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"OMAR KHAYYAM" IN THE EYES OF QAZI NAZR-UL-ISLAM

At the very outset, may I offer my respect to this august audience assembled on the occasion of the 'persian scholars congress' for offering me an opportunity to present a short discourse on immortal poet 'Omar Khayyam – in the eyes of revolutionary Bengali poet Qazi Nazr-ul-Islam'.

Nazrul Islam had full command over Arabic and Persian and had studied many Persian works of Persian poets like Hafiz and Omar Khayyam.

'Omar Khayyam probably needs no introduction like the glorious sun rising from the snow-clad peaks of the Himalays. He is famous for his excellent Rubaiyat / Quatrains as well as his vast knowledge in the field of Mathematics, Geometry, Physics, Astronomy and Philosophy in the whole world. Generally speaking specially the occidental world came to know about the 'Rubaiyat' through the translation of Fitzgerald in 1859.

Nazrul Islam came to know about Khayyams 'Rubaiyat' at an early age through his study of Arabic and Persian language. He believes that all the attributed 'Rubaiyat' belong to Omar Khayyam. He translated only few selected pieces of Rubayat.

The appreciation of the poetic beauty and genius that initiated at this time continued to influence his love songs and love-poems in directly and indirect manner through out his writing carrer.

Nazrul Islam shared the view of some scholars that Omar Khayyam was a 'Sufi'. While some took him as 'Epicurean'. He however never bothered for such stags. He believed that Khayyam was a different kind of a thinker of the ascetic order. He was disguising himself so that others may not recognized him. He did not drink wine but he was drinking some spiritual nectar of a different kind, a source of eternal enjoyment.

'Saqi' found in his poem may not refer to an original beauty but it is usage of the poetic diction found in Persian poetry and it refers to spiritual guide which is the source of all enjoyment.

Omar Khayyam has written poems over a number of years that he has maintained a continuity of style.

The idea expressed by Khayyam in the following Rubai have been very nicely described:

1. Isar-i-Jahan chunanki dar deftar -i- mast
2. Guftan Natawan zaunke wabale sare Maast
3. Chun Neest darun Mardumi Nadan Ahli
4. Guftan Natawan haranche dar Khatir -i- Maast.

The secrets of this world which are in my volume cannot be spoken, for they may be calamitous; as there is none meritorious in this assembly of the foals, seretc may not be revealed, all that are in my mind.

In his 'Rubaiyat' Omar describe the pains apprehension, hopes and hope lessness of man, who sees himself encountering the enigma puzzle of death and life.

In his another Rubai, Khayyam wrote:

1. "Saqi, Qadahi ki kare Alam Nafasi Ast yar Shaadi Azoo
Yek Nafs un Neez Bari Ast
2. Khush Bash ze harche peeshat Aayed ze jahan
3. Hargiz Nashavad chunanki dilkhar Kasi Ast.

"O! Saaqi give me the flagon of wine, for the world and its business are but far a moment, and if a moment joy from its is your lot, it is enough; be happy with whatever you get from the world, for it does not fulfill every man's desire".

The chief characteristics of Khayyam's 'Rubaiyat' namely:

1. Spirituality;
2. Disguise ;
3. Veil ;
4. Continuity of Iranian style of Writing.

Who never through of writing love poetry without the images of saqi, wine and flower. Nazrul Islam found him tormented by the eternal querries of life, life beyond death, sorrows, sufferings, happiness and thought that the only escape from such pains in through 'Sarab' and 'Saaqi'.

In Nazrul Islam poetry we also find such type of symbol and metaphor.

Nazrul Islam wrote:

What a wonderful tune you have rendered – O my bird of distant land. This is not a music but a tune wrapped in wine. Listen O my dearest 'Saqi'.

He also wrote some melodious songs. As an example:

By the use of the word 'Bulbuli' derived from the Persian word Bulbul. The influence of Khayyam's poetics on Qazi Nazrul Islam is quite apparent.

In short, Omar Khayyam in the eyes of Nazrul Islam was the contimity of the eternal philosophy rendered through his mystic 'Rubaiyat'. Having being influenced by Khayyam he undertook the task of introducing Khayyam's poetry to the people of Bengal and for this he used Bengali another one of the sweetest languages of the world. By doing this Nazrul Islam enriched Bengali literature.