

ABSTRACT

The thesis studies Rabindranath Tagore's philosophy of school education with particular reference to his essays and the history of the Brahmavidyalaya established by him. Alongside, it also analyzes how the same is reflected in Tagore's fictional prose, poetry and drama.

For a thorough understanding of Tagore's philosophy of school education, the thesis analyzes Tagore's essays, letters and lectures delivered upon different occasions. It demonstrates how Tagore established the sheer futility of the "knowledge" derived from the mechanical learning practiced in the colonial school and how that had become a meaningless burden for Indian students rather than fortifying their intellect or characters in any way whatsoever. The thesis analyzes the Tagorean system with particular focus on its various aspects like the curriculum, the environment, the ideal teacher for implementation of the system along with the characteristics and values that the system was based upon.

In order to understand the unique character of Tagore's educational philosophy, it is necessary to understand the daily operations of his school. As stated earlier, Tagore's philosophy of school education runs hand in hand with the way his school functioned. The functioning of Brahmavidyalaya helps one to understand Tagore's philosophy of school education just as much as his own writing does. In fact, the operation of the Brahmavidyalaya and Tagore's philosophy of school education are so intrinsically interlinked that a discussion of each is incomplete without the other.

Therefore, the thesis creates a memorial reconstruction of life at the Brahmavidyalaya involving all its stakeholders in order to understand the philosophy driving it as well as the practical implementation of the ideas about school education that Tagore is proposing in his numerous essays on school education. The memorial reconstruction uses the numerous memorial accounts by students, teachers and parents of students at Brahmavidyalaya as their source material.

The second part of the thesis consists of translations of selected essays by Tagore that focus on the subject of school education. Translation being a tool of interpretation in itself, an up-to-date translation of this essays would add critical value to complete the understanding of Tagore's philosophy of school education.