



PATRIOTIC AND ALTRUISTICALLY REVOLUTIONARY HUES IN GHULAM AHMAD MAHJOOR'S POETRY

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Abstract

Kashmir is generally considered a Dardic language written in Devangiri script and Perso-Arabic script. Presently it has myriad poets who enriched its literature in diverse ways. But, Mahjoor is one of the poets who left the indelible mark on Kashmiri literature. History is witness that the people of (J&K) suffered long under different rulers, including the Sikhs, Afghans and the Hindu Maharajas. They cried for independence in Kashmir giving numberless valuable sacrifices. This sad state of the people of Kashmir ineffaceably shaped the mental makeup and poetic oeuvre of this poet. Mahjoor immortalized the sufferings, struggle and victory of the people of his motherland in his poetry. He gave voice to the oppressed masses of Kashmir to disseminate his patriotic and revolutionary messages to people of the land so that they are awakened and fight for their esteem, freedom and dignity. The present study attempts to bring forth the philanthropic and revolutionary elements in the poetry of Kashmiri language poet Peerzada Ghulam Ahmad popularly known as Mahjoor (Trans : Discarded, Cast aside) whose poetry, has love of motherland and welfare of his people as the main thrust to express through his verse. It is need less to mention that Kashmir has faced the worst kind of bondage and cruelty from rulers that the sensitive poets like Mahjoor can't go unaffected. This study attempts to bring out richness of his revolutionary and patriotic fervor as well as his benevolent expression of love for people present in his oeuvre. He has not only recorded the cruelties but suggested ways out of them which shows him as a harbinger of change in political, economical as well as social front making poetry his medium of message. His poetry is replete with the social and economic awakening.

Keywords: Motherland, Revolutionary, Discarded, Oeuvre, Disseminate, Oppressed, Dignity, Patriotic, Freedom, Harbinger.

INTRODUCTION

Writing for a purpose 'The Poet Of Kashmir' Peerzada Ghulam Ahmad who adopted 'Mahjoor' as his poetic pseudonym was born on 11th August in 1885, at village Mitrigam 38 km away from Srinagar, in the district of Pulwama (J&K) started writing poetry under the influence and guidance of Bismil Amritsari and famous Urdu writer Shibli Namani. Determined to write in his native language he used the simple diction and syntax in his writings. A 20th century poet of Kashmir whose poetry is divided into three collections – Kalam-e-Mahjoor, Payam-e-Mahjoor and Salaam-e- Mahjoor. His collection Payam-e-Mahjoor contains those poems which have either the Kashmiri man or Kashmir the land as their theme or central thought. Mahjoor felt closer to the earth and the common man of the valley and made the love of his motherland and its people major thrust in his poetry.

Mahjoor introduced a new style into Kashmiri poetry and expanded it into previously unexplored thematic realms. He is the most known and sung poet of Kashmir. He is called the Shair-e-Kashmir (The Poet of Kashmir). His themes were the woes and miseries of the people and the depiction of the beauties of the nature in his land. He was a philanthropist and gave voice to the unheard fellows. He also instilled the hope of freedom and liberty to his oppressed people. "Through his verses in Kashmiri, Mahjoor contributed to the sentiment and movement of freedom struggle during the tyrannical and autocratic Dogra regime. His poems gave momentum to the struggle and served as a clarion call to the masses to free their nation from the chains of slavery." (Farooq Peer Gk)

The turbulent Kashmir of 1931 did not leave him untouched and the poet in him was now stirring with patriotic fervor. Addressing his people as gardeners, he expresses his patriotic fervor in the poem "Walo Ho Baag-Wano" (Arise, O Gardener) and stresses upon his fellow countrymen to decorate their nation and land with flowers of freedom. Here the poet impresses upon them to stand and fight for your rights and keep alive your traditions based on honesty, truthfulness and dignity. Much like Urdu poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz he breathes new life into their slumbering souls. The state force arrested Mahjoor for writing these lines, but was soon released:

*Wala Ho Bage-wano Naw Baharukh Shan Paidakar
Phalan Gull Gat Karan Bulbul Tututhi Samane Paidakar*

Trans.

**Arise O, gardener! Create the glory of new spring!
Make flowers bloom and bulbuls sing – createsuch haunts!
The dew weeps, and your garden lies desolate;
Tearing their robes, your flowers are distracted.
Breathe life again into the lifeless flower and the bulbul!**
(Trans. by Triloki Nath Raina)

Geographically, Mahjoor was well aware about Kashmir. In a beautiful poem, “Gulshan Watan Chu Souni” Mahjoor expresses his love for his nation and breathes out the idea symbolically and that too with sincerity and pride that there is nothing dear to him than his nation and he wishes fervently it to prosper and become a dignified nation.

*Bulbul wananchuposhan
Gulshan watanchusouni*

Trans:

**The bulbul sings to the flowers:
'Garden is our land!'**
(Trans. by Mohd. Nageen)

Mahjoor believes that love of one's nation should be the prime duty of everyone. He felt that love of one's homeland is as important as one's (Imaan) religious faith.

*Mohabbat pan ne watnukpuraasunshobiinsaanus
Czemaanmeanzulus watak thyothiimaanpaidakar*

Trans:

**One should have love for one's Nation to the brim
Believe, that you will reach your destination, if you have such faith**
(Trans. by Mohd Nageen)

Mahjoor's poetry symbolically infuse the revolutionary spirit in the life of an ordinary man and the land he belonged to so that the man may always hope for the best in the midst of the miseries and hardships he is made to bear by the oppressors. He believed that unless and until the Kashmiri peasant and poor labourer will not try to stand on their own legs will not be able to translate their dream of freedom into a vivid reality. The poet gifts them with an optimistic and promising future ahead. Mahjoor's poetry was sung and read in every household because “his songs and his poems are the cherished property of every man, woman and child, living between Baramulla and Pir Panchal. If Mahjoor writes a poem today, it will be on the lips of the populace within a fortnight.... laborers bending in their ceaseless toil, all will be singing it.” (Balraj Sahni, Vishva Bharti Quarterly Nov. 1938) Mahjoor knew that it is only through his poetry that he can send a revolutionary and most need message to his people let's see how he inspires them indirectly:

*Faakifikre shongmutimazdoortrawgaflatgaczhusaar
Wothsapudustaadzulmanchukhczekormutnaabkar
Wothgareebimormutchukhhoshkarsanbaaldum
Woth won kootkaalrozakhzulmwasakhtihundshikaar*

Trans.

**O starved but slept labourer, shun the sloth and wake up
Stand! The oppression has rendered you useless
Stand! Poverty has crushed you, stir yourself and come to senses
Stand! how long will you be victim of this brutality and misery**
(Trans. By Mohd Nageen)

His love for the majestic beauty of the land and his attempts to invite one and all to retain the dignified status of his motherland is superbly expressed in his poetry. He wanted that all the people of his land should be ready to suffer and sacrifice so that the land may prosper. Mahjoor believes that the love of one's land should be the prime duty of every one. He wished that everyone should do his best for upkeep of the values and rich culture and live in unity. However at times Mahjoor says one thing in the garb of the other. The symbol of flowers refer to the harmony among many religions and brotherhood. Everyone should keep the values alive and resplendent; he depicted his concerns about human values even in his love poetry. “Those who dismiss his poetry as hackneyed poetry of rose and bulbul are mistaken... He uses the rose and bulbul with other flowers and song birds as symbols with multiple significations” (G R Malik 56)

**Come to the garden early, and mark
Who helps keep flowers in trim?
And makes them - bloom ere break of dawn**

(Trans. by TrilokiNath Raina)

His poems composed in peoples' language using their syntax and their style he always felt the pain himself which he saw around. "He brought the language of poetry as near as it is poetically admissible to the language of the common man"(GR Malik 56)He sympathized with the oppressed laborers and pleasant community who had to toil hard to earn their bread and butter. The people in winter used to go to Panjab facing the odds to earn a penny. Their miserable condition finds expression like:

*Maine bachnikmaene garay yodaashahkanhintizaam
Faerhan ma wand raechandarbadar baekaarsaen*

Trans:

**If there are the arrangement of any livelihood here
The desolate people need not run from pillar to post for a penny.
(Trans. By MohdNageen)**

Mahjoor knew well that without the support of any other nation the freedom from dogra rulers is only possible when the people will remain firm and determined in their resolution and they have to fashion their destiny themselves by finding the ways to throw away the yoke of oppression in unity he laments this helplessness like this

*Kari kusbulbulaazadpanjrasmanzczenaalanchukh
Cze pan nay dastepanininmushkilasaankar*

Trans:

**Who will set you free o, nightingale, you are in cage, crying in vain
O you, find the solution to your woes by yourself
(Trans. By MohdNageen)**

However like P.B.Shelly he transfused the revolutionary blood in his countrymen so that a wave of freedom may be invited:

*Wothnazarkar gash aawkhootinkilaabukaftaab
Choondodmut bag falepaigaamhethaawnobahaar
Wothrewajenhenzpraine yemzanjeerchatt
Near maedansandardarrtrawczete ban shahsawaar*

Trans:

**Stand! See the light, the sun of revolutions has risen
Your withered garden will bloom again, says the spring
Stand! Break the chains of bondage and dead habits
Shun fear, be courageous, you too will be a rider (fighter)
(Trans. By MohdNageen)**

Mahjoor wrote a popular prayer mostly recited in school by the children which shows that he wanted that the people of his land should always remain loyal to the Creator and believes that the salvation of his masses from all kinds of woes and miserable conditions is possible only by surrendering one's will to God. Interestingly Mahjoorwishes that knowledge and wisdom should prevail in his homeland:

*Sahibo sath chum maechaeni
Wathmaeaslichhaawtam.....
Kootkaalarozebayzaan
Zaenuendmuschaawtam*

Trans:

**O God, I look to you for help
Show me the righteous path
How long can I afford to remain ignorant
Let me drink from the nectar of knowledge!
(Trans. By MohdNageen)**

Undoubtedly like Wordsworth ,Mahjoor'sghazalas and nazms soothe, heal and inspire miserable Kashmiris especially those belonging to the lower rung in society like meagerly paid laborers and hardworking farmers. Same is true of the beauty which his motherland possessed, a cure and therapy far better than pills and potions for man who is bent with the hardships and grieves of life.

**A drink of morning dew relieves
The heart that's bowed with grief -
It's only the garden where the sick get healed
(Trans. by TrilokiNath Raina)**

The poetry of Mahjoor springs from his altruistic self who always wanted a change for the betterment of his society. Mahjoor wrote about ordinary people- farmers and laborers and their ordeals and upliftment were the main content of his poems. Because of his genuine interest in and love for rural people, Mahjoor emerged ultimately as a most sung poetic sage of Kashmir. Mahjoor persuaded the people to rise, urging them to fight for their own salvation and be ready to face hardships that might befall them. He believed that Muslims and Hindus are milk and sugar and they should be always put together to have the better taste. He used many other striking metaphors to send his message of communal harmony. "Mahjoor always laid stress on maintaining the secular character of the freedom movement and pleaded for restraint, mutual respect and tolerance when whole of India was suffering from riots and communal fire was raging in the sub-continent." (Saif-ud -in Soz GK)He wants harmony all the time:

1. O' my Lord

Grant me the boon of such heavenly

Words;

Words; that quell hatred and mistrust

Words; that evoke love and affection

2. Ye! Native of this Nation

Retrospect and Remember

The inspiring acts

Of sacrifice and fortitude

By Muslims for Pandits

By Pandits for Muslims

Like that of

QudaGojwari and SirijKak!

His poetry, perhaps for the first time, in Kashmir is concerned about national resurgence and is considered herald of didactic poetry in Kashmiri language. He was the first poet of Kashmiri language to incorporate themes closer to life and times of his age.

CONCLUSION

Mahjoor the man of sensitive tendencies brings forth his higher concepts and sends valuable messages of love, patriotism, mutual respect, values and purpose of life to the world especially to the people of his land inspiring them to shed the yoke of bondage both political and economic at once to live a better life full of dignity. He judiciously emerged as a revolutionary. His belief in unity, religious harmony and fellow feeling, coupled with the simplicity and commonness, made his message more appealing and universal. "Mahjoor became the first remarkable poet of nature and patriotism in Kashmir" (GR Malik 55) With his melodious strains, composed in peoples' language with undeniable originality, he strode the 20th century stage like a colossus and inspired generation of men and women and was happy to see his land free from Dogra rulers:

Mahjoor, throw away this belt of bondage!

From now, you are free as a bird.

Your heart commands, your voice obeys!

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