



Freedom Manifests in Action, by Rabindranath Tagore

The more man acts and makes actual what was latent in him, the nearerÂ does he bring the distant Yet-to-be. In that actualisation, man is everÂ making himself more and yet more distinct, and seeing himself clearlyÂ under newer and newer aspects in the midst of his varied activities,Â in the state, in society. This vision makes for freedom.

Freedom is not in darkness, nor in vagueness. There is no bondage soÂ fearful as that of obscurity. It is to escape from this obscurity thatÂ the seed struggles to sprout, the bud to blossom. It is to rid itselfÂ of this envelope of vagueness that the ideas in our mind areÂ constantly seeking opportunities to take on outward form. In the sameÂ way our soul, in order to release itself from the mist ofÂ indistinctness and come out into the open, is continually creating forÂ itself fresh fields of action, and is busy contriving new forms ofÂ activity, even such as are not needful for the purposes of its earthlyÂ life. And why? Because it wants freedom. It wants to see itself, to realise itself. [...]

Thus is man continually engaged in setting free in action his powers,Â his beauty, his goodness, his very soul. And the more he succeeds inÂ so doing, the greater does he see himself to be, the broader becomesÂ the field of his knowledge of self. [â€‘]

Those who have fully realised the soul have never talked in mournfulÂ accents of the sorrowfulness of life or of the bondage of action. TheyÂ are not like the weakling flower whose stem-hold is so light that itÂ drops away before attaining fruition. They hold on to life with allÂ their might and say, "never will we let go till the fruit is ripe."Â They desire in their joy to express themselves strenuously in theirÂ life and in their work. Pain and sorrow dismay them not, they are notÂ bowed down to the dust by the weight of their own heart. With theÂ erect head of the victorious hero they march through life seeingÂ themselves and showing themselves in increasing resplendence of soulÂ through both joys and sorrows. The joy of their life keeps step withÂ the joy of that energy which is playing at building and breakingÂ throughout the universe. The joy of the sunlight, the joy of the freeÂ air, mingling with the joy of their lives, makes one sweet harmonyÂ reign within and without.
--Rabindranath Tagore, from "Realisation in Action"