

# Sarojini Naidu: - The Voice of Nation A Journey Through Poetry from Mughal Era to Indian Independence

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**Abstract**—India has produced many cerebral and noted women in its history. These women secured a spellbound place in their nation to reflect their works. In one of them is Sarojini Naidu who is ratified as 'Nightingale of India'. Sarojini Naidu is cognized as Political activist, Freedom fighter, Feminist and Poet. Sarojini Naidu was born in 1879 at Hyderabad under British raj. Her parent's name was Aghornath Chattopadhyay and Barda Sundari Devi. Sarojini was bestowed with scholarship by the Nizam of Hyderabad to study in England when she logged a Persian play "Maher Muneer". In England she met Edmund Gosse a noted literary figure. He suggested Sarojini to frame her works with Indian touch and theme. With his encouragement, Sarojini embellished her lyrics with Indian hues, culture, festivals, seasons and vehemence and earned the rubric of Indian Yeats. Sarojini was the ardent partisan of women rights. She advocated to suffragette movement for right of casting vote by women. She was accompanied to jail several times for her patriotic and nationalistic acts. In the bazaars of Hyderabad, The Autumn Song, The Indian weavers, Humayun to Zobeida, The Golden Threshold, Pardanashin and The Palanquin Bearers are the grandiose examples of Indian history and framework. Her lyrics have vivid imagery, sense, natural arrangement and women elucidation with magnolious touch. Sarojini volunteered in freedom fighting with prominent leaders of her era such as Gandhi, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Mohammad Ali Jinnah. She served in plague during British raj and credited as Kesar-i-Hind award by British govt. She renounced the award to protest against Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Sarojini served as the first Indian female president of Indian National Congress because of her outstanding oratory and nationalistic motifs. She was elected as the first woman governor of Uttar Pradesh. Her devotion for her country through her poems is pinnacle and sempiternal. Women's day in India is celebrated on her birthday. Sarojini Naidu was the convey of Women rights and Hindu - Muslim brotherhood.

**Index Terms**—Cerebral, Magnolious, Sempiternal, Spellbound, Vehemence.

## I. INTRODUCTION

"In the battle of liberty, fear is unforgivable treachery and despair, the one unforgivable sin"

Enslavement is considered as curse for the natives of any nation. Their dilemma, dejection and inferiority can shatter humanity and humankind. Foreign power could be destroying the culture, nature and respect of any country. It values a lot if the nation is an olden one and acknowledged for its century's old literature, knowledge, spirituality and prosperity. But under colonial power it seeks for recognition and liberation. India is the land of supreme erudition and philosophical learning around world. Thousands of students across the globe migrated India for discernment, education and enlightenment. They inscribed the glory of India in their records. Many external visitors and scholars appreciated this country for its noted teachings and sermons. The country was its zenith in world-wide identification.

India was not only enriched in cultural, mythological and communal term but also eminent in women consequences. Many noted women made their part on this land in different ways. Indian women were marked sagacious, intellectual and chivalric for hundred years. Women from every sect, creed and caste set an example for the privileges of their people and surroundings. In year 1757, during the battle of Plassey, Robert Clive defeated the nawab of Bengal, SirajUd -Daulah with his French allies. It was the deceitful victory of British East India Company over nawab and the starting of colonial power in India. This colonial power soon extended to the rest of the nation. The British Empire gradually changed into inhumane acts of greed and economic exploitation. National upheaval became the root of Indian people. They were treating as outsiders on their own land.

Nature and natural elements were harmed by foreign

sovereignty just for the sake of their vicious needs. British administration was declining the magnificent past of such great nation. They attempted to create religious hate against the united harmony of Indian background. British East India Company shaped as British empire in nick of time. Their evil intention was to ruin the backbone of India and Indian people. The motherland was casting tears on distraught plight of her children. Thralldom conveys abrasion, affliction and indignity. Emotional pain, unhappiness and distress are the name of foreign rule over any country. Infact, invaders we're not new for India but most of them settled here and adapted the essence of Indian tradition and custom with their religion and rituals and it was the reason that Indian people were not introduced the heinous reality of enslavement in their nation. They shared their social and common life together and entertained distinguished traits of brotherhood and freedom.

British enslavement made clamour in the placid life of Indian people and in their homeland. They were facing discrimination, throes and wretchedness by the invective acts of British government. Their own land became strange to them under British rule and slavery. The air of their nation was not fresh and fragrant as it was full of torture, torment and turbulence. The nation was in dire need of rebellion where people from each section of would come forward to raise their voice against malicious and implacable government. The voice gave new strength to both men and women. They began to fight for national liberation unanimously and their unity for Indian independence amazed British government. Several groups of poets, writers and freedom fighters emerged from nook and corner of the country who pitched high to aware the people of their nation through poems, stories and actions. Men and women were ardently alerting citizens that how barbarous and brutal slavery made them prey of colonial greed. Women crossed the thresholds and became freedom fighter.

In 1879, The prominent Nightingale of India was born at Hyderabad at the abode of Aghornath Chattopadhyay and Barda Sundari devi and the child named as Sarojini. Who later identified as great political leader, freedom fighter, nationalistic, orator and poet. Sarojini Naidu a name is embedded with nationalism and nationalistic. When Sarojini grew up it was the era that was witnessing the uncompassionate

ruling of British raj. The nation was in crest need of motivation and inspiration. Hope was far off to the trodden Indian hearts and black clouds were darkening Indian land. Sarojini gave her attention towards innovative ideas of nationalistic theme and background through her works so that the people of her country could donate their part for liberation. Sarojini was hankered to obtain the previous glory and respect of her nation. She composed many lyrics which were woven with patriotism, duties and call for scarification for nation. She stepped with renowned leaders of her time and proved herself a devoted nation lover and political activist. She summoned to jail many times.

When Sarojini was in England she met Edmund Gosse who was amazed with her literary talent but he advised her to utilize her domestic aspects for literary outputs. Sarojini's poems are full enthusiasm and inspiration for homeland. She not only sprouted the thought of federalism in her people but also collected women power and energy for Indian independence. Annie Besant, kamala Nehru and Vijay Laxmi Pandit were her counterparts in struggle for freedom. Annie Besant set up All India Home rule league in 1916. It is accosted as first conglomerate to demand furnished independence in nation. Annie was the first female president of Indian National Congress. With Annie Besant, Sarojini established Woman's Indian Association for the upgrading of women from each creed and sect. She was the obstinate supporter of women identity. She had given ideological terms of women representation, women rights to vote, women political participation and girl's education. For Sarojini, women are the builders of nation and without their direct involvement no manumission can admitted.

Sarojini political subscription was noticed by renowned leaders as Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi. In 1905, When British authority slyly tried to divide Bengal on the substram of religious hate. Sarojini called her nationals to be united against the meticulous stratagem of colonial control. She compiled patriotic lyrics to evoke the feeling of solidarity and brotherhood and recalled them about the century's old unification of Hindu- Muslim. She orated on chauvinism and incentivized them for their services towards motherland. Her activities for freedom struggle were observed by Gandhi and she was sobriqueted

“Nightingale of India” by him. Sarojini accompanied Gandhi in every movement for country. In year 1920, Gandhi launched an enormous civil disobedience movement in Indian history where he demanded for “Swaraj” and asked Indians to boycott British goods and employment. Sarojini assisted Gandhi with profound devotion and went to jail many and suffered British injustice. She denounced her title of Kesar-e-hind that was honored to her by British rule for her philanthropic acts during Plague. Her loyalty for her nation made her to be the first Indian female president of Indian National Congress at the convocation of Cawnpore in 1925.

Sarojini opposed British enslavement through her works and words. She framed “To India” that is a patriotic poem. Sarojini personified her motherland to awake from her slumber and redefine her past with freedom, bravery and individualism. The lyric had the touch of hope and future of her nation. She wants that her motherland would attain her majestic past. She words to her motherland that she should be left to inspire her citizens to grasp her yore and mystical days of olden days.

“O Young through thy all-immemorial years!  
Rise, Mother, Rise, regenerate from thy gloom And,  
like a high mated with the mated spheres  
Beget new glories from thine ageless womb!

The above lines have nationalistic and patriotic tone to Motherland about her historic values and spiritual importance. She must be reviving her position in world. Let the world know about the vanished chronicles of her. Sarojini tried to evoke countrymen that their motherland would be an independent nation in future and it would have the same place like other nations in the globe.

The future calls thee with a many folds’ sound  
To crescent honours, splendours and victorious vast;  
Waken, O slumbering mother and to be crowned,  
Who once wert empress of the glorious past.

The poet has optimistic sonorous for her future if her homeland gets awake from her careless sleep for her freedom from foreign slavery. Sarojini was as a patriot who ever wanted to spark nationalistic feelings in her people through her vibrant works. Her lyrics as well as her speeches depicted true notions of Indian identity.

Her poems were amalgamation of imagery, colour and natural beauty. In her poems she subjected Indian delightness and delicacy.

Sarojini has three visions for her country which she addressed as Vision of nationalism, Vision of feminine autonomy and cultural restoration. Nationalism conveys the concept of fraternity to fight together against colonial power and subjugation. According to her, both men and women should struggle for liberation and uproot the British thralldom. In 1917, she went Prayagraj and delivered her legendary speech as “vision of Patriotism”. She started her speech with marvellous oration and praised the crowd for their contribution in skirmishes for freedom. Sarojini was an outstanding orator who mesmerized the people around the world. Her magical voice provided her an extra ability to capture the attention of her listeners.

#### Vision of Patriotism: -

Sarojini had encountered the colonial India which was seeking for its laurels under foreign power. Slavery vanished the ability and potency of her people. They were under the darkness of humiliation and pessimism surrounded them like reptile. Only Patriotism can make them liberate from evil coil of enslavement and alien power. Men and we should come forward and sacrifice their lives for their nation. Nationalistic allegiance is above all. Loyalty and faithfulness are the obligations of each citizen. Their fidelity can vanquish their respect and importance from colonial control.

#### Vision to Women empowerment: -

In views of Sarojini, women are nation builders and they should not back in their progress and self-development. Schooling and tutelage can convert their conventional plight into individualism and representation. Sarojini supported women of all sections, sects and society. For her women must have intellectual thinking and resistant for their seduction and neglect in male dominated circle. Women can cultivate full-fledged and sophisticated nation for posterity. Indian women must have identification like European women. She glimpsed a ray of self-capability in women and encouraged them to cross the oriental thresholds and gain gender equality. In her poem “Pardanashin”, Sarojini drew the stirring conditions of Muslim women inside their houses and their control by androcentrism.

Vision of cultural refurbishment: -

Sarojini embellished her lyrics with Indian subjects. She gathered nature, festivals, seasons and bazaars of her nation and tactfully embroidered them in her words. Indian weavers, Bangle sellers, Bazaars of Hyderabad are timeless poems of her. She placed emotions and feelings of her newlywed bride in "Palanquin bearers" and compared her with nature. Harmony, Music and Nature are interwoven with Indian nature and culture. In her lyric "Heena", She has taken "Sawan" that is celebrated by Indian women by applying geometric designs on their palms. They sing, sing songs and dance together. They grind the fresh leaves of Heena and apply on their hands. Nightingale sings and makes the environment magical and wonderful. Sarojini coloured nationalism in her works and made it alive with the succour of her homeland. Her poems emerge the sense of chauvinism in her countrymen.

Wars always have notorious plot to distraught human lives for the sake of Power, Politics and Desires. When war takes place, it makes shattered settings for people. In the mid of 1900, a horrific wish to overcome the world became rapacious terminology of strong countries. Britain was one of them that was involved in such thought. In 1914, World War one was appeared as an enemy of mankind and predecessor of World War second. British government made words with Indian representatives that if Indian soldiers fight by the side of Britain. They would grant freedom to India. Thousands of blameless soldiers were sent to take part in war and they scarified their precious lives to free their motherland from colonial rule. After war British authority cleverly denied for liberation to India. Bodies of Indian soldiers were left without proper cremation and they were not honoured by British domain. It shredded Sarojini a lot and she composed a heart wrenching poem "The Gift of India" in 1917. In this poem she highly criticized British officials for their false and inhumane words for national freedom and made them responsible for the forgotten scarification of Indians soldiers who were not paid tribute by colonial rule. Sarojini personified India as she who said to British imperialism that she has given her grain, land and commodity to them for their aristocracy and materialism. Britishers built their lavish empire from East to West on the skins and bones of her natives. British slavery hollowed their roots and course of life. Her inhabitants became helpless prey in the jaw of

British belligerence. Indian resources are flourishing their political strategy and treasure. Puissant holders were the hunters of placid and naïve people of their ruling nation. They used slave men and women for their vicious purposes.

India as mother rebuked colonial position to bother the relatives of scarified soldiers as they are wailing for the corpses of their beloved ones. Their dead bodies are scattered around war area and no locutions are spoken for them. Indian Army fought for Britishers while their nation is the victim of colonial slavery. The poem is with touch of patriotic and anti-war.

Is there aught you need that hands withhold  
Rich gift of raiment or grain or gold  
t Lo! I have flung from East to West  
Priceless treasures torn from my breast

The lyric denoted sarcasm about the meanful acts of British materialism and luxuriousness and scarification of Indian soldiers.

She travelled many nations to reveal the reality of British rule in India. Torture was the primary assistance of British slavery for Indian people. She visited America in 1928 to address her lecture about Indian greatness, matriarchal upliftment and British dominancy over innocent Indians. It was historic and awestruck news for the rest of world that a woman was going to present her perspectives from great but controlled nation. She expressed her views about sisterhood strength, nationalistic dedication and British engrossment. Her bold and brave demeanour bewildered the world about women robustness in India. Her speech made a vigour impact on her listeners. She echoed the stage with her brawn lines

"Friends, I came from many thousand miles away to you as the ambassador of a very ancient country to the youngest nation of the world. You may surprise that the country which you are taught to regard as conservative should have chosen a woman to be its representative and ambassador."

She sermoned that India is chronicled in the pages of history since the existence of this terra and its recognition doesn't require to have any introduction. For thousands of years, India has been travelled and accounted by many travellers and record makers and they all applauded India for her culture, spirituality,

education and brotherhood but this gigantic land is fighting with brutal subdue of British colonization. She intended that her motherland would be out of foreign sovereignty.

Salt march that was a 24 days padyatrra framed Gandhi from March 12, 1930, to April 6, 1930. It was non-violent civil disobedience against British hegemony on Salt. The gluttonous government imposed irrelevant tax on Salt and deteriorated the lives of immaculate Indians. Sarojini joined Gandhi and enlightened countrymen to be congenial against colonial cartel. She was arrested and sent to jail for patriotic and dedicated acts in opposition to colonial ownership. She went to London with Gandhi to join Roundtable conference. She was among noteworthy male leaders of her period. She accompanied Gandhi in many protests against

British control. Gandhi admired Sarojini for her patriotic submission to her homeland and nicknamed her "Bharat Kokila".

Sarojini was a lauded orator. While delivering speech she used to bedazzle her audiophiles. She was praised by W. B Yeats for her fascinating oration and enchanting lyrics. Sarojini is also known as Indian Yeats. Her lyrics are adorned with patriotic theme, natural decorations and cultural backgrounds. She attempted to edit the past and future of her country through her notable poems. She had contemporary and cosmopolitan poet like Dr. Rabindranath Tagore who also followed nationalism in his poems. But he was not untouched by the lyrical talent of Sarojini Naidu. He lauded "Night girl of India" for her patriotic and innovative works. Sarojini was consecrated to her motherland at core of her heart. She pictured British enslavement in picturesque details. Her political activism upgraded her place among top poets of her time.

Since her childhood Sarojini engaged herself in writing in many vernaculars. She got her interest in poetry by her mother Barda Sundari devi while her father wanted that she would be a mathematics. She had command over Persian, Bangla, English and Telugu. She committed her life and actions only for the welfare of her country and countrymen. Her contribution motivated the soul of Indians to come forward and help to their motherland in such miserable conditions. She endorsed Hindu-Muslim unity in her speeches to edify the rhythm of religious harmony in her nation so that

outsiders could not get the privileges of their discord. During Bengal partition she mustered the people of both sect against machination of British government for theological division. She visited Bengal and insisted to have belief in religious coalition.

Sarojini's poems entertained richness of love, nature and death. Her personal point of view in her works displays her board thinking and prudence hope for national liberation. She advocated for women rights and social delineation in male centred milieu. In her words women could also abolished foreign encroachment from their homeland. Sarojini's works are sempiternal in the history of Indian independence and literature. Her patriotism reinforced her to win the hearts of her country men.

Every year Her birthday is emblazoned as a National Female Day in India to recall her contributions for women welfare and her ardent acts for female progress and upgrading. Sarojini lyrics are the soul of Indian life and lifespan. She insisted to compile national love for countrymen and her affection for her motherland. She was foresighted about Indian development and evolution after independence. Her works are essence of her patriotism against colonization in her period and for further centuries and generations.

"I say it is not your pride that you are a Madrasi, it is not your pride that you are brahmin, it is not your pride that you belong South India, it is not your pride you are a Hindu, that it is your pride that you are an Indian."

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