



SAROJINI NAIDU- A LYRICIST

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Abstract

Sarojini Naidu, an Indian English Poetess, Known as Bharatiya Kokila (The Nightingale of India) was a Prolitic Poetess, Sarojini's genius was essentially Lyrical. Although she has written a few ballads and narrative poems too, Yet her main bulk consists of lyrics. She has attempted every species of the lyric. Her lyrics can be divided into five categories. Her lyrics have all the necessary qualities of a good lyric. In her lyrics there is an integration of different traditions, of different levels of experience, thought and emotion. Palanquin Bearers, The Bangle Sellers, An Indian Love song, Indian Weaver, The Coromondal Fishers, Street Cries, The Snake Charmer, Leili, Rajput Love Song, The Pardah Nashin etc are her important lyrics. All the essential Characteristics are presented in Sarojini's lyrics, I can undoubtedly recognise her as a lyricist.

Keywords :- Sarojini Naidu, Indian English Poetess, Poems, Lyrics, A Lyricist.

Introduction :-

An Indian English poetess and Political activist Sarojini Naidu, Known as “ Bharatiya Kokila “ (The Nightingale of India) was a prolific poetess whose work drew wide acclaim and influenced generations of writers. Her brilliance is deeply observed in the sublime and lofty songs that she sang. Unparallel as she stands even today, for the variegated versatility and rapturousness of her lyrics, she is the unsurpassing great woman, the staunch patriot, the national singer. The first thing that strikes us in reading

Naidu's Poetry is her exquisite melody and the fine delicacy of feeling, an expression blended with the freshness and exuberance of spirit. She has skilfully weaved a beautiful picture using various strands of emotions – love, separation, ecstasy, mellowness, seasons, especially spring folklore, festivals, history and mythology to present the vivid images of India and Indian womanhood whether it is Radha, Zebeidaa, Pardha – nashin coy lady, a

married woman or a mother, Damayanti or a Rajput Princess – all poems have a bird like rapturous, melodious, haunting, resonating and perpetual quality about them, Sarojini's all songs are melodious. All her major themes are variegated and depict not only her love for her motherland but her complete amalgamation in its culture.

Sarojini's genius essentially Lyrical :-

Sarojini's genius was essentially lyrical, like P.B Shelley's. The bulk of her poetry consists of lyrics. As a lyricist Sarojini has the same position in Indian English Poetry of P.B Shelley in English Poetry.

As a Child Sarojini was of a very emotional and sentimental kind. She had a prominent romantic trait in her blood. They all manifest themselves in her romantic lyrics - a world of fantasy and allegoric idealism. In her Poetry the lyrical appeal is very wonderful.

Song like quality - Simplicity and Spontaneity

A lyric is characterised by simplicity, brevity, spontaneity, music and melody. It is essentially these qualities which her poetry has. She exhaled a lyric, as a flower exhales fragrance and lyric comes to her as spontaneously and naturally as do leaves to a tree. The song like quality is the first that strikes the eyes, when one begins to read her lyrics and it is for this bird like quality of song that they would always be valued. Her lyrics are characterised not only by the melody, but also by the simplicity of a bird song. For her life was not a riddle to be solved, but a miracle to be sung and celebrated. Its endless variety excited her, its colours dazzled her, its beauty into intoxicated her. Thus Sarojini Naidu was a "supreme singer of beautiful songs"

Emotional Intensity and Fervour

It is the cardinal feature of a lyric. Sarojini's lyrics have this in abundance. All her lyrics possess this emotional depth and intensity.

The Romantic Note -

Sarojini Naidu's lyrics belong to the English Romantic School of poetry, which were in the romantic tradition of John Keats and the Pre – Raphaelites.

The soul of India

We hear in her lyrics- echoes of countries, Indian myths and legends when she sings

“ If you call me, I will come

Fearless, what betide”

Sarojini sprang from the soil of india, and it is the very soul of india that finds expression in her lyrics. She has never falsified reality, though she has glorified and romanticised it.

Classification of Her Lyrics

On the basis of their themes sarojini Naidu's lyrics may be divided into five broad categories

1. Nature Lyrics
2. Love Lyrics
3. Lyrics of Life and Death
4. Flok Lyrics
5. Miscellaneous Lyrics

Nature Lyrics –

Sarojini has a number of beautiful nature – lyrics to her credit. Some of Sarojini's best known nature lyrics are : “ Leili”, “Songs of the Springtime” (ten poems describing Spring in all its splendour), and “The Flowering Year “ (six poems of which ' June Sunset' ‘ is the most charming) Spring in Kashmir, the glorison Lily The Water Hyacinth etc..

Love lyrics –

The love theme looms large in the lyrics of Sarojini .There are a number of fine love lyrics scattered all over her four collections of verse. One may mention such beautiful lyrics as- Indian Love –Song, Humayun to Zubeida, Ecstasy, The Poet's Love Song, Song of Radha, The Milkmaid, The Temple, The Flute, Player of Brindaban, The Gift, The Amulet, Immutable and Songs of Radha. However, The Temple A Pilgrimage of Love A Collection of Twentyfour lyrics divided into three sections - the Gate of Delight, The Path of Tears, The Sanctuary - is her most extended and elaborate statement as a poet of love. Her love lyrics deal with a variety of love experiences which are characterised by intensity and immediacy and draw both on the Hindu tradition of love poetry and the sufi muslim tradition.

Lyrics of Life and Death -

A large number of her finest lyrics deal with the problem of life and death. Life has its sorrows, its pain and suffering and it all ends with death. The poet is conscious of the pain of life and the inevitability of death, and hence a note of melancholy runs through many of her lyrics. But the poetess bravely accepts the challenge of death and is determined to enjoy her life, despite all sorrow and suffering. “Life” “To the God of Pain”, “Damayanti to Nala in the Hour of Exile”, “The poet of Death”, “To a Budha seated on a Lotus”, “Digre” “Love and Death, “Death and Life”, “The Lotus”, The Soul's Prayer”, “A Challenge to Fate”, “In Salutation to the Eternal Peace” and “invincible” are some of her lyrics of life and death.

Folk-Lyrics –

The folk –theme predominates in the lyrics of Sarojini. The opening section of the Golden Threshold is entitled ‘Folk –Songs’. and in Bird of Time,one of the sections is” Indian Folk Songs” The folk – theme also appears in many of the lyrics of the other sections.

Miscellaneous Lyrics –

A number of Sarojini’s lyrics deal with Miscellaneous themes not covered under the above mentioned four categories. The more important of such lyrics are those which throb with her patriotism or in which she pays tribute to someone or the other of the contemporary personalities. The Gift of India is the finest of her patriotic lyrics. And The Lotus is the lyric in which she pays her homage to Mahatma Gandhi. It is one of the finest of her lyrics in which she celebrates contemporary personalities. In “Salutation to My Father’s Spirit”, an elegy on the death of the poetess’ own father, is the finest of her topical lyrics.

Some of her lyrics like the Festival of Memory, The Palanquin Bearers, To a Buddha Seated on a Lotus, Guerdon,Indian weavers are among the lyric classics. Naidu’s “ The Pardah Nashin” is taken from the last section of “The Golden Therehold” is an exquisite lyric. Like anyother lyrics of Naidu, this particular lyric is marked by music, melody, compactness, thought and superb analogy.

Diction and versification

Besides the lyrical wealth, Naidu seems to be accomplished in her handling of diction and versification. The words, phrases and devices are used in perfect harmony with the intended meaning and movement of the poetic thought. Her lyric appeal is “ Various, wonderful and full of the magic of melody.”

Sarojini’s words are carefully chosen both with reference on their sense and sound. She was a great Matrical artist, who experienced with a number of verse- forms and stanza patterns. So her lyrics have a bird like singing quality.

Conclusion –

Sarojini Naidu’s poetic output is slender, but even this slender volume consists of lyrics which could last as long as the English language lasts . She has attempted every species of the lyric – a hymn, ode, elegy, sonnet and has achieved excellence in each. For her, An object of beauty was a joy forever as it was for the great English poet John keats. Also the beauty of everykind thrilled her and inspired her to poetic activity.

Lyric is a brief expression of the poet’s personality, emotions, feelings, experiences and ideas. It is a melodious, emotional and spontaneous composition. All these characteristics are present in Sarojini Naidu’s poems.

No doubt, Sarojini Naidu has her faults and also as a lyricist she cannot rank with the greatest. But We cannot deny her as a lyricist. Undoubtedly she is a lyricist. Again it also cannot be denied that “No woman has written so many and such perfect songs of India” in English language as Sarojini Naidu had. So she has rightly been called the Nightingle of

India and a Singing Bird. Anyhow, Sarojini's genius, like that P.B Shelley and John Keats was essentially lyrical.

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