

**Glorification of nature in Sarojini Naidu's poetry.**

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**Abstract:** Nature plays a great role in poetry from ancient period. It is very often described by poets as a source of inspiration to mankind. They portray nature to describe their emotions about life, death, love and war. In English literature John Donne, John Keats, William Wordsworth, S.T. Coleridge, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Lord Byron and Robert Southey etc. are famous nature poets. The foremost Indian nature poets are Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu etc. Nature poetry primarily focuses on themes, ideas, situations or images connected with nature.

**Keywords:** mystic, mythology, season, flower

Introduction-Sarojini Naidu is a prolific nature poet in contemporary Indian English literature. She is named as the 'Nightingale of India'. Her poetry is abounded in description of nature. Nowhere nature finds vivid expression as in the poetry of Sarojini Naidu. Her poetry has a great similarity with that of Tennyson and Keats and devoid of mystic element like Tagore's poetry.

Sarojini Naidu's nature poems are classified into two categories. First is on seasons and second is on flowers. Naidu's famous nature poems are "Spring", "A Song in Spring", "Champak Blossoms", "The Ecstasy" etc.

Sarojini Naidu presents nature as soothing and sympathetic. She also portrays it as benevolent. Her poetry deals only with peaceful and beautiful aspects of nature. Naidu feels the call of nature irresistible and observes the locations, colors, moods and sounds of nature remarkably. Her keen power of observation makes her nature poems immortal.

Sarojini Naidu looks at nature with child-like wonder and her response to it is like that of an infant. She criticizes the artificiality of pseudo-modernism and seeks shelter in nature. Naidu expresses the irresistible call of nature in these lines,

"The earth is ashine like a humming bird's wing  
And the sky-like a kingfisher's feather,

O come, let us go and play with the spring  
Like glad-hearted children together”.

The poetess devotes most of her poems to depict the summer, autumn and spring season. Winter does not find place in her poetry. She feels as if summer season brings the re-birth of nature. The charm of summer season is described in these lines beautifully,

“Poppies squander their fragile gold

In the silvery aloe break

Calm and ivory lilies unfold

their delicate leaves of the lake.

“Spring” reveals the rapture of two lovers Kamala and Krishna.

Kamala twinkles a fingering foot.

In the grove where temple-bells ring,

And Krishna plays on his bamboo flute,

An idyl of love and spring. (Spring)

Naidu displays the indifference of nature to worldly life in “Summer Woods”. “Autumn Song” presents a universal theme of change during autumn season. “The Ecstasy” depicts the joyous experience of spring time. Naidu’s best treatment of nature is found in “The Songs of Springtime”. The poem is full of the realistic description of spring season. The fantastic beauty of spring takes her away from the world of sorrow to a heavenly world. She is greatly fascinated by the cheering power of spring season and glorifies the season in most of her poems. Her songs on spring season carry the color and warmth of spring.

Naidu depicts a wide range of circumstances that occur during spring season. The green branches of the banyan tree, the honey birds, the coral and ivory lilies, the ruffle of the kingfisher, the fluttering of butterflies and the blue hills, blooming flowers, singing of the cuckoo and dancing of peacocks at the arrival of spring find vivid description in this poem. She compares the ringing of the temple bell coming through bamboo hedges with the flute of Lord Krishna. She records her joys in these lines,

“O heart let us sing,

The years are before us for weeping and sorrow

To-day it is spring”.

“June Sunset’ describes an Indian pastoral scene.

“An oxcart stumbles upon the rocks,

And a wistful music pursues the breeze

From a shepherd’s pipe as he gathers his flocks

Under the peepal trees”.

The poetess summons her children to share the joys of spring time in these lines,

Children, my children, the spring makes anew,

And calls through the dawn and daytime

For flower like and fleet footed maidens like you,

To share in the joy of its play time. (The Call of Spring)

Naidu's awareness of the transience of the beauty of flowers is expressed in these lines,

“Wild bees that rifle the mango blossom

Set free awhile from the love god's string.....

.....Fire flies weaving aerial dances

In fragile rhythm of flickering gold”.

Naidu portrays a picture of Indian maidens gathering the leaves of henna tree for painting their hands and feet in red color in “In Praise of Henna”.

“Hasten maidens, hasten away

To gather the leaves of the henna tree”

In “In praise of Gulmohar Blossoms” Naidu praises the richness of Gulmohar and says that it exceeds every kind of beauty. She portrays the song of various birds and buzzing of bees in her poem. Flowers are everywhere in her poetry. She portrays the lotus flower which is associated to Indian mythology and takes it as the symbol of knowledge, beauty, purity and creation. In “Nasturtiums” she portrays the radiant bloom of flowers. She also describes various Indian animals like elephant, cow and the serpent realistically. She does not treat snakes as object of terror but of love and adoration. In “The Snake Charmer”, she writes,

“Come, then subtle bride of my mellifluous

Come thou silver –breasted moon beam of desire”.

Naidu is greatly impressed by sun and sunshine and rain. She regards sun as the ‘Lord of Harvest’.

“O giver of mellowing radiance. We hail thee.

We praise thee, O Surya, with cymbal and flute”. (Harvest Hymn)

The poetess depicts changing seasons, rivers and lakes, beaches and forests, flowers and birds realistically in her poetry. In “Coromandel Fishers”, she refers to the sea as the mother of the gulls, the cloud as their brothers and the sea waves as their buddies. The poetess brings a close relation between clouds and rain in “Songs of Radha”. Naidu finds pleasure to observe the scenes and shades of coconut glades, the scent of mango grove and the moon blanched sands. Her fascination towards the color of the sunset is expressed in “June Sunset”. The poem engages the reader in the world of nature.

“Here shall my soul find in true repose

Under sunset sky or dreams....”

In “Hymn to Indra”, she portrays the worship of people for rain,

“Thou, with bountifully torrent and river

Dost nourish the heart of the forest and plain,

Withhold not thy gifts, O omnipotent Giver

Heaven, O Lord of Rain”.

The poetess wants to long alone with nature in “Solitude” to find joy and calm. She wants to escape from the crowded world and take shelter in the world of nature to find solace like John Keats.

M.K. Prasad writes, “Naidu’s poetry is intensely emotional, at times passionate to the point of eroticism and always have a spring like lyricism”.<sup>1</sup>

Naidu depicts about a long list of Indian birds and their ways of living and habits in “Bird Sanctuary”. She vividly portrays the pigeons, the kingfisher, the parrots and other birds. The poem is an allegory to a safe place in nature where all kinds of people live happily. It reveals the sensuous and aesthetic attitude of the poetess towards nature and her ardent faith on the divine.”Coromandel Fishers” depicts the relationship between man and the world of nature. In this poem human emotions are set against the world of nature. It appears that nature as a symbol of beauty brings optimistic view of life.

“Rise, brothers, rise, the wakening skies pray to the morning light,  
The wind lies asleep in the arms of the dawn like a child that has cried all night,  
Come, let us gather our nets from the ashore and set our ships free,  
To capture the leaping wealth of the tide, for we are the kings of the sea”.

Conclusion- Sarojini Naidu is a true devotee of nature and her poetry reflects her ardent passion for nature. She adores every aspects nature in her poetry. Nature description in her poetry is marked by simplicity of style and diction.

### **Reference**

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