

“REVISITING INDIANNESS IN THE POETRY OF ARBIND KUMAR CHOUDHARY”

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ABSTRACT

Arbind Kumar Choudhary is known as the Phrasal King in Indian English poetry for his exploration of phrasal fragrance that runs across his verses or quatrains. The idea of his poetry is based on ethical, cultural and mythical values of India that gained his reputation among Indian English poets. His major works are Eternal Voices (2007), Universal Voices (2008), My Songs (2010), Love Poems (2010), Love (2011) and The Poet (2011). In all these works he popularized the themes of sensuousness, imagination, mysticism and fancy. His philosophy of love and nature lays the foundation of a well known school of poetry popularly known as Arbindonean School of Poetry that emerged from the literary soil of India. Arbindonean School of poets persuades a large number of poetry lovers for fiery poetic approach. He is the only literary figure in Indian English poetry that has not only been interviewed for anthologies, journals and magazines but has also been honored with the literary title of Phrasal King. His school of poetry guides the masses in India for spiritual sensations also. The primary purpose of his school of poetry is to turn the century for the prosperity of English poetry in India.

Keywords:

The fertile literary land of India has produced a galaxy of versifiers who are peerless and matchless like Rabindra Nath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Kamala Das, Nissim Ezekiel Sarojini Naidu, Arbind Choudhary. The contribution of Arbind Choudhary is unrivaled as far as contemporary Indian English Poetry is concerned because of his pioneering style of versification, use of ample number of phrases, incorporation of myth, restoration and revival of spiritual sanctity and above all the evolution of Indianised version of Arbindonean Sonnets has been done for the first time in the history of Indian English poetry. Arbind Kumar Choudhary, the founder of Indianised version of Arbindonean Sonnets in Indian English poetry, has explored innovative racy style called Arbindonean racy style that has given an additional tinge to his poetic flavor. His sonnets are considered as the fourth model of sonnets in English literature next to Spenserian, Shakespearean and Miltonic sonnets. The genesis of the fourth model of sonnet took place in Indian literary soil and it became popular among Indian writers, scholars and critics. Arbindonean Sonnets are divided in to seven rhymed couplets and the sonneteer has made use of a number of figures of speech throughout his works. Arbind Choudhary has been crowned with a number of literary titles like- Indian Keats, Quatrain king, Phrasal king, Mythical Monarch, Poet of the Poets. Prof. M.P.Singh has aptly commented in his paper entitled 'Phrasal King in Indian English Literature':

The phrasal fragrance of the Phrasal King makes him a literary flower of the poetic garden with might and main. The proverbial dialogue appeals most to the poetry lovers that has been widely appreciated by a number of critics and poetry lovers in India and abroad. There are a good number of literary titles-phrasal king, mythical messiah, proverbial Samarat, poet of the poets, Indian Keats and many more to his poetic credit in Indian English poetry that speaks volumes about his magnetic poetic personality. Several national and global awards, reviews and, above all, interviews sing his poetic popularity across the globe. (2016:108)

Arbind has written nine works : *Eternal Voices (2007)* , *University Voices (2008)* , *My Songs (2008)* , *Melody (2009)* , *Nature Poems (2010)* , *Love Poems (2010)* , *Love (2011)* , *Nature (2011)* and *The Poet (2011)* which are replete with phrasal fragrance, fancy, mysticism, spirituality, flamboyant imagination, sensuousness, expressive diction. amalgamation of the classic and the romantic, use of a variety of figures of speech , rhymed quatrains, pictorial and mythical elements, picturesque rural landscape. He experiments with various styles and form but one can taste the flavor of racy style of versification in his poetry. His aim is to revitalize the older celestial knowledge for the literary readers across the globe and to conciliate ailing

heart, to support the emotionally suppressed people. Prof. Mahashweta Chaturvedi comments in her scholarly paper entitled 'Phrasal Flavour of A.K.Choudhary':

It is the 'Universal Voices' that establishes his poetic career not only as an originator of Indianised version of sonnets called Arbindonean Sonnets but also lays foundation for the crown of the Phrasal King in Indian English poetry. (2015:13-14)

Indianness is the nectar of his verses and it predominates captivatingly all through his Indianised versions of sonnets. The chief purpose of his writing is to reinstate the cultural heritage of India upon which Indians have remained proud and also to spread the message of harmony, brotherhood and friendship amidst all living beings on this ailing earth. His poems consists of innumerable examples of mythical blending of Indian, Greek, Roman gods and goddesses, mythical characters and their western counterparts like Ram, Sita, Radha, Meera, Shakuntala, Sabri, Urvashi, Panchali, Mary, Mercury, Melpomene, Helen, Lucy, Cynthia, Jupiter, Fanny, Mary, Terpsichore, Isabella, Flora, Scylla, Venus Adonis and many others. This poem that perfumed the spiritual level of the lovers is noteworthy not from capital idea only but from the compact view of versification. The poet weaves an anecdote of poems. "The incense of Mary's sight\ is a vital feeling of delight. Over the fatal feelings of delight\ for the embroidered night."(2011:46) In most of the poems the sun and the moon has been personified as male and female. In his poetry he talks of the spiritual love rather than the sensual love. Sabri, Shakuntala, Urvashi, Meera, Radha are the major goddesses which appear in his poetry and also convey a message of spiritual love for Dick, Tom and Harry for celestial light. This quatrain consists of following four phrases like this "The shrill delight\ of Radha's rosy sight is the transparent might\ like many a voice of one delight." (2011:12) He focuses on emotion, passion, notion, ecology, pollution, religious canon, duplicity, humiliation, deforestation, dehumanization, cultural catastrophe, philosophical deprivation and immorality. Indian rivers – the Ganga, Sirajpur, Majuli, Ganga, Satra, Brahmaputra and the Karamanasa blossom with the western rivers Acheron and the Lethe in his poems. A Renowned poet and critic MSV Ramaiah has aptly commented in his scholarly article entitled, 'Proverbial Samarat in Indian Writings in English':

There are a number of his verse suitors in India and abroad who have appreciated the novel trend of his writings with full-throated ease. Prof. N.D.R. Chandra calls him the Phrasal king while Prof. S.C.DDwivedi honours him with the crown of mythical Messiah in English poetry. Prof. Mahendra Bhatnagar Calls him the Proverbial Samarat while poet Biplab Majumdar becomes Madonna of Indianised Version of Arbindonean Sonnets. Dr. Mahashweta Chaturvedi becomes the ardent suitor of his verse pattern while poet M.S.V. Ramaiah honours him with several literary titles in English poetry. Many a critic calls him a Mythical Monarch while majority of them honour him with the title of the Quatrain king in English poetry. (2016: 66-67)

Autobiographical elements are also found in his poetry and one can find numerous examples from his childhood memories like description about his native and working places, villages, farms, his spending of time along the bank of the sacred river Ganga and his social ambiance. His poetic intention is to give voice to the voiceless nature, to support the inarticulate living creatures on earth, to disclose pathos of the common man and he wishes that all the living creatures must thrive naturally with the passage of time. He focuses on ecological disorder, lack of moral values, adulteration of human nature, distance of human beings from nature and materialistic dictatorship. His philosophy of nature is reflected in his nature poems like 'Nature' which is an amalgamation of his theory of poetry which resonates with the Romantic poets in general but with John Keats in particular. His poetry portrays his love for rural landscape, sensuousness, imaginative vision, downheartedness, mythological, legendary and medieval elements. Prof. N.D.R. Chandran while commenting on the phrasal beauty of his nature poems writes:

Some of the striking phrasal words that consists are animal spirits
Prize idiot, fair luminous mist, dewy dark obscurity, Herod policy,
Long last sheep, in sun and shower, dog in the monger policy, a
Woolf in sheep's clothing, green room, Pandora's box, bliss of
Solitude, blue blood, full- throated ease, time's best jewel, wild
Goose chase, the pests of society, ruling passion, lap of luxury,
Red letter day, gold digger, seventh heaven...sacred caw, make

Heaven and earth, petticoat government, turn the corner, good
Humor, Pay the debt of nature, azure sister, Dutch treat, red carpet
Welcome and many more all through his poetic garden. (2014:139)

In the due course of time natural objects, living beings are subject to decay. For the sake of human beings lakes, mountains, jungles, hills, rivers, birds, trees and living beings are the natural objects that are ever fruitful. Human being leads a mechanical life for sensual pleasure. Natural disaster occurs due to rape of natural piety. Disasters like floods, earthquake, explosion, tsunami are the crops we people sow in this world. Chhath Puja is seen on the twilight of setting and rising sun. For spiritual completion all human beings must take lesson from nature. Nature the best guide leads us towards the better future in life. His poem "The Ganga" portrays not only a lovely picture of nature but also peeps into his poetic heart. The poet yearns to be Vidur rather than any other prominent characters of Mahabharata.

The Ganga's odour/Is a good humour /
For the Vidur /Of Sirajpur."/ (2010:23)

In his poems the sun, moon, the stars and other objects are projected as human beings. He worshipped Indira God and Chhath Puja. Across his poetic garden riverscape, ruralscape, majulandscape and sirajpurscape are painted very beautifully. The poet singing is seen in the poem "The Sparrow" in which the sparrows valley is shown as a land of milk and honey without any disturbance. The poet says: "The Sparrows valley \ is wallow in money\ for the loveydovey." (2010:53) Nature is the code of conduct of which all the living beings are to abide. Natural beauty is the auspicious day for his poetic treasure while as the sensuous imagery lends him to the seventh heaven. Natural beauty is his poetic goddess while natural cycle is the wage of this sage. According to him change is necessary and it is his eternal friend also. His teachings of nature spread all over the world. "Nature is the universal code of conduct for all living beings in this planet that not only guides our courses of life but also makes it speedy with morality from time to time. Natural beauty is the source of eternal joy for all of us." (2011:123) In "My Songs" he justifies that the beauty of life lies in the tragedy rather than comedy. Life is a coronet of thorns rather than a bed of roses. The more one undergoes a pain the more one becomes successful in his life. As compared to Keats Chaudhary embraces the pains of life for the bed of roses in the days to come. The rhymed quatrains which consist of three phrases- inward glory, chill penury, Tom, Dick and Harry brings to light the emotions that control all the activities of human beings. As an emotional creature man inhales the sweetness of pleasure and pain from time to time in his life. The poet ends the pains of Tom, Dick and Harry for the spiritual thoughts and moral lesson. He sings that the earth is a place where the native spirits drink to the less in order to avoid the envious eyes. The serpent debates have no place to live in. the earth is the place of cheerfulness. The poet grumbles: "The earth is a pearly gates\ and place of genial spirits where wises drink to the less\ and avoid jaundiced eyes."(2011:65) To him life is a struggle where there is a connection of chequered career time and again. Life is such a struggle where everybody is forced to take the pangs and pains of the chequered career in all consciousness. The evolution is the reason of life. Adventures, innovations and creations are the ways of life that makes our life sweet in this immoral age of money minded people. Among the Romantic poets Melancholy has remained the leading poetic quality in general and Choudhary in particular because he the sagging of the romantic tradition of writing in this century. Agony is his treasury, lack of comfort, and above all the roots of a peal of smile. Love is also one of the prominent themes in many of his poems. Love has the capacity to arise the spirits of a common man and to raise his conscience to taste the flavor of heaven. Love is the feeling that prompts and encourages an individual to rejuvenate, flourish and also guides the course of life towards its destination. True lovers prefer to go after spiritual love which gives them a feeling of heaven and the common people crave for the sensual love. Love is a great blessing and it is the source of immense pleasure for those who have insightful souls for spirituality and doesn't possess a materialistic outlook. The love poetry of Arbind is replete with several examples of Greek, Roman, Indian mythical messiahs like Radha-Krishna, Meera-Govind, Sabri-Ram, Laila- Majnu and Heer -Rangha love episode who have remained the basis of motivation and inspiration for the generations next to come. Love is divine, universal, it is the spiritual feeling that is created by God and it stirs our mind, sparks our thought and brightens our lives. Contrary to it, marriage is the social custom or a legal contract between the bride and the groom. Love is the creation of all living things in general and the human beings in particular which exhales its sweetness in order to run a life smoothly without any disturbance. Love is such a thing that is realized in pure heart and sound mind. It is neither preserved nor traded at all. It is the love which energizes the depressing germs of life for betterment in the wake of time. His belief of love is universal that goes over the ravenous head in th is materialistic world. Love is such a force that shapes the spirit of human beings. Its smell runs for the natural order on this earth. His philosophy of love is based on the mutual understanding, universal truth and

intimate conversation in the world. His poetic enthusiasm becomes a goddess for a man of disgrace because his poetry exhales its sweetness for spiritual wisdom on the earth. His struggle ends with the fertile outcome at length and sings the success story in life. His poetry becomes a divinity for gentlefolk. His "Melody" is the fruit of success story while as love is his spiritual cause that flourishes with the cycle of nature. His proverbial and the pictorial eliteness make him a literary fertile while as the phrasal and mythical passages wage a war for the domain of this poet. Arbinodean school of poetry takes in the cultural essence of India on the one hand and also blends the cultural ethos with many burning issues on the other hand. In an interview with B. K. Dubey he unfolds his philosophy of love: "love is the jewel of the amative, for amative and by the amative. It is the universal gift for all living beings in general and human beings in particular that sends only in the seventh heaven. Modern men are deeply influenced from the power of wealth, money and ego. People seek love in women, in wealth and in sheath of the sword. Those human beings who are really in love, love the whole beings of this earth. The climax of love lies in spiritual union with the Devine. The sensual pleasure, lust for wealth, the world of earth hunger and imagery try its best to robe the beauty of love on the name of love. Those who are in love are the most lucky men in this world. (www.Indianruminations.com) Sensuousness is present throughout his poetic works in general and this is perhaps the reason they call him the most sensuous, Indian Keats and Indian Spenser too from time to time.

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