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CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S NOVEL 'MALINI'

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Abstract

Rabindranath Tagore is a Bengali Indian poet, writer, painter, and philosopher. He works mainly connected with the common people. One of his famous novel Malini which is a story of beautiful princes who is influenced by the Buddhist religion, however; she was a force to adapt the traditional religion. Through this story, Rabindranath Tagore focuses on the problem of society when anyone wants to follow another religion. His stories are easily connected by the people as he portrays the character in his story in a very simple way.

Keywords: Philosopher, Painter, Rabindranath Tagore, Indian poet, and Buddhist religion

Introduction

In this article, we will discuss one of the most famous novels named Malini which is written by Rabindranath Tagore. In this article, we will discuss the achievement of Rabindranath Tagore. We will also see the summary of the

biopic of his life as well as his novels. In this chapter, we will mainly focus on his popular novel Malini which is a story of love and hatred about religion, friendship, and devotion. We will discuss the characters of this novel as well as the lessons from this novel. In this article, we will discuss the major achievement of Rabindranath Tagore and his contribution to the field of literature. We will also see how he influences the modern artist as he is the first Indian artist whose paintings are exhibited across Europe and the United State. The major work is done by him like drama, play, stories, music, and playwright will be discussed inside the story. Through his novel Malini he gave a message about the devotion, betrayal, and faith that we will see in the article.

Biography of Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore is an Indian poet, writer, and philosopher who is well known for writing the National Anthem of our country. He was born in Kolkata on 8 May 1861. According to Banerjee (2020), he was born in a family of social reformers and thinkers which genetically helps him to be such a great poet and writer. The poems, stories, and novels of Rabindranath Tagore cover the various aspects of the Indian culture. All the stories and novels written by him proved path-breaking and brought revolutionary changes in society. In all the novels and stories, he tried to cover the problem of divisions, boundaries, and discrimination based on territory. According to Som (2017), the motto of the novel, poems, and stories written by him was to spread brotherhood among the world. In every novel, there is a message of

love and peace. Rabindranath Tagore was passionate about patriotism, however; he knew that everything is good and healthy if it is within the limit. Rabindranath Tagore covers all the subjects like social, political, cultural, religious, and moral topics. He is well known for composing puravi which is known as morning song and evening songs. In the year 1890, he wrote a poem named Mansi in which he describes the social and political issues. Sonar Tari, Chitra, Kalpana, and naively are some famous poetry through which he wanted to provide a message to the world about peace and brotherhood. According to Alam (2017), beyond being a good writer and poet, he was also known as a great educationist. He was the founder of the University named Shantiniketan. Rabindranath Tagore spent his life serving humanity rather than visiting temples and ashrams. In 1941, the saddest moment came for the country as he died in Kolkata.

Achievement of Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore's Gitanjali received the Nobel Prize of literature in 1913. He is the first Asian to receive a Nobel Prize for literature. According to Gourishankar (2017), he is also known for introducing the short story genre to Bengali literature. He is also known for founding a university named Shanti Niketan. He is the composer of the National Anthem of India as well as Bangladesh. The national anthem of the Srilanka is inspired by his work. One of the major achievements for him is to be considered the greatest modern Indian poet. At the age of eight, he started to write poetry and at the age of 16,

he wrote a poem named BhanusimhaThakurerPadabali which is one of the most famous poems.

In all the poems of Rabindranath Tagore, the unity of all the creations is shown. According to Richarson (2019), he is known for his innovative ideas and interesting mind puzzling ideas. At the age of twenty, he started to write plays and he became the leading playwright of his era by writing Chitrangada, Chandalika, and Shyama. According to Tagore and Kiran (2017), Rabindranath Tagore is also known as the towering figure in the world of literature in the 20th-century era. Apart from poetry, stories, and drama, Rabindranath Tagore is also known for his eight novels and four novellas. Chokher Bali, Noukadubi Gora, GhareBaire, and Char Odhyay are some of his best novels. The new literacy standards and the new artistic rate was established in the nation. The thought process of society was tremendously impacted by the writings of Rabindranath Tagore. The other achievement for Rabindranath Tagore was at the age of sixty he started painting by creating doodles and later he started making mysterious human faces; bizarre beasts and mystic landscapes.

According to Narasipurum et al. (2018), he is the first Indian artist whose paintings are exhibited in Europe, Russia, and the United States. He adopted the way of modern paintings and became the influence of various modern artists. In the National Gallery of Modern Art, more than 102 works are listed in the collection. He is well known for founding VisvaBharati University as he was one of the famous educationists. The major achievement of

Rabindranath Tagore is that he is the only person who wrote the national anthem of the two countries. For India he has composed the song "Jan Gan Man" and for Bangladesh, he has composed the song "Amar Shonar Bangla". Rabindranath Tagore was also awarded an honorary degree by Oxford University. He was the first writer who received this honor in the field of education. Rabindranath Tagore is also known as Gurudev.

Works of Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore has written various novels, poems, essays, short stories, dramas, travelogues, and thousands of songs. According to Mamilla et al. (2017), he is well known for originating the Bengali-language version of the genre. The stories written by him were mostly inspired by the lives of common people. He is also known for writing autobiographies. At the age of twenty, he first wrote a drama named Valmiki Pratibha in which used revamped kirtans and folk melodies and explored a wide range of dramatic styles. DakGhar was another poem which was written by Rabindranath Tagore in the year 1912 which is about a child named Amal who died of an incurable disease in his Uncle's house.

According to Sarabhai and Joshi (2020), all the works of Rabindranath Tagore are known for their rhythmic, optimistic, and lyrical nature. One of the finest dramas written by him is Visarjan which is the adaptation of the novel Rajarshi which is written by him. In 1877 Rabindranath Tagore started writing short stories. The first short story written by him was Bhikharini which deals with the story of a woman who lives her life by begging. He wrote a book

named Galpaguchchha which consists of 84 short stories. The stories which are present in the book Galpaguchchha show the innovative and mind-puzzle ideas of Rabindranath Tagore. The story covered by Rabindranath Tagore was mainly connected with the life of common people. Chaturanga, ShesherKobita are the novels that are written by him. Apart from writing, Rabindranath Tagore was also known for his RavindraSangeet in which he composed around 2,230 songs.

All the poems, stories, and plays of Rabindranath Tagore were rhythmic and lyricised. Amar Shonar Bangla a song by Rabindranath Tagore was adopted as the national anthem of Bangladesh in the year 1971 which was written during the protest of the partition of Bengal. According to Singh and Deol (2019), the national anthem of Sri Lanka was inspired by his work. At the age of sixty, Rabindranath Tagore started painting and his several paintings are based on scrimshaw by the Malanggan people of northern New Ireland.

In every story, he tried to portray the character as he felt in society. He always tried to break the shackles of traditional society through his writings. He has broadly minded and in his stories, he tried to put the issues about the traditional society and helps to construct modern society. His writings are translated into various languages across the world which itself is proof of his greatness in writing. His stories mainly focused on the humbleness and the miseries in society. He was also interested in politics and opposes the British government. He was against the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi and opposes the Swadeshi Movement.

Overview of the Novel Malini

Malini is one of the famous poetic plays which is written by Rabindranath Tagore. Malini covers the story which deals with religion, devotion, friendship, and faith. It is a story about love and hatred. According to Banerjee (2020), through this novel, Rabindranath Tagore tried to change the perception of people's minds about religion. The novel is about the girl Malini who belongs to the royal family, however; she is a different thinker and she is attracted by the Buddhism religion after getting an education with the Buddhist monk. The other characters in this play are Kemenkar, Supriya, king, queens, and Brahmins. In the novel, we will see that Malini has to face several difficulties for her different thoughts. All the Brahmins, Kemenkar, Supriya, and the king wanted to banish her for not following the traditional religion.

In the novel, we will see that when the Malini returned after the banishment the Brahmins were ready to accept her as a form of a goddess. However, Kemenkar and Supriya were not happy. In the novel, we found that Kemenkar and Supriya were childhood best friends and when Kemenkar tried to control the kingdom with the help of Supriya he betrayed him by informing the king. The Kemenkar was not ready to accept the betrayal of Supriya and he killed him. Despite Kemenkar killing, his best friend Malini requested his father to forgive him which shows how great Malini's ideology was.

Lessons from Malini

The novel Malini is the story of love and heart. Through this play, Rabindranath Tagore tried to show the different faces of people to the world. In the story we have seen that Malini has to face so many difficulties for her different thoughts which show that having different perception from others is not an easy task. . According to Lewisoh (2017), it is possible to have no interest in wealth, prosperity and royal pleasure despite being in a royal family. Rabindranath Tagore wanted to open the eyes of people through this novel that everybody is free to follow any religion. We have also seen the betrayal and revenge in the friendship. This part is giving an important message to society that nobody is permanent with us. Anyone can betray for personal reasons as we have seen in the novel how Supriya betrayed Kemenkar and in revenge that killed Supriya. This shows that betrayal is also possible in friendship.

We get the lessons after reading this novel that always has a great heart for forgiving anybody as we have seen how devoted Malini was as he argues from her father to forgive Kemenkar. This novel provides the lesson about the faith, devotion, love, hate, and confidence to have different thoughts. This novel shows the modern thought of Rabindranath Tagore as he wants to break the barrier of religion in society. Inspire of being a prince she has faced banishment from her palace. This shows how difficult it was for the common people to follow other religions. He wants to break the conservative thought of the society about following the traditional religion. Betray in the friendship

has also been shown in the novel which wants to give a lesson that nobody should blindly faith in anybody that anybody can change at any time.

Critical analysis of Rabindranath Tagore's works

Rabindranath Tagore was perhaps one of the few writers who had such a diversified potential and writing skill. No other writer was able to provide such eloquent and exemplary work at such a consistent scale. He is also one of the few celebrated writers and novelists who dealt with literary categories from poems to songs. The writer was also a patriotic human from the heart which is directly visible from the example of his refusal of "Knighthood". As per Chakrabarty (2020), there are also many stories, poems, and proses that showcase how much the writer hate the oppression of the weak by the superiors. The respective play Malini is an inclusive story of castism and its effects on people and their lives. It beautifully portrays the consequences of blindly following certain ideologies without regarding or seeking the truth and logic behind the, Malini can be said to be the resemblance of every holistic and pure human being within this world, whereas Kemnakar and Supriya; who are also holistic in their thoughts serve selfish purposes. The story conveys how disregarding logic can affect the life parameters of people.

Not only in "Malini", but in another famous play of Rabindranath Tagore named "Guru", he portrays the same ideas of the ill effects of castism and their consequences. The story also portrays several other emotions such as love, revenge, gratitude, and betrayal. Rabindranath Tagore is amongst one of such notable writers whose works consist of each and every form of emotions

that human's experience. From treachery to forgiveness, each and every emotional parameter is inclusive among the life works of this exemplary writer (Chelliah and Litt 2019). If the novel is evaluated in a technical way; it can be seen that the writer tried to focus upon the ideals of rationality and equality among all other casts, which was not a popular ideal during those times. It has been found in many works of Rabindranath Tagore, that he disregards the communal hierarchy of Brahmins and Brahmin-ideology.

Being a Brahmin himself, he has always been fond of other segments of people and their ideologies; which can be seen in the autobiographical examples of his childhood interactions with his family tailors and maid-workers. The secondary data sources also showcase the dignified personality that the writer holds, and it is also noticeable in his literary works.

Upon evaluation of the work's popularity to the fame that the writer has received in all these years, it can easily be said that he is perhaps the best writer, poet, composer, novelist from the land of Bengal. Like all other writers of that time, Rabindranath has also focused many of his works on showcasing the problems of oppression and prejudice. Malini is a similar kind of work and the evaluation of the play will help the reader in understanding how complex and big was the problem of castism during the concerning time period mentioned in the play-novel. The notable aspect of the play is that every character has logic behind their own beliefs, and except the main protagonist Malini, no other character is acceptive of other ideologies, which further

showcases how blind-folded traditional norms and beliefs can make their respective followers.

Conclusion

In this article, we have discussed the biography of Rabindranath Tagore. Rabindranath Tagore is a Bengali Indian poet, writer, and social reformer, playwright, and storyteller. He has written various famous novels such as Chokher Bali, Chaturanga, The Home and the World, and many more. In this article, we have discussed one of the famous novels named Malini. In the novel, we have seen the story of a beautiful princess Malini who faces various challenges due to her different think about religion. We have also seen how the childhood friend Supriya betrays his best friend Kemenkar and for revenge Kemenkar killed Supriya. This novel is based on betraying, devotion, friendship, and love. Rabindranath Tagore has got so many achievements for his large contribution to the literature field. He is the first Asian to receive the noble prize and the first write to have an honorary degree from Oxford University. Shanti Niketan Formed by him is the symbol of his interest in education.

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