

GENERAL ESSAY 2020

Poetry as a Social Force

Poetry is a type of literature, or artistic writing, that attempts to stir a reader's imagination or emotions. The poet does this by carefully choosing and arranging language for its meaning, sound, and rhythm. Some poems, such as nursery rhymes, are simple and humorous.

Poetry is one of the finest expressions of human emotions. It conveys the deepest insights, wide range of emotions and elevates human experience to highest levels of consciousness. What is however important is to recognize its impact on the inner chemistry of human emotions. How we perceive, how we respond and how we behave – all this is shaped by literature and fine arts to a large extent. Among the literacy forms, poetry has a specially profound influence.

Poetry is not just expression; it is an expression that has beauty in it. Poets do not just express themselves in mere words but paint images with their words. They breathe life into words with rhyme, rhythm and melody.

Poetry is a powerful medium to promote brotherhood and peace.

We can spread Compassion through Poetry. Sensitivity and compassion are central to poetry.

Compassion is innate to all of us. Poetry can open our eyes to realize it and practice it consciously till it becomes our habit and all our actions, subconsciously, exhibit compassion, kindness and positivity.

The first verse of the Adi-Kavya, Ramayana starts with the utterance of 'manishada', Sage Valmiki's compassionate appeal to the hunter to spare the life of a bird. It is his 'shoka' or his despair at the loss of a precious life that became 'shloka' or poetry. Compassion begets compassion.

This idea, when propagated through the powerful medium of poetry, attains the capability to change the world.

Poetry speaks of deep feelings, creates stunning images and beautiful lyricism and blends truth with beauty.

India's tryst with poetry is as old as the civilization itself. Poetry flourished in ancient India.

The great Indian epics Ramayana and Mahabharata are considered to be among the finest specimens of epic poetry ever written.

They are celebrated not just in India but all over the world for the grandeur of their themes, the extraordinary literary heights and the depth of the messages they convey.

These epics are considered to be treasure houses of India's traditions and great encyclopedias of ethics, religion, politics and morals.

India has a long illustrious poetic tradition and includes such luminaries like Kalidasa, Mira Bai, Tulsi Das, Amir Khusro, Kabir Das, Sarojini Naidu, Subrahmania Bharati, Mirza Ghalib and Shri Rabindranath Tagore mesmerized one and all with their poetic genius.

Poetry is a powerful vehicle of intergenerational transmission of values and knowledge. Songs and poetry have been used to pass on traditional wisdom and lessons in morals and values from generation to generation. Indian tradition has relied on poetry for transmission of wisdom and even scientific knowledge.

More than anything else, poetry has the capability to change attitudes, mindset and social norms. If we aim at a more compassionate world, poetry can be one of the most powerful instruments.

Poetry does promote peace, motivate people to cultivate universal brotherhood, social harmony and tolerance. Poetry can serve as a powerful catalyst that could hasten the process of social transformation.

Schools should to make poetry reading and appreciation a compulsory part of the curriculum.

Universities to encourage literature, arts and humanities education. We need poets and writers and artists and singers as much as we need doctors, engineers and scientists.

Promotion of literature is also an impactful method to preserve and promote languages, a cause that is very close to my heart.

The best way to preserve or promote any language is to use it extensively in everyday life. More and more people should be encouraged to write poetry, stories, novels and dramas in their native languages.