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Indianness in the Poetry of Biplab Majumdar

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Abstract

Literature is a colossal expression of thoughts emotions and different kinds of behaviours of the society in which it is written. Every society has its own feelings, ideas, value system, myths, history, religion, education system, culture, and tradition. Indianness is a concept and feeling like Americanness and Africanness. It is a kind of conceptual opulence found in literature of India in different languages. It is influenced by the religious background, cultural practices, philosophic ideas, attitudes of the society, myths, history, books, and writers of the time. India is a country full of varieties and vastness in the matter of geography and spirituality, religion and history.

Keywords- Indianness, Flora, Fauna, Cultural Practices, Africanness, Americanness

Indian writers writing in English have shown intense love for human beings that is a shadow of love for God. Lover of God has a great moral and social respectability. Indianness is influenced by the stories of the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Quran*, the *Vedas*, the *Purans*, and other religious scriptures, cultural and historical events of Indian subcontinent. Hindu mythology and Hinduism has been one of most important impacts on Indianness. It is a kind of feeling and wholeness of Indian literature as we find juice in orange, lemon, and grapes.

English as a language is an international means of discourses and conversation. There are some Indian writers who write in English. With that they can express their views rightly than any other vernacular language of India. Prof. Srinvas Iyengar rightly believes that Indian writing in English is a kind of novel experiment for the creative mutation with the world writers and readers. Prof. Iyenger further says, "To be Indian in thought, and feeling and emotion and experience yet also to court the graces and submit to the discipline of English for expression" (*Indian Writing in English*: 5). Indianness is rooted in the Indian environment and reflects its mores. It has been rich in Indian sensibility, context and value and religious system. It is a kind of combined response to the idealistic, physical, and intellectual properties of India. It is present in the form of naming of the characters, expression of thought and assignment of imagery. It forces writers to present Indian reality, culture, history, feelings and underlying sensibility by using Indian diction, imagery, and words from vernacular of India during writing in English.

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There are various poets, novelists, short-story writers, and dramatists who have expressed Indian ethos and sensibility in their works. Sri Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu, Rabindranath Tagore, Nissim Ezeikel, A.K. Ramaujan, Kamala Das, Jayant Mahapatra, Shiv K. Kumar, P. Lal, Gauri Deshpande, Toru Datt, Salman Rushdie, Raja Ram Mohan Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, Arun Kolathkar, R. Parthaswamy, S. C. Dwivedi, R. K. Narayan, Mahesh Dattani, Arun Joshi, Vijay Tendulkar, Ramesh Chadra Dwivedi, Syed Ameeruddin, Biplab Majumdar, A. K. Chaudhary and so many others.

India is a country of spirituality, religion, civilization, human values, and there are some social, religious, political problems, education problems; representation of which might be called as Indianness. M. K. Naik, one of the greatest critics of India, has called Indianness as a kind of synthesis between Indian culture and English speaking culture.

Biplab Majumdar is an Indian poet rich in cultural, spiritual, historical, and traditional background of India. He has got published several collections of poems. Most of his poems are full of human values, Vedantic ideals, patriotic visions, world peace, universal brotherhood, tolerance, and cultural ethos. There is a conspicuous craftsmanship, introspection, love for downtrodden, spiritual realization and self analysis in the poetic expressions of Biplab Majumdar. The above tomes are all pervasive in most of his poems.

If we look for his strength and goodness as a poet, we must find the poverty of India, civilization and history of India with overtones of spirituality and impact of religious books like, the *Vedas*, the *Puranas*, the *Ramayana*, and the *Mahabharata*. Their combined sense of toleration, endurance, and humanism build a constellation to sparkle and guide human beings. He has tried to express a sort of synthesis between changing environment, reality of India and personal feeling in his poem. He does never feel alienated from the Indian landscape and its social political, religious values. Biplab has given evidence of genuine poetic inspiration and has tried to refine and reform evils from the society.

Biplab's originality lies in his way of expression and his imaginative world. He grapples with abstractions, emotions centering round human varieties like sex, compassion, social and cultural values. The poetry of Biplab Majumdar suggests a case of exploration of Indianness, authenticity in locale and culture. *Virtues & Vices*, *Island's Dolphin Song*, *Cosmic convergence*, and *Golden Horizon* are some of his poetic collections of great repute. His sense of representation of social value system and religious system is unique and peerless.

The poem, "Expectation" is remarkable to show Indian ethos of hopefulness and future prosperity Biplab writes:

Believe, someday the dawn will be ours
and our favourite pebbles would be
bright in enough unworldliness.

(*Island's Dolphin Song*)

Indianness is concept deep rooted in Indian belief system, philosophical and myths. "The Rays of Truth" is a poem in which Biplab explores the concept of truth which is shapeless and bloodless yet it has strongest sense of humanism. It inspires us to do real and practical works. It does

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not incite us to live in the world of fantasy. We realize our true identity when we get confronted with truth and reality. Biplab writes:

Experience gets aged
in the morning sun
under the rays of truth
can identify my real friends

(Island's Dolphin Song)

Indianness is reflected in the expression like "Kurukshetra Aheads in which we get references of the *Mahabharata*, a religious book of Hindus and of human beings. The poem shows the cunningness what we know about Shakuni against Pandavas. The whole poem is true reflection of Indianness. It shows historical and legendary background of India. Biplab writes:

Turning over the pages of Mahabharata
has come up the Push-Parva:
Shakuni-kouravas are on the other side

** ** *

Being compelled Pandaras hand over
all the weapons to the expended
tongue of darkness

** ** *

Now they are subdued by united conspiracy
Feeling a spell of cauterization in bones.

(Island's Dolphin Song)

The poem "OM" is expression of religious manifestation of Biplab's poetic vision. The whole poem is a call for religious realization of the poet. Biplab writes:

Converging all sounds
The resounding OM
Words hang on it
Numerous ducklings towards the call of bran

** ** *

Tongue of a word is greedy
staring at
The clustered grapes of verse

(Island's Dolphin Song)

Places nearside his residence are well echoed in his poems. It is also a root of Indianness which has been well represented in his poems. Some incidents which regularly happen in India are represented here:

That's why the sun rises
Even today,
Goes down to the west
Green buds

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Blood sporadically in joy
At schools and colleges
On the streets and roads
At shopping malls
Nandan, Moharkunja
Millenum Park
Beside the waterline of
Victoria Memorial of my
Loving city kolkata.

(Island's Dolphin Song)

There is a wide vision and expression in the poetry of Biplab Majumdar. He has shown concentration on family, educational, political, social, agricultural, religious, environmental problems of India. He talks about poverty, human relations village and city life, corruption, unemployment, brain migration casteism, and conflict of upper and lower class in India.

India is a country of mysticism, magic, superstition and the most important thing the abode of gods. There is mysticism, exoticism, and communal toleration in the poetic vision of Biplab Majumdar. Indianness is also shown in the representation of human values which one of the strongest arguments of representation of Indianness. Biplab inspires the readers and give a kind of mental, spiritual, and social enlightenment. Following lines have full realization of Indian philosophy of life:

That our life is
Nothing but a stream
Of sprangled seconds
Like the flight of falcons
An ever pervasive present
Whizzes past incessantly
To the world of nothingness

(Cosmic Convergence)

Indianness is also shown in the representation of Indian months with the special references of, culture, history, climate, environment, and seasons. Biplab writes:

April you know is
The season of sky, and
The youth of year.
Now the shadows of separation
Cannot cast its curtain
Upon our
Mellowing marvelous moments

** ** *

The canvas is colourful now,
Nascent narcissistic night
Smiles with screaming stars,

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Expands up to the
Distant dreams of desert.

(Cosmic Convergence)

Indian people believe that death cannot be challenged. God of death is supposed to come and extract the soul from the dying person: It is remarkable to note the views of Biplab Majumdar in following lines:

No one can defy his destiny
The deluge of destruction
Death of dearest ones
And surpass
The unavailable unseen

(Cosmic Convergence)

The Indian philosophy of life is well explored in following lines:

Our life is nothing but
A voyage to vastness
And of course
A way-fare's waiting
To see the bright face of TRUTH

(Cosmic Convergence)

India is country of various religious. Here every religion is given proper importance. People respect all religions and called themselves as secular. Biplab writes:

My search continues to
Blooming Bodhi of Buddha
Golden gospels of Jesus
Rainbow of realization of Rama
Magnificent message of Mohammed

** ** *

I searched the answers in the
Truth of Tripitaka
Blessings of Bible
Grace of Gita
Quest of Quran.

(Cosmic Convergence)

In Hinduism there is quest for salvation as final goal of life. Man tries to know his existence and tries to maintain a kind of balance in his life: Biplab writes:

A life-long quest to know oneself
To fund integrity of inner soul,
Liberty is the essence of life
And salvation is the final goal.

(Virtues & Vices)

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Indianness has distinction of being a concept of love for others and tolerance. Biplab writes

The best creed and finest charity
Tolerance towers above the difference
Doesn't care frontiers and fence
Tolerance leads to the land of unity

(Virtues & Vices)

Indianness is expressed in the poetry of Biplab Majumdar in form advocacy of simplicity and humanism. Indian people love simplicity and they do not want to show off things and belongings in the form of pomp and show. India has been known as a country of culture, human values, simplicity, and civilization. Biplab writes:

Though simplicity is a rare virtue
One can have it at ease
Just willingness to be simple
Is more than enough to live in peace

** ** *

Simple living and our simple wants
Faith in god in humble chest
Keep us healthy, happy and wise
Simple life is always best

(Virtues & Vices)

India has been a religious country. The people of India possess morality, dignity for one another and human values. There is a concept of character in Indian communities. Biplab writes about it:

Character is considered as a silver tree
That bears a lot of virtues fruits
The cool pleasant shadow it spreads
Reputation is that, the colourless have.

** ** *

Noble characters are gems of a nation
The dignified conscience keepers of it,
The priceless assets of a country
People offer them the golden sits.

(Virtues & Vices)

People of India respect elders and older one. It is a kind of culture which makes it different from other countries of the world. It is also a kind of unique sensibility to show the representation of Indianness in literature. Biplab writes:

Respect is always a heavenly tribute
An awesome love it is, in fact,
Promotes peace in the turn of unity.
Secured existence is the result of that.

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** ** *

Respect your elders, society and nation
Respect its laws, all religious scriptures,
Respect of course your dear mother land
In brother sense musty respect "others"

(Virtues & Vices)

Indianness is also reflected in values which well amalgamated in Indian system of behavior and act of unity. Biplab writes about the value of kindness:

Kindness is considered a heavenly tribute
The most precious gift one can offer,
At the call of an elevated conscience
The flow of kindness ennoble character

** ** *

Kindness is known as a wonderful balm
The lessens pain and sweetens sorrow.
It discovers greatness of human minds
Man who shows it is truly a hero.

(Virtues & Vices)

"Charity" is a wonderful poem which shows ideal heart of an Indian poet. The poem is notable to understand the feelings and values of Biplab's poetic heart. Charity has been one of the greatest concerns of Indian people. He writes:

Charity is born out of sincere respect.
To everything, everybody that we see.
Recognizing the sanctity of eternal right
Charity speaks for the presence of 'HE'

(Virtues & Vices)

"Divinity" and "Religion" are two most remarkable poems which are very thoughtful realization of Biplab's heart regarding Indianness. Indian Gods, Goddesses and philosophies of life are well represented by the poet. These poems are full of Hindi words like, "Shakties" "Kriya", "Rayas", "Anand", "Satwaguna", "Atman", "Paramatman", "Ahamkara", "Chit", "Tama guna" Guru, Avesta and so many others. By using Hindi words poets show their inclination to the language, culture and tradition of Indian and indianness. In Hinduism man's body is supposed as the abode of several gods. In accordance this belief Biplab writes:

Human body is a temple of God
Where Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswar
Dwell together in different shades
Life reflects them with great care.

** ** *

Maheswar in heart called as Atman
Represents satwaguna, the existential drama

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When the drama comes to an end
The Atman meages with the paramatman
(*Virtues & Vices*)

In India there are three gods in the form of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar. All these are called shakties by Biplab Majumdar. Brahma is called the generator of the world, Vishnu is called preserver while Maheshwar is called destroyer of the world. As these three are working according to the assigned responsibility.

The religious books of India have got a careful representation in the works of Biplab Majumdar. According to him all religions and religious books are source of inspiration and realization of humanity. Biplab writes:

All religious are mere different roads
Converging towards the same soul
Does it matter if the road differs
As all of us chase the similar goal

** ** *

The Gita, Bible, Talmud and Quran
A vesta, Guru Granth, many whatever be,
All scriptures preach the same slogan.
“Love your neighbour and respect HIM”.

(*Virtues & Vices*)

Thus we find a special appeal for Indian sensibility in the poetry of Biplab Majumdar. Most of his poems are full of philosophical and ideological abundance of Indian myths, thoughts, and emotions. It is a kind of realization which we must always pay attention during perusing poems of Biplab Majumdar.

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