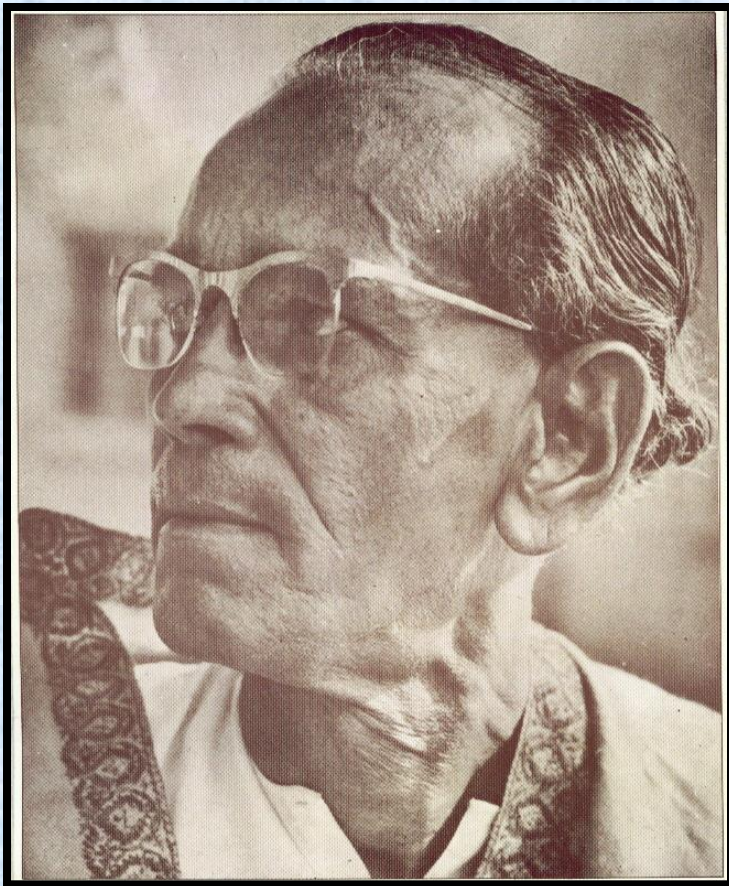




Indian Authors and Poets

Tarashankar Bandyopadhyay



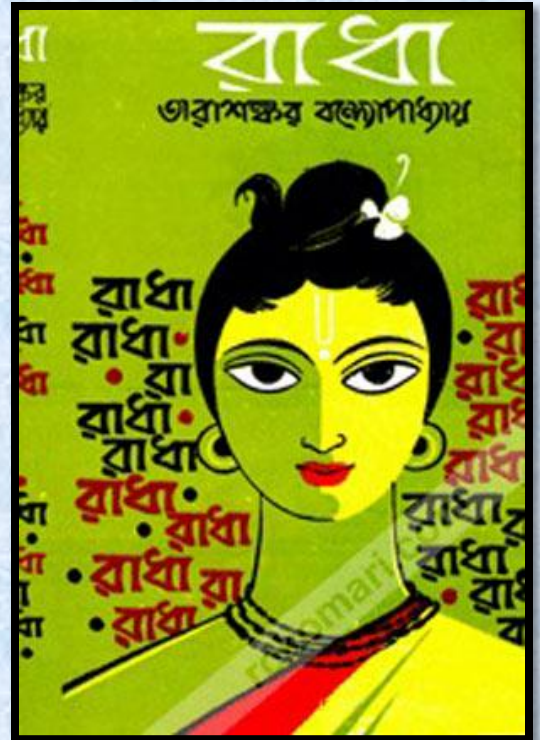
Tarashankar Bandyopadhyay (1898-1971) is one of the great modern Bengali novelists in India. He was born into an aristocratic family of Birbhum and married to Umashashi Devi in 1916. While he was a student in Calcutta he fought against injustice at different levels of the society and due to his active participation in political movement and ill health he had to quit. He was actively involved in social activities. He joined the Gandhian Movement and took an active part in India's struggle for independence. He even was jailed for a year for his active participation in the struggle. He was also a staunch critique of the Fascist movement but later he turned to Gandhism. He served as a member of the West Bengal Legislative council from 1952 to 1960 and was also a member of the Parliament (Rajya

Sabha) in New Delhi from 1960 to 1966. Tarasankar later realized that he could serve the country better by writing rather than by actively participating in the Gandhian movement and took writing as his full-time profession.

Tarashankar has contributed greatly to Bengali literature. He is an unbiased writer who wrote what he believes and what he observed. He is one of those writers who saw the world from different angles and broke the poetic tradition in novels but substituted

realism by adding romance to human relationship, breaking the indifference of the so called conservative people of the society and hypocrisy of the then society. His novel represents various classes of people and writes in a simple, extremely natural style, giving an authentic feel to the readers. He was also a good story teller, sharing about the society and also of his own experiences. He is most noted for his long novels about rural life. His historical novel 'Ganna Begum' is an attempt worth mentioning for its traditional values. Rabindranath Tagore also had high appreciation for Tarashankar's writings.

Tarashankar will be remembered for his amazing work, where life is observed with care and the judgment is offered to the reader. He mainly flourished during the war years and having produced in that period a large number of novels and short stories. His literary career is spanned over forty- two years. His first novel Chaitali Ghurni was published in the year 1932 and his first successful novel Rai Kamal published in 1934 is a bitter sweet love story of three wandering Vaishnava mendicants. He wrote more than 210 short stories, autobiographies and 40 novels of which more than 45 were stories of his were made into movies/tele-films. The most celebrated movie based on his writing is Satyajit Ray's movie "Jalsaghar" (The Music Room). He directed one Bengali feature film (Amrapali) in 1959. Tarashankar's celebrated novels are Arogyaniketan, Dhatridebta, Kalindi (The River Kalindi), twin novel Panchagram and Ganadevata, Kabi, Raskali and Hansuli banker Upokatha (The legend of Hasuli Bank). Unlike many writers in the early 1930's and 40's, Tarashankar though a traditional novelist was deeply inspired and influenced by western trends and also provided Indian novels with a new dimension. He was awarded the "Gyanapith Award", the highest literary award of India, in 1967. For his novel Arogyaniketan, he received the Rabindra Puraskar in 1955 and the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1956. In 1966, he received the Jnanpith Award, honoured with the Padma Shri in 1962 and the Padma Bhushan in 1969.



Activity

1. Write a timeline marking the importance of Tarashankar's life and career.
