

Momtaz Renu: A Missionary Poetess

by Mir Mostafizur Rahman

YES, it was a unique enigma. I came across a shocking and pitiful incident in September, 1992. I observed that for a petty temporal achievement one could grab dishonesty and falsehood. I used to have a positive impression about human beings. Through that bitter experience, I got the scope to learn about the black side of human being. I was seriously thinking how could they receive purification. A question was constantly hammering my mind 'Could it be possible to refine their nature through showing love, affection and sympathy?' A sentiment of pain and ecstasy invaded my soul all along and gradually I became a close observer of nature to get rid of the melancholy. The magnetic beauty of nature absorbed me fully' said Mrs. Momtaz Renu who likes to present herself as a spiritual preacher, not as a poetess or a lyricist. She was discussing the philosophical vision of her poetry. In her poem titled 'Shwarga Shishar Alok Parash Deep', the poetess says:

O divine rays of truth,
Come to this earth
And make them purified
Through your reflection of love
and hope
As they are living in the dominion of
Lies, pride and falsehood,
Please do come, O heavenly spirit.

Following that bitter experience all of a sudden I heard some sounds from the air—some melodious music, some whispering as if the sounds came from a heavenly musical instrument. I visualised some pictures, some images. I began to write down the words I heard. At first I failed to trace the words because those were from Urdu and Hindi. Then I began to learn Gazals. I was always in a melancholy mood as I did not receive anything in my mother tongue. A feelings of dissatisfaction gripped my,' said Renu in an exclusive interview with renowned poet Asad Chawdhury in the 'Prachhad', a prestigious magazine programme of Bangladesh Television.

Her first poetry book 'Adhare Jale Dip', a collection of her 242 poems and first audio cassette 'Dip Jale Dip Nive', a collection

of her nine songs were published recently. It is noteworthy that she has composed those music and gave voice herself. In this connection a publication ceremony was held on 15 Baishakh of 1409 of Bengali calendar. Renowned intellectuals like Prof. Emajuddin Ahmed, Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University, Prof Syed Monjurul Islam of English Department of Dhaka University, renowned poet Asad Chawdhury, and Dr Badruddoza Chawdhury, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament expressed their views on her book. Meanwhile notable musician Prof. Monirujjaman discussed her songs. Her second poetry book is to be published within a short time.

She is a priest of nature wanting to show her healing power to man. She is a visionary wanting to have a visitor of the spirit behind nature. Her attitude towards nature is unique.

She observes life or spirit beneath the eternal beauties or phenomenon of nature. She links nature with man and impaled human association and minds to natural landscapes. She delicately harmonises nature with the moods of human life and most artistically paints nature's changing and complex moods. As she utters in the following verses.

Days and Nights—the hard,
harsh lances of the Sun
And the somber folds of shadowed recesses embrace

Each other alternately, mingle
unconditionally—relentless

She has the power of shaping the beauty which she sees. There is a personal touch, the individual surprise, the unique way, the unlimited snapping which provokes imitation in her works.

We feel in her work the immediate pressure of an original, personal creator, who has her own special manners with things and words. This is one of the tests of genius, like the great poets, every line is alive with distinction. Her adoration of beauty is sincere and intense. It is evident in the following lines:

Etherised from far away—
The tragic note of the flute
Reminds her of the beloved
Melancholy grips her and
She gazes into the sky,
A stormy wave inside the heart.

She has a rare power of painting as if in a flash, an accurate picture in a word or in a phrase, she can create an excellent pictorial effect for an atmosphere often flowering in a lonely world. Instances of such pictorial expressions are proclaimed in the following lines:

Come on, O fairy,
Let's jump into the lake.
In the limpid water
float the restless lotuses
They sparkle on eyeballs
While the stars twinkle.

Besides she has a sure ear for music and rhythmic harmony which contains a melodious tone.

Her poetry has a twilight quality, a subtle suggestiveness along with soft ease, airy beauty and a charming romantic quality. In her poems and lyrics, she deals with the sacred relation between man



and woman and portrays its divine linkage with the creator.

Her mission

We can trace her mission by analysing her poetic works as well as lyrical creations.

Poetry and philosophy are two aspects of the discovery of truth and therefore of the growth of the human mind. Truth is eternal, but in order that its phenomenal aspects may be grasped in Time, it has to be expressed in entities which are apprehensible to the senses.

Poetry and philosophy are both means of apprehending and expressing in different ways the truth whose phenomenon is unchanging but whose existential aspects are differently interpreted throughout historical time and according to individual sensibility. There are at least two broad ways of approaching truth—the intuitive

and the rational—and even in the rational way of approaching truth, there is at the beginning an intuitive moment which is rationalised, analysed and pursued throughout all its ramifications in the case of the philosopher, and expressed in sensuous concrete terms in the case of the artist. Poetic truth the revelatory power of words, has taken various aspects throughout the centuries.

With the Symbolists—and here we come to the background of Renu's poetry—the indefinable moment of poetic truth, 'the thing in itself' can only be suggested or hinted at, without narrative elements or didacticism, through music images and rhythms.

Her works reveals conflicts, conveying the struggle for liberation's and the mystical experiences of a soul which thirsts for the Almighty and which has found at last the union it was longing for.

Renu's philosophy regarding life is universal. She preaches the message of love and purity which exists between the Almighty and his creations. Love and sympathy can change human nature. Through love and sympathy one can be transformed from dishonest; to honest, from bad to good. If we observe the creation of the Almighty closely we can see that everything is unified with the bond of love.

Love exists between Sky and Ocean, between the Earth and the Moon.

If a man is rejected he should not be frustrated or depressed because Almighty is there to reconcile him.

If he can keep patience and leads his life honestly he must be revived. Everyone will have reward before or after death if he leads a fair life based on honesty and truth," says Renu.

Lastly, Renu, the poetess with a spiritual mission, wants to unite all creature, into a common bond of love and sympathy. Her art consists of her minute observation and accurate and clear reproduction of the senses of nature. There is no detail that escapes her keen eye.

At times her description is so accurate that it becomes almost photographic.