

RABINDRANATH A LYRICAL POET : EXCELLING SHELLEY AND KEATS

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ABSTRACT_

Rabindranath Tagore was a multidimensional personality. He was one of the greatest poets of the world; a lyrical poet of nature par excellence. His poetry is full of mysticism in. He won nobel prize in literature for his masterpiece collection of lyrics "Geetanjali". He is the unique poet in the world whose two songs have been adopted as national anthems of the different nations "India" and "Bangladesh".

In addition to a poet, Rabindranath Tagore was a great novelist. His short stories are one of the best in the world literature. His lyrical dance-dramas are staged throughout the world. His songs, "Rabindra Sangeet" are very widely sung by the whole community on various occasions.

Rabindranath was a great educationist. He founded a multidimensional university "Visvabharati" at "Shantiniketan". He was a great freedom fighter.

However in the present article we are discussing Rabindranath as a lyrical poet of nature compared to English romantic poets - Shelley and Keats.

INTRODUCTION

Rabindranath was born decades after "Shelley" and "Keats". Even though born with silver spoon in his mouth Rabindranath was deprived of mother's love due to her sickness. He did not get formal education but learnt at home and from nature. He lost the motherly love and affection of his sister-in-law, "Kadambari". He lost his wife, his son and his great son at early age. These incidences must have compelled him to sing his sweetest songs out of sadness which was the spirit of "Shelley".

SPIRITUALISM :

Rabindranath was very much influenced by Indian spiritualism as an impassioned lyrical poet. He expressed spiritualism through medium of senses, embodied it in glorious flesh, clothed it into rainbow garments, rich with the embroidery of imagination. Some times when drunk in the wine of pain, he stripped it stark naked and flashed it like a sword of lightening, quivering in anger.

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RABINDRANATH, SHELLEY AND KEATS

As a great lyrical poet, Rabindranath makes us remember Blake, Shelley and Keats. Blake's vision, Shelley's idealism and Keats's sensuousness are the ingredients of Rabindranath's poetry but entirely in a new tone. Unlike Shelley and Keats, Rabindranath never saw away from life to a world of starry idealism. He was a lover of life as it is. We do not find any divine hysteria or emotional excesses in Rabindranath. Emotions, on the other hand, are crystallised into a wonderful tranquility.

The greatest lyrical poems of the three poets, "Ode to the West Wind" of Shelley, "Ode to the Nightingale" of Keats and "Urvashi" of Rabindranath are full of sadness depicting spirit of nature.

"Urvashi" was an enchanting dancing girl in the assembly of gods. She came out of a foaming sea of milk in full flowering youthfulness. Rabindranath idealises her as Shelley does the "West Wind" and Keats the "Nightingale". Urvashi is the spirit of nature, the energy divine which throbs at the heart of the world. Shelley's epithet of "impetuous one" and "thou uncontrollable" would benefit well; when she dances to please the gods.

"To measured music dance the lined waves of the sea shivering to the ears of the corn trembles the skirt of the earth. From the charmet on the breast bursts the star and falls on the floor of the sky. Suddenly in the breast of man the mind loses it self".

The stream of blood dances in the veins on the distance of horizon on a sudden snaps thy gridle. O, thou without restraint".

The imagery is Shellean throughout and the spirit of Shelley through the turbulences and fumes of his mighty harmonies softens down the earlier part of this poem.

RABINDRANATH SURPASSES SHELLEY AND KEATS

Shelley and Keats were great poets of nature. However, Rabindranath surpasses them in spirituality. His master piece "Geetanjali" won him nobel prize. "Geetanjali" gives a deep insight for his spiritual progress.

"Amar Matha nato Kore Daao"

"Antaro Mamo Bikasheeto Karo He"

are the first steps of spiritual practice. After some progress the "anahat sound" is perceived. Rabindranath writes "Amar onge, onge ke Bajaye Banshi". It indicates his spiritual development. When he becomes spiritually matured and saturated he writes –

"Ebar Nirob Kore Dao, Mukhore Kobire"

He also writes - "Geebane jata pooja Holo Na Sara".

Rabindranath is also outstanding in glorifying the death. In “Bhanu Singh Padaavali” he writes –

“Marana he Tumi Mor Shyama Samana”

Rabindranath has unique glory of being the poet of two national anthems of two nations, India and Bangladesh.

His songs are sung by the entire community as “Rabindra Sangeeta” on various occasions. He himself had given the tunes of these songs and he used to sing himself. He has composed many dance - dramas which are staged widely. He himself used to play the role of Maharashi Valmiki.

CONCLUSION :

Rabindranath is called “Vishwakavi”. He was a poet of the universe. He is an outstanding lyrical poet of nature because of his mysticism, rich and cultural heritage and universal appeal.

Shelley and Keats are no doubt great romantic lyrical poets of nature but Rabindranth is the greatest.

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