

Review on Sarojini Naidu's Poetic Volumes and Realism in the Poetry of Sarojini Naidu

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Abstract

Sarojini's poetry journey started on the day of her birth. Her mother's lullaby taught her this talent. Her mother was a well-educated, multilingual woman of substance. Her father had secretly released the poetry she had written when she was a teenager under the label "songs." Following her academic pursuits in England, she went back to India and tied the knot with her true love. She even started taking more initiative to achieve her goals after getting married. Instead than being a theory, realism is more often defined as a movement. Butler provides a better explanation, which Moore quotes at the outset of his "Principia Ethica," saying "Everything is what it and not another thing." Every phrase constitutes a component of realism when it exists independently of the others. As an illustration, suppose that A and B are two entities that exist independently of one another. They are connected externally. Realists assert that there is an external relationship between the subject and the object of knowledge. Realists view any physical item as the ultimate object of knowledge.

KEYWORD: Sarojini Naidu, Poetic volume, Disillusionment, Modern Love, Fra Lippo Lippi, and Aurora Leigh

INTRODUCTION

Sarojini Naidu was born during a turbulent period in both politics and society. Everywhere you looked there was horror, discontent, violence, and disillusionment. At the moment, she was unable to come up with any relatable poetry topics. She was invited to write on those topics by the social turmoil. A real humanist, she was. She was a person of pleasure and sufferings for others. Because of her compassionate and caring nature, she was able to relate to the suffering of the common people who were led by Mahatma Gandhi.

'WOMEN' As a Theme in Her Poetry

She had a great understanding of the dreams, expectations, and joys shared by women in all spheres of life, including those in the workplace, the countryside, and the metropolis. Her poetry captures all the feelings, moods, and sentiments of women. According to Dr. P.V. Rajyalakshmi, "her folk songs demonstrate a sincere comprehension and admiration of India's folk culture." She portrays all other traditions, convictions, myths, and celebrations as integral components of realistic poetry. The Indian National Social Conference held its 22nd session in 1902. It approved a resolution to build a women's house, provide educational resources for widows, and remove barriers to their remarriage. Sarojini was in attendance at the Pachaiappa's College Historical Association in 1908. On the occasion, Pandi Madan Mohan Malavia delivered a speech. Following his address, Mrs. Naidu stated that while women in India traditionally fell behind males in terms of education, women in western nations had an equal role to play in a nation's progress. During the 1936 summit of the Women's Indian Association, Sarojini was a source of inspiration. They sent "Women's Manifesto" to all candidates running for central and provincial legislatures, as well as for office in other public bodies. Women's organizations can still utilize that manifesto to highlight social challenges that call for legislative and governmental action. She could converse with them in their vernacular, which drew the younger generation of boys and girls to her. She believed that one day they will inherit the rich heritage of the nation, thus she was always worried about their education. In 1903, she gave an inspiring address at Pachaiappa's College. "Time Brotherhood" was the talk's theme. She said that after a great deal of travel, education, and exposure to the outside world, she had developed a clear vision and realized that discrimination based on race, caste, faith, religion, color, or language should not exist for the advancement of a country. One ought to be Indian and not anything like a Madrasedee.

Deep down, Sarojini was a realistic person. She discussed young people's lack of discipline in

the nation. She once had to go to a meeting in the Lucknow University main hall with several college students. The kids were yelling and making catcalls when she arrived. The throng in the hall did not see her. Sarojini also began to make catcalls at that point. The kids laughed at first, but Mrs. Naidu acted grave and kept imitating the catcalls until they understood she would only talk if there was total stillness. She physically chastised the pupils as she started to talk.

Prevalent National Issues

In the current setting, her opinions on poverty and associated national economic regeneration were quite pertinent. She claimed that a country's growth depended more on its food supply than on its number of schools, colleges, universities, and other contemporary facilities. The most basic need for survival is food. As President of Congress, she spoke to the group in 1925 and discussed the need for education and rural rehabilitation as well as the contentious political issues of non-violence, non-cooperation, and Hindu-Muslim harmony. She underlined that in order to develop a nation, each young member must be willing to make personal sacrifices and demonstrate an unwavering devotion to the cause of independence and national unity. Sarojini was a mother, and her behavior made it clear that she felt like a mother. She genuinely cared about the well-being of every congressional volunteer. She implored the laborers to break out of their shells and take action for the country.

The country's national policy was formulated. The enhancement of agricultural laborers' and cultivators' lifestyles was the main goal, along with rural development. A policy formulated by Congress was enacted in 1936. This brought to light a number of important issues, such as agricultural laborers' freedom of organization, their release from feudal lords' levies, a significant decrease in rent and revenue, prompt and equitable relief from agricultural debt, protection of their interests against the state, state funding for economic, social, and cultural amenities, freedom from government harassment and oppression, defense against limitations on the use of natural resources for domestic and agricultural needs, and, lastly, the promotion of incentives to reduce rural unemployment. Sarojini had that same well-known grin on her face even though she was secretly depressed during the moment of India's freedom. She was hilarious in the best way possible. Despite her fragile health and familial obligations, she always handled situations with such elegance. She was bold and uncomplicated. Even in the most dire circumstances, she could make people laugh because she had a healing sense of humor. She was devastated by the partition of India; something had broken inside of her, but she understood that life would inevitably bring hardships and that one had to be prepared for them. Her poems, such as "conquest," which was written in 1927 and is included in "The Feather of the Dawn," reflect these kinds of ideas woven within a realistic framework.

Native Flavors as a Realist Theme in Her Poetry

The elements that have shaped one's growth are necessary for realism. Sarojini Naidu has a strong connection to her homeland. Despite her strong literary connections to English poetry, she retained her own sensibility. Her writing was in Hindustani, although it was written in English. She was almost an Indian daughter. Her poetry incorporates topics, ideas, and even images that are characteristically Indian in spirit and character. She consistently used the local flavor for the topics. Sarojini was deeply fascinated by the vibrant, authentic Indian life that was developing all around her. She was fascinated by the oddities and quirks of everyday objects, noises, celebrations, and other living things. Everything around her piqued her curiosity. Seldom is there anything that doesn't have any sort of real-world origin. All facets of authentic Indian existence appear to draw her in. She has adopted a western vocabulary and style of expression, yet renowned Indian author Mulk Raj Anand stated of her that "she seems to me to be in the main Hindustani tradition of Ghalib, Zok, Mir, Hali and Iqbal."

She lived her entire life as a poet and dreamer. Her four poetry books are as follows:

1. The Golden Threshold (1905)
2. (1912) The Bird of Time
3. The 1917 film Broken Wing
4. The Posthumous Feather of Dawn (1961)

The Golden Threshold (1905)

First, let's discuss the Golden Threshold. In 1905, it was published. It includes every poem she wrote prior to 1905. She received prompt attention from the western world as a result. London-based William Heinemann published this book. It was an instant hit, selling out of copies the year it was released and sparking the prompt release of a second edition. The term "The Golden Threshold" suggests realism in her methodology. When her father was the college principal in Hyderabad, his home was known as Golden Threshold. A close friend of Sarojini, Sir C.P. Ramaswami Iyer, believes that "the title is related to her happy, contented, beautiful domestic life."

This book is divided into three sections:

- a. Folk Songs
- b. Songs for Music
- c. Poems

There are twelve poems in the first section, six in the second, and twenty-four in the third.

- a) Palanquin bearers
- b) Wandering singers
- c) Indian weavers
- d) Coromandel fishers
- e) The snake charmer
- f) Corn grinders
- g) Village song
- h) In praise of henna
- i) Harvest hymn
- j) suttee

The third section of this album consists of "Indian Folk Songs." It only contains eight poems. "Village Song" is the opening song of this part. It is divided into two stanzas and has eleven lines. The song is performed by a genuine maiden who lives far from the Yamuna River in an Uttar Pradesh hamlet. She heads out to the river with her pitchers before dusk to get water, a typical scenario in the countryside. She quickly heads home after filling her pitcher because darkness is drawing in, but on the way she hears a boatman singing a song. She is unable to reject her beloved. The monsoon season is upon us. The sky is covered by the horrible night. The Yamuna River is flooded and the Moon is not visible in the sky. She feels the song's engulfing terror. She fears that she may be bitten by a snake, that she could be captured by demonic spirits, that the storm will break and lightning would strike her in the terrifying darkness. She asks God for help. The song is entirely realistic. It depicts a stormy night next to a flooded river in a realistic manner. "Nothing like this had ever been heard in the English language before," according to Prof. Rameshwar Gupta.

Vasanta Panchami

Usually, it is a realism poetry. In it, a well-known Hindu holiday is observed. It is customary for maidens and ladies to offer lit lamps and freshly harvested grain to the goddess of spring. However, widows are frowned upon. One of the characters is Lilavati. She did not accomplish all of this; she is a widow. The poem's theme is her lamentation about the approach of spring feast. Once more, we may state that a character is honored in this poetry. Furthermore, widows were not allowed to celebrate life until Raja Ram Mohan Roy voiced his objection. They were forced to live in all-white clothing, consume only boiled food, and not be allowed to go to any social events. Every aspect of the poem, both the character and the topic, is realistic. This passage is from "Songs of the Spring Time," which is found in "Bird of Time" (1912).

Bangle Sellers:

"Bangle-sellers" illustrates the many phases of a woman's life by matching the right bangles to each period. The "rainbow-tinted circles of light" that the bangle vendors are carrying to the temple fair are therefore described as "beautiful mementos of radiant lives, for happy daughters and happy wives." Bracelets are associated with pleasure, festivals, and marriage among

Hindus in India. Women wear bracelets every day here. There are clothing that go with the bangles. They are seen as symbols of happiness. These stylized life loops have been eloquently explained in the poem. This poetry is undoubtedly the result of her perception of life.

Hymn to Indra, lord of Rain:

"Hymn to Indra, lord of Rain" is the following item in the row. This final poem in the part asks for a torrent of rain in India, and it is shared by men and women alike. This article refers to it as a "Omnipotent Giver." The phraseology that has been selected has the actual impact. The nation of India is diverse. Geographical differences exist here, which explain why certain regions of the nation receive more rainfall than others. Even now, we have seen individuals doing rituals, giving gifts, and singing mantras to Lord Indra in hopes of receiving rain. As a result, we may state that the poem's topic is realistic.

Festival of Serpents:

Her two poems on serpents are among her other poetry that deal with real-world issues. The way that Indians generally view these unusual examples of our forest existence is reflected in these poetry. Serpentine is viewed as a frightening animal in the west. It's a terrifying and lethal beast. It is the epitome of brutality and depravity. However, it is usually regarded as the protector of life-giving water in Indian mythology. Indian language literature is replete with extols of the serpent. Even now, snake charmers are in high demand in India. There is a favorable attitude toward snakes in Sarojini's poems as well. Usually, we observe that they adore having snakes as pets. The last words of the poem "Snake Charmer," which read, "Come, thou subtle bride of my mellifluous wooing," express the Indian snake charmer's abiding love for it. Come, moonbeam of yearning with silver breasts. The "Festival of Serpents" is modeled in actual Indian problems. It is believed that Monday is Lord Shiva's day. On this day, people pray, give milk to snakes, and fast both married and unmarried Indian women. Written on the occasion of Nag-Panchami, "The Festival of Serpents" is a supplication addressed to snake deities, saying, "Shinning ones, awake, we seek your chosen temples." In caverns, protected sand dunes, and hallowed banyan roots; raise your dreaming heads from their slumber of timeless knowledge, and weave your ethereal rhythms to the tune of flutes.

The Broken Wing

It is Sarojini Naidu's third book of poetry. When it was first published in 1917, literary circles welcomed it with open arms. An ardent follower of Sarojini, Dr. Amaranantha Jha, was given a copy of the book, which had come from Sir Edmund Gosse's library. The book was accompanied by a letter from William Heinemann dated December 21, 1916, which said, "Herewith another book of your God-Children." It has been quite difficult for me to deliver the book to Sarojini before Christmas, as I had intended. When she sees it, she should be happy with it. She was undoubtedly ecstatic to see it, as well as the entire poetry community. When Sarojini Naidu first met Gopal Krishan Gokhale in 1915, she revealed the book's title to him. Regarding its title, "The Indian Ladies" magazine had also conjectured. William Heinemann's autumn list featured it. Gokhale only asked her, "Why should a song bird like you have a broken wing?" when he questioned her about the title. Her response was, "Look! I get up to greet the inevitable spring and soar over the heavens on my shattered wing! She was honest about it, yes. In the same year, her father went away, and a month later, Gokhale tragically departed away. She was deeply troubled by these two events. She felt a strong connection to both of these individuals, and their separation had a dreadful hold on her.

In Gokhale's Garden:

The first poem in "The Feather of the Dawn," "In Gokhale's Garden," is titled "Gopal Krishna Gokhale was the great saint and soldier of our national righteousness. His life was a crament and his death was a sacrifice in the cause of Indian Unity." Gokhale was deeply patriotic and the one who first inspired Sarojini to enter politics. The poem was likely written in Gokhale's garden at a time when the fruits and flowers had taken on a new look, but the poetess was saddened and nostalgic by his passing. Gokhale's great ideas inspired the freedom fighters, and the poem is realistic in tone as it depicts a real man, a great son of Mother India.

In Gujarat:

The poem "In Gujarat" is a sonnet. The poetess conveys in this poem her intense anguish at the disastrous flood that struck Gujarat in 1927. The poetess speaks to the Lord of Rain (Indra) in the beginning and ends by pleading with him to cool his temper. The Gujarat flood of 1927, which received about ninety inches of rain, was the deadliest and most destructive; a novel was published about it in 1937. Due to the high water levels in the Vishwanutri River caused by the heavy rains, the day the water reached the feet of the Kala Ghoda Statue in Baroda became known as the "horse flood" in Gujarat. Many individuals perished, and the entire city was shaken. The water killed a lot of the animals in the zoo's cages. A lot of individuals volunteered to provide food and drink to others who were stranded in their homes due to the flooding everywhere. Sarojini was stirred by all of these things to the point that she inspired young people to step up and assist the poor. This genuine problem, expertly handled by Sarojini Naidu, gives the work a realistic feel.

CONCLUSION

Realistic writing emerged throughout the Victorian era, mostly in novels and poetry, and to a lesser extent in plays. Poetry eventually took the lead in promoting realism, with novel form becoming as its symbol. In literary studies, realism is crucial. Even while it is not as simple as literature from previous times or eras, it provides insight into writing that was inspired by the common, the ugly, modern topics, and the impoverished. Realism cannot completely abandon beauty and style, but it also cannot embrace elaborate style. Its two main instruments are metonymy and prose use. In poetry, realist writers partially abandon metaphor but nevertheless utilize symbols to express their ideas. Realists believe that art ought to address topics that are relevant now. Similar to how Aurora discusses fighting against the affluent, it discusses societal concerns, particularly social injustice. The impoverished segment of society is discussed in realism. In Aurora Leigh, for instance, Aurora makes the decision to go see Marian, a different character, whom Romney is supposed to cheer up; previously, Romney had intended to cheer up Aurora. Marian was kept unaware of her residence in a destitute area of London, which she only learned about from media and government reports. One description of the episode is "middle class descent into lower class hell." Cholera and death threats were present. The overall tone of this episode is lower class. "Contemporary Love" (1862) Once more, George Meredith attempts realism. The specifics of the narrator's marriage failing because of the wife's infidelity are described in this poetry. In the poem, they both talk about how their marriage failed and agree that it is only normal for this to happen in real life. They claim that since this is life, it is our responsibility to accurately portray it. Thus, the three examples—Modern Love, Fra Lippo Lippi, and Aurora Leigh—all demonstrate how poetry developed as a vehicle for expressing a logical and scientific viewpoint while simultaneously serving as a vehicle for illustrating the materialistic issues of the day. One may argue that realism did not emerge overnight, but rather that there has always been a realist drive. Examples of this can be seen in the writings of Chaucer, Pope, and Wordsworth throughout the Romantic era, as well as in the prefaces to Lyrical Ballads and the poem "Michael." At the time, Jane Austen was establishing the Realist book, while Keats, Shelly, and Byron were busy composing poetry. If we read between the lines, we will discover that Sarojini wrote everything based on her personal experiences. Whatever she happened to be living at the moment, her pen conveyed the feelings, emotions, environment, and characters that she felt in real life. Every character in the story—including "Coromandal Fishers," "The Snake Charmer," "Wandering Singers," "Damyanti to Nala in the hour of exile," "Palanquin Bearers," "Festival of Serpant," "The Old Woman," "The Bangle Seller," "Indian Weavers," "Coromandel Fishers," "Corn Grinders," "Village Song," "In praise of henna," or "Suttee"—is realistic regardless of the characters.

Sarojini is a "native" person. Her entire speech is indigenous to India. Every idea is infused with the rich culture of our nation. Through her works, the life of the Indians is vividly detailed. Everything about the tone, attitude, and handling is realistic. The writings of Sarojini scarcely include the big western world of Toru Dutt or the philosophy of Aurbindo and Vivekananda.

Sarojini Naidu presents the intricate details of Indian mythology, thinking, and existence in a way that is far more relatable and straightforward. "If the poems of Sarojini Naidu are carefully and delicately studied, they will be found as luminous in lighting up the dark places of the East as any contribution of a historian," says Edmund Gosse, with good reason. Sarojini Naidu weaves Indian culture into a stunning landscape. It provides a hint of the human experience without being too cerebral. Sarojini was a realistic writer, as seen by the few of her letters that have survived and are kept in libraries. Edmund Gosse had received letters from her. He was her literary instructor, and he gave her constant advice and corrections. The letters make it clear that Sarojini never requested his poetic, lofty language. Being a lady who had always aspired to be a part of the real world, she asked him about his harsh statements. She was never attracted to simple visuals.

She claimed that it was only after Gosse referred to her as a poet that she realized she was a poet in a letter she wrote to him on October 6, 1896. Her entire way of thinking was grounded on realism. She never attempted to adorn her poems; instead, she gave the facts straight. Her upbringing was surrounded by math and science. Neither of these things ever call for grandiose thoughts, fantasies, or creativity. On a one-to-one basis, they are proven. Sarojini was the same way; despite everyone in Hyderabad praising her, she still desired a somebody who could give her an honest look at herself. She desired to have a critic beside her. She always desired Gosse to be more stricter and more demanding than before. From North to South, Sarojini Naidu was revered as a brilliant poet. "The Golden Threshold" (1905) was her debut compact volume of poetry. "The Bird of Time" (1912) and "Broken Wing" (1917) were her next two books. Each of the three volumes was warmly welcomed both in England and in our nation. Both The Manchester Guardian and The London Times gave her poems positive reviews. 1937 saw the release of "The Sceptred Flute." Her poetry had a charming and witty quality. She was a learned woman whose poetry was humorous. She was a woman who decided to share what she had observed. She lived in colonial India, and her observations about it greatly influenced her passionate outburst in poetry. "This gift of words and their magic use has been at the service of India's independence movement for over twenty years, electrifying audience from one end of the country to the other, almost hypnotizing them into believing in a free India," Halide Edip said, referring to her Realist background. Her talks don't always address what shape independence would take or how Indian society should get ready for it. She is the first of the seed sowed, and contemporary India would not exist today without her.

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