

UNITY IN DIVERSITY IN THE LYRICS OF SUBRAHMANYA BHARATHI-The NATIONAL POET OF INDIA

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Abstract

India is famous for its splendid culture in which different castes, religions, races, communities, languages, customs and traditions sail in one ship. One of the Indian Tamil National poets, Subrahmanya Bharathi thought globally, struggled hard to unite the entire universe to be one and penned his lyrics .He travelled across northern India was greatly influenced by Hindi ,Sanskrit and Bengali literatures. Deeply inspired by Annie Beasant, Keats Walt Whitman and Byron.shelly. He established a Shelly guild and sported the pseudonym ‘Shelly Dasan .His thoughts were shaped by Vivekananda, Aurabindo. He had high respect to sister Nivedita, Tilak and Gandhiji. Bharathi was a patriotic, spiritual, romantic mystic poet of India. Bharathi was a true follower of Jesus.” Have no enemy, bless them those curse you. Bharati’s aim was to spread universal unity irrespective of caste nation, religion and community. He says in his songs

*This World is one
Male female, mortal immortal
Life ,death, every thing is one*

He questions in his poems”What is life without unity? Division only spells ruin.

Bharati strongly believed when two states or countries come closure, cultural co- operation develops which strengthens relationship. He savoured the beauty of each state of India and led the chariot of poetry. In his song “Sindhu nadi” he respected all the Indian languages. He described Hindu-Muslim inter –dining as a welcome sign of friend-ship and referred ‘Ganapati The HINDU God as another name of Allah and Jehovah called as the God of the universe.

*“Allah Oh! my Lord you protect
Man, the un-educated, the liars, the wicked ,even the sinners
Because you are the Supreme.*

Bharati described the crucifixion witnessed by Mary Magdalene and through her, he paid high tribute to Jesus. Bharati praised Budha also. He is the follower of Bartruhari who said the entire world is one family the maxim of Darwin. In ‘New Russia wrote about Lenin and the socialist revolution. There are also references to Afghanistan, China, Egypt, Turkey, United-states and English. In 1914 his admiration and sympathy was with the embattled Belgium. He called Belgium “a gipsy girl confronting a forest tiger with a mere tray in hand and he saluted the gallant little country with a memorable poem.

*“Your military strength may be low
But your deeds are heaven-high”*

Bharathi penned one poem in praise of British Royalty. He welcomed the prince of Wales also. Thus Bharati sees the entire universe as one family and spreads unity in diversity.

Key words: Unity in diversity, Universal lover Bharathi, Universal literary unity, Religious unity, Cultural unity, Patriotism and National integration

UNITY IN DIVERSITY IN THE WORKS OF SUBRAHMANYA BHARATHI

India the living 'Tower of Babel' is the only nation where diverse culture, varied languages, different castes, religions, races, communities, customs and traditions sail in one ship. If we browse India, diversity can be found in every corner, yet the spirit of unity lucid in every side. Diverse we are in cultures, habits, surroundings, life-style, languages, costumes, customs, traditions but we are one in spirit, we are one in identity we are all human beings with one soul of humanity. That is the motto of Bharathi's works.

Mahakavi Subrahmanya Bharati known as subbaiya was born on 11th December 1882 in Ettayapuram, Tirunelveli Dist., of Tamil Nadu. His parents were Chinnaswamy Iyer and Lakshmi Ammal. It was the period that saw the cyclonic rise of the nationalistic party on the Indian political scene and a revolution shook in Tamil poetry. Bharathi's period was an age of heroes in almost all political, religion, literary fields in almost every walk of life. Bharati lost his mother at an early age and spent his childhood with maternal grandpa who introduced the boy all the glories of Tamil poetry.

Soon the precocious boy began composing verses in Tamil and was honoured with the title "**BHARATHI**" for his excellent proficiency in Tamil. While he was not very enthusiastic about English, his father compelled him to go to school at Tirunelveli. The romantic poets were the charmed magic casements that opened his eyes to new horizons and filled him with wonder and infinite surmise. He used to read Shelly in English, Victor Hugo in French and Goethe in translation. He studied up to V form in English at the Hindu Higher Secondary school, Tirunelveli. Bharathi travelled across northern India and was influenced by the modern trends in Hindi, Sanskrit and Bengali literatures. He was also deeply inspired by Annie Besant and by European poets. He sang in praise of all world up heavals against tyranny and oppression with fervor and patriotism. Bharathi's vision was world vision. Bharati was influenced by P.B. Shelly's poems and changed his name as "**Shelly Dasan**" imbibed the spirit of revolt of the poets Shelly, Gray Wordsworth, Keats, Byron

Bharathi's dressing style was changed after returning from Varanasi (In fact his clothes reflected a fusion of various Indian traditions. An orthodox south Indian Brahmin wearing a Sikh like turban and sporting a rough moustache was quite unusual those days.) The young man aping alien ways had made himself an outcaste. After returning to Ettayapuram, he established a "**Shelly Guild**" and sported the pseudonym '**Shellydasan**'.

Bharathi's works were classified as follows.

Patriotic Songs

- Songs on Bharat Land.
- Songs on Tamilnadu
- Freedom Songs
- Songs on the freedom movement.
- National Leaders
- Songs inspired by Freedom movements in other countries.

Devotional Songs

- Prayer songs
- Songs on philosophy

Miscellaneous songs

- Ethics
- Society

- Unclassified songs
- Tributes
- Autobiographical
- Free verse.

Three great poem collections

- Kannan Pattu
- Panchali Sabatham
- Kuyil Pattu

Universal literary Unity

The most impressive about Bharati is not only he responded to the happening during the most ardent period of India's political growth but also showed sensitiveness to the major world events of his times.

Freedom in Bharati's songs is an elemental thrust, a basic aspiration and a primary need of the human soul.

“Enndru thaniymintha sudhandira thagam?
Enndru madiyum mengal adimaiyin mogam
Endrama thani vilangugal pogum?
Endrama thinnalgal theerdhu poi yaggum?”

“When will the thrust for freedom slate?
When will our love of slavery die?
When will our mother's fetters break?
When will our tribulations cease?”

These verses show direct influence of the American poet Walt Whitman's “**I hear America Singing**”, and also Walt Whitman's influence made Bharati to write Prose- Poetry (Vachana Kavithai). His Kuyil Pattu shows the direct impact of Keat's Eudemon and ode to Nightingale.

In Bharati's works Endaiyum Thayum , Bharatha Desam, Thayin Manikkodi, Pudiya Russia, Kuyil pattu and pudumai penn have direct links with the poems of Romantists. They have identity and difference.

Like his favorite poet Shelly Bharati was a non conformist. Rebellion was in his blood. The freedom that he wanted for India was not vague and abstract and the replacement, out of ‘Self-respect, of the white bureaucracy by a brown the Englishman by a Brahmin. It was freedom for the suppressed the cobbler, the fisherman and the hunter.

“Viduthali, viduthalai, viduthali
Pariyariku mingu thiyar
Pulaiyarikum viduthali
Parava roadum kuravaruku
Maravarukkum viduthalai
Thirami konda theemaiyatra
Thozil purithu yavarum
Thertha kalvi gnam yeidi
Vazvam intha naatilay”

Freedom Freedom Freedom
To the pariahs, the Tiyars, The pulayars
Freedom to the out castes degraded
Themselves in three grades
Freedom to fisherman and nomads and tribes in “Criminal trades”
Engaged in skillful work,
Harming none,
Learned and wise, in our land
All shall line as one.

Again the women of his land dumb unlettered moving about as chattels in their own home caught his eye and like Walt Whiteman he became the poet of the women and treated them same as men. It is like Shakespeare’s John of Gant, affirming with boundless faith his country’s great destiny.

Universal unity

The Russo-Japanese war, the racial conflict in Africa, The Irish Question the First World War and its aftermath, the mighty events in Russia leading to the October socialist revolution. In his poem ‘Pudia Russia’ he describes the same. He was the first Indian poet to sing of the Russian revolution. Bharathi wrote about Lenin and socialist revolution too. There are also references to Afghanistan, China, Egypt, Turkey, United States and England. Bharathi penned one poem in praise of British loyalty. Bharathi welcome the Prince of Wales pointing out that British rule benefited India in a certain way, but millions of ill cry out to be solved. He also tells the prince that both the English and the Indian should live in amity without hurting each others.

Varuga selva vaazman neeya
Vadamerrisai kan maaperutholayinoor
Porciru thivakap puravalan payantha
Nattarava pudhava nalvaravunathe

Bharatha devi pazamaipol thiruvarul
Pozithar lurranal porulsaiyarkuria
Thozirkanam papapa thondrina pinnum
Kodumatha paavigal kurumbelam akangdrana

Welcome, Prince! Long may you live!
The precious son of a great king
Of a far island in the West,
You deserve to be welcomed.
Royal Highness, you and your wife
Have come across these thousands of leagues
Just to see me. Hail, all hail!

Listen to my words that come spontaneous
From a full and joyous heart.
Before your fathers started to rule
My loved children in this land
My heart was riddled with a hundred sores
Caused by the numberless torments inflicted
By unloving aliens for a thousand years.
Many new industries arose
And employments to make wealth.
Besides, all the horrors ceased

Of cruel religious fanatics.
Female infants thrown into rivers,
Children crushed under chariot wheels,
Widows burnt with their husband's corpses,
And other such evils disappeared.
A ray or two from that sound of Knowledge
Which pierced the darkness in the West
Found their way here to light my sons.
But so what? Millions more
Botherations are still here.

“Apostrophe to Belgium” in which he praised its courageous fighting against the German armed might.

He called Belgium “ a gipsy girl confronting a forest tiger with a mere tray in hand, and he saluted the gallant little country with a memorable poem ‘Belgium’ Nattirku vazhthu.’

“Aarathinal veeizthuvittai
Annaiyan valiyanagi
Marathinal vandhu seitha
Vannmaiya poruthal seyyai
Murathinal puliyai thaaku
Moyvarai kurapen pola
Thirathinal yelliya yathi
Seygaiyal uyarindhu nindrai”

“Fallen for your honor
The enemy grew large
Through ugly terror
You could not endure”

Like a gipsy girl facing a
Tiger with tray in hand
Your strength is mean
But great the deeds.

As a political journalist Bharathi had commented on freedom movements in foreign countries. His well known poem on Mazzini's oath before the association of young Italy to free the country from alien rule.

Through Mazzini's oath Bharati's struggle to free his own mother land can be seen

“My wealth, body, soul it self
I cede to your association
Founded for patriots
Determined like my self
I shall make my people
Realise for their good
Unity is the sole means to
Achieve our goal.

National Integration

Bharati is engaged in projecting India as a whole before us a unified vision on India in all her intellectual and spiritual qualities and powers in his poem. (Engal Nadu)

“Mannu miyamalia yengal malaye
 Manilaphaghu porpiri thilaiye
 Innaru neergangai yarigal yarey
 Ingithan manpirkum kethirathu verrey
 Pannuru mubanita noolengal nooley
 Paarmesai yethoru nooledhu pooley
 Ponnolir bharatha naddengal naadey
 Poortruvam ithai yemakilai yeeday

The mighty Himalaya is ours
 There is no equal any where on earth
 The generous Ganga is ours
 Which other river can match her grace?
 The sacred Upanishads are ours
 What scriptures else to name with them?
 This sunny golden land is ours
 She is peerless, let's praise her!

Next to his patriotic poetries his devotional poems are universally celebrated. Bharati translated the Bhagavad Geeta into Tamil. He also translated some portions of Rigveda, Patanjali Yogasutra, the Kenopanishad and selected vedic hymns. He has rendered the Gayathri Mantra in Tamil in Panchali Sabadham. Bharati was a true devotee of PARASAKTHI and Muruga. His spiritual message was ‘God is one who is omnipresent. The style of Indian devotional literature, which consider the almighty as friend, mother, father, teacher, lover, student, Lord, child can be seen in the works of Bharati. Bharati went one step more and considered Lord Krishna as his servant also.

Bharati seen Krishna the omni present and says

Kaikai siraginilay nandhalala
 Ninthan kariya niram thodruthaiya nandhalala
 Parrkum marangal ellam nandhalala
 Nindhan pachhai niram thodurhaiya nandhalala
 Ketkum issaiyilelam nandhalalala
 Nindhan keetham isaikudhada nandhalala

“In the plumes of the crow Nandalala
 Is your dark glow? Nandalala
 In the tree's green Nandalala,
 Is your emerald sheen Nandalala
 In each sound one hears Nandalala
 Is the music of your spheres Nandalala
 It thrills through and through Nandalala.

Religious Unity

Bharathi wished for universal Unity. He himself stated “I am the follower of Baratuhari who said all the world is one family. I follow the maxim of Darwin who said ‘Mankind and all animals are one’” Bharati says,

Jayaberigai kottada kotada
Jayaberigai kotada
Kakai kurivi yengal jaathi neel
Kadaulm maliym mengal kootam
Nookum thisaiyellam naamandri veerillai
Nokka nooka kali yattam.

In this song Bharathi is beating the victorious drum of success. He shares it with the entire Universe.
Beat the drum Beat the drum,
Beat the drum of victory.
The crow and sparrow our kin
One with us mountain and sea,
Wherever we glance ourselves a dance
In a whirl of Ecstasy!

He believed all gods were one. He described Hindu Muslim inter –dining as the welcome sign of friendship and always tried to unite all religions. Bharathi referred to “Ganapathi as another name for Allah and Jesus and called as the God of Universe.

In the words of Bharati,

Pallayiram pallayiram kodi kodi yandangal
Ellathisaiyilum morrillayaila velivanile
Nillathu suzandroda niyamanjseidarul nayagan
Solllalum manadhalum thodaronnatha penunjothi allah allah allah”

Allah Allah Allah
He is the supreme Lord
The Glorious Effulgence
Allah! Oh! My Lord you protect Man,
The uneducated the liar
The wicked, even the sins
Because of you are supreme.

In his song ‘Puthia athichoodi’ Bharati under lines the unity of all the religions. He sees Gods of various religions in one god i.e. in Lord Shiva. The song goes like this

Aathisudi yilam pirai yanidhu
Monathiruku muzu ven maniyam
Karunirak kondu paar kadal misaim kidappon
Mahamadh nabiku marayarul pooridhon
Aasuvin thandhai yenapala madhathinar
Urruvagathaley unarathua radhu
Palavagai yagaap paravidum paramporul
Onndra adneyal olyuuru marivaam.

Wearer of Aathi leaves and the young moon
The ash smeared in an eternal trance
The dark haired asleep on the ocean
Reveals of wisdom to Mohammad
Father of Jesus

Even thus different sects describe
That eternal are, its nature is effulgent knowledge.
He who knows that is free from care
Many we praise that grace a
And gain immortal life.

Bharathi described the crucifixions witnessed by 'Mary Magdalene' and through her paid high tribute to Jesus.

"My Lord expired on the cross
And ascended in three days
Beloved Mary Magdalene
Saw this happen
Friends! Here is the esoteric scene
The gods will enter us
And guard us from all ills
If we transcend pride.

Other than Tamil poems Bharathi penned poems in English also. Of his poems in English Time a vision is a brilliantly evocative piece where man is seen swimming against the tides of time to attain his goal.

In 1916 the poem 'Peace' was written during Christmas, has almost a biblical severity and simplicity and beauty.

Bharati adopted Kshama- dharma from Hindu Philosophy and followed the teaching of Jesus to forgive is divinity. Bharathi says "**Pagaivanukkaruvai Nannenje! Pagaivanukkarulvai**" the English translation for it

Love them that hate
Love them that hate; my good self
Love them tat hate.
Enveloped by smoke burns fire
Have we not seen this, my good self?
Enveloped by hatred burns love
Have not seen this
Our Lord is there
My good self
Love them that hate
If but an evil thought enters the mind
It loses its balance and its calm.
Good my self, a drop of poison
In the honey cup, it renders it all undrinkable
Love them that hate

Bharathi praised Buddha too in his melodious lyrics. Bharati's universal vision is not focused any particular religious god. In his poem Bharati
"Five continents on earth and of religions a croze,
Buddhism Jainism Zoroastrianism the Christian worship of Jesus
The Hindus Sanatana Islam Jews
The Tao of the Chinese from the 'blind man's buff' all the way up
How many creeds we know! But deep in them all is the essence.

That is the greatness of Bharathi the universal lover. He sings in his poem sound the tocsin he describes the unity of races.

“The Brahmins salute the fire the Muslim” daily prayer the Christians go to church and bow to the cross.

Cultural Unity

Universal poet Subrahmanya Bharati not only wished for the progress of Tamil Nadu but he saw the whole states as a single and wished that there must be cultural, mutual and economic exchange among the states of India. Bharathi savored the beauty of each state of India. He depicts the unity of India by unity its status.

Sindhu nadiyen misai nilavinilay
Sera nan nattilam pengaludaney
Sundara telunginil paatisaithu
Thonigal ooti vilai yadivaruvom

“In the brightness of the shining moon
On the banks of river Sindhu
In the company of beautiful young girls of Kerala
Singing the sweetest songs of Telugu
We sail in a boat and play.

Floating on the Indus under the moon
fair damsels from Malabar shall make holiday
and in their boats shall be hear the songs of sweetest Telugu.

Gangai nathipurathu kodumai pandam
Kaveri vetrilaiku maaru kolvom
Singa maratiyar tham kavithai kondu
Serathu thanthangal parisalipom

The wheat of the Ganges valley
shall be exchanged for the pair of the pan of the Kaveri land.
We will make rich gifts of Kerala ivory
In return for the brave songs of Maharashtra.
The philosophers debating in Kashi
We will have instruments to hear them at Kanchi.
We will honor the heroes of Rajasthan
With the beautiful gold of Karnataka.

He respected all languages equally Bharati led the chariot of poetry through the path of non violence.

Bharati was inspired with sister Nivedita and he scrupulously followed her commandment to treat woman as equal to man. He penned so many poems on women’s emancipation. In Indian orthodox society women were treated as inferior in spite of their nobility and intelligence. Bharati wrote Penngal Vidudalai Kummiyadi, (Celebration of women emancipation) and Pudumai Penn’ Modern lad or Millianeum lady he describes her

Hail! Hail! A thousand hails
Ten thousand hails to your golden feet!
Like a fresh lotus in the mud
Bright and beautiful you have come!

The drums of freedom ushering you
Have beaten all our distress away
Maiden queen, the answer at last
To our peoples penances'

A straight look and upright gait,
Brows that fear none on earth,
A pride arising from mature knowledge
Will keep a woman steadfast, it seems.
A woman's duty, we are told
Is to spit on the darkness of ignorance
And a helpless, sunk, uncultured life –
Did you hear that fledgling girl?

Many and many a lore they will learn;
Many and many a deed they will do;
Destroy all the hoary lies;
Raze down all the stupid blocks;
All that men have done so far
They will reform for God's assent;
Earn men's regard by the way they live –
Did you listen to that youngster's aims?

Conclusion

The fact that his is almost unanimously considered to be poet who ushered in this century of democratization, pro lateralization and industrialization is evident from the various appellatives that are in common usage to adorn his name.

Pudumai kavingan (modern poet), Purathchi kavingan (poet of revolution), Makkal kavingan (people's poet), Marumalarchi kavingan (renaissance poet) and Navayuga kavingan (poet of new age). Thus in Bharathi's lyrics we found the national integrity, patriotism, unity in diversity.

Students of Comparative Literature have begun to realize that Bharathi should be ranked along with Tagore and in some respect his is even superior to the Nobel Laureate. Thus his approach is a friendly approach to the entire universe.

Asatho Ma Sadgamaya
Tamasoma jyothirgamaya
Mrituyrma Amritam gamaya
Om Shanti Shanti, Shanthi
(Lead me from the Unreal to the real
From darkness to light
From death to immortality
Let peace spread every where.

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