

## Depiction of Typical Pre-Independence Indian Market in Sarojini Naidu's Poem 'In the Bazaars of Hyderabad'

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### Abstract

The reflections of the current social, cultural, economic, political scenario are often penned by the writers in their literary creations. The impact of British rule in India has made English language one of the major mediums of creative expressions. Sarojini Naidu was one such Indian writer who voiced her expressions using the medium of English language. She depicts India and Indian sensibilities in her writings in English. Present paper aims at studying depiction of typical pre-independence Indian market in Sarojini Naidu's poem 'In the Bazaars of Hyderabad'.

**Keywords:** India, Bazaar, Market, Shops, Customers

Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949) was a public speaker, poet, Indian political activist and a freedom fighter. She wrote many volumes of poetry. She was elected as president of Indian National Congress in 1925. She was an active participant in India's freedom movement. She is popularly known as Nightingale of India for lyricism in her Poetry. Sarojini Naidu has published several volumes of poetry which includes 'The Golden Threshold' (1905) and 'The Broken Wing' (1912). The lyricism of her poetry earned her the title of 'The Nightingale of India'. Her poetic style is traditional and simple.

Her poems are rich in imagery and expressions. She was influenced by W.B. Yeats and Arthur Symons. She tried to blend Indian and English sensibilities in her poetry. Many of her poems depict the true picture of India and Indian people. Her poems depict rustic simplicity, beauty, and diversity of Indian rural and urban life. 'In the Bazaars of Hyderabad' is one such wonderful poem which pictures the typical pre-independence Indian market situated in Hyderabad. In many of her poems one can get the beautiful image of India and Indian life. According to Harish Raizada,

Sarojini Naidu has captured colourful life of towns in several of her poems. Even the pictures of natural landscape, Indian flora and fauna, projected by her in her poems, are such as she has come across in the towns, particularly in her native town Hyderabad to which she was deeply attached. The picturesque scenes of

Hyderabad figure prominently in her poems like "Nightfall in the City of Hyderabad", "Street Cries", "Songs of My City", "In a Latticed Balcony" and "In the Bazaars of Hyderabad". (91)

'In the bazaars of Hyderabad' is a fine lyric by Sarojini Naidu describing a picture of crowded Indian market. The market described in the poem is a market situated in Hyderabad during pre-independence era but the similar pictures of markets can be seen anywhere in India. The market contains shops of different things. The typical Indian markets contain the shops of cloths, vegetables and fruits, flowers, musical instruments, goldsmiths, flowers, food grains, general stores, hotels and other such things.

Most of the merchants display the goods available for sale in their shops and try to attract the customers. The peddlers are also very common in the market selling various small things useful in day today life. They try to catch the attention of the customers by calling them. The entertainers like magicians are also seen in the bazaar who entertains people by their magical tricks. Thus, by visualizing the bazaar of Hyderabad situated during the pre-independence era in the poem; Sarojini Naidu has given a picture of the typical Indian market which can be seen anywhere in India. Naidu has an immense power of description which enabled her to portray most exact picture of Indian life. According to Ansari,

Sarojini was endowed with an immense descriptive power. She always described a scene or situation in accurate detail. Her method of description was natural, with or without comments or reflections according to the requirement. (61)

The poem, 'In the bazaars of Hyderabad' pictures rich colours, smells, sounds and tastes of Indian bazaars giving a perfect sensual experience to the readers. The bazaar is filled with different shops selling variety of goods. The merchants have displayed the several goods available in their shops. The things of different colours like silver, crimson, purple, amber, red, white creates a wonderful galaxy of colours which is very pleasant to the eyes. The fragrance of sandalwood, flowers, spices henna, food

materials appeal to the nose.

The poet also creates auditory imagery by the cry of the merchants, call of the peddlers, the music played by the musical instruments like sarangi, sitar, drums, and the chant of the magical spells by the magicians. The mention of fruits like lemons, pomegranates and plumes appeals to the taste. The sense of touch is produced by the bells made for pigeons. The glitter of gold and fancy of clothes are also making one joyful. Thus, reading this poem is a joy ride giving a perfect sensual experience.

While giving the typical picture of Indian market the lyricist tries to present the balance of physical world with the philosophical. The first philosophical idea put forth by the poet is the message of Swadeshi (Indian Goods). The poet says that the Indian market contains all the things needed to survive in this physical world. These things contain cloths, food grains, vegetables, fruits, golden ornaments, flowers, stuffs necessary for entertainment and other such little things needed in day-to-day life. This clearly means that Indians don't need any foreign goods to survive in the physical world. This reflects her political views, love for Indian culture and strong urge for freedom of India. Meena Alexander says in her essay,

What follows is a brief inquiry into the complex feminism of a woman who lived at the interface of two cultures, that of the Hyderabad she was born into and the colonial culture of British India. She passed through the diction and manners of the latter into a poetry and politics forged, at least in her later years, within the very tumult of Nationalist politics. (49)

Naidu has also tried to picture the balance between the physical and philosophical world when she speaks about the flower girls. By showing the activities of the flower girls the poet shows that how they are weaving crowns, garlands, and chaplets for the happy occasions and sheets of white flowers to be offered on the grave of the dead. Thus, through the medium of this poem Naidu shows the balance of the physical world with philosophical.

In the last stanza the writer describes the flower shops. She could see the flower-girls weaving garlands, bouquets, chaplets and crowns out of different coloured flowers. When she enquired for what they were weaving; she came to know that they were weaving crowns for the brow of the bridegroom and chaplets to garland his bed. She also came to know that they were also weaving the sheets of the white blossoms from the fresh white flowers to be offered on the grave of the dead. Thus, the writer shows the contrast in their work. Those girls were preparing

beautiful garlands and chaplets for the bridegroom for happy occasions. While doing this, some of them were also busy in weaving sheets of white flowers. The sheets which they were making were to be offered on the grave of the dead. Thus, Sarojini Naidu pictures the juxtaposition in the work of flower-girls weaving garlands, chaplets and white sheets of the flowers for happy and sad occasions at the same time.

Present poem seems to be expression of a simple young girl who visits the market of her city. At the same time the poem has a strong message with philosophical undertone. one can notice the celebration of nationalism and the message of Swadeshi goods given in the form of poem. In Those days goods from England were brought to India and the Indian consumers were made used to buying those goods. Almost all nationalists strongly opposed such economic domination by the British in the country. Sarojini Naidu, being a major political activists and freedom fighter too raised her voice against the foreign goods through her poems.

The poem 'In the Bazaars of Hyderabad' depicts a prosperous market place in India overflowing with things of all types. The typical Indian market gives everything to the consumer from the food grains, fruits, jewellery items, goods needed during the ceremonies and burial accessories. It clearly means that without foreign goods coming England Indians can obtain things needed in their day-to-day life from markets situated in their village or the city. Thus, Sarojini Naidu gives a strong message of Swadeshi goods by giving picture of Indian market through her poem, 'In the Bazaars of Hyderabad'. Sarojini Naidu intoned the praise of India and her people through poem in an elusive way. As Harish Raizada remarks,

Sarojini Naidu's poetry is overtly Indian in spirit. No other Indian English poet has unfolded Indian milieu and ethos in such wide variety and with such ardent passion as Sarojini Naidu has done. From the very beginning of her poetic career, she has been admired for the lyrical intensity and the vivid treatment of Indian ethos in her poems. (78)

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