

Sublimity & Spontaneity in Dulākāg's Poetry

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It is said, great poets are born and not made. "Their names are not writ in water", as Keats used it for himself but "on fire", as Gibran said for Keats. Sometimes the greatness of some poets remains confined to their own regions because of some barriers of language, culture, norms, etc.

Lord Shri Krishna says in Bhagvad Gita:

Manushyānām Sahasteshu Kaschidhyatati Siddhaye,

Yatatāmpi Siddhānām Kaschinmām Vetti Tatvatah.

[Out of thousands among men only one reaches to perfection and of those who have attained perfection rarely any one knows me in truth.]

Dulākāg is one such versatile genius of this earth, in no way inferior to the world renowned poets and writers like Shakespeare, Tagore, Gibran, Galib and Kabir, as far as Gujarati Folk literature is concerned.

Kāg belonged to Gandhian Era. Gandhiji loved him for his sweet voice and striking creativity, especially on *Rāmāyan*. There grew an intellectual intimacy between him and Meghāni Jhaverchand. He was born and brought up in a very small village in Kāthiyāwād, called Mazādar, which is now known after him as Kāgdhām, specially after the occasion when Moraribapu (for whom Kag, is one of the sources of inspiration) unveiled his statue in Mahuva. He belonged to Gadhvi (chāran) community which is specially endowed with the grace of goddess Saraswati. In Kāthiyāwād (Saurashtra) folk literature is very much influenced by Chārani Sahitya a distinguished type of literature, exquisite and lofty in tone, rhyme and rhythm. Thus coming from a rigid and traditional background, he was not much educated. He could read and write. But creativity does not require any such norms and conditions.

The true acquaintance of an artist lies in his own creation and thought, e.g.,

"All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players"

shows what Shakespeare is. The sublime thoughts and melodious presentation of Dulākāg provides his real acquaintance:

EK RANGĀ NE UJALĀ JENE BHITAR BIJI NA BHĀT

ENE VĀ'LĀ DAVALI VĀT KE'JE DILANI KĀGADĀ.

[The feelings of heart, pleasures and pains should be disclosed to those who remain unmoved and who have no other (bad) intention within]. To the same effect:

Man melā ne tan ujalā evibhātānek,

Dhankāludākāg-ne bāharbhitarēk.

Here, the poet wants us to beware of the deceptive nature of the people who seem white (good) outwardly, but having malice in mind; they are multi-intentional from within. The praiseworthy are those who are one and the same inside as well as outside. He uses the metaphor of a 'crow'. The 'whiteness of black' and 'blackness of white' is depicted vividly by the poet.

There are five parts (books) of *KĀGVĀNI*. Here, the pun is there in the word *KĀG*. It refers the surname of the poet and it means a 'crow'. The voice of the crow is bitter, but truth is always bitter. Specially gifted by Goddess Saraswati, Kāg deals with the blend of exquisite music and loftiness of thought and style. He has given hundreds of 'Dohās' (verses). Meghāni wanted him to create at least 500 Dohās. Kāg paid him his

hearty homage by writing a number of wonderful and unforgettable 'Dohās'. Apart from that he has touched almost every field of literature: Bhajans, Dhoons, folk songs, lyrics, short narrative poems, ballads, prayers, elegies, stories and biographies are included in *Kāgvāni*.

The striking thing about Kāg is his magical power over tone, rhyme, rhythm and above all, over 'word'. Still more striking thing is his spontaneity. There is one incident of his life. Once the Diwān of Bhavnagar state at that time gave him a subject to compose a poem on- "Limbole" (Neem Fruit). On such an insignificant subject, he created a song, a wonderful poem with exquisite blend of rhyme, rhythm and hidden meaning:

Bjikadvuhatugarbhakadvohato, garbha nu sthān pan hatuevu,

Hatushaishavkatuyuvākadvihati, vrudhpanuavyuzerjevu,

Jehvāvihatiejlatkihati, din pachhiGhanāmadhmāybolī,

Khabar ante padi, je hatitehati, e hatilimbādāniLimbole.

[The seed the pulp/kernel and the place within were bitter; the three stages of growth- the childhood, youth and old age- were poison like, very bitter alike. The thing that hanged was the same thing which was sown. Then it was dipped in honey for days, but finally we came to know- it was- what- it was that was the (never changing) fruit of neem tree.]

It is not only the rhyme, rhythm and comic aspect, that is important, but the hidden meaning regarding the 'persistent nature' of things and persons. Nature of things remain unchanged, unaffected. The poet addressed the peculiarities of human nature.

Some of his dohās addressed to mother have miraculous charm and sublimity in them. Pining to get the bosom of mother the poet says:

Moto kari ne mâte mane tārākholethikhahtokaryo,

Have tārōkhōlokhundavāmāpāchhobanāvbalakkāgādā.

[After giving youth, o mother you sent me away from your bosom. He languishes to be child again to get that loving caress.]

Kāg served all Rasas (juice of literature). There is a peak of Karun Rasa and sublimity when he appeals God for helping the motherless, hungry, little child to get suckled:

Māmarimadadupadyuenuchhoruurchade

Enehāvandhāvavā de thodikghadi nu thākārā.

[Mother is dead. The dead body lay. The child is trying to climb over to get suckled. See the picture! The poet appeals for a moment's suckling, one cannot control tears flowing.]

Kāg's poetry also served to awaken the national spirit and patriotism. He devoted some of his poems to Gandhiji and Vinobajee. About Gandhiji---

"So so vatu no jānnāro, mobhidomāro, jājivātu no jānnāroenākāntelāmāphodonaumate... jinukāntanāro."

See the lively description of Gandhiji

"E dehedubaliyo pan gebigāmadiyo

Mutsaddi ne Munjavnāromobhidomāro..."

The thin and lean simple villager who got even the intelligent Britishers bewildered!!

'GandhidoMāro', 'VāniyokhedeVer', 'Gandhiji Ni Dikari', 'HindmātānoLādakdoVarChhe', etc are the poems on Gandhiji.

Finally, there are some sweet songs and poems in *Kāgvāni*, which are intensely popular among Gujaratees. In his poem "AVKARO", he beautifully presents the way of hospitality in Kāthiyāwād.

E jitārāānganiyāpunchhi ne re koi aave re aavkaromithoaapje

E jitārākane re sankat koi sambhlāve bane to thodukāpje

Kem tame aavyachhoemnavkejeenedhire- dhiretubolavādeje

Kāgenepānipājesāthebesikhāje, enezānpāsudhimelavājāje...

[If someone comes asking for your place, give him warm welcome. Don't say, why have you come? Hear his difficulty patiently and if possible, try to remove it. Give him water. This is the true tradition of Kāthiyāwād in particular and India in general.]

The two remaining beautiful lines are:

Mānavinipāse koi mānvinaaave

E jitārā divas nipāsedukhiyāaave re aavkāro...

[No man comes to man, but man comes to man's day, i.e. to the man who has some position or wealth which can remove his difficulties and calamities.]

'UdiJāoPankhi', 'Pag Mane DhovāDyo', 'Dildā NaDage' and many others have worked miracles on the minds of singers and readers. DulāKāg himself was a wonderful singer. He rendered the listeners spell-bound with the magic of his miraculous voice.

To sum up, years passed since the absolute departure of DulāKāg, but people still sing and read his poetry with deep love and touch of heart. Rather than getting dominated by English tradition and culture we should try to render such treasures of Indian Literature as *Kāgvāni*. I am sure they would come out as the masterpieces of world, in no way inferior to English classics.

References:

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A man is great by deeds, not by birth.

~ Chanakya