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HIFIZ IBRAHIM AND QAZI NAZRUL ISLAM'S POETRY ON NATIONALITY

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ABSTRACT

Two of the most dominating personalities in the twentieth century among their own people and beyond, are Hafiz Ibrahim and QaziNazrul Islam, born in two far-off geographical territories, but subscribing to almost identical ideals to realize the rights to self-rule for their own people. Both of them opted for sovereign nationalism. As persons they have many things in common, still it was impossible for them to be wholly interchangeable. What matters most in the guiding inspiration they drew from their personal experience of what they faced in course of growing up as free citizens of this vast Universe. Firstly we will consider in this chapter the Egyptian nationalism and the poetry of Hafiz Ibrahim.

Egyptian Pro-Ottoman flourished in the period from 1882 to 1940 at least in part because of its perceived utility in regard to another nationalist orientation existing in Egypt. This was the concept of Egyptian nationalism or patriotism' identification as part of a geographically distinct, historically unique Egyptian nation rooted in the valley of the Nile. Produced both by the separate political and advanced socio-economic development of Egypt during the 19th century and by the powerful example of European doctrines of patriotism, Egypt centered sense of identity and allegiance developed in late 19th century and early in the 20th centuries.

Introduction

The first explicitself-conscious expression of modern Egyptian patriotism is dated from the 1860's and 1870's. As has been noted, the object of the political and social speculations of the leading Egyptian thinker of that period, Rifa'a al-Tahtawi was clearly depicts, the land and people of Egypt conceived as a distinct unit. Emotionally his attachment to Egypt has been described as 'awarm personal feeling' a love of the land of the Nile and a pride in its glorious part that led him to compose a number of

patriotic poem (*Wataniyyat*), as well as to write two histories of the country. Tahtawi was perhaps the first modern Egyptian writer to view the entire civilized history of Egypt as a continuum and to formulate an embryonic theory of an Egyptian national character that extended from the ancient Egyptian to his contemporaries.

The writers of the school of Muhammad Abduh saw themselves as a middle group, steering a careful course between extremes: on one side the traditionalist on the other side the secularists. Their object was to accept and encourage the institution and ideas of the modern age but link them to the principles of Islam, in which they saw the only valid basis of social thought, the political law accepted by all of which Bakhit spoke. In the process they were led ever nearer to the second of the two extremes, simply because it was this and not the first which presented the real danger. Rigid conservatism would in due course show its incapacity to understand and therefore to control the modern world, and in the end might just wither away. But the ideas of the modern world precisely because they were irresistible, had the power both to destroy and to remake Islamic society – to destroy it if left unchecked, to remake it if harnessed to the eternal purpose of Islam; and in the attempt to harness them; more and more concessions were made to them.

This was seen clearly in attitude of the modernists towards the idea of nationalism, the most potent form in which the modern idea of secular society expressed itself. The relationship between Islam and Egyptian nationalism was not so simple. The idea of an Egyptian nation, entitled to separate political existence, involved not only the denial of a single Islamic political community, but also the ascertain that there could be a various community based on something other than a common religion and revealed law. That the relationship was close and positive was due to the position of Egypt 1882. “It was the British Occupation which fused Islamic modernism with Egyptian nationalism and finally produced as we shall see, a nationalism which was created and led by a close associate of Abduh, but which had in the process abandoned his first principle.”¹

The development of Egypt started in 1870's and the events which ended with the British Occupation of 1882. It gave such ideas a new force over men's minds and a new importance in political life. Around 1879 a number of officers formed themselves into a semi-Secret Party, the National Party, which attracted to itself number of civilians, and it was this grouped, led by Ahmad Urabi Pasha, which became the care of the movement and held power in the months leading upto the occupation. In this period that the newspaper of opinion began to play an important part in Egyptian political life, and there appeared one of the key figures of modern era, the political journalist concerned not so much to communicate ideas as to arouse strong feeling by skillful use of language.

The nationalist attitudes of the leaders of the Urabi Movement of the early 1880's were less exclusively Egyptianist than has sometimes been assumed. “As Alexander

Schlock has shown, the movement's famous slogan 'Egypt for the Egyptian' meant more a native Egyptian participation and sharing in power and privilege with the established TurkoCircassian elite than the total replacement of the latter by the former, and the intellectual formulations of the movements spokesmen demonstrate on developed concept of a secular national state limited to Egypt."²

Nationalism in Poetry of Both Hafiz and Nazrul

Poetry is one of the most limited arts, it can never become new in the way painting, sculpture, and music can. If the poet could revolutionize his medium as the other artist can their materials, and produced a verbal art totally devoid of prose meanings and external associations, and approaching painting or music, then his art would become (as did Dadaism) not merely divorced from life but from language itself. But it will be agreed that most poetry, and certainly most Arabic and Bengali poetry, having for material a more or less 'meaningful' languages especially Arabic and Bengali, of their own nature repudiates a complete break-down between 'new and traditional' 'present' and 'past' and imposes upon even an entirely 'new form' which may be theoretically created in them, the unavoidable continuities of their grammars and usages. The 'newness' of poetry within a specific language is inevitably relative.

The present search complements the study included in the one preceding it and devoted, as the reader will recall, to the legacy of Hafiz Ibrahim and Qazi Nazrul Islam. It is a companion study and a continuation of our exploration of various aspects of achievement in poetry of two pioneering poets. Hence we concentrated on Hafiz and Nazrul's legacy in verse. The study covers i) Colonial experience and response (ii) freedom and nationality and (iii) Linguistic structure.

Their views of poetry went through various stages of developments in response to the changes of their political and social milieu. Hafiz Ibrahim and Nazrul Islam were a handicap against playing the role for which they were by nature qualified. They kept wavering between conflicting political functions, but they always retained-against all odds – a nationalist voices that gave expression to the aspirations of the Egyptian and Indian people. They always been the voices of the masses, harassed by poverty and oppression. Their verses in the light of stylistic studies of literature are more relevant. The 'Grand manner' based on flowery language and mighty feelings alike and another 'familiar realistic mode' resorting to paradox, colloquial expression, striking joke and irony, in its rhetorical sense. The stylistic type becomes, therefore, a way of self-expression as the self finds itself in the midst of a circumscribed social milieu. Poetic effusion, starts with a clear-cut 'I', making their appearance at the very start of the poem, and later emphasized by a striking repetition of the first person singular, in their effusion, the relationship between the addresser 'I' and 'We' is one of harmony. Most important of all their diction is characterized by repetition and symmetry; both were romantic and dramatic in nature.

These poets have a lot of similarities, they were revolutionary and their motto were almost same and opposed the British occupation. The most significant changes brought about by the two poets were in the languages, style and content of poetry. The theme of their poetry were confined to the praise of local deities or of royal or aristocrat patrons, satirical poems, devotional with love and nature, universal brotherhood etc. they made it simple enough to be understood and appreciated by the common people, and they took for their themes the burning problems of life abounded them, such as enslaved conditions, Socio-economic inequality or injustice and freedom, upliftment of women, young, child etc in the Egyptian and Indian Societies.

Conclusion

Both poets took part (direct or indirect) in political and social movements of their times and had similar political views. Both were votaries of Democracy, a system that allows equality of opportunity to every man whatever his colour or creed or economic status, a broadness of sympathy also characterizes both the poets.

Nazrul Islam as a lyric poet and composer of songs, the figure at about four thousand, no other Bengali poet including the great Tagore, wrote so large number of songs as Nazrul Islam did as well as music composer, but Hafiz Ibrahim has very limited works on song and music field.

Differentiation of Hafiz Ibrahim and Nazrul Islam's contributions, Hafiz Ibrahim's prose work is very limited, he wrote only one prose entitle 'Layali Satih ' and translated 'Victor Houg's less miserable', while Nazrul Islam has written, many prose, Drama, Novel, Short Stories etc. But above everything; their contributions are always been ideal, Hafiz Ibrahim never against Allah or Nature but Nazrul Islam sometime against Allah or Nature. One thing is that we find in their contributions, Hafiz Ibrahim some time favored the British but Nazrul Islam never favoured the British. To sum up, the people of Egypt and India are blessed indeed that they lived with two great souls, Muhammad Hafiz Ibrahim and Qazi Nazrul Islam Whom they will ever remember with gratitude.

Suggestions

The most significant changes brought about by the two poets in the language, style and content of poetry. Arabic language is stronger than Bengali language. The theme of their poetry was confined to the praise of local deities or of royal or aristocrat patrons, satirical poems, devotional with love and nature, universal brotherhood etc. it was Hafiz Ibrahim who released the language from the traditional style to modern style. Nazrul Islam also changed the conventional to the modern style; he brought a new style in Bengali language and literature with used Arabic, Urdu and Persian words. They made it simple enough to be understood by the common people and they took for their themes the burning problems of life arounded them such as enslaved conditions of countries, socio-economic inequality or injustice and the inferior status of masses,

freedom, upliftment of women, young, student, child and workers in the Egyptian and Indian societies.

Both were revolutionary poets, Nazrul Islam called the 'Rebel Poet', 'The National Poet' of Bangladesh, it was Hafiz Ibrahim called 'Poet of the Nile' 'The National Poet' of Egypt and 'The People's Poet'. Both poets suffered for their revolutionary beliefs and compositions. In their writings, Hafiz Ibrahim's many poetry was proscribed by the British Government when he was posted in Sudan, where he regarded as exile under the commandant of Lord Kitchener, most of his writings were unpublished until his last breath. Nazrul Islam was condemned to one year rigorous imprisonment and had to suffer much in jail, he even hunger strike for forty days to protest against the harsh in human treatment meted out to the political prisoners, his best five books were proscribed by the British, but above all the persecutions and trails did not break-down their strong wills and spirits.

More researches may be done to bring out more valuable works of both the poets.

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