

The Victorious Woman (Poem) - Rabindranath Tagore**Dr. M.L. Agrawal***Assistant Professor, Department of English, Govt. E.V.P.G. College Korba, India***Abstract**

Tagore belongs to a rich three dimensional historical reality and the traditional culture of India. His works have been translated into many languages all over the world. As a writer he was a restless experimenter and innovator and enriched every gender. He was a rebel against formal education and yet was a great educationalist. The Victorious Woman written on January 14, 1896 tells us a mythical story about cupid who shoots his arrow of love at Lord Shiva so that he may fall in love with Parvati but with a deviation. The Victorious Woman is victorious not only over the god of love but also over the poet himself. She is victorious not by the virtue of her sensual power over him but because of her power over his spirit. She is his Muse, his 'manasi' almost his 'jeevan data' or the deity of his life. With this I'd like to state that even Tagore had in his mind that women are victorious and we would have missed a delightful episode if translations were not done. I would like to add a few lines of mine to put forth what Tagore has denoted in his poem.

Key Words: Rabindranath Tagore, The Victorious Woman

Tagore belongs to a rich three dimensional historical reality and the traditional culture of India. He is India's greatest poet with a brilliant creative genius. His works have been translated into many languages all over the world.

Tagore wrote poetry throughout his life besides working for the welfare of the people in his country. His life was densely packed with growth, activity and self renewal as a tropical rainforest and his achievements are outstanding. As a writer he was a restless experimenter and innovator and enriched every gender. His work in Bengali is a monumental heritage for people who read Bengali. He was a prolific writer, a singer, a painter and many things more.

He was a rebel against formal education and yet was a great educationalist. He believed the human beings to be a part of the universe and not a set apart from it. He realized that human beings must live in harmony with the universe if they wanted to survive. Tagore has achievements in a diversity of fields assuring his high qualities. He was a pioneer in many fields and therefore it became a natural point of reference. His poetry is characterized by an impressive wholeness of attitude, a loving warmth, a compassionate humanity, a delicate sensuousness, an intense sense of kinship with nature, a burning awareness of the universe of which we are a part. The Nobel Prize in 1913 brought him international fame.

The Victorious Woman written on January 14, 1896 tells us a mythical story about

cupid who shoots his arrow of love at Lord Shiva so that he may fall in love with Parvati but with a deviation. Tagore believed that women should be uplifted and should have equal rights and most probably this is the reason for the change in the mythological aspect of the poem. In his poem, Cupid goes with the same purpose but due to the beauty of the young woman he himself falls in love and becomes the slave of this beautiful girl and gives his love in offering-----

“Speechless with wonder, his head bowed down

At her feet laid his offerings of adoration---“

Tagore most probably derived the idea of the defeat of Cupid from the story of the destruction of Cupid by Lord Shiva. “The Victorious Woman” a poem from Tagore’s book Chitra is said to have as its source an inspiration from an episode in Sanskrit prose classic of the 7th century “Kadambari”. This work is considered to be a prose romance or could also be called a 7th century novel, wherein the story within the story of the lives and incarnations resemble the spanning of generations in a modern novel.

Tagore’s poem has an interesting relation to the source of his inspiration. The bathing woman is modeled on the Gandharva Princess Mahasweta in Kadambari who with her milieu comes to bathe in the lake Achchoda and falls in love with a hermit Pundarika who also returns her love. But in Tagore’s poem the bathing woman does not fall in love but scores a victory over the God of love himself. There is a twist from the original text, where the love god is not in existence but in Tagore’s poem the

mischievous god of love appears everywhere.

The woman is victorious over the love god because she does not need his help in any way. She can win her beloved by means of her spiritual power and does not need the power of erotic attraction. And when the love god realizes this he falls to her feet in surrender. Such ideas are manifest in Tagore’s writings. This adds as it gains strength from the facts of his personal life. It can almost be said that the myths of his heritage and the interactions of the facts of his personal life have given him greater understanding of the female species.

The Victorious Woman is victorious not only over the god of love but also over the poet himself. She is victorious not by the virtue of her sensual power over him but because of her power over his spirit. She is his Muse , his ‘manasi’ almost his ‘jeevan data’ or the deity of his life. She can even inspire him dead in an instant.

W.B. Yeats after reading Tagore’s translation of Geetanjali writes in his introduction “--- Tagore writes music for his words and one understands at every moment that he is so abundant, so spontaneous, so daring in his passion, so full of surprise because he is doing something which has never seemed strange, unnatural or in need of defense.” (Geetanjali).

And with this I’d like to state that even Tagore had in his mind that women are victorious and we would have missed a delightful episode if translations were not done. I would like to add a few lines of mine to put forth what Tagore has denoted in his poem.

“Woman! On mysterious woman,
Wriggling to rise out of the mists,
Of drooping silence
To make a place for herself.
Poets write about her
About her beauty divine
But her depths---
Can they ever disclose?
She is beauty undefined
A listener unrealized—
For her heart encloses

Feelings, no man can disclose.
A symbol of victory she stands
Which no man can understand.”

- *Madhavi*

Translation plays a very important part in any literature and if the poems of Tagore would not have been translated the world would have had a void in literature for his work carries the words that give us wealth and wisdom.

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