Myers’s Presentation of Political Scenario of Akbar’s Time

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Myers’s India novels also deal with some very vital issues of life, for instance, love, sex, marriage, divorce is those which affect all. The problem of divorce was still complicated. one had to depend on the Royal permission to obtain divorce In The pool of Vishnu Myers relates Hari’s problem:

"His problem linked itself on one side to the question whether he had any chance of obtaining a divorce from his wife. There was not much hope of success, for the Emperor's sanction would be necessary and it was to be expected that the rigor of Akbar's presents views of marriage would be stiffened by energetic protests from Ambissa hereself."2

Thus, Myers’s presentation of political scenario of Akbar’s time is not an abnormal feature in monarchy where intrigues and conspiracies are hatched, political rivalries are exposed, and tables are turned. During Akbar’s reign too factions and parties gained momentum. There was a party which whilst remaining loyal to Akbar’ cherished the hope that the emperor would make concessions to Salim and name him as successor to the throne. The other party fastened its ambitions upon prince Daniyal. This, however, the Rajah was not entirely prepared to do. The reason was that Daniyal had managed to seclude himself within the circle of his own particular friends, and very cleverly had avoided the ordinary run of court functions. Myers explains the whole issue with its pros and cons in The Near and The Far.

Following passage throws light on the evils of autocracy:

"Independence, initiative, respon-
-sibilities all are you! And now it
seems, freedom of thought is about
to go too! Egoists like Akbar suck
up all virtues in the soil around
them, even the lives of them
friends are stunted and starved. I
have always declared that we should
be better off under Salim. He is
something of a scoundrel, no doubt,
but anything is preferable to a
full - blooded tyrant."1

The evils, the loop holes, the dark heinous practices that make the night darker and all sorts of vices us that prevailed during that period, are not only associated with Akbar, the Great Emperor but also all the autocrats of the world. It reveals that Myers’s Political vision was comprehensive. His approach to human miseries and sorrows was not intellectual but emotional, probably of the same variety which moved Gautam Buddha to renounce the world and make the great Ashoka go about the country preaching the doctrine of Ahisma. Though Myers did not belong to India yet he contained those ingredients that are found in Indian soil. His heart too, was molded in the same cast as that of the two great sons and while Myers cogitated and brooded over the doctrines of Marx and communism, what made him "tick" or led him to move heaven and earth to secure a fair deal for the people, was the compassion to beautifully reflected in the above passage.

He further says. :-

"As Long as India continues to lie
under the heel of an autocrat in
his dotage, her case will be
hopeless. what is one to expect of
a man who allows his sentence like this

"The most holy natively of his
Majesty from the sublime veil and
consecrated curtain of her
Holiness, a cupola of chastity and
top- root of the unbridgable trunk
Happiness, occurred when the attitude
of the lesser - dog - star
was 38 and when eight hours and
twenty minutes had passed from the
beginnings of the night of 8th Adan
465."3

Wither lies salvation? will Autocracy grant peace? will capitalism bestow prosperity? Myers tackles the problem gracefully. He prescribes communism, the last refuge of a fatigued sojourner. His restless spirit burning in London inferno - the aftermath of war, economic depression, spiritual and moral degradation, found a silver lining in the war - torn clouds. He had seen God's wrath falling on the poor, the down - trodden, the worms in the drain. He beautifully draws the pictures of miserable peasants in the pool of Vishnu. His heart bled for the sufferings of all human beings, and he wished to bring the socialist millennium by democratic means. In this novel he gives vent to his feelings through Hari khan who informs the Guru that the conditions of the villagers are beyond description,

He says:

"Cholera, Civil war, Famine and
then the new taxes."2

Soon a messenger arrives on the scene and announces the advent of civil war, Tom, Dick Harry like Lalu were trampled to pieces, their belongings were seized by tax - collectors and
the spectators watched the catastrophic end of the drama with sullen sunken eyes. Little did the poor Lalu, the representative of Myers's proletariat comprehend the way the emperor worked.

He writes:
"But he (lalu) understands nothing except that they have taken practically everything that he has - his store of millet, his goats, his one copper pan - and they say that he still owes them forty pice."¹

The other were hearing with rapt attention because they knew that their turn would come soon; and if they were as unprepared as Lalu, their lot would be the dame - they knew it well.

The tax-collectors were extortionate and mad: or
"Why should Miraj Din whose family was on the verge of starvation be asked to pay four hundred pieces which he did not possess while Ram who was comparatively prosperous had got off with three hundred and fifty ? "²

Works Cited


[2]. I bid, P. 80

[3]. Myers, L.H.: The near and the far P. 103

[4]. Myers, L.H.: Rajah Amar, P 560

[5]. Myers, L.H. The pools of Vishnu P. 731

[6]. L.H. The Pools of Vishnu P 717- 718