

Tagore: (泰戈尔) A Case study of his visit to China in 1924

Sourabh Chatterjee

(Mody University of Science and Technology, India)

Abstract: In 1923, Beijing Lecture Association, Jiangxueshe (讲学社) invited Rabindranath Tagore to deliver a series of lectures. Established in September 1920, Jiangxueshe was one of the many globally acclaimed institutions that mushroomed in China in the wake of the May Fourth Movement. The main objective of this institution was to invite foreign scholars and celebrities to arrange lectures by them for Chinese intellectuals. They thought it will help the Chinese intellects to be prospers in many aspects, which will enrich their country. Every year, they used to invite the most respected global figures, research scholars, scientists, and noble laureates to deliver their valuable speeches and sermons. Before Rabindranath, the Association invited some dignified global figures like John Dewey (1859-1952), Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) and Hans Driesch (1862-1941). Most of them were not able to move them in a great way. Anyway, as the Chinese association felt that they were not receiving expected result after inviting so many global scholars, they finally decided to invite Rabindranath to their country. It is worthy to be mentioned here, some fervent critics and scholars like Das, Sun and Hay have averred that Tagore's visit to China created two fold reactions among the people of China. Tagore's visit to China received both friendly and hostile reactions from them. Many of them were in support of this visit and some Chinese were against it. Here my endeavour is to spotlight them and probe these with proper reasons and acute critical analyses.

Keywords: Chen Duxiu, Guo Moruo, Hu Shi, Liang Qichao, Mao Dun and Xu Zhimo.

I. Introduction

There is no doubt that Tagore set his foot on the Chinese soil on 12th April in 1924. He left India for China and reached in Shanghai (上海) on April 12, 1924. During Tagore's visit to China, both India and China were going through a state of remarkable changes. As the influence of Tagore and his philosophy, the Chinese society was receiving some positive changes. Some additions and deductions in their culture helped them become prosperous and establish them as one of the most important nations in the world. Tagore fifty-day-vacation in China helped the Chinese to be more organized, more powerful and more humane. In fifty days, Tagore visited major Chinese cities and palaces of attractions en-route from south to north of China. He travelled Jinan (济南), Tianjin (天津), Hangzhou (杭州) and finally Beijing (北京) on 23rd April. He travelled Beijing by train. Critics have different opinions regarding this tour. Here I am selecting three fervent critics (of Rabindranath) belong to three different countries such as India, China and the USA. All of them have their perceptive re-search works on Tagore's visit to China. I am selecting three scholars Das, Sun and Hay, as they belong to different countries like India, China and America, respectively. Their works show different opinions. They have explained this visit in different perspectives.

II. Case Study

Let me start with Chinese scholar, Sun Yixue. (Sun Yixue is a renewed literary scholar working at Tong Ji University in Shanghai). He has done a very good work on R.N. Tagore. Compiling all information about Tagore's visit to China and recording Tagore's all speeches and responses, he brought out them into several anthologies with a bit repetition of information. They are most precious gems to give us detail information on Tagore's visit to China. He explains the failure of Tagore's China visit. According to him, it was "a misunderstanding of the time". He says, "The unsuccessfulness of Tagore's visit to China was because he came in a wrong season". According to him, Rabindranath came with a 'world-saving messianic message', which was applicable for the then China condition. The paradigm failed in the then China scenario. They received a wrong paradigm, when they needed an alternative paradigm for their development.

Now let me move onto the second scholar Sisir Kumar Das. In his perceptive book, "Talks in China", this fervent scholar from India has mentioned some disregards that he observed at the time of Tagore's visit in China. According to him, some ultra left-oriented political leaders like Guo Moruo (郭沫若), Mao Dun (茅盾) and Lu Xun (鲁迅) strongly opposed Rabindranath. They brought about a fierce attack on Rabindranath, while he was visiting China.

Last but not least, the American scholar Stephen Hay, an India specialist trained at Harvard, observed the visit as failure. Hey was the only person to have published book-length review in 1970 on Tagore's visits to

China and Japan. In his doctoral thesis under the title, "Asian Ideas of East and West", Stephen Hay opined that Tagore's visit to China was a failure and Tagore himself was responsible for it as he tried to play the role of a prophet rather than a poet. In his well-researched monograph, he argued it as the failure of purpose and humiliation of Tagore. In his own words, Rabindranath Tagore tried to "play the role of a prophet rather than a poet". He thinks, Rabindranath Tagore tried to propagate an ideal of a unified Orient, an ideal of one Asian superseded by spiritualism. It opposes the materialism of the west. According to Hey, Tagore failed to realize that the idea of the orient was a gift of the western orientalist, which was rather a myth than a reality.

It is quite difficult to record and locate all the lectures delivered by Tagore in China. Some of his lectures we have in an abridged form and few others in distorted form. Some of his lectures were completed and reproduced by Visva Bharati University. The university published it in their *Visva-Bharati Bulletin* and *Visva-Bharati Quarterly* issues. However, most the lectures delivered by Rabindranath in China are in 'Sisir Kumar Das' perceptive book, *Tagore's Talks in China* published immediately after his return from China Visit in 1924. However, Tagore banned the book and published a new revised and verified version in the next year. It is worthy to be mentioned here that although both the books carry the same title for them and include almost same material, but they have received some radical changes in certain parts of the essays. Not only have the certain parts of the essays in the first edition been deleted in the second edition, but also rearranged them in a more harmonized way under five headings: "Auto biographical", "To My Hosts", "To Students", "70 Teachers" and "Leave-Taking". Two essays named "Civilization and Progress" and "Satyam" in the 1924 edition have been published in the 1925 version without any significant change. On the other hand, three other Tagore's lectures namely, "At a Buddhist Temple", "To the Japanese Community at China" and "At Mrs. Bena's, Shanghai" in the first edition have been omitted in the second edition. Anyway, a comparative study will find- these two editions can easily prove that there have been some significant changes: some of them are very serious and some are radical in nature.

Tagore may have taken a great pain in deleting some parts, information, places, venues of lectures, and several perceptive passages. Although reasons are not known, but it can be presumed that Tagore had some bitter experiences or un-liking things in them. Most interestingly, although *Talks in China* is one of the most important records of the information on the Tagore's visit to China, it has received no attention on behalf of the scholars of Tagore in Bengal or the students of India-China in relations. We have no other translated version in Chinese and other language than the real English version written by Sisir Kumar Das. Most of the articles written on Tagore's visit to China in different journals and newspapers are either difficult to find out or eventually lost or destroyed. Nobody takes pains to accumulate them in one anthology or book. Most interestingly one significant book entitled *Lun Taige'er 论泰戈尔* (On Tagore) keeps records of many articles written on Tagore's visit to China. Many Chinese scholars and political activists of the then time (between 1921 and 1924) wrote on the visit and its impact of them. Zhang Guanglin (张光璘) of the Institute of South Asian Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences at Beijing published this book in 1983. It is definitely a precious book, which keeps records of almost all interesting events and lectures of Rabindranath Tagore. In a long article, Ji Xianlin (季羨林), the Director of the Institute of South Asian Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the President of the Comparative Literature Association of China, has given scholarly analysis on how Rabindranath Tagore became controversial guest in China. He has critically explained responsible factors that made the tour controversial. In his opinion, some of his hosts and organizers were political "reactionaries" who wanted to utilize Tagore's visit to uplift their own political image and seek support for their ideology. Ji Xianlin further added that Rabindranath inherent duality reflected in his works and philosophy. According to him, Tagore was not only an anti-imperialist and intensely patriotic but also a religious and a mystic. His works has close connection with pantheism. His songs, poems and fiction inspired the Indian to keep continuing their fighting for liberty and independence. Tagore's poems and short stories have an implied universal spirit. Some of them find outlets for leaving this world unseen through escapism. According to Ji Xianlin, some of the Chinese admirers of Tagore tried to establish him as mystic without any concern for human suffering. They tried to show Rabindranath a man driven by dream and emotion without any real feeling for humanity and human suffering. As writer, he absorbed in utopian world or the world imagination. By the wings of his imagination and dream, he would reach to the world of ethereal beauty forgetting or understanding all about the world of reality. Ji Xianlin might have an intention to down the severity of the Chinese protest against Tagore with this criticism. He may have done this influenced by Mao Dun's criticism of Tagore, which we will discuss later.

It is an undeniable fact that Tagore faced hostility in China as the consequence of his hosts' target to criticise him. They wanted to lower down his dignity and honour. However, it is not clearly explained in the book. It is quite unknown, why they extent their fury against a foreign guest. It is worthy to be mentioned here, Tagore set his foot on the land China (in Sanghai) on 12 April 1924, but debate and controversy started before Tagore's visit to China. Since 1923, before few weeks of the announcement of Tagore's visit to China, a sharp controversy and debate started among the people of China. Whatever the reason may lie behind it, a group of

poets, politicians and intellectuals started criticizing Tagore openly. Most interestingly, some of them were aboard (out of China). They started blaspheming Tagore, criticising his thoughts and writings as a great threat to the Chinese youth. They made infrequent references to Tagore's hosts. However, the references were dominated by partiality. The criticisms by intellectuals were such severe that any individual would think that the influence of Rabindranath on Chinese was persistent, which required immediate removal or stemming. Actually, it may be taken as the pre-planned blasphemy against Tagore by a group of poets, politicians and intellectuals to abstain Chinese youths from his presence. To be more precise, before sending invitation to the great noble laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore, they inspired Chinese to cherish abhorrence against Tagore so that when Tagore would come to deliver his lectures in a gathering, he will not have enough audience for hearing his lectures. This is one of great conspiracy against Tagore for showing disrespect to him.

On the contrary, great critics on Rabindranath Tagore, Krishna Kripalani expressed different opinion. According to him, "Tagore was hardly known in China when he was invited there, and implied that the controversy was generated because of the ignorance of the Chinese intellectuals, but the facts are different". However, if you way and consider his opinion, you will easily understand that it is not right. This is an undeniable fact that many Chinese students and scholars who used to study in America, England and in Japan were well aware of Tagore's writings. They might have read some of his works translated in English. Say for example, Hu Shi (胡适), Guo Moruo (郭沫若) and Xu Zhimo (徐志摩) have known well about the Tagore's work, which brought noble prize for him. They have read some of his poems when they were in foreign countries. It is certain that the Chinese has rich culture of English before Tagore's visit to China. This is why, it is certain that the Chinese who have read English subject to undergo the spell of the *Crescent Moon* and *Gitanjali*. Apart from this strong reason, if we think about the work of the Chen Duxiu (陈独秀), one of the founders of the Communist Party of China, we will find that Chinese knew well about Rabindranath Tagore and his great works. To be more precise, Chen Duxiu translated Tagore's *Gitanjali* into Chinese in early 1915s. Besides, many people in China read the English version of *Gitanjali*. This is why the opinion that when Tagore visited China, Chinese were not familiar with Tagore and his works is baseless. It cannot be unaccepted in any way. It is worthy to be mentioned here, immediately after the announcement that the Nobel Prize has been awarded to Rabindranath Tagore, a Chinese scholar named Qian Zhixian wrote an article in the East, mentioning the poet was one dedicated person to his motherland. He writing is for the social welfare and benevolence of mankind. It clearly explicates that Chinese knew Rabindranath at least from 1913, the year of wining noble prize for his *Gitanjali*. Another Chinese scholar named Chen Duxiu (陈独秀), in the second issue of the influential journal *Xin Qingnian* 新青年 (New Youth), translated four poems from *Gitanjali*. He translated *Gitanjali* no: 1, 2, 25 and 35 with a message that Tagore was not only a mystic but also a mentor of the Indian youth. This phrase, "mentor of the Indian youth" was used to label him as biased. He tired to establish him as a man of partiality. It might have done to keep Chinese youth away from him.

However, around the same time Guo Moruo took Tagore as his hero. To honour him as his hero, he wrote the following poem:

"The lead grey roofs of the fishermen's cottages
Gleam darkly with a circle of red flame
Now crimson ... now redder
Now orange ... now gold
It is as ever the white radiance of the moon.
On the seashore of endless world's children meet
The infinite sky is motionless overhead and the
Restless water is boisterous.
On the seashore of endless worlds the children meet
With shouts and dances.
Again I sit on the broken hulk on the shore
My little Ah-ho
Joins with a troop of children,
They play together on the sands.
Reciting this poem of Tagore
I go and play with them
Ah, if only I could become a pure child."

To prove that Chinese knew Tagore very well before his visit to China, let me take another example. In 1916, Chinese in their oldest and most widely circulated Chinese journal *Dongfang Zazhi* 东方杂志 (The Eastern Miscellany), published one of the lectures delivered by Rabindranath Tagore in Japan. This lecture can

show well Rabindranath as a man of spiritual temper and one of the sharp critics of modern western civilization. Therefore, this lecture published in *Dongfang Zazhi* was able to establish Rabindranath in China as a sharp critic of the then western civilization. I think most of you will agree with me that as several young writers translated Tagore's poems, plays and short stories in their language and most of the Chinese read them, there were no other dimension of Rabindranath left for them. In other words, they explored the other dimensions of Tagore's personality before his travel to their land. The records say, *Gitanjali* was translated (not the full volume in Chinese) by Zheng Zhenduo (郑振铎), Zhao Jingshen (赵景深), between 1920 and 1923. Most of these translation works were published in various journals. Zheng Zhenduo translated Tagore's poem *The Crescent Moon*. The publisher of this book, the Commercial Press published another translation work of the same book completed by Wang Duqing (王獨清). The Taidong Press of Shanghai published the book. Apart from these works, Tagore's stories started coming into translated versions in various Chinese magazines since 1917s.

Although not very earlier when Tagore visited China, a reputed women magazine named *Funu Zazhi* (妇女杂志) published two popular stories of Tagore named *Chuti* (Home Coming) and *Dristidan* (Vision) in 1917. The stories got good response from the Chinese. It is very clear from their frequency of translation. Before Tagore visited China, *Chuti* was translated there at least for thrice. It surely indicates the popularity of the story there. Another significant short story that shook China in a great way was *Kabuliwala*. As the Chinese appreciated, the story in a great way, publishers had to publish and republish the story at least for six times. Four out of the six translations came before 1924 (when their controversial guest Rabindranath visited their land). Around four plays named (*Chitra*, *Sannyasi*, *PostOffice* and *The Cycle of Spring*), two volume of essays named (*Personality and Nationalism*) and one novel named (*The Home and the World*) came to the scene before Tagore visited China. Although not all translation works include the name of the translators, but Wang Duqing (王獨清), Xu Dishan (许地山), Qu Shiyong, Zheng Zhenduo (郑振铎), Bai Xiang and Shen Yanbing (沈雁冰) were the most dedicated writers and promising translators of the then time. If we hark back to the translators of Rabindranath, we will find that Wang Duqing (1898-1940) was a fine poet educated in France. He was one of the founders of *Chuangzao she* 创造社 (The Creation Society). Xu Dishan 许地山, a great scholar and essayist of the twentieth century, was abroad to study Indian philosophy at Oxford. Not only did he study Indian philosophy at Oxford, but also he came to India in 1925 immediately after Tagore's visit to study Sanskrit and Buddhist philosophy. To tell about Qu Shiyong (1900-1976) was a teacher at the Beijing University. Zheng Zhenduo 郑振铎 (1898-1958) was a great writer, history scholar, and editor of a monthly fiction, *Xiaoshuo Yuebao* (小说月报). He was a popular writer and scholar of Chinese literary history. He was significant among the founders of the Literary Research Society in China. It is important to mention here that *Xiaoshuo Yuebao* (小说月报) in close association with Mao Dun (茅盾) and Zhou Zuoren (周作人) published at least three plays, eight stories, and a collection of Tagore's poem. Most of them were translated by *Xiaoshuo Yuebao* (小说月报) before Tagore's visit to China in 1924.

It is important to mention that some important Chinese translators of Tagore like Chen Duxiu and Shen Yanbing criticized Tagore's visit. Although they introduced and pioneered Tagore's visit to China, but they did not dissociate themselves from criticising Tagore's visit. They can be adjudicated in the charge of ambiguity. It is clear that their earlier experience about Tagore's works and his literary achievement prevented them from criticizing Tagore as a writer. Even they did not feel any discontent for Tagore, before they receive Tagore on their land. This is why they had no objection in inviting Tagore's in their land; rather they strongly supported the decision. It is a rumour that Chinese invited Tagore to help Liang Qichao (梁启超) and his associates. They wanted to receive him to educate Liang Qichao, Zhang Junmai (张君勱) and other Liang's associates. Zhang Junmai took an important role of co-authoring a book with Eucken. The work deals with *Das Lebers* problem in China and in Europe (1922). To confute the allegation against him for criticizing Tagore's visit to China, he had to make an announcement. In his announcement he had to proclaim that he was unfamiliar with Tagore's thought until he meet him personally during the time of Tagore's visit to China. In his own words, "Mr. Tagore and I have no connection with each other, and he definitely did not come to China to assist me." From his speech, it is evident that he denied the truth that he was a strong supporter of the decision of inviting Tagore in China to help him and his supporters. The cause may be the rising bitterness between Liang and his friends. They might have opposed him for last few years on the issue.

A wind of change came to the country until it was 1917s when intellectual activities were found in Chinese in a sustainable range. They felt an urge for the development of Chinese language and literature. Hu Shi 胡适 (1891.1982), a fine scholar of philosophy and literature, believed in John Dewey's pragmatism. As a follower of John Dewey, he started a movement, which deals with "art for the purpose of life" not "art for art sake". As the principle and philosophy of pragmatism, he started a movement in favour of *bai hua* (白话), a language of common people. It was an iconoclastic approach to shatter the conventional notion of using honoured

speeches wen yan (文言) and languages for literary works. In a word, Hu Shi wanted to substitute the “bai hua” with “wen yan”. He got strong support and patronage from Chen Duxiu, the great scholar and translator of Tagore’s *Gitanjali* in English. He was successful indeed in his approach. He was able to transform Chinese cultural life. With it, he went a long ahead of his desire for modernization of the Chinese life. He wanted to bring about a positive change in Chinese life and their culture. For it, he chose Chinese language as an effective means of doing this. He perceived that better understanding through their language could help him fulfil his purpose exactly, effectively and righteously. He thought that the language of common people could communicate and manipulate people much better than antiquated literary language. The result came to him hand in hand. Using people’s speech not only helped him build a closer relationship with the readers but also increased circulation of newspapers and magazines. Apart from their own works, translations from other languages also received increasing attention. Common people in their country started showing their interest in learning literature that helped him meet his target of developing a rich culture with subtle selections from others. Thus, it opened up a window for them to reach the world. This approach may be taken as the consequence of language reform influenced by a wide intellectual fermentation. Chinese gradually extended to the other areas enthused by iconoclastic ideas. They were able to go a long way challenging the incompatibility of the older tradition in their present time. A group of young talents, iconoclasts and intellectuals those who studied abroad strongly opposed traditional culture. They expressed their concerns for traditional cultures and Confucianism. They criticized the traditional values and welcomed technology to activate the dormant energy of China. Actually, intellectuals were looking for development communication. With the aid of technology and e-governance, they wanted to bring a positive change that can ensure progress for them.

Liang Qichao, the first in China to write on Karl Marx, had a deep influence on the Chinese youth. He was able to win the hearts of the Chinese youth with his writing on the French Revolution and its great propagator Rousseau. Through his writing, he brought about a fierce attack on Confucianism that touched the Chinese youth in a great way. Liang Qichao organized the bairi gaige (百日改革) ‘Hundred Days Reform’ coup d’état in 1898 with his mentor Kang Youwei (康有为). ‘Hundred Days Reform’ was based on the radical image of his younger days and image of Mao Zedong (毛泽东) in his youth. In the earlier period of his life, he set up an association to communicate and acquaint with the Chinese youth and younger generation to instil multifaceted western thought in them. The change came into him, when he went to Paris as a representative of China. War-torn Europe disillusioned him and brought a great change in him. His meeting with Henri Bergson intensified the change in him. As the consequence of it, he switched off from his old thought and respect for the development through technological innovation and diffusion of innovation. He turned off from his attraction towards Europe. Instead, he became a critic of technology society and blind faith in science. As the sign of his disillusionment he wrote, “millions of people on the other shore of the ocean are worrying about the bankruptcy of material civilization, sorrowfully and desperately crying for help, waiting for your aid, our ancestors in heaven, the sages and the older generation are all earnestly hoping, you will carry out their task. Their spirit is helping you.”

The Chinese youth reciprocated it in two divergent ways. To be more precise, this opinion created a mixture reaction in the Chinese youth. The majority of the youth took it adversely, finding it unacceptable. However, some distinguished intellectuals accepted Liang Qichao opinions. Liang Shuming (梁漱溟) was the most distinguished among them. Metamorphosis in Liang Qichao persuaded him to shift from his position, which caused strong protest from a group of youth like Zhou Zuoren, Zheng Zhenduo, and Mao Dun. Chinese cultural tradition was at the fray as the consequence of division between the Chinese intellectuals. Therefore, a reassessment was needed for taking decision for fixing the right path for Chinese civilization.

In February 1923, Zhang Junmai, a disciple of Liang Qichao, took the initiative for it declaring the necessity for a reassessment of the Chinese civilization. As the reaction of it, Mao Dun and Chen Duxiu, clearly declared the worthlessness of the Chinese tradition, rejecting cautious note of Zhang Junmai and his appeals for a selective approach towards ancient heritage. Intellectuals and scholars were divided on the issues. They started brainstorming on the necessity of literature in a society. Which is more important, literature or science? Xu Zhimo was very happy with his contentment. He was lucky to make acquaintance with Lowes Dickinson, E. M. Forster and Katherine Mansfield, I. A. Richard, C. K. Ogden. He was deep in love with Lin Huiyin (林徽因), the beautiful daughter of Lin Changmin (林長民), a friend of Liang Qichao and a member of the short-lived cabinet in 1917. Xu Zhimo friend, Qu Qiubai believed in the ideology of Marxian. It is important to mention here that when Qu Qiubai met Xu Zhimo and his friends, he discerned that they live in a world of dream and imagination. To him they were the men of imaginary world. They believe in escapism, forgetting all about the real world. The time is also important as Guo Moruo come with his revolutionary speech. Guo Moruo declared, "We are men on the revolutionary path and our literature of today can only justify its existence in its function of hastening the realization of social revolution... Now is the time for propaganda, and literature is its instrument." Another non-communist liberal and host of Tagore, Hu Shi criticized Liang Qichao’s view about western

civilization. He opposed the Liang Qichao view of western civilization. According to him the nation and civilization is always acceptable that can use machines best as the substitute of human labour. To be more precise, a civilization is that uses machines for substituting human labour is more spiritual than the civilization, which uses men as beasts of burden. There was a sharp conflict as Liang Shuming was defending Confucianism while Hu Shi was criticizing Kongjia 孔家 (Confucius and sons). When the debate was at its apex, Chen Duxiu attacked not only supporter of the traditional culture but also Hu Shi, his onetime close friend. It is to be noted that Hu Shi wanted to carry on literary movement in China in association with Chen. When he came back from the USA, he joined as a Professor of English and Philosophy at Beijing University. He got a great chance to acquaint and motivated his students and many young people with his thought and philosophy. With his defence for agnosticism of Huxley and pragmatism of John Dewey, he became highly popular among the people of young age groups. Hu Shi was an intimate friend of Lu Xun and one of the pioneers of modern Chinese poetry. He was great scholar devoted more time in scholarly pursuits and activities than spending it in fruitless political debates. In spite of taking significant role in the cultural reforms of China, his involvement in abstract philosophical problems and refusal take part in the left movement made him a target of the Communist Party. Forgetting all about his contribution in the cultural reforms, Communist Party attacked him. It is definitely ignominious for a culture. Showing disrespect to a man of strong academic records, definitely unveils coarse nature of their politics. He was a man who showed interest and warm regards to Rabindranath when he visited China in 1924.

Apart from Hu Shi another person showed great interest in Tagore, he was the young poet Xu Zhimo 徐志摩 (1895-1931). He was an enthusiast of Tagore. He knew about Tagore's visit in China from Elmhirst and Qu Shiying (a young philosopher and educationist) when he visited them in April 1923. In the meeting, they discussed about the possibility of Tagore's visit to China. They informed about the discussion to Liang Qichao and Zhang. Both of them accepted and responded the proposal affirmatively. For Xu Zhimo it was great event. As he was well aware of Tagore, it seemed to him a great achievement for China. He heard much about Tagore and his works when he was in Cambridge. At that time, Tagore's reputation was at its zenith in Europe. Although Xu Zhimo was a lover of Shelley and Keats and of Katherine Mansfield, he liked and passionately responded Tagore's poetry for its sophisticated philosophy, humanity and universal appeal that was commonly uncommon with other poets. The great young poet left this world untimely at his thirty. The bending sickle of time cut and took him away with her (time) much earlier. Xu Zhimo has an unforgettable contribution in Chinese society and literature. He set up the Xinyue shehui 新月社会 (The Crescent Moon Society) in 1923. In collaboration with his poet friend Wen Yiduo, Xu Zhimo, he launched a monthly journal went by the same name The Monthly Crescent Moon. Within his short lifespan, he did many noble deeds. Three years before his death, Xu Zhimo set up a publishing house named Moon Publications. In spite of doing noble so many noble deeds, a group of writers represented by Guo Moruo and others, strongly opposed him.

In the early 1921s, Guo declared:

"I am a proletarian

Because but for my naked self

I possess no other private property."

As I told in the previous paragraph, Xu Zhimo's cherished deep liking for Tagore. In spite of having deep interest for Tagore and his works, Xu Zhimo might have been barred to do it. Marxist view of literature might have prevented them to do so. Most interestingly although Xu Zhimo, Zhang Junmai, Liang Shuming, Liang Qichao and Hu Shi have some dissention or difference in their opinions, but they were united to form a group to oppose to the newly organized Marxists. In an organized form, they tried to combat against newly organized Marxists and their philosophy. As they had deep enthusiasm for Tagore and they were the antagonist of Marxists in China, Rabindranath Tagore might have faced threat on behalf of the Marxists. Rabindranath appeared to have faced protests while delivering his lectures in gatherings. An oblique criticism of Marxist view of literature said, Xu Zhimo, Zhang Junmai, Liang Shuming, Liang Qichao and Hu Shi understood the influence of Dewey and Russell on Chinese. Their (Dewey and Russell) influence was limited, as Chinese were not fully aware of Dewey and Russell. On the other hand, Chinese knew Tagore and his works very well. This is why they realized that the popularity of Tagore. They thought that the huge popularity of Tagore would help him get the potentiality of attaining a large number of audiences. To prevent Rabindranath from attaining a great number of audiences in his lecture giving events, they started opposing Rabindranath and his lecture events.

On the eve of his sailing for China, Tagore told the press that he has received a warm welcome on behalf of Chinese. He took it as an invitation for India to China. Therefore, as a humble son of this country, he must accept it. He left India for China with a hope to re-establish the cultural and spiritual links between the two great nations. In his own words, "We shall invite scholars and try to arrange an exchange of scholars. If I can accomplish this, I shall feel happy." Before leaving India, he had no idea that he might be their controversial guest. The words "I shall feel happy" were more than a small talk for a man who cherished a strong affection

and deep love for China. He hoped to see China as an important centre of learning where people across globe would throng to learn and enrich their cultured.

As has been alleged by some of his critics, Tagore's knowledge of China was not limited and confined to a shallow acquaintance. It was not loosely tied with Confucianism. Delved deep into his heart Rabindranath expressed his feelings for China that he felt in his childhood. He discerned the romantic roots of China, leaving in India at his tender age. While speaking in a gathering in China, he became nostalgic and opened up his recollection. In his own words, "I had in my mind my own vision of China, formed when I was young, China as I had imagined it to be when I was reading my *Arabian Nights*, the romantic China, as well as the China of which I had caught glimpses when I was in Japan." It might be a hint of his huff, seeing difference between what he thought about China and what he received after reaching in China. Anyone who read Rabindranath and his writing about China, he would easily perceive his deep feelings and sufferings for Chinese even in his early literary works. There is no doubt that Tagore's love for China was pure and acute. It is evident from one of his earlier writings about China named articles *China Maraner Byabasay* (The Death Trade in China). Published in the Bengali magazine *Bharati* (in 1881), *China Maraner Byabasay* is surely a great account of the people of China and their sufferings. It recorded how British in China organized a massacre to run their business. Apart from this, there are so many literary works of Rabindranath that deal with Chinese affairs. *Samajbhed* (Social Differences) and *Chinemaner Chithi* (Letters of a Chinaman) are name but a few. Based on Dickinson's Letters of John Chinaman, *Chinemaner Chithi* (Letters of a Chinaman) was published in 1898. It showed how Tagore was interested in China and the affairs of its people. Written in 1901, *Samajbhed* (Social Differences) was a burning record of the western barbarity practised by the British in China. The writing owes its origin from the English article named "*Tiger China and Lamb Europe*" (published in Contemporary Review, London). Tagore also held his pen against the malpractice in China by Christian missionaries in the twentieth century. He found the Christian missionaries are the root of all evils and kingpin of all social and political turmoil. Driven by pride and arrogance, Christian missionaries forgot to recognize the necessity of diversities in a social system. They failed to recognize the significance and meaning of true religion. Tagore discerned civilized people in Europe refused to adhere to the principles of Christianity. They were also against the disruption of ancient civilization and their heritage culture. They condemned this brutal endeavour for perpetuating its (Christian missionary) self-interest and achievement.

III. Conclusion

Tagore was one of the earliest modern Indian thinkers and great patron of Renaissance who perceived the benefits of mutual understanding and good relationship between the two great civilizations, China and India. He was the first man to eulogize the long-standing friendly relationship between India and China. He strongly advocated the reopening of the path between the two countries that remained close for a longer period. He paid warm regards to the great contribution made by the predecessors for the cultural exchanges between the two countries. Tagore was highly enthusiastic in promoting inseparable friendship. He was in deep thought for a mutual understanding between the two oriental people, Indian and Chinese. He was the real hero for the revival of India-China relations. He looked forward to offering the song dynasty, following the advent of the Europeans. He entreated the people of the two countries to develop spirituality to achieve great success. According to him, spirituality is the great way of being successful civilizations. He opposed the mad pursuit for materialistic gain like the people of the West who only knows how to gain and spend. The people of the Waste have given their heart away- a sordid boon. Like elite thinker of China, Tagore was the first modern Indian to think on China's place in the modern world. John Dewey and Bertrand Russell is the most important among his fellow thinkers. When in China, Tagore in his final lecture said, "I have done what was possible --- I have made friends." The speech was many ways symbolic for the renewal of friendship between India and China. This is not a sheer friendship between the poet and his fans in China but an awakening of potential and mutual understanding between the two countries. We commemorate Tagore's contribution for re-establishing India-China fraternity in modern times.

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