

Concept Note and Call for Papers

RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND TRAVEL

Throughout his life Rabindranath Tagore was an inveterate traveller. Right from his childhood he made innumerable trips both within India and abroad. The earliest journeys were imaginative and he has left us accounts of these as well as of later physical journeys in various travel writings – letters, diaries, poems, songs and essays. In 1872, at the age of eleven, he travelled with his father to Santiniketan and then the upper Himalayas near Dalhousie and stayed there for four months. Though not written as a travelogue, the experiences of this trip are narrated by the poet in his book of reminiscences entitled *Jibonsmriti*. Later we get travelogues like *Yurop Probasir Patra* (of his first trip to England in 1878), *Yurop Yatrir Diary*, the collection of essays called *Pather Sanchay*, *Japan Yatri*, *Paschim Jatrir Diary*, *Java Jatrir Patra*, *Russir Chithi*, *Parasya Yatri* and others. But apart from these published narratives we also get a lot of information on his trips both within the country and abroad, through the writings of others and also through the poet's occasional journal entries, fiction and the like.

Apart from taking into consideration writings by the poet related to physical travel to different places, we also find him using the metaphor of a journey when he writes:

Days have gone by. I forget that we are crossing the ocean. My mind has been following its own path, from one thought to another. To say it has been following its own path, perhaps is an exaggeration....In the mind's geography there are innumerable undiscovered spots. The roads leading up to them are like rivers...I feel this river within me.

The Department of English, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan is organizing a Conference on the 29th and 30th of March 2019 on “**Rabindranath Tagore and Travel**” under its UGC- DRS SAP II Project to explore the idea of Tagore and travel in terms of real/ physical/ metaphorical/ imaginary journeys undertaken by the Poet recorded in his writings across genres and in the writings of others in his circle.

Interested scholars/researchers who are willing to participate in this two-day deliberation are requested to contact the following signatories along with the proposed title and a short abstract of approximately 250 words at the earliest.

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