

“NARRATIVE METHOD IN INDO - ENGLISH POETRY”

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My mode in Indo-English poetry seems to be a perennial mode of poetic inspiration. The mythic mode is felicitously used not only in Indo-English poetry but also in global poetry. Myths and legends, however, have received paramount place in Indo-English poetry and continue to inspire it to the forceful use of its poetic manifestation. Myths and legends have been fascinating the poets to revitalise poetic cult and to make it live afresh in the present day of poetic decline. To bring life back into poetry, myths have to be tenaciously incorporated and operated into the being of poetry. They alone can fuse life and soul to the body of poetry. Mythic mode is ever the loveliest way of poetic utterances with Indo-English poetry as with great poets of the world such as T.S. Eliot, W.B. Yeats, James Joyce, D.H. Lawrence etc., to mention a few of the greatest poets of the world poetry.

Myths have penetrated so deep into the psyche of the Indo-English poetry that their charms and grace have overwhelmed their heart and head. They cannot strip off themselves from the magic of their beauty and power. Thus mystic method with its living use in poetry has become perhaps the healthiest trend with Indo-English poetry as well as with that of the world. Thus the method has its own poetic fecundity and beauty. It evokes poetic sweetness so enchantingly that the poets obliterate other uses in poetic endeavour. Mythical method is, therefore, immensely used by the Indo-English poetry like K.N. Daruwala, P.Lal, Sri Aurobindo, R.N. Tagore, Kamla Das, Nissim Ezekiel and Toru Dutt to the enrichment poetic and epic glory. The vitality of spiritual life derived from art and poetry; for its power and vigour is ever fresh. These Indo-English poetry have invigorated the past, present and future into eternity of divinity through the constant use of myths and legends in their poetic exercise and thus have successfully contributed to poetic felicity which appears to be dying in the midst of scientific invasion of poetry. The usefulness and utility of the mythic

mode in poetic expression is all the more relevant today specially when the present day over intellectualisation is menacing the poetic fervour and force. The poetic sensibility has never before suffered such a set back as now ever since the dawning of poetry on the earth. Poetry, through myths, has kept the harmonious universe alive, peaceful and tranquil with man and God. The sovereign method of myths and legends have alleviated the heart and soul from agony of life to ecstasy of love whereby the lovely creation is possibly made to survive and eternise into a fructifying paradise on earth.

Appreciating and defining “Myth” Aristotle said that the word myth (mythos) means utterance something one says in the form of a tale or story commonly understood by the ancient Greeks as “traditional tale”. Richard Chase in his “Quest for Myth” considers myth as “aesthetic creation of the human imagination”. It has a fictional character and it is as Cleanth Brook says, “Imaginatively true”. The source of both poetry and myth is the same. Chase argues that they “arise out of the same human needs represent the same kind of structure succeed in inviting experience with the same kind of awe and wonder”.

Furthering the argument it can favourably be said that Myth has the infinite potentialities of poetic creation. The earth and the heaven become one composite whole of the universe. We feel the universality in myth and legends. Man and God meet in the mythic vision and become living super human or God defeating the evil. It is at once human and divine, celestial and ephemeral transmitting the experiences of life into a transcendental vision of beauty. Such is the magic of the mythical way of poetic utterance which overwhelms us all into fascinating belief in its global importance.

Therefore, myth alone can alleviate the world chaos and anarchy and it is perhaps for this reason that the Indo-English poetry in particular have chosen to constantly deploy mythic mode pervasively in their poetic songs. The logic given behind justifies the rational use of the mythic method notwithstanding its limitation.

To save the world from impending doom and disaster myths and legends have been evoked to the aid of poetry. Thus, they found it relevant in their poetic expression regardless of the fact of scientific threat posed to poetic sensibility because, otherwise they probably may have been failing in their priestly task of delivering goods to the making

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of human destiny expected of them. No any other way is opted out for invigorating the lofty ideals of life that prevail on the earth.

Myth is an effectively aesthetic means of exploration and recreation of the individual experience and to apprehend the contemporary man's responses to the central question of his time. Myth is a mode of expression of the complex interaction of the self and the world. Myth and poetry, in essence, are synonyms, the former provides essential matrix to the latter. It transcend beyond the ordinary human experience into those of divine. By applying mythic mode in poetry a poet can see a transcendental vision of fulfillment in real life which is on the verge of chaos and confusion. Myths enable to save from the helplessness of life and take beyond it to a holiness and meaningfulness. Myths in poetry create order upon the disordered world, they animate the life of hope and happiness. Peace and tranquility pervades the aggrieved psyche retrieving the pain of life. The readers stand fascinated and spell bound by the poetic presentation of the experience through myths. Referring to my mythical method, Frye observes that "literature is only a part though a central part of the total mythopoetic structure of concern which extend into religion, philosophy, political theory and many aspects of history vision a society has to its situation, destiny and ideals and reality in terms of those human factors.

Religion in many of the cases, has been confused with myth. Men of religious sensibility discovers in myth those hidden powers which can enable the modern humanity to dissolve the spiritual dilemma. J.J. Altiizer and others have found a note of identity between myth and religion. He has highlighted the sacred nature of myth.

The significance and importance of myth varies from person to person. Men of artistic sensibility have a faith that myth has the happiest future of art. Elizabeth Draw also observes that "Eliot sees the happiest future for art under the influence of a new controlling factor. He calls this the mythical method and he sees it a way by which an artist can give shape and significance to the chaotic material of contemporary life."

In ancient India art has its root in myth and symbol, the proper language of metaphysics. In the past of India bards expressed their feeling , religious thoughts and myths. In ancient days myths were clothed with flesh and bones because people succeeded in sharing their super rational or extra rational activity of the day today existence. Myth, therefore, was the symbolic representation of primitive instinct that his a day to day existence was interpreted with a super rational or

extra-rational activity in which he himself could and did share."

Thus myth may be defined as a story or a complex of story elements taken as expressing them as implicitly symbolizing certain deep lying aspects of human and trans human existence. It is of vital importance in modern civilization which has been reduced to a heap of broken images. As modern humanity is cut off from the vital roots of myths, they see nothing but the vast panorama of moral anarchy and spiritual draught.

Seen against this background of mythic mode, K.N. Daruwala's poetry is the clear expression of this vital truth with regard to massive deterioration of moral values causing social and political anarchy and chaos as reflected in his poems like "Crossing of Rivers", "Apparition in April", and "Under Orion" as in these line :

What place of destiny have we arrived at

Is it a paradise or purgatory or lower below....

The mythical method or rehandling of mythe does not remain confined to the Indo-English poetry alone but the English and the Greek writers have also widely used myths to illuminate the predicament of man thereby make him realize the need to uphold and sustain the beauties of the blessed state of the primitive men against the modern complexity of sterility and lovelessness. The Indo-English writers or poets have, in their search of meaning, sought to take mythic material from the world of Indian treatises and epics to fascinate and interest that is precisely to educate and incorporate the moral values to the devoid world from spiritual health and salubriciousness through the implicit use of myths.

This is so embedded in poetry as to enhance the poetic and aesthetic delight. The myth thus woven in poetry and art of Indo-English poets have majestically succeeded in rejuvenating the mythic heritage of the great Indian culture and tradition. This has helped in the recapitulation of the poetic beauty and joy, resilience and ecstasy of the past.

The new critics, tend to be more conversant with psychology than with philosophy. They have also been influenced by the anthropological studies of the last fifty years. They have been tremendously impressed by the discovery or rediscovery - that myth ritual and poetry are to be found at the beginnings of every culture. The specifically human estate begins, it has been persuasively argued, with those forms of human expression and it develops under their influence. The modern myth critic have probably been even more powerfully

impressed by the evidence that primitive man still lurks within each of us, and that the 20th century citizen who dutifully drives to work each morning in an automobile, transacts business by telephone with a firm three thousand mile away, and gets himself ready for sleep by watching entertainment relayed to his living room by electronics industry, recreates mightily in his dreams the prime ordinal symbols of ancient myth. Seeing in these terms, myth seems to offer to poetry an inviolable refuge against the incursions of a hostile science. Myth is immensely useful and timelessly relevant. Its concept needs to be deeply studied intuitively, intellectually. Myth, in the archetypal design of a poet, turns into structural principal, rather the psychoanalyst's collective consciousness.

Proceeding to Rabindra Nath Tagore's poetry it can be said that his poetry is the ecstatic manifestation of Indian mythology that stirs to beauty and romance. His mythic made rejuvinate his poetry with ecstasy of joy. This is evident from the poetry of "Urvashi" that is duly appreciated by Iyengar in the following words. The Urvashi myth is as old as Rig Ueda, and Brahma Epic, Purana and writers like Kalidasa and Aurobindo have embellished it in a variety of ways. Tagore views Urvashi as the sheer woman not child, nor mother, nor wife – but the beautiful woman who is goddess and seductress at once – "Woman you are, to ravish the soul of Paradise"/ like the dawn you are without veil, Urvashi, and without shame.

"She carries nectar in one hand, and a chalice of poison in the other; she slumbered in her awful fullness of bloom. She is thus of all men adored, the ageless wonder when you dance the gods, flinging orbits of novel rhythm into space, Urvashi, the earth shivers, leaf and grass, and autumn fields have and sway, the sea surges into the frenzy of rhyming waves, the stars drop into the sky-beads from the chain that leaps till it break on your breast; and the blood dances in man's hearts in sudden turmoil".

Further expressing his deep appreciation for "Urvashi" Thompson remarks that "Here is Urvashi; there is a meeting of East and West indeed, a glorious tangles of Indian mythology, modern science, and legends of European romance."

Thus, we find the Indian poets, in their quest for beauty, love, joy, resilience and romance have been deeply preoccupied with the fascination of myths and legends right down from the primitive sources of all corners of the world i.e., from whichever and whatever source of beauty is explored in their poetic flavour outpouring pervasively on the Indian panorama of the mythological life and philosophy.

Humanity suddenly feels an extraordinary sense of release, as though transported or caught up by an overwhelming power. At such moments poets are no longer individuals but the race. The voice of all mankind resounds in all of us. After anthropological researches, Frazer and Jessie Weston confirm Jung's findings that the patterns of themes and motives are common in the myths of several nations and their similar values in the life of man in all ages. Problem of relating the modern human predicament to the history of the race in order to show the height from which humanity has declined to the evolution of the technique in literature. It was later embraced by James Joyce and cultivated to best possible result by other galaxy of poets and writers after him. Eliot, too has ecstatically harnessed this sustained parallel method of myths and legends to show similarities between the past and the present, between contemporaneity and antiquity to impose order upon the universal chaos.

Thus, the mythic mode in Indian English poetry is well established and has given a rich harvest. The Indian civilization derives its strength and validity from its ancient myths and folklores. In fact their manifestation is experienced in every walk of life even in the present time. The heritage of myth in the Indian – English poetry is natural and genuine. Myths give a fresh base of life to poetry and sustains it too.

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