

# Indian culture in the Lyrics of Subrahmanya Bharathi- The NATIONAL POET OF INDIA

Dr. Lakshmi Aiyar, N

**Abstract**---India the living 'Tower of Babel' is the only Nation where diverse culture, varied languages, different castes, religions, races, communities, languages, customs and traditions sail in one ship of splendid Indian Culture derived from Sanatana Dharma of India. If we browse through 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 emboldening soul of Indian ancient (Sanatana) Culture. It is the Indianess ingrained in the Culture.

Indian literature has been shaped by the crucible of culture. One of the Indian Tamil National patriotic, romantic, mystic spiritual poets, the lover of the nature and humanity Subrahmanya Bharathi thought globally, struggled hard to unite the entire universe to be one and penned his lyrics on the base of Indian Culture. He travelled across Northern India was greatly influenced by Hindi, Sanskrit and Bengali literatures. In fact, he was 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 for sister Nivedita, Tilak and Gandhiji. He savoured the beauty of each state of India and led the chariot of poetry. In his song "Sindhu Nadi" where he honoured all the Indian languages focussing the cultural unity.

This paper highlights the reflections of the Indian Culture in the works of Subrahmanya Bharathi and focuses about the view of Bharathi hailed from vast Ocean of Indian heritage and culture.

**Keywords**---Indian culture, INDIANNESS, Sanatana Dharma, Custom, Tradition, Universal lover, Heritage.

## I. INTRODUCTION

**C**ULTURE is the expression of our nature, expressions, nature of living and it is also widely seen in our literature, walk and talk of our life style, religious practices, enjoyment and every moment of life including the food we eat, dress we wear.... Culture that makes people to become ethical bringing us closer to human values. Ethics is not a static proposition but is constantly in a state of dynamic flux. Now-a-days under the narrow definition of freedom and with the support of rapidly growing web-world we lost our cultural values which are entangled with the ethical values of life like solidarity, natural genuine love, dedication, mercy, forbearance, generosity and even morality.

**Subrahmanya Bharati the National Poet of India:** patriotic, revolutionary, mystic poet and lover of nature, known

as Bharati was born on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1882 in Ettaiyapuram, Tirunelveli Dist., of Tamil Nadu, India. 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. He studied up to 5<sup>th</sup> form in English at the Hindu higher secondary school, Tirunelveli.

His literary interest flourished in an environment where he managed to study and enjoy Tamil epics. As he was deeply inspired by poetry and beauty of nature he could not study further returned home and penned many lyrics. He studied Upanishads, The holy Bhagavad-Gita. He was honored with "Bharati" which means Lordess of knowledge. He spent few years in Banaras and acquired proficiency in other Indian languages Bengali, Hindi. He was greatly influenced by literary works of Bengali. After returning from Banaras he changed the style of dressing. His dress reflected a fusion of various Indian traditions. An orthodox South Indian Iyer, wearing a silk like turban and sporting a rough moustache was quite unusual in those days. He established a Shelly guild and sported the pseudonym "Shelly Dasan" (slave to shelly). He became incisive journalist and edited many journals like "Swadeshi Mitran, Chakra vardhini, and India. He focused mainly on the social reforms. He imbibed the Vedas and was deeply inspired and influenced by the poetry of Shelly, Keats, Walt Whitman and Byron.

## II. INFLUENCE OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

His thoughts were influenced by the Indian philosophers like Vivekananda, Auro Bindo Ghosh, Ramana Maharishi, Raja yogi Tilak and Gandhiji. One side he is the follower of ancient Sanatana Dharma and on the other hand he was a revolutionary poet who struggled hard for the emancipation of Women. His spiritual message was "Lord is one who is Omni present. He considered the Almighty as friend, mother, teacher, father, lover, student, God, child or even as servant which are the features of Krishna devoton cult of Indian philosophy.

Bharathi translated the Bhagavad Geeta into Tamil. He also translated some portions of Rigved, Patanjali's yoga sutra and the Kenopanishad and some selected vedic hymns. In his epic paanchali sapadam he has rendered the Gayatri mantra in Tamil.

Dr. Lakshmi Aiyar, N, is Associate professor, Dept. of Hindi, Central University of Rajasthan, India. (E mail: lakshmiaiyar@curaj.ac.in, jaiyarkrishna@yahoo.co.in, cell: 09680276038)

### III. BHARATHI'S DEVOTION

Bharati seen Krishna the omni present and says

*Kaikai siraginilay nandhalala  
Ninthan kariya niram thodurthaiya nandhalala  
Parrkum marangal ellam nandhalala  
Nindhan pachhai niram thodurthaiya 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.*

He sees his God as his dear child and sings ..."**chinnan chiru kiliye kannamma**

*Selva kalanjiyame!*

*"My fledgeling kannamma!  
Riches infinite!  
You came to redeem me  
And greaten my fame.*

*My nectar-fruit, my child  
My speaking image of Gold  
Dancing in front of me  
For my love's embrace!*

*When your eyes shed tears,  
My pained heart bleeds!  
Aren't you light of my life?  
My life is thine."*

**Kshama guna:** One of the important aspects of Indian culture is **the kshama** or the forgiveness .

Bharathi says "**Pagaivanukkaruvai Nannenje!**  
**Pagaivanukkarulvai**" the English translation for it.

*"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."*

Bharati's aim was to spread unity irrespective of castes, religion and community. In his poem vandemaataram" he questions "what is the life without unity? Division only spells ruin. He stresses the power of Unity which is the theme of Indian culture. **Give and take policy or aadan-pradan** or mutual cooperation is the life of Indian culture. He believed that when two states or two countries come closer, cultural

unity develops which strengthens their political and economic relationship .Though Bharati was Tamilian he wished the progress of the entire states of India. He wished there must be cultural ,mutual and economic exchange among the states of India. Bharathi in his song "Sindhunadi inmisai" he sings.

*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"*

*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 poets 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.

Thus Bharathi's wish has turned true today as T.v and radio and satellite channels.

**Respect to women** plays a vital role in the ethical values of Indian culture and tradition. In Vedas it is said that "Yatra naryastu poojyante Tatra Ramante Devatha" . "God dwells, where women are worshipped. He penned so many poems on women's emancipation. In Indian orthodox society women were treated as inferior by the male chavanists in spite of their nobility and intelligence. Bharati wrote Penngal Vidudalai Kummiyadi, (Celebration of women emancipation) and Pudumai Penn' Modern lady or Millianeum lady he describes her. Bharathi is the first poet who fought for the right of women education. P.s. mani says "Bharati speaks in words of thunder and lightning on women's freedom. Bharathi condemned child marriage and the evil custom of old men marrying young women. He fully supported widow re-marriage. In Pudumai penn ,which hails the modern woman who wants to throw in to the fire the scrolls of bondage and slavery. He described the glory of woman hood as "Let us rejoice in praise of womanhood,

*Let us dance to the cry of victory to woman!-  
For woman is the sanctified union  
Of the mother's fame and the spouse's name.*

Bharathi says "The days of those who thought it was sin for women to touch the books are no more and have been put to shame,".

He dreamt that modern lady must be

*“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?”*

Indian culture always stresses the “**Vasudaika kutumbakam**” means the entire universe is one family. . He himself stated “I am the follower of Bhartruhari who said all the world is one family. I follow the maxim of Darwin who said ‘Mankind and all animals are one’”. His motto is “Loka samasta sukhino bhavantu”. He wished that “*This world is one Male, female, mortal, immortal  
Snake, bird, air, sea  
Life, death-every thing is one.  
Let all lives attain joy  
May all bodies be rid of ills  
Feel all senses becoming one  
Hail the self!  
May the nector be a joy for ever.*

Freedom in Bharathi's songs is an elemental thirst, a basic need of the human soul. 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 woman, the cobbler, the fisherman and the hunter who ever being exploited in the society.

*“Viduthali, viduthalai, viduthali  
Pariyariiku mingu thiya  
Pulaiyariikum viduthali  
Parava roadum kuravaruku  
Maravarukkum viduthalai //vidudalai//*

*Thirami konda theemaiyatra  
Thozil purithu yavarum  
Thertha kalvi gnam yeidi  
Vazvam intha naatilai”  
Freedom Freedom Freedom  
To the pariaars, 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.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Thus Indian culture reflects in his entire works. Bharathi was not ,of course unmindful of conditions that had to be established if freedom was to come and endure.He wished a Country like India with hoary traditions, should be free from poisonous superstitious beliefs, free from the fragment made by race .caste,creed and language .Thus Indian motto “Vasudaiva kutumbakam “reflects in his entire works.

Asatho Ma Sadgamaya

Tamasoma jyothirgamaya

Mrituyrma Amritam gamaya

(Lead me from the Unreal to the real

From darkness to light

From death to immortality)

“LOKA SAMASTA sukhino Bhavantu (Entire universe may be filled with happiness)

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Poems of Subramania Bharathi, A selection translated by P.S. Sundaram -Vikas publishing House,pvt.Ltd.calcutta.
- [2] The Voice of Bharathi, Published by Bharathi Tamil Sangam (Calcutta) -Edited by M.Srinivasan.
- [3] Bharathiyar Kavithaigal (Tamil)Manivasagar padhipagam,Chennai.
- [4] On Bharathi , K.Kailasapathi, New centuryBook House, Pvt.Ltd, Sidco Industrial Estate, Chennai-98.
- [5] Paper by Lakshmi Aiyar in the proceedings of The National seminar on “Image of India in world literature”. - Published by Center for Comparative Literature Dept.of Culture and Heritage,cochin university of science and Technology, Cochin.
- [6] A comparative study of Bharathi and Vallathol -By Bala Subramanyam, sirpy, Bharathiar University.
- [7] Comparative Indian Literature-Some perspectives-Indira Nath Choudry.
- [8] Dutt,C.C.The Culture of India as envisaged by sri Aurobindo.
- [9] Poems Of Subrahmanya bharathi (English &Tamil) Prema Nanda kumar.
- [10] Meiyappan,S.Bharathiar Kavithaigal,Annamalai University.
- [11] Polivka,S(Ed0.Socialist community and India's Cultural Ties. Web sites : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subramanya\_Bharathi oldpoetry.com/oauthor/show/Subramania\_Bharati www.discovertamilnadu.net/subramanyabharathi.html [www.worldlingo.com/ma/enwiki/en/Subramanya Bharathi](http://www.worldlingo.com/ma/enwiki/en/Subramanya_Bharathi), neyveliweb.tripod.com/bharathy.htm -