spirituality and humanity into their works. Eco- consciousness is the much awaited need of the time as the world gets depleted of its wonderful resources due to man’s greed and necessitate. Literary works of Rabindranath Tagore and Amitav Ghosh connect in the point of Eco-consciousness and deviate to various destinations. Rabindranath Tagore’s Eco-consciousness leads to spirituality and Amitav Ghosh’s Eco- consciousness takes its journey towards exploitation of nature and the urgency to conserve nature to save mankind, living beings and planet earth.

Keywords: Eco - consciousness, Awareness, Ecoconservation, Expression, Regional Literature

Mother tongue is the best medium of expression in literature. Regional literature refers to writing in twenty two national languages. Regional writing is geographically limited to one or few states of India. Indian writing in English receives worldwide fame as English language enjoys a special status in India due to Colonialism and Elitism. Regional literature does not reach the West's consciousness though it has got such a great diversity. Most big publishers prefer to publish the works of Indian writers in English rather than the works of Regional literature. Dalit literature and women's writing are two of the most important literary movements emerging from Indian regional writing. Lack of good translators is to blame for the fact that Indian regional literature remains unknown in the West. As a result the goldmine of India’s Regional literature remains largely unexplored and unnoticed.

Rabindranath Tagore, the giant of Bengali literature and the pride of India is renowned for his great contribution to Literature. His Gitanjali has brought worldwide fans to Tagore after

it was translated to English. Tagore and Amitav Ghosh share the same Bengali roots. Tagore has a tremendous influence on Amitav Ghosh. Tagore's largest collection of works *The Essential Tagore* was published by Harvard University Press in the United States and Visva-Bharati University in India to mark the 150th anniversary of Tagore's birth. Among the notable contributors who translated Tagore's works for this anthology are Amitav Ghosh, Amit Chaudhuri, Sunetra Gupta, Syed Manzoorul Islam, and Kaiser Haq. Amitav Ghosh builds on Tagore's short story "The Hunger of Stones", to create his fiction, "The Calcutta Chromosome".

With these striking analogies this paper endeavors to espy the Ecoconsciousness propagated by Tagore and Amitav Ghosh. In one of his poem, Tagore says that his adoration for God spreads wings like a glad bird which tries to fly across the sea. And he says that the life breath of God's music runs from sky to sky. And that the holy stream of God's music breaks through all stony obstacles and rushes on. Tagore wants to keep his love for God in flower "keep my love in flower"

In another poem, Tagore says that summer has come at his window with its sighs and murmurs and that the bees are plying their minstrelsy at the court of his flowering grove. He asks God to pluck him like a flower as an offering. The poet says that he is anxious as the blossom has not opened and that the wind is sighing by. Tagore's sorrow gets revealed in nature through the lines, "Clouds heap upon clouds and it darken".

The poet looks at the far-away gloom of the sky, and his heart wanders crying with the restless wind. He wants to wait like the night with starry vigil and its head bent low with patience. He believes that the morning will surely come and that darkness will vanish and that the voice of God would pour down in golden streams breaking through the sky. Then the poet believes that words will take wing in songs from every one of his birds' nests, and that his melodies will break forth in flowers in all his forest groves.

Tagore thinks that the lotus was blooming(enlightenment) and he was not noticing it. He personifies spring season and says that spring season has left after bringing his flowering. The Poet says that he is now waiting with the burden of carrying the faded flowers and waiting. The Poet says that the waves have become very attractive with yellow leaves falling on its bank. And the Poet feels a thrill passing through the air with the notes of the far-away song floating from the other shore.

Tagore says that he walks in the deep shadows of the rainy July and that the morning has closed its eyes not paying attention to the continuous calls of the loud east wind, and a thick veil has covered over the always wakeful blue sky. He says that the woodlands have silenced their songs, and doors are all shut at every house. The poet uses the pictorial images like, "dim shore of the ink-black river, edge of the frowning forest, mazy depth of gloom", to ask the path in which his beloved God would arrive. As a traveler, the poet says that if birds sing no more, if the wind has flagged tired and draws the veil of darkness thick upon him and has wrapped the earth

with the covering of sleep and tenderly closed the petals of the drooping lotus in the evening. Being a tired traveler the poet renews his life like a flower under the cover of God's kindly night.

The lines such as "The sky is overcast with clouds and the rain is ceaseless and "The night is black as a black stone" are excellent. The description of "the storm" and "the parched up heart" realistically portray the Poet's longing of God's love. It keeps on raining in the poet's heart and the horizon is naked without the thinnest cover of a soft cloud, without the cool shower. The poet is asking for lashes of lightning to startle the sky. Then the Poet says that "cloud of grace bend low from above like the tearful look of the mother on the day of the father's wrath". As the mother looks at her tearful child frightened of his father's anger so does the cloud of grace falls upon him. Tagore brings out his emotions with star, sun, sky, clouds, doves, withered leaves in the lines like,

"sun-embroidered green gloom, rumbling of cloud ,
 the darkness shudders with lightning,
 decked with stars,
 passing breeze leaving its coolness upon my forehead,
 the sea surges up with laughter and pale gleams the smile of the sea beach,
 death-dealing waves sing meaningless ballads to the children,
 in the nest is thy love, stars shone in their first splendor."

Tagore's imageries are like precious gems dazzling through all eternity. He expresses his purpose of life so beautifully in the following poetic lines, "Like a flock of homesick cranes flying night and day back to their mountain nests let all my life take its voyage to its eternal home in one salutation to thee". These wonderful imageries of Tagore spread Eco -consciousness without one being aware of it.

In Amitav Ghosh's novel, "The Hungry Tide" the writer creates awareness of the environment by taking us into the Sundarban islands and then by displaying before us snakes, crocodiles, dangerous tigers, dolphins and the changing landscapes of the place. The whole novel revolves around the theme, if forest can be occupied for man to live or to be preserved for animals.

The writer Amitav Ghosh, brings to light, the awareness of the Dolphins disappearing due to the inhabitation of man, the brutal killing of the tiger and the tiger's attack on man and the powerful storms that quake the place in a moment. Piya comes as the savior of the Dolphins and Kusum fights hard to save the refugees. The character Fokir has the "river running in his veins". He is thorough of the whole Sunderban Island. He represents Nature and Piya represents Science. Finally Piya gets saved by Fokir and she is helpless before the destructive power of nature.

The Morichjhapi incident is the locus of the novel, where Amitav puts forth a vital question to the audience. The refugees get settled in the Morichjhapi Island which is reserved for tigers by the government. When they were asked to evacuate the place they refused to do so and

eventually end up being forced to evacuate the place and lose their lives for their cause. They were poor refugees and we wonder if they were driven out of the place only because of the fact that they were poor? Should the tiger reserve area be only for animals or should human habitation be given concern too is the question put forth by Amitav. Kusum asks, "I wondered, who loves animals so much that they are willing to kill us for them." (HT: 262)

The whole landscape envisions before our mind with the challenges of Ecological concern enlarging day by day. Is Nature for man or man for Nature? Amitav propagates the present problems of the environment and promotes Ecoconservation through his novel, "The Hungry Tide" whereas Tagore uses nature to exhibit his emotions in a strong manner. Both the works have done their purpose of spreading ecological awareness in the way which suits them.

Tagore's work is a translated work whereas Amitav articulates himself in English. Both the works have reached a wider readership. There are lot more treasures of regional literature waiting to be explored only when scholars do quality translation. It's a proud moment to know that even under the hold of translation Tagore could promote Eco - consciousness and advocate Eco - conservation. He very gently points out at Nature stressing that man cannot live without that and that there exists a natural synchronization between nature and human beings which can never be eliminated.

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