

Contribution of Sarojini Naidu In Literature and Freedom Movement

**Suman
Assistant Prof. in English
D.A.V. PG College, Karnal.**

Abstract:

Sarojini Naidu was born in 13, 1879 in Hyderabad, India. She was died on March 2, 1949 in Lucknow. She was not only a great poet but also a political activist who took part in freedom movement. She was called as ‘The Nightingale of India. She was deputed as First Lady Governor of Uttar Pradesh. Her contribution in Literature as well as a poetess will remain unforgettable.

Key Words:Feminist, patriotism, visionary, outstanding poetess.

Introduction:

I Sarojini Naidu was a great personality who combines in her an intense poetic temperament and a strong poetic urge. She was born in an educated Bengali family at Hyderabad on 13 February, 1879. She was an intelligent girl and matriculated at the age of 12 from Madras Presidency. She got the opportunity to study at King’s College, London and at Girton, Cambridge University. There she

comes in contact with two towering personalities – Edmond Goose and Arthur Symons. She married Dr. Govindarajulu Naidu on her return to India in 1898. She played an active role in the freedom movement under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi. She also participated in Satyagraha and went to jail during Quit India Movement. When India got independence in 1947, she was appointed the first woman Governor of the United Provinces. She was called the “Nightingale of India” because she was a great poetess. In English literature, every anthology of poetry is considered incomplete without her poems.

It is true that Sarojini was a great poet and she wants to live in an ivory tower of beauty of romance but she is also concerned with the social, moral and political issues facing her country and countrymen. Shelley possesses a supreme gift for natural song, yet he feels an undying urge to reform the world. Likewise, Sarojini is a poet of beauty, but she never turns cold and indifferent to the problems of her country. The self image projected in a speech at conjeevaran reflects a marked growth in Sarojini's awareness of the poet's function as a benefactor and redeemer of mankind: “I have seen once more the vision beautiful to which my life is dedicated. When have you come out of the ivory tower of dreams to the market place? Why have you deserted the pipes and flute of the poet to be the most strident trumpet of those who stand and call the nation to the

battle?” in a speech, the poet remarks: “I came in your midst as a stranger A wondering singer That had brought to you the message of unity which is the only message of today that may be uttered from the lip of man or woman.” She says in “Wondered Singers”: “All men are kindered, the world is our home.” Here is “a nationalism that readily flaws into the broad international current.”

Sarojini was very well acquainted with her poetic gifts and she wants to use it for the service of her motherland. She knows that her songs of patriotism can awake feelings of patriotism among her countrymen. And she made it real mission of her life. Prof. Iyender rightly observes: “Like Tagore and Aurobindo, Sarojini too was more than a poet; she was one of Mother India’s most gifted children, readily sharing her burden of pain, fiercely articulating her agonies and hopes, and gallantly striving to redeem the Mother and redeem the time.” To Sarojini, as to Nehru, India is not a ore geographical entity, a portion of earth and a population but something, “For Sarojini, India is ever felt reality. Sarojini has thrown all her energy of her passionate soul into the service of her motherland. Sarojini wants to dedicate herself for the service of liberty. In one of her fiery speeches she says:

“As long as I have life, as long as blood flaws through this arm of mine, I shall not leave the cause of freedom. Come my general! Come, my soldiers ! I am only a woman, only a poet. But as a woman I give to you the weapons of faith and

courage and the shield of fortitude.” She has started writing poetry in her childhood. When she was only twelve years old she wrote the poem.” The Traveller’s song which clearly shows her deep affection for her motherland.

Sarojini was a great dreamer in such a age when very few dreams. As Mira dedicated her life to the service of Lord Krishna, in the same manner Sarojini has dedicated her life to her motherland. Poetic urges were equally strong in Tagore. His soul roared because India was bound in the chain o slavery and his only wish was to liberate India from this slavery. He says in Gitanjali. “Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action – into that heaven of freedom, my father let y country awake.”

Sarojini is a poet of national awakening. Her longing for freedom is always strong in her. “To India is a poem to Mother India. In this poem she requests to Mother India to wake-up from her ageless slumber and to open new prospects for her children. She requests Mother India to wake and regenerate from her present gloom and despondency.

“Rise, Mother, rise, regenerate from they gloom,

And like a bride high-mated with the spheres,

The poet wishes that one day her country will again be a glorified and prestigious and emerge as a tremendous power and show the light of freedom not

only to her people but also people of the world. She can give them divine message of peace, love and faith.

Her another remarkable poem is “Gifts of India. It was written in 1915, pays glowing tribute to the soldiers of India who sacrificed their lives in the First World War in different parts of the world. This poem is also an outcry against the ravages of war and envisions a new world based on peace, love and understanding among the people and nations of the world. In the very first stanza of the poem the poem is discussing about Mother India. Mother India is addressing the world at large or perhaps Britain and her allies during the First World War. She says that she has sacrificed all her possessions.... even her most valuable treasure her sons. The lines vividly express her sorrow and anguish over the march of her sons to the fields of death and destination.

Some critics have called this poem a war poem. But in fact it is a patriotic poem which is full of with deep love for motherland. It is written to attract the attention of the world to the brave soldiers of India who served the Allies in the First World War. Through her poetry she wants convey universal message of love and faith to people of all sections and religions.

Her another poem “The Broken Wing” is marked by patriotic enthusiasm. A mild note of sadness colours the poem because when she wrote this poem, she has

lost her father and friend Gokhale. The poem is in question- answer form and expresses her deep patriotic passions. Through this poem the poet wants to convey the message that one should forget the sadness and melancholy of the present and past and build up new courage and stamina to wake her motherland to new heights of glory.

“The great dawn breaks, the mournful night is past, from her deep age-long sleep she wakes at last.”

“An Anthem of Love” is a sincere expression of the poet’s deep love and divine duty towards her land. She feels strong patriotic cravings and surrenders whole heartedly to the cause of freedom. She was ready to do any kind of sacrifice for her country.

Sarojini’s response to the call of Indian Nationalism is deeply rooted in her profound sense of identity with the land, the people and the culture. She has seen India as a country who is rising from her glorious past.

She has not only written past patriotic poetry but has also taken part in freedom movement with great national leaders like Gokhale, Mahatma Gandhi and Jinnah with her verses. Gokhale has a very inspiring influence on Sarojini. She says: “Gopal Krishna Gokhale was a great saint and soldier of our national righteousness. His life was a sacrament and his death was a sacrifice in the cause

of India's unity." Gokhale, in fact, was her political 'guru' who initiated her into politics. Once Gokhale has sent a message to Sarojini, he exported her to dedicate her life to the cause of India's freedom and progress.

Her poem "In Gokhale Garden" is a memorable tribute to the Gokhale. This poem was written in Gokhale's garden when rain has "wrought its Wizardry" and flowers wear a new look. She remembered her dear friend after looking at the bright and fresh look of the garden.

"Lotus" is a sonnet dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, the father of nation. Gokhale has shown her the path of politics, but Mahatma Gandhi has given her direction. Mahatma is being compared to Lotus which stands in Indian literature and mythology for beauty, purity and sanctity.

Sarojini was not only a poet but a feminist too. In her time the plight of the women's were very deteriorated and through her poetry she has always tried to raise voice against their conditions. Sarojini was in favour of the view of traditional place of women in society. She liked women like Sita, Savitri, Padmini, Damyanti and others. They were her ideals. In her poems she has talked about the most popular topic, "Pardah". She was not in favour of pardah system but she talked about the ease and splendor that surrounds the pardah world.

She has also talked about another problem in her poem “Suttee”. This is a pathetic poem which deals with the sad journey of an Indian widow whose husband has just died. She has not advocated this system. Some critics say that she has glorified this system in her poems but no this is not truth. She has just tried to show the sacrifice which only an Indian wife can do for his husband. Through her poetry she has just tried to acquaint the people about the prevailing systems of society like pardah system, suttee and Jauhar. Despite these poems, Sarojini works throughout her life for the welfare and upliftment of Indian women.

As a poet of national consciousness, Sarojini takes her stand as a visionary. She confessed in her speech at Allahabad that she cannot grapple with the transcendent details of politics. She takes independence as a “Yagna a sacred baptism” in which the active participation of people of all communities, faith and creed is essential. All must be united to “poor the divine essence of love for India.”

Conclusion:

No doubt, Sarojini was an eminent poet of English literature. Through her poems she has contributed a lot for the welfare of Indian people. Her poems have evoked feelings of patriotism in the hearts of Indian people like fire. She was

a social reformer too. She has also raised her voice against evil which were prevalent in our society at that time i.e. Pardah system, suttee and Jauhar. She has taken active participation in freedom movement too.

Bibliography:

1. Sarojini Naidu and Her Art of Poetry, Capital Publishing House, Delhi, 1988.
2. Songs of Sonnets, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., Delhi.
3. Vision in Verse, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1998.
4. Wikipedia.

Presented by:

Suman,
Assistant Prof. In English
D.A.V. PG College,
Karnal.