

Revisiting Tagore's "Shishu Bholanath" in the Light of Dynamic Flow

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Abstract: At its heart—psychodynamic approach conceptualized that overtly manifested behavior, emotion and feeling are intermingled with the underlying covert psychological processes and early experiences. Early life experiences along with the flow of internal energies develop numerous blowing capitals that ultimately reconstruct one's personality through differential manifestations. Literature, a path to know the unknown deeper insight, is the expressed imaginative feeling of the innovative mind. The present objective is to put a vivid glance on the hidden dynamic flow of Rabindranath Tagore's journey with "Shishu Bholanath". The vision and mission of the present purpose is to explore the existence of gracious analytical trace in the mentioned literature with special emphasis on 'Oedipal Complex'.

Keywords: Psychodynamic, Psychological Processes, Personality, Analytical, Oedipal Complex

1. Introduction

Psychologists like painters put multiple hues in multifarious shades, playing with darkness, their analytical power deliberately draw explanation about mental processes—the entire conceptualizations unanimously take the form of 'persona'. The Austrian legend, in the history of Psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud [6 May 1856 – 23 September 1939] conceptualized the manifested conscious behavior in the light of unconscious motives. His theoretical originality about the dynamic libidinal flow and infantile sexuality has significant role on the entire behavioral dimension. This primitive, early instinctual flow primarily directed toward the family members within a limited context, later it broaden across the social surrounding. This is the budding ground for newly developing numerous floating capitals. In that movement to achieve a temporary protection from the fear of being rejected, one starts to 'repress'. This short-term relief has a long-term effect on the constructed behavior pattern which in turn, complicates one's perceptual experiences. An adequate, healthy solution to the problem enlightens and glorifies behavior, excluding all the symptom formation.

The synthesis of any literature has pluralistic and diversified sources. These various sources are numerous in quantity, like: differential cultures, ethnicity, linguistics

groups, political influences, socio-contextual backgrounds and many others. Simultaneously, the domineering influences of enumerations qualitative resources are ample, too. The vision and mission of the present purpose is to explore the existence of gracious analytical trace in the constellation of poems, under the shade of 'Shishu Bholanath', written by Rabindranath Tagore. The manifested poetic aroma of Shishu Bholanath is the conscious evidence of Tagore's creative impulse. The objective is to explore that grandiose literature analytically with special emphasis on 'Oedipal Complex' to discover and rediscover the exceptionality of sublimation.

2. The Dynamic Unconscious as a Source of Motivation [Gardner, 1991]

'Experience of the frequency and power of impulses of which one knew nothing directly, and whose existence had to be inferred like some fact in the external world, left no alternative open... although one had no immediate consciousness of them and could only infer them from their words and actions' (Freud, 1925). Experiencing the objectivist, realistic, materialistic Western Culture, the compassionate poet Rabindranath Tagore became very upset (Bandhopadhyaya, 1981; Bhattacharya, 1991). Sensitive poet with his unsatisfied Western experiences became lost his rational thinking processes. Conflict in the unconscious mind

raises creativity as a solution. The Ego-syntonic solution reinforces conscious part of the mind and personality, results in creative production and behavior (Mandal, 2009). Poet's self-reproach inspired him to recover from the immense sea of sufferings through a mature mechanism—sublimation. Tagore's deeper agony always inspired him to engage in and evolve a creative solution. Inner conflict, painful experiences turned his grief-stricken adulthood into the candid childhood and that very journey started with the imagination of his own 'idealized inner-child'. This essence of regression in sublimation is clear in the present piece. The iconic poet in his creative flow cherished that 'idealized inner-child' to gain the protection from the crude reality of individualistic culture. Hence, the very first poem under the poetic rhythm of "Shishu Bholanath" is named as the same. In India, Lord Shiva – the destroyer, the transformer is known as 'Bholanath'. That divine Yogi decorated with crescent moon, designed with holy river Ganges, played with damaru and control the entire universe. HE enjoys a divine, vigorous, violent dance form— 'tandava'. This dramatic art of 'Shaiva' tradition represents the creation and destruction with five basic principal manifestation of eternal energy, they are: a. 'Srishti' (creation, evolution), b. 'Sthiti' (preservation, support), c. 'Samhara' (destruction, evolution), d. 'Tirobhava' (illusion), e. 'Anugraha' (release, emancipation, grace). Representing all these activities, poet especially emphasized on the virtue of destroying one's own creation to achieve freedom from earthly attachments—'the nirvana'. This lack of interest for cohabitation, devotion toward one's own production is the symbol of anti-stagnation attitude. Poet's 'inner child' is absolutely presented as an 'idealized entity', representing the Great invincible God 'Mahadeva' (Bandhopadhyaya, 1981; Bhattacharya, 1991). This 'idealized child' with his unconquerable energy destroys his own creation being indifferent. To the 'child' dust particles are intangible, HE has lack of possession but not poor, HE is shameless, lidless, but full with inner nectar – HE is the 'Richest'. The mournful poet prays to achieve that very stage of dynamic progression to get rid of everyday's painful experiences.

From the known, drowning into Unconscious – the deepest level of mental structure, eliminating from the sunrays, untouched from reality, with its poor introspective value, contains with thought processes, memory, affect and motivation (Westen, Drew, 1999). The Swiss German ("Paracelsus", *Britannica*, 2011) Paracelsus —a physician, botanist, alchemist, astrologer, and general occultist (Allen G. D., 1993) was the first person who described about the role of unconsciousness in cognitive processes in his book 'Von den Krankheiten'. After this 'Pioneer of Modern Psychology', the German Romantic philosopher Friedrich Schelling coined the term almost around 18th century. This descriptive, dynamic and systematic concept has its trace even in Vedas and ancient Ayurvedic researches. Sigmund Freud from his practical knowledge appreciates the functional processes of unconscious mind (container of wishful impulses) to explain numerous deviated behaviors. Freud distinguished between

dynamic sense and descriptive sense of unconsciousness. Dynamic unconsciousness with its greater psychoanalytical value is a source of motivations which actually and potentially lead to mental conflict, and that influence the cognition a little. Repressed unconscious materials with their monumental forces pull to come out in the conscious mind. At the very same time the simultaneous counter cathectic force tries to protect the process of repression. As per Rotraut Roychaudhury (2014) Sigmund Freud mentioned, 'Latent states of mind whose existence is undeniable....have abundant points of contact with conscious mental processes. The only respect in which some of these latent states (ideas, purposes, resolutions and so on) differ from conscious ones is precisely the absence of consciousness.' Being distant from reality, these very active impulses if leak, modifies by primary and secondary censor. Sublimation is a kind of mature mechanism in which transformation of those unacceptable impulses takes place so the outputs become a socially desirable one. This symptomatic exaggeration of creative essence is reflected in the poem "Ecchamotti", where Freud's messages about the hidden anxiety-provoking unconscious materials are vividly expressed. In this connection, Rabindranath Tagore's free play of imagination lead him to write, "there lies some unknown at the deep drowning steps, they are silent but active in their own, the poet exclaimed that his glance towards them may makes him fearful".

3. Oedipal Stage: Conflict Between Ego Dystonic Erotic Trends and Self Preservative Ones [Simon & Blass, 1991]

The progressive mind in one of its very season of life is primarily dominated by its sexual 'cathexis' for opposite gender and hostile 'cathexis' for same gender parent. The two opposite forces, that is, the sense of possessiveness as well as the sense of rebelliousness lie in a single thread of existence. This alters the peaceful mind into a battle ground though temporarily gets relief from repressing all the inner conflicts. Now it becomes a dynamo of anxiousness. His imaginary father-figure changes into a resentful, punitive, dominant rival. Boys engage in a competition with their imaginary rival—'the father' as both is enriched by the masculine possession. A perceived comparison between the two male has been drawn by the poet in the poem "Dushttu", where the curious poet with all his daring and tenacity deliberately asked his mother to reply truly about "whether his father is better than him or not in respect of being naughty? The innocent poet also wants to know how much his father obeys the desired lady – 'the mother' ". The pragmatic ego of Tagore, functionally decorated with reality principle offers his intensified erotic desire for mother figure with the following lines in the poem "Onno Ma", where the poet under oedipal force express his mother that "she (the mother) have to recognize the poet, if he embraces her, rushing to her

lap.” This explicitly expresses the transformed form of narcissistic libido into object libido. The name of the present poem has its own significance, too. The primary loved object now becomes boost-up with multi-layered reciprocal attachment in the tone of Oedipus complex – a psychoanalytically rich idealization. The shaped persona of Tagore as a poet sublimated his infantile libidinal energy and offer his deeper oedipal appreciation towards his mother in the poem “Duorani” – with the manifestation of the following primitive physically sensational lines: “In the silence of the night/Burying my face in your chest/My eyes will shut with drowsiness/ Do not, at that time/Go away to Father, please!! In this connection, poet wish to play as a protector to his mother while deliberately offering her a hut, leaving the present palace” (Kakar, 2013). Poet’s awareness regarding the fact that for his mother he is not the sole focus is reflecting in the poems named, “Khela-Bhola” and “Sat-Samudra-Pare.” In the former poem, the anxious poet found “his mother as a strange lady from unknown country who is sited calmly near the window holding the letter of poet’s father. At that moment the poet realizes the distance between the mother and him.” The poem “Sat-Samudra-Pare” vividly expresses poet’s urge to replace the father as “he asked the mother to make a boat with that very piece of paper, which he had torn from his father’s copy. He also mentioned to his mother, not to write the letter for his father, and suggested for that day atleast his aunt may write the letter.” The unconscious mind is very conscious about the fact that in this unequal contest the father is more competent and hence the poet expressed that “he will go far away (Sat-Samudra-Pare) when the father came from Delhi and found himself as a guilty.”

‘An intimate friend and a hated enemy have always been indispensable requirements for my emotional life; I have always been able to create them anew, and not infrequently my childish ideal has been so closely approached that friend and enemy coincided in the same person’ (Sigmund Freud, 1913). Castration anxiety leads to repression of the lustful feeling for ‘the mother’ and hostility toward the paternal figure. This results the identification of the boy with his father. This vicarious satisfaction to incestuous craving transformed into tender affection for ‘the mother’. And finally the superego develops. The acquiring gender concept is getting clearer with the internalization of the concept of father-mother differentiation. This gender – specific demarcation in the manifested behavior and the affectionate feeling for ‘the mother’ as well as the intermingled concept of superego function has been vividly dramatized in the poem “Raja O Rani”. The dramatic flow of the mentioned poem presented the ‘father figure’ as the representative of the traditional values and ideals of social circumferences. That idealized father reflecting the authorized standard of the society by punishing the poet’s uncontrolled impulse. This is not the entire picture of the poem, the rest part of the allusion deals with a softer emotion – a modified form of sexual energy between the child and ‘the mother’, and a slight touch of non-materialistic reward is also getting its significance in

this context. In the words of Sigmund Freud (1957)— ‘ a man who has been the indisputable favorite of his mother keeps for life the feeling of a conqueror, that confidence of success that often induces real success’.

‘In human beings pure masculinity or femininity is not to be found either in a psychological or biological sense’ (Sigmund Freud, 1953). Sigmund Freud hypothesized that every individual in the universe is inherently bisexual – a physiologically and psychologically well-established concept. This constitutional homosexuality with its collective image is revealing in the devotion of Tagore’s literature named “Onno Ma”. That very inner urge presented by the poet as “....though ‘the mother’ and Abu (the poet himself) had a distant meeting during the day time but a harmonious sense will develop between them in the evening”. This “distant meeting of daytime” reveals poet’s preoccupation with loneliness and separation. ‘These two are the strong unconscious desire for confirming the presence of good mother’ (Kakar, 1997).

4. Transition from Primary-Drive Gratification to Applying Secondary Process-Thinking

The process of transitioning from ‘oedipal stage’ to the next more progressive adult approaching stage has been seen in the poem “Ghumer Tatto”. Here, the desired person has been changed with the loosening of the ties to the previously made erotic attachment to the mother. That grown up independence, removing the earlier vulnerability has been well established in the poem “Rajmistiri” also—here the grown up mind established himself as a professional at a distant place near the city. The poem by its name represents a particular constructive masculine identity. As per the classical psychoanalytic theory a child’s identification with the same gender parent denotes the successful resolution of ‘Oedipus complex’. The poet repeatedly exhibits his incessant libidinal flow toward the endless eternity. Therefore, the poet as a ‘mason’ imagines constructing a building to touch the sky-high. Here the poet also enjoys more the capability of competence and the sense of independence than the earlier stage as he mentioned in the same poem. This very stage not only reflects security but its intangible proactive influences are more clearly seen in the later poem—“Ghumer Tatto”, where the need for mature belongingness reveals. Here, the mentioned dream-princess signifies the removed-narcissism with the externalization of love object through separation from the earlier one.

5. The Conclusion

Rabindranath Tagore in his modest book “Shisu Bholanath” with his unfathomable poetic mastery has shown a dynamically significant transformation from primary narcissism to reality-oriented socialized adult. Poet with his devotion towards auriferous motherland when faced the

western culture, that very sensed perception revoke his susceptible insight. That retraction, suffering, trouble rebounds his impulses to sublimate through the mentioned book. During the process, initially the existence of regression has been vividly shown, though the 'ego' with its expert functional capacity channelized the regressive flow toward a creative benefit. Thus the 'Adaptive Regression in the service of the Ego' provides the opportunity to objectively enjoy the worth mention poetic spirit. The 'special feature' of psychoanalytic 'unconscious system' is that it can be expressed lies in between its fundamental features and those of the manifested mental states (Freud, 1915). 'Ego' is that very 'inner agency of psyche which screens and synthesizes the impulses, needs, emotions and memories from within and the impressions, ideas, expectations and opportunities from outside, both of which become part of our consciousness and call for some kind of action' (Kakar, 1997). In the present connection, poet's painful experiences unravel itself with the manifested content of poetic sparks with the excellence of ego-functioning.

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