

Selfhood and Creativity in Taufiq Rafat's "Reflections"

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Abstract

Reconstruction of selfhood is a central theme of post-colonial writers. They strived hard to decolonize their lost identity through creative works. They consider revival of selfhood an elemental source for creative consciousness. It is a base for developing a pure creative thinking. In fact, a desire for reshaping selfhood and identity gave birth to post-colonial writings. Frantz Fanon emphasized on the need of complete rejection of colonial influence in order to attain autonomous self. He lays this responsibility of reviving selfhood on writers and most importantly on poets as they enjoy direct access to masses. Pakistani post-colonial writers particularly poets also tried to revive their splendid self through their writings. Taufiq Rafat coined "Pakistani idiom" to entitle a distinguished identity to Pakistani literary world as well as its dazzling culture. He sublimed Pakistani culture through his influential works. The present study also focuses on Taufiq Rafat's efforts to recover selfhood and a distinguished creative expression through his seminal poem "REFLECTIONS". The analytical framework is borrowed from Fanon's notion of reviving selfhood for autonomous expression by rejecting the colonial influence and by meticulously concentrating on indigenous culture. The close study of a poem 'Reflections' will highlight distinguished Pakistani culture and identity. It will also open new vistas for young researchers to explore in the area of selfhood and creative expression.

Keywords: selfhood, identity, reconstruction, creativity, decolonization

Introduction

Selfhood is a distinct identity which strengthens individual's conscious and ego. It is the awareness of one's own thoughts, values and origin. It reveals through the behavior and discourse of individual. Self-awareness emancipates a person from inner fears and apprehensions, it enables a person to think and decide freely. So, the first attempt to control someone is to fade the identity of a person. The

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same rule was applied by the colonizers across the world in order to control the suppressed. They introduced disruptive effects of modernity to the colonized with full intensity and complexity. Even decolonization couldn't decolonize the selfhood and the unified identity of the colonized. The effect of colonialism was profound on culture, language and on the life of oppressed. Colonialism exerted its full efforts to etiolate the integrity of colonized. They developed policies to civilize the colonized elite and to produce a class among natives who used to think, live and act like them. So, colonialism continued even after the decolonization as the elite who apparently seemed native followed colonizers mode of governing. This decolonization gradually turned into neocolonialism. Frantz Fanon discusses colonizers mentality in his essay "On National Culture" that they don't get satisfied just by griping and ruling the subalterns in fact they try to devalue their pre-colonial history and consciously "hammer into the heads of indigenous population that if the colonist were to leave they would regress into barbarism, degradation, and bestiality." (Fanon, 1961, pg149)

Bapsi Sidhwa also discusses the same mentality of rulers in "The ice candy man" when a British Inspector General apprises Mr. Singh, a Sikh, about the disastrous consequences of colonizer's leaving of India.

"Rivers of blood will flow all right!" he shouts, almost as loudly as Mr. Singh. "Nehru and the Congress will not have everything their way! They will have to reckon with the Muslim League and Jinnah. If we quit India today, old chap, you'll bloody fall at each other's throats." (Sidhwa 1989, pg62).

The physical occupation of colonizer extended its power to mental colonization. It was their mission to prove supremacy of white cultural legacy. Their writers promoted superiority of western culture and values under the guise of universality to maintain the hegemony of west over east. This arrogance over "self" created inferiority among colonized and stimulated admiration and inspiration in them for the superior white culture. This hegemony and hybridity bleached the original selves of colonized.

It also affected the creative process of colonized. The white cultural hegemony started ruling over his thoughts and ideation. His language was corrupted by the colonizers. For creative writing and expression, they started looking towards west. So, they began writing within English tradition and gave birth to commonwealth

literature which was traditionally humanistic. This kind of literature dealt with universal theme and ignored historical and cultural context in which these writers were working. It was an English literature of dependency. They borrowed metaphors, similes, images and concepts from western culture as they considered them the torch bearers of knowledge and expression. These writers tried to form a bridge between natives and rulers. However, this colonial effect in the minds and thoughts of the colonized remained same even after decolonization. Post-colonial Creative writers tried to revive their selfhood besides getting inspiration from colonizers. Chinua Achebe in his essay "Colonialist Criticism" vigorously advocates cultural self-determination and independence. He criticizes western criticism for its expectation of universal qualities in all kind of literature and that literary art should deal beyond its time and place.

For reviving selfhood Frantz Fanon stresses on the role of native writers. In his essay "On National Culture" he says that writers enjoy direct link with masses, so, they can help them in decolonizing their identity. For these indigenous writers have to search their own identity first. Fanon believes that without repudiating colonial dominance over colonized culture and language actual independence cannot be achieved. The aim of decolonization will remain fruitless. Cerebral autonomy is indispensable with physical independence. Reconstruction of selfhood and identity is impossible to achieve within the dominant colonial framework. The decolonized needs to search his own identity which can grant him distinguish self. Selfhood can be revived only by keeping people in touch with their culture. He lays more responsibility on poets as they enjoy wide appreciation and access to common man. They can revive their pride on past which was tarnished and miss interpreted by colonizers. Post-colonial writers particularly poets focused on the rumination of Fanon and strived hard to search for the native identity. They resisted cultural imperialism, they searched for unified identity and unified self as colonizers tried to divide them in different nationalities and culture. It was Edward Said who provoked decolonized nations for their real status through his "Orientalism" in 1977 that beside its military invasion colonialism operated as a discourse of domination and misinterpreted them in form of orient the uncivilized and savage. However Said also emphasizes on the capacity of intellectuals and writers in the awakening of the people by their writings and valuable thoughts by becoming the 'agents of illumination within the realm of the colonized'. (Lazarus, 1996, pg. 219) He advocates the significance of intellectuals on

the 're-establishment of a national and cultural heritage'.(Said,1990) Neil Lazarus also discusses the efficacy of intellectuals in his 'National Consciousness' that writers have presented very bravely the effects of colonization and of resistance against the subjugation of identity of individual and community of the oppressed in their writings. DEBRA KELLY in her "Autobiography and Independence Selfhood and Creativity in North African Postcolonial Writing in French" comments about the struggle of postcolonial writers in the reconstruction of identity and selfhood.

"They are all clear on the need to write themselves out of dominant systems of representation, to remove themselves as inventions of the colonial imagination, while simultaneously decolonizing themselves from that colonial imagination and from their own ambivalent desire for the West; to posit themselves as subjects". (Kelley,2005, pg335)

She further "tries to uncover the complex relationship of identity and its need in self-expression in individual texts and tried to see what unites or divides these diverse creative interventions around these issues." (Kelley, 2005, pg4)

She explores the issue of identity and expression in the autobiography of different writers belonging to different African cultures but all of them experienced the French colonization. She discussed in her work the issue of identity and the role of post-colonial writers by analyzing the works of four African writers belonging to different areas and time of French colonization. There are two main points discussed by them in their works.

"The first of these is the challenge that all of these writers pose to the notion of the hegemony of European historical, philosophical and literary discourses; the second concerns their contribution to debates concerning identity, whether of individuals or groups, at various levels of contemporary society, and to the role of the writer and to literature generally." (Kelley, 2005, pg336)

Derek Walcott raised the issue of identity of the once colonized people in his plays and poetry. He looks into quandary of identity and selfhood in the colonial and postcolonial Caribbean. His Homeric epic poem, *Omeros* (1990) investigates the humanity's relationship to history and nature. Both have been corrupted by man's ambition, leaving humanity deeply wounded. One of the acknowledged works of

Derek Walcott is *Ti-Jean and His Brothers*: In *Ti-Jean and His Brothers*, the themes of colonization, identity and the ancient theme of good versus evil are prevalent. (Sheoran, 2014, pg5)

The whole postcolonial literary world responded actively to the desire of recovering selfhood and identity, in fact Fanon's idea of ultimate independence from colonial influence was wholeheartedly welcomed by the writers.

❖ **Quest for Selfhood and creativity in Pakistani post-colonial poets**

Pakistani post-colonial writers also explore the bond between self and literary expression in their writings. During colonial time Dr Muhammad Iqbal galvanized the concept of selfhood in Muslims of India through his writings. He presented an idea of "Khudi" self to his people in order to get rid of physical and mental colonial influence. In his seminal prose work, 'The Reconstruction of religious thought in Islam' he discusses Khudi in detail in a separate chapter. For him strong and determined ego and understanding of self is ultimate goal of life. As he says about selfhood, 'Raise your selfhood so high that before allotting his fate, god himself should ask the man, tell me what is your wish?' (Bal-e-Jibril, 1935)

This concept of Iqbal was prospered successfully by the post-colonial Pakistani writers as they were groomed and raised up with the thoughts of Iqbal so; realization of self-hood and identity was evident in their writings. They tried to solidify national identity through their literary expression. They viewed past and future at the apex of present and this enabled them to recover their identity.

"Pakistani poets in English modulated the European models to become synchronous with the inflections of the vernacular. Pakistani poets in English also searched for poetic idioms that were closer to the speech patterns of the vernacular. This call to indigenization yielded interesting results in the domain of Pakistani poetry in English. Direct and simple in address, Pakistani poetry in English displays an interesting study as to how it has been shaped by the English language and is, in turn, giving a new shape to it." (Mansoor, 2012, pg23)

Pakistani poets are aware of this reality that for creative process reevaluation of self and unified identity is indispensable particularly for a nation which emerges from a fledgling colonial power. However, in a country like Pakistan which is multicultural, multilingual, multi traditional society, it is a colossal responsibility

of an author and particularly of poet as Frantz Fanon suggested to emerge a unified identity. Pakistani society is a unique amalgamation of culture, tradition, language and history. So, for exploring Fanon's notion of ultimate unified self it is necessary to understand and embrace the idea of cultural hybridity and the lasting effects of colonial process on the minds and life of the once colonized. Pakistani poets not only delve for literary emancipation and autonomousness but also work at historicity. They try to explore a unique kind of self, squeezed from colonial and pre-colonial past with the aura of present. Their poetry display dependency as well as a desire for autonomy. Pakistani poets focused on both points on creating pride among people on their splendid past and on the search of distinguished identity which is necessary for a complete decolonization from colonial influence as highlighted by Fanon. Daud Kamal among Pakistani English poets revived past in his poetry. He elaborated a splendid eastern past in a very realistic and sumptuous way to raise pride among people. His poetry reminds imagist tradition.

Carlo Coppola assesses Kamal's poetry in his "Some Recent English-Language Poetry from Pakistan", "Kamal possesses a unique sense of history and recognizes the need for an artist — and indeed a country — to connect with the past. As if to contradict the notion that Pakistan came into being only in 1947, he links this present-day country to the rich, illustrious history of the area Pakistan now occupies and insists that we recognize the continuity and commonalities between now and then..... To his acute historical awareness, Kamal.... fuses a deep appreciation for the rugged natural beauty of his country..." (Coppola, pg206....207)

He quests for selfhood through introspection. His poems are coruscating display of creativity. He tries to remove the dust from the tomes of past in search of identity. His poems "The Plough and the Oxen", "The Leap" are dazzling instances of his acute awareness of past. But the real champion of reconstructing selfhood and identity is Taufiq Rafat. He is a creator of Pakistani idiom, a vanguard of distinguished Pakistani identity. Rafat sifts his past and takes from it what he cherishes and elaborates his self in present through it. He evaluates his eastern life and finds it distinguished from west. He accepts the cultural influence and hybridity of colonialism but stresses on separate identity which needs pruning and cultivating for reshaping cultural selfhood which works as a fuel in creative process. In fact Rafat's poetry 'provides 'a space for a meditation on the act of literary creation and on the ways in which that act intervenes in the world.'(Kelley,

2005, pg1) He believes that self-awareness brings self-expressions. He provided a workable vision to Pakistani English poetry. His most significant contribution to Pakistani English poetry is his untiring support and practice of Pakistani idiom. It stands for the modification of creative expression particularly in poetry according to indigenous environment and culture. It focuses on the linguistic patterns of indigenous languages that how they are used in our culture but it doesn't mean translating the colloquial words in English language. Pakistan idiom is deeply rooted in our emotions, expressions, sensibilities and in our history and heritage. In fact, by coining Pakistani idiom Taufiq Rafat also justifies Frantz Fanon concept of a national culture which is based on people efforts in the sphere of thoughts "to describe, justify, and extol the actions whereby they have joined forces and remained strong". (Fanon, 61, pg168).

The present study also analyzes Fanon's concept of autonomous creative process and reconstruction of selfhood in Rafat's seminal poem 'Reflections'. It is a meticulous expression of culture and self. This poem is an extract of his whole poetry. It is part of his premier work 'Arrival of the Monsoon' which is deeply embedded in earth-rootedness as its thorough reading reveals pattern of growth and development of self. The poem 'Reflections' proves the idea that cultural rootedness is fully integrated with creative consciousness. It strengthens the individuality and self-consciousness of its readers. The hunt for the recovery of indigenous selfhood and its relation with creative consciousness is the central idea of the poem. The very title of the poem is symbolic and meaningful. It intelligently reflects double meaning. Reflection is a two-way process taking something in from outside like a mirror image and giving out something like radiation which spreads energy. This paradoxical title also suggests that indigenous people remained mentally crippled for a long time as they were following and imitating their imperial masters. They had observed and absorbed a lot of colonial time in them and now it was time to reflect in their own way. The poet mind remains fresh until the creative excrescence remains in action. This creative process can occur only in selfhood as Rafat believes that poetry should be done only by those who are deeply embedded in its culture and roots. The power of Rafat's expression in this poem is quite diverse. He has tried to touch the cultural life of Pakistan in detail. Rafat derives his poetic inspiration from various sources. He is greatly influenced by his Punjabi origin and village exposure. The south Asian mysticism has also influenced his creative process. The Hindu mythology, Muslim sages, Persian folk tales etc.

throws potent influence on his poetry. Orality is an important factor in Rafat's poetic art. Rafat was aware of indigenous poets like Waris Shah, Qadir Yar who also inspired his work. He was deeply aware of the south Asian ghazal tradition. So, the poem 'Reflections' reflects all his influences very powerfully. Rafat follows the tradition of great classics and romantic poets for the construction of his poem but uses the indigenous content in order to maintain his distinct identity. He is aware of cultural hybridity which has become part of our life but self-consciousness also keeps him in touch with his own roots. He believes that this hybridity has transformed our identity into a distinct recognition. Subcontinent is itself a multicultural and multi religious society which influences its inhabitants deeply as we see commonalities in Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs Christians and its other residents. There is no independent and autonomous self. Rafat takes colonizers influence as something which has enriched their culture but he feels a need for the search of distinct self and creative consciousness which has overshadowed by the colonial policies and influence. He starts the poem with an epigraph which is like a crown of the poem, reveals the central idea of the poem that though life is temporary and everything will vanish yet eternity can only be achieved by our deeds and arts. So, we should strive for perfection which can bring everlasting honor and dignity to us. The introduction of the poem and the prologue of Chaucer's 'The Canterbury Tales' share resemblance as both the poets welcome the new season which has removed the inactive and boring life and enable people to do something creative. Chaucer says that this new energetic season is perfect for a pilgrimage and for Rafat this new season is perfect for creating new poetry and for satisfying his self. Rafat wrote this poem after recovering from a long disease which kept him away from poetry. It was a time of contemplation on society, universe and life and now the time came to transform those thoughts on paper in form of words. His long disease can be related with the colonized sickness and lack of creativity as they had been walking on the footprints of colonial literature and writers. Now after a long sickness of colonization which shackled their thoughts and expressive power they have become able to decolonize themselves and their creative process and to rediscover their selfhood.

The long dry spell is over.

Waiting is ended. The paddy fields

receive the last monsoon showers

with a fierce gladness. It only needed

These beginning lines can be related with long spent barren and desolate life under colonization. The revival of monsoon is revival of selfhood. Monsoon symbolizes east. It is considered a spring of east. Rafat finds his strong and rooted self in monsoon. As west regards spring a revival of life and activity similarly monsoon defines east. D. H. Lawrence in his essay 'Whistling of Birds' presents spring in form of revival of life and rebirth after a long harsh and cruel winter. Rafat calls summer as raucous and finds revival and strength in monsoon which evokes artist's creative self. A lot is written about monsoon as it is source of inspiration for poets. It is always idealized in east.

Rafat himself sketches a pictorial imagination of monsoon in Pakistan in his poem 'Arrival of the Monsoon' when he says

Alive, alive, everything is alive again.

Savour the rain's coolness on lips and eyes.

How madly the electric wire is swinging!

Rafat very confidently and boldly uses eastern images to express his feelings which sprinkle a feeling of separate cultural identity. His concepts are deeply embedded in his own society. His creative process revolves around his own roots.

As Athar Tahir remarks:

"There was a clearing of colonial cobwebs, a rejection of borrowed poeticisms and an expression of fresh perception. Rafat sang not of daffodils and dales, but of Gul mohur and cacti. He wrote not of the civilized patter of English rain, but of heat and dust, of thunder and the relieving monsoon." (Tahir, 1997, pg.vii)

Monsoon instigates everyone to respond as he says

to which every living thing responds;

and the poet too

wakes up from his dreams and doodling.

The time for action is here,

Monsoon is a weather of rebirth and reconstruction. The cruelty and harshness of colonialism which overshadowed indigenous identity and suppressed selfhood can also be related with rasping and heated summer as it rusted native thoughts, ideas and way of life. In fact, it shackled the colonized in their cultural clout and true decolonization can be achieved as Fanon suggested by getting rid of their cultural impact. Rafat refers 'paddy fields' to the fertile mind of a poet who is ready to set his journey in search of self. Weather has changed his mind and his poetic landscape has become fertile. He is calling his mind a thick forest which is full of thoughts and ideas, waiting to transform in words but his mind was colonized and struck by foreign influence and monsoon is decolonizing it. Rafat relates this decolonization of mind and ideas with a sacred journey in form of poetic expression.

So, in saffron apprehension

I start on my second pilgrimage.

For Rafat this creative process is a kind of pilgrimage, he refers it with "saffron" a color of Jogi in sub-continent. He is well versed in eastern mysticism and relates this struggle towards self-expression with Jogi's search of his own self. Rafat brings images from all the indigenous cultures and religions; he doesn't confine himself to the Punjabi culture only to which he relates. Cultural images affect more than cosmopolitan images. Rafat is the most Pakistani poet like Philip Larkin who is considered the most English poet as he derives images from the atmosphere of England. 'Saffron' is the dominant color in Hindu culture which is used in the marriages and even the believers wear it in pilgrimage towards Banaras (a holy destination). So, a journey towards pure creativity and self is like a holy journey. It is a pilgrimage in the sphere of mind and conscious. Poets chisel art through mind. In poetry words are used with poetic intentions poets derive images from surroundings as nobody can live in creative island, inspirations are always borrowed from culture in order to make the expression more distinct and near to the hearts. Rafat is also chiseling poem as artist chisels a statue with indigenous metaphors and images. The 'white phrases' which were 'tumbling in the air' transforms into a rounded pattern hinted at by the winking wheel.

Rafat frequently refers the rounded shape as it is the perfect shape in the world. It has no beginning and end which shows its everlasting influence. The circle is

eternal. Muslim arches and domes are rounded, similarly, Muslims introduced the figure zero so rounded shape symbolizes east. Rafat considers words very important for the expression as he says

.... words are our elements,

Words are our identity poets express themselves through words so the selection of words is very important it should represent the culture in which poets' roots are embedded. Rafat discusses two processes of creative expression the Apollonian and Dionysian. Both are necessary for poetic expression. Rafat had been paralyzed for three years, he couldn't even move his hands and tongue but the creative process was not halted it remained active in his mind. He relates this effort with the practice of classicist in poetry who gives lot of importance to rhyme, meter, diction, and use of imagery. The classicist used to follow the apollonian approach giving importance to tradition and senses in creative process. T. S. Eliot a classicist explains the relationship between poetry and tradition in his seminal essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" that true creative process occurs only in following the past and tradition. For him novelty generates in tradition. However, Rafat like other critics of Eliot also reflects this idea in the poem that poetry is not just an intentional process it appears sometimes spontaneously as Wordsworth calls poetry 'a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.' Rafat also shows here that when poets get mature they leave following rules and poetry turns a shape of spontaneity for them as he says to the followers of tradition

for those who hone technique.....

till each word is irreplaceable,

but clips into the landscape of a poem

as casually as the startled snipe

plummets to a cool anonymity.

Rafat is actually guiding the young poets who have to take the responsibility of exploring selfhood. In colonial era poets had been following two great movements of English poetry romanticism and classicism. He urged poets to come up with new ideas and themes. Rafat tries to merge the Apollonian and Dionysian way of creativity besides forming his own distinct way of expression as he uses more

images from local flora and fauna. He believes nothing is new under the sun only our way of presentation makes it more vibrant and impressive. There are endless possibilities of creating meaning. Man has an ability to form novel ideas from same base. In fact, beauty is in simplicity and symmetry. Poets present same ideas in new form as difference lies in form not in content. So, words contain great importance for poets as it is a source of expression for them

for words are flesh and blood, are real,

emotion only a state of mind

However, poet gets ideas from very ordinary things and expresses them with his own powerful vision which keeps him alive even after his departure from the world.

the tone of green

an artist sees in the turning light.

What is so true as an artist's vision?

Or so untrue as an artist's vision?

Rafat guides the young poets that individual's identity is reflected through the clothes and poet's clothes are his words. Nations are identified through their national dresses so poets are also recognized through the language they use for exploring their inner self. It is true that clothes create discrimination and feeling of superiority among people. He says people of primitive age were better as they had no clothes so there was no discrimination among them.

When a primitive who grunts and gestures

Is persuaded to wear

clothes to hide his nakedness,

he loses identity at once

However, in modern age it is essential to maintain self-identity. It was a pride in self which forced colonizers to tarnish the identity of colonized in order to maintain their superiority. They developed policies to fade the history and self of

the suppressed. Rafat makes his readers and new poets realize that in order to decolonize themselves from the colonial influence it is very essential to develop our own idiom. Pakistan idiom is symbol of self. He evokes the idea through it that pure creative process can occur only through a free and unified self. Poetry is representation of our thoughts and reflection of society so it can be best expressed through an indigenous idiom. Self can't be expressed truly through borrowed techniques and metaphors. 'Reflections' is a true representation of selfhood and creativity as Rafat insists his readers and young poets to follow their own path. He tries to evoke pride in them by using colloquial images in the poem. Rafat believes that inspiration is a good thing. Young poets should take inspiration from colonizers art and form but should present it in their own way with their own distinct self. Rafat wanted to develop a distinct identity of Pakistani poets in English. So, poets should be free from colonial influence. He restricted poets that only those can represent society who are 'close to the pulse of the land'. (Tahir, 1986). We should try to reflect our culture through our eyes rather other misrepresent us as pointed out by Edward said in his renown and seminal work 'Orientalism'. In 'Reflections' he not only guides young poets how to deal with a creative process but himself present a rich use of indigenous and colloquial images and metaphors. As Athar Tahir remarks about his poetry, "Never is there a pinning for the colonial repertoire of images, attitude and subjects. Instead he seeks them in the land where the Indus flows. The sparrow, the pigeon, the quail and crow, marsh birds, ducks and geese and squirrels are of his terrain." (Tahir, 1986)

Rafat proves this idea that images and metaphors of native culture are also as influential and powerful as of imperialists. He compares his culture with the surroundings of John Keats and finds it effective with same strength. The images around us can also bring stream of creative ideas for us as Keats travelled through world of imagination with the song of nightingale.

I sit in my garden

And listen to its overtones.

Here the red-arsed bulbuls come

to inject a dumb tree with life.

The songs of 'bulbul' stirs his imaginations and ideas. He calls himself 'a dumb tree' without any ideas and thoughts and the mesmerizing chirp of 'red-arsed bulbuls' evokes his power of imagination. These red arsed bulbuls only exist in South Asian countries. Rafat says that in the beginning an artist remains more conscious about form but when he gets mature he can borrow inspiration from anywhere a common sight can accelerate his imagination. In fact,

The flashing of a kingfisher's wings
against a brooding tree
triggers a new chain of thoughts.

Rafat guides young poets for the selection of themes as he calls

A poem is a monument
sculptured in words
It will last as long as the stone

In search of selfhood it is indispensable for a poet to aware of his responsibilities that his words and ideas will represent his roots. The words can lose its affect but its sublime message remains eternal. Rafat stresses on the idea of essential goodness. Our actions keep us alive even after our departure from the world.

Skill survives, though the edifice falls,
.....
headstone lies in the heart, survives,
because its marble has no veins.

Our art and words bring us eternity. Similarly, poets remain alive with the work of their successors. Rafat's idea of permanence reminds us Shelley's "Ode to the west wind" that the seeds of tree which are taken by wind to some far-off places provide permanence to its basis in form of new trees. The words lose their affect with the passage of time but new words evolved from them with same content keep the

ideas alive. Rafat uses rich cultural symbols for elaborating the idea of permanence.

A twisting goat-track in the hills
saturated with pine-smell
is remembered, or a path
through the rice fields long ago.

Rafat unifies the sensibility. He compares logic and inspiration. There should be balance between them, inspiration comes from surroundings but it should be presented with logic. Rafat like a true mentor preparing new poets for a mission of reconstructing selfhood. He tries to show them a right path. He relates the Apollonian and Dionysian creative process. Poetry evokes from nature but nurtures through culture. He uses a cultural metaphor of 'woman' for inspiration as it arises from spontaneity and emotions. The woman in eastern culture is considered emotional. However, Rafat believes that we have a task ahead of reconstructing our selfhood and identity so can't leave our inspiration in wilderness. We have to show mature approach towards our expression

The risk is real but it is time
to leave the path in the wilderness
and seek, with an adult purpose,
contentment in the formal garden.

Rafat evokes young poets to search for distinct identity whose presentation or association makes them distinguish in the world. He urges on the creation of a national myth. Myths are source of creativity, help in unraveling the mysteries of the world and accelerate the imagination.

For a myth is an imaginary mountain
in a scrubby landscape of facts.

Rafat wants to develop a distinguish identity in present age as the idea of globalization has spoiled the individual identities. The neo colonialism is affecting each and every thing of indigenous culture.

Snipers nest in our tree,
and the drone of the homing jet
pollinates all cultures between
Hong Kong and San Francisco

Rafat stresses on the importance of literature as it is necessary for humanizing the people. Literature of a specific culture can highlight the dark picture of society in a very elaborate and appeasing way which can be guideline for bringing improvement in society. Literature and particularly poetry can revive history and can aware us of our local narratives. It can raise pride in us for our past as well as for our present. Mathew Arnold also provides the same idea that how poetry can help in improving the society. Rafat lays this responsibility on poets. He believes that only a poet can reconstruct selfhood among people through his unique expression.

This, then, the renewal of man
Through the revalidation of words
is the poet's task.
Poet and word are rooted in time.

Rafat believes that by following the 'literary ancestors' they will be able to raise 'the slogans of a new criterion'. Poetry has a power to fade out the colonial and neo colonial affects from the minds and life of a nation. It is then a true independence can be enjoyed. Rafat trusts the power of poetry that's why he struggled a lot to give it a distinguish place by introducing Pakistani idiom. He says,

it is potent enough. One yes
can rekindle love, or start a war.

Conclusion

This article is an attempt to discover the relationship between selfhood and creativity and its importance for attaining eternal freedom from foreign leverage. A famous Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu says in his “Tao Te Ching” “Knowing others is wisdom. Knowing the self is enlightenment. Mastering others requires force. Mastering the self requires strength.” (Feng & English translation). So, for achieving enlightenment Pakistani creative artists strive for reshaping selfhood. They tried to attain strength which was suppressed by the colonizers in order to reassert their real identity. Athar Tahir comments about Pakistani poetry that “There was clearing of colonial cobwebs, a rejection of borrowed poeticisms and an expression of a novel idiom.” (Tahir, 1986)

The analytical study of the poem ‘REFLECTIONS’ prove that Pakistani culture is vibrant and ravishing. It has an ability to epitomize itself through creative medium. Taufiq Rafat has successfully displayed the distinct identity of his land through his poetry. His rich use of colloquial metaphors, images, similes and symbols bestows Pakistani culture a new self.

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